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IDEOLOGY VERSUS PRACTICALITY:
A CASE STUDY IN RURAL EDUCATION

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
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ABSTRACT

This case study attempts to provide a historical account of the first twenty five years of Feilding Agricultural High School. This coincided with the Principalship of L.J.Wild. The School curricula was sexually differentiated and chiefly aimed at providing courses which prepared rural boys and girls for their future vocations as Farmers and Farmers' wives.

During the period 1922-1946, a polarity of expectations was apparent in post-primary education. The producers of rural education were endeavouring to foster knowledge thought appropriate to rural consumers. However, rural consumers were demanding an academic knowledge unrelated to rural life as it conferred social and educational advantages. Whilst Wild deplored the hegemony of the academic tradition, he was compelled to reproduce it. If he had not compromised between demands for a successful agricultural course made by the Department of Education and those for an academic course from the parents of his pupils, Feilding Agricultural High School would not have survived its first three years. Wild early realised that if he was to serve the Feilding community effectively, he would have to offer a multilateral and comprehensive form of education.

This research has been undertaken from a historical perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

Valuable insights into contemporary ideology and State educational machinery can be revealed by analysing a school's history. In a minor way, this study has attempted to add such an insight. The particular case study presented here is that of a rural technical high school. Feilding Agricultural High School was created in 1922 amidst high hopes of implementing a predominantly agricultural curriculum. However, along with other small-town technical schools established at the same time, it was obliged to develop a multilateral course in order to respond to the demands of a local clientele. It thus provides a vivid illustration of how a school's success is dependent upon correctly assessing the educational, cultural and social context in which it exists. Failure to do this frequently leads to threats of withholding support and resources in order to ensure conformity. Feilding Agricultural High School would not have survived its first three years had it not conformed, to some degree, to the external, conflicting pressures made upon it.

At the time of the School's establishment, New Zealand's economy was predominantly rural, dependent for its economic survival upon its successful export of primary produce. It would therefore be natural to suppose that a large component of State education would be agricultural in nature. However, despite being advocated by prominent agriculturists and educationalists, this was not the case. Academic knowledge was commonly regarded as the only legitimate form of knowledge and was consequently accorded high status by New Zealand society. This led to sharply differential views upon what constitutes the most useful knowledge for specific social and gender groups. Whilst this dichotomy between high status and low status knowledge is present in most Western based educational systems, nowhere is it more evident than in the history of agricultural and domestic education.

This research examines the Education of the male Farmer and the Education of the Farmer's Wife. Chapters Three and Four are therefore the most important. In these two chapters the economic, cultural, educational and social reasons advocated for rural education are analysed. Their analysis raises some major themes which constantly recur throughout the history of New Zealand education.

Amongst the economic reasons advanced for transmitting a specifically rural education were those chiefly directed at firmly securing the economic base of the country by improving national efficiency. It was thought that this could not be achieved without implementing associated measures aiming at controlling the urban drift. Applied educational measures were thought to be effective in conserving and strengthening the rural population. Cultural reasons for educating the farmer and his wife were aimed at upholding the Rural Ideal. Country areas were regarded as healthy, clean and wholesome, in contrast to the rapidly expanding urban areas which became associated with crime, and poverty and cramped, unsanitary living conditions. Rural education was thought to foster a specific world view and imbibe the necessary values of the dignity of rural labour. Social functions of rural education involved the effective imposition of social and moral control over this specific section of the community. Strategies employed to achieve this ranged from 'character training' to inducing a desire for law and order. Rural education was also

believed to have intrinsic educational qualities, especially if it was of a locally relevant nature and provided a useful vocational function. The Feilding Agricultural High School curriculum was directed at providing courses which would produce a successful farmer and a successful farmer's wife.

As schools can be regarded as agents for transmitting the desired cultural and social norms of current society, it has been necessary to devote the first chapter to setting the context for the School. As the School wished to become an agricultural institution, a brief history of agricultural education has also been undertaken.

Chapter Two focusses more directly on the creation and consolidation of the new School and the development of its philosophy. The period in question (1922 - 1946) also coincided with the Principalship of L.J. Wild, and he actively participated in the evolution of several distinguishing features of the School. Amongst these were the Self - Government System, the Community Centre, Commemoration Day traditions, the Young Farmers' Club, the introduction of the School Farm and its associated Residential Hostels. The first three of these features form the basis of discussion for Chapters Five, Six and Seven, whilst the last two are explained fully in Chapter Three. Most of the School's objectives reveal a concern for the formation of 'character', and are aimed at the development of leadership skills, loyalty, and corporate spirit. They became evident in most of the School's customs, traditions, and sporting and cultural activities. The ideals of democracy and training for citizenship became increasingly important to the School during the Thirties. Also during this time, there was an increased preoccupation with international political issues.

The concluding chapter reviews the major tensions existing between academic and vocational education. It also includes reference to the differential allocation of knowledge by the controllers of knowledge and indicates the subsequent lack of acceptance by the consumers. The latter demanding an education that facilitated social and geographical mobility. This increasingly involved the school in a credentialling function specialising in the production of a portable commodity and which usually took the form of a certificate of academic attainment. This was used indiscriminately by the employment sector.

This period of the early School's history was a very interesting one and many present day social patterns were initiated during these years. Despite the rapid population growth, an increasingly sophisticated communication and transport network led to a unification of the country. Migration into the urban areas precipitated the expansion of the secondary and tertiary industrial sectors and led to the development of a new middle class. Modernisation of the government and its administrative infrastructure proceeded apace and the majority of the population gave evidence of their growing political awareness by exercising their franchise rights. Land settlement patterns became intensified and farms became smaller, and the introduction of refrigeration and pasture control resulted in the growth of the dairy and fat lamb trade.

By the 1920's, an increasingly sharp divergence in lifestyle and world-view had emerged between the urban and the rural population. This resulted in different political, cultural and social affiliations. The benefits of individual and national efficiency were extolled and there was post-War

concern with loyalty and patriotism which was best illustrated by outward expressions of the love of God, King, Country and Empire.

In the Thirties sectional interests became more partisan and more articulate and Unions, such as the Farmers Union, made the needs and aspirations of the country's primary producers heard. Trade Unions in the towns and cities also flourished and became more militant. The welfare system that had been initiated by Liberal Government reforms was continued by the Labour Government. Throughout these years, New Zealand remained a nation whose main income depended heavily upon overseas trade and borrowing. This meant that the implementation of Government policies depended heavily upon international economic fluctuations. The Labour Party was established and managed to gain a rural foothold by abandoning its land nationalisation policies and offering guaranteed prices for farm produce. This, together with its concept of developing a Social Welfare State based on the Keynesian theory of economics attracted the support of most sectors of the community. Its educational philosophy advocated equality of educational provision for all, regardless of social class, race, gender or creed. This embracing of an egalitarian ethic ensured further widespread affiliation. The years during and immediately preceding the Second World War brought an increased preoccupation with the democratic ideal. Fear of extremist political policies and propaganda promoted a move towards post-primary education for the mass of New Zealand citizens.

All these factors contributed towards the establishment of an increasingly complex society which influenced the development of future social trends. No school could remain untouched by such rapid developments, and Feilding Agricultural High School was no exception.

This is not an informal, intimate history of the development of Feilding Agricultural High School. Such a history has already been provided by the excellent accounts authored by local historian and former teacher of Feilding Agricultural High School, B.L. Evans. Descriptions of personalities, prominent characters and memories of important events could not be attempted by an 'outsider'. Rather, this research is directed at exploring some of the forces which shaped the development of agricultural education and domestic education, with particular reference to the diffusion of ideology with practicality, during the first 25 years of Feilding Agricultural High School.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

'Rural Education'- is used to describe that education given to rural boys and girls which aimed at preparing them for their future rural occupations. In the present context, it will be confined to agricultural education for boys and domestic education for girls. The majority of the school population resided in the rural township and the surrounding Counties. The majority of the agricultural course boys came from remote rural areas all over New Zealand. Rural education at this time was sexually differentiated. At Feilding Agricultural High School, during this period, one girl participated in the agricultural course and no boys enrolled in the domestic course.

'Domestic Education'- is defined in detail in Chapter Four. Briefly, it refers to those curricula subjects directed at the preparation of girls for wifehood and motherhood. The addition of horticulture, poultry-keeping and bee-keeping ensured a fitting preparation for the wife of a farmer.

'Agricultural Education'- was directed at those boys wishing to become farmers or enter businesses directly concerned with the agricultural and pastoral industries. In the case of Feilding Agricultural High School, it included subjects such as animal husbandry, field husbandry, farm management, animal physiology, genetics and nutrition, wool classing, farm crafts, metalwork and woodwork. These included practical and theoretical components and much work was undertaken in conjunction with the School Farm. In the early years of the School, the agricultural course comprised of English, arithmetic, drawing, chemistry, botany, zoology and physics as applied to agriculture.

'Academic Education'- refers to the Matriculation course that was designed at directing pupils towards a professional (rather than a farming or a commercial) career. It was intended to be a four year course and it consisted of English, French, maths, history, geography, natural science for boys and home science for girls.

'Cultural Education'- is also frequently mentioned. This refers specifically to Wild's definition which includes curricula and non-curricula subjects and activities which aim at the improvement of the mind and the refinement of 'manners'. These involve subjects such as music, the Fine Arts, literature, the debating society, plays, concerts, etc.

'Commercial Education'- A three-fold course was initially envisaged by Wild, this consisted of a boys' agricultural course, an academic course, and a domestic course for the girls. However, Wild added a commercial course as a result of local demand. This consisted of English, arithmetic, history, geography, French, shorthand, typewriting, book-keeping, business methods and home science.

CHAPTER ONE

EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE CREATION OF FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL

The establishment of Feilding Agricultural High School had its roots in the ambitions and expectations of the first European settlers upon the Manchester Block almost fifty years before. Feilding has long been regarded as a cohesive and prosperous township, with the majority of residents belonging to the agricultural sector. It has generally been assumed that these settlers originated from a farming background, hence the urgent demand for agricultural education which climaxed in the establishment of an agricultural high school. However, this chapter will show that this was not the case. The majority of settlers were tradespeople and unskilled labourers and they were initially reluctant to take advantage of any form of education. Despite this, a need for post primary education arose as the number of Feilding children receiving an elementary education increased, and as, in keeping with national trends, a need for post-primary education came to be more generally perceived. This was satisfied for a time by a district high school and an evening Technical School. However, a small nucleus of townspeople under the enthusiastic leadership of Harry Tolley, began to demand an education for the town's primary school leavers that transmitted a locally relevant knowledge in agriculture. They openly opposed the academic nature of the existing secondary curriculum. As their views coincided with many educational controllers and administrators, they were heeded. In 1922, a Technical High School was established with the intention of providing a specialised rural post-primary education for rural children.

This chapter examines the intermittent controversies surrounding the establishment of Feilding Agricultural High School, and attempts to locate it in a national context. It focusses upon the background and experiences of the early European settlers in Feilding and, in so doing, provides the historical setting which leads up to the opening of Feilding Agricultural High School. It also highlights the important political, social and educational trends which were relevant to the development of an integrated policy of rural education.

THE SHAPING OF FEILDING AS A RURAL COMMUNITY

There seems little agreement between writers with regard to the occupations of the early Feilding settlers. According to T.A.Gibson (1) most of the early migrants were recruited from the British countries of Middlesex and Buckinghamshire and the majority of them appeared to be unemployed farm labourers unable to obtain employment in the rapidly expanding industrial and urban areas of England. Gibson held the view that there were many reasons for their occupational displacement in Britain, chief amongst them were the decline of primary produce and the introduction of mechanised farming. The British Land Enclosures Act had ensured the eviction of many small farmers from their land and, as a solution, many of them had either drifted into the urban areas, encouraged by men such as Joseph Arch, or had emigrated. Gibson attributed the rural background and occupation of the settlers as the main

reason for the successful development of Feilding as a thriving farming town. However, in a later account of Feilding's origins Clevely and Davies more accurately state the occupation of the settlers as,

"A large population of immigrants accustomed to the timber trade" and also "A sprinkling of shoemakers, tinsmiths, blacksmiths, paperhangers and other artisans" (2).

Arnold located only two families from Lincolnshire amongst the Feilding migrants, one was a farm labourer and the other a foreman who, after eight years, had purchased the freehold to forty acres, in addition to his town house. (3) My own research supports the view that the majority of early Feilding settlers were mainly general labourers, sawyers, carpenters and other tradespeople. Amongst the 93 occupants listed by the passengers from the first six shipments, there were only three farmers nineteen farm labourers and one ploughman (4). Consequently, despite this lack of a former rural occupation, the majority of settlers eventually purchased their own farms, settled on the Manchester Block and became small land owners. (5).

All of these immigrants came to Feilding in response to the recruitment drive of the Emigrants and Colonists Aid Corporation. Early Feilding was referred to as the Manchester Block in honour of the Chairman and Patron of the Corporation, the Duke of Manchester. The other directors of the Corporation were H.G.Ashhurst, John Balfour, the Earl of Denbigh, Col. W.A.H.Feilding and C.S.Bailey. Founded in Britain in 1867 it was recognised as a society based upon a combination of remarkable business acumen and philanthropic idealism. The Corporation had conceived of a plan to relieve unemployment in Britain by transplanting the jobless, to the Colonies where labour was in high demand. They did this by employing a comprehensive emigration scheme.

"The theory submitted was that England and other parts of Europe were overburdened centres of population and that the obvious remedy was to transplant the surplus to the uninhabited, fertile regions in the colonies, not merely to rid the Mother Country of a commercially unwanted section of the community, but to benefit the colonies and its emigrants themselves" (6).

Despite the harsh and manipulative overtones of this quotation, many commentators also noted the philanthropic ideals of the Corporation and realised the mutual benefits to be gained, particularly by New Zealand and the emigrants themselves. Buick informs us, in his description of the Corporation's colonising policy that altruism was not always the motivating force behind their immigrant recruitment.

"The scheme was nominally one of philanthropy, intended to give the mechanics of England an opportunity of bettering their condition, but as is often the case with the benefactors of the working man, it was found that under the glamour of benevolence, the directors had managed to introduce a substantial element of business, and that it's commercial side was every whit as important as it's philanthropic aspect" (7).

On behalf of the Corporation, Colonel Feilding negotiated terms for the purchase of a block of land, 106,000 acres in area from the New Zealand

Government, on 26th December, 1871; the price paid was £75,000. This was quite a profitable transaction for the Provincial Government who had purchased it five years earlier from the Maori people as a small portion of a larger block for which they had paid £25,000.

A formal proclamation by George Bowen, Governor of New Zealand, declared that the Manchester Block in the Manawatu district was to be set aside for the purposes of immigration, and following an extensive emigration drive in January, 1874, twenty seven and half statute immigrants arrived. They disembarked from the "Duke of Edinburgh" and were transported to the Block in a journey of three stages, by tramp-steamer to Foxton, by tram to a halfway house and, finally, by bullock cart via Awahuri onto the Manchester Block. The latter part of the journey was extremely hazardous in wet conditions. On arrival at the site, A.F. Halcombe, an agent of the Corporation generally supervised their welfare and made available working tools, cooking utensils, food and accommodation in the form of bell tents, until they could build winter accommodation.

Immigrant labourers were being welcomed into the country as ambitious public work schemes, designed by Julius Vogel, were being put into practice, Vogel envisaged the migrant labour force as providing the necessary manpower to bring the country under closer and more intensive settlement. In the process of so doing, they would begin to utilise the vast areas of virgin forest which, he believed, lay as a valuable, untapped resource. The profits realised from this, together with the huge loans that he had managed to raise, would finance the communication and transport networks that he thought vital to the development of the country. It was perhaps the first massive exercise in State intervention in New Zealand.

Preceding the assisted passages scheme offered by the Vogel administration by just one year, the Corporation had already introduced a free passage scheme to "acceptable" immigrants, in conjunction with the Government. "Acceptable" immigrants were those considered to be physically and mentally fit. Great emphasis was placed upon the 'character' of the new settlers and there was an increasing desire to introduce, 'the agricultural labourer'. This is clearly in evidence in a letter from Short to the Superintendent of Immigration referring to one hundred and six and a half statute adults who were landed on the 27th October, 1874 by the Corporation and bound for Feilding.

"I desire also to point out that this shipment of Corporation immigrants is physically a very inferior one and it seems to be the desire of some of the Directors in England rather to rid their Parishes of persons who are likely to be permanent burdens upon them than to benefit their tenants and the Colony by supplying the class of Immigrants which is so urgently needed - the true agricultural labourer" (8).

It seems interesting that after almost a year of encouraging tradespeople, the Corporation now wished to recruit agricultural labourers. They were apprehensive that the shipment would not be able to cope with the hardships of pioneering life and they were also realising that developing the Manchester Block was a much tougher proposition than was first envisaged. Halcombe realised that he had to consolidate the position and amenities of the existing settlers as they were unhappy with the conditions and the isolation. Their vociferous complaints were considered serious enough for Colonel Feilding to arrive post-haste from Britain in order to investigate them.

Halcombe hastily drew up a policy of centralisation and he reversed his initial policy of settling the immigrants immediately on their own section of land. He now required that they stay in provided central accommodation for at least six months. They could then opt to stay or move on to larger sections on the outskirts of the Block.

A correspondent writing for the New Zealand Mail, not only provided an interesting eye-witness account of the new township but also provided the reason for Halcombe's new strategy of centralisation. He also emphasised the fact that the settlers were unfamiliar with rural life.

"Most, if not all of the immigrants, are utterly unaccustomed to bush life, have no experience in agricultural matters and would have no chance of success if located immediately on their arrival upon their farm sections. Distribution upon sections also meant isolation, difficulty of supervision and the impossibility of their benefitting by the suggestions and instructions of A.W.Halcombe and his experienced assistants....The great advantages of immediate employment being provided for the immigrants can scarcely be over-estimated. Indeed, there are no drones at Feilding. There are immense forests to be reclaimed, houses to be built, roads and tramways to be constructed, rivers to be bridged, fences to be erected and large quantities of timber to be provided, and what is wanted here are strong arms and willing hands.

So as soon as the new arrivals have temporarily settled down in the townships they are set to work clearing bush roads, brickmaking, sawing, splitting and so forth by contract and at first rate prices. The men who arrived from the Ocean Mail were all hard at work next day, having obtained the necessary tools in advance from the Corporations general store" (9).

It initially appeared, that educational provision was to become a high priority for, after only a few weeks, an area was set aside for a school and a schoolteacher's residence. The Corporation provided the building materials and the school was opened on the 2nd November, 1874, with a roll of six pupils. However this was out of a school population of over sixty children. The school was named "The Manchester School" (changed to Manchester Street School in 1921), and its first Headmaster was R.C.Dowling. The school came under the control of the Wellington Provincial Council's Act, 1871, and was one of ten districts belonging to the Wellington region. At the time, an annual capitation grant of five shillings per year was made available together with annual rates on rateable property which was restricted to a halfpenny for every pound (10).

The following year (1875) there were nine hundred and ten statute adults (11) living on the Block, but when Colonel Feilding visited the settlement he was disappointed at the School's low rate of attendance, in fact the roll had dropped so low that the Headmaster's Assistant had been forced to leave. To alleviate matters he promised to petition the Government for the provision of three months tuition on credit. The question arises as to why there was so little public "support" for the school. A number of factors can be outlined in answer to this. It was not only the financial consideration that discouraged school attendance, there was also difficulty of access and the fact that parents were dependent upon the children's labour and assistance with

clearing, planting and harvesting their own sections. They also experienced dreadful conditions at the School once they had managed to get there. The building was inadequate, draughty, and certainly not watertight. The stove discharged smoke and fumes into the classroom and the fire risk was very high. They were also put to work by the teachers clearing the area around the school and making the school building itself habitable. The evident contradiction of the school opening within ten months of the settlers first arriving and its subsequent lack of attendance may also be explained in terms of the differing ideals of the Emigrant and Colonists Aid Corporation and those of the settlers themselves. The Corporation had obviously to live up to its philanthropic image by making immediate educational provision, whilst the settlers placed basic survival needs ahead of any educational ambitions. With regard to the settlers educational ideals, Rollo Arnold (12) has accurately observed that the social and geographical origins of the settlers had a great bearing on the value that they accorded education. In comparing the early residents of Feilding who were largely composed of timber workers and general labourers with the early residents of Inglewood (settled in 1875), who were mainly rural labourers, he concludes that rural workers were influenced to a greater degree by the Agricultural Unions of Britain. These Unions had insisted that only education could satisfactorily equip them with the capital essential to escape their lowly status.

The academic ideology of the newly emerging Yeoman-Farmer focussed upon education as a key factor in fulfilling their aspirations of self-ownership of a smallholding. It was an ideology that transplanted successfully to New Zealand. Whilst many of the early Feilding residents must have encountered this ideology, they obviously remained impervious to its inherent function. It is possible that as tradesmen e.g. carpenters, blacksmiths etc., they were suspicious of education and regarded it as a threat to the Apprenticeship system. They had received their training through on-the-job experience and had probably, in turn, been involved in training apprentices themselves. It appeared that they regarded formal education as the spearhead of a campaign designed to disrupt their old and familiar network of passing on useful information. Despite this, the school's roll eventually increased and at the time of Dowling's departure in 1888, the one thousandth pupil had been enrolled at the school.

The Education Act of 1877 also boosted attendance rates, both in Feilding and at a national level. It attempted to provide an elementary education that was free, secular and compulsory, and, until this provision was made only half of the New Zealand's children between five and fifteen years attended school. Secondary education was still regarded as the prerogative of the wealthy. The schools now came under the jurisdiction of District Education Boards and the Central Government became responsible for financial assistance. School Committees elected by and comprising of the householders of the district under direct control of the Education Boards, were responsible for directing and managing the educational concerns of the local area. By 1881, the central settlement of the Manchester Block became municipally controlled and it was constituted the Town Borough of Feilding, named after one of the Directors of the Corporation.

To summarise: Basic survival needs were more important to the settlers than the education of their children. Education became more important as compulsory education became more effectively supervised, and as the settlers developed and consolidated their smallholdings. Also, as the labour market of the expanding township offered extended job opportunities.

SOCIAL DEMANDS FOR AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

As elementary educational provision became widespread, it became increasingly evident that although the country was dependent upon exporting its primary produce, little education of an agricultural character was provided. The following section briefly describes how New Zealand developed into a predominantly rural economy and how this led to a demand for an agricultural education that would maintain and stimulate this growth. It also examines the general response to the proposals for agricultural education.

Wool, butter and sheepmeat prices fell in the depression of the 1880's. This crippled national agricultural production but the effect was alleviated somewhat when final clearance of the land in the North Island had taken place. Ironically, many technical innovations evolved during the years of poverty, and these assisted a rise in production and consequently led to a rise in incomes. All of these improvements prompted rural prosperity. Innovations such as fencing and top-dressing, the advent of the cream separator, Babcock testing, milking and shearing machines, drenching and improved transport networks helped to raise the level of production and advance the processing of primary products. However the two main developments of the Eighties were the introduction of refrigeration and the development and utilisation of fertilisers. Much agricultural research and experimentation was aimed at improving animal breeding techniques. The Merino lost favour as the predominant breed of sheep and was displaced by the Lincoln and other cross bred species in the North Island. Sheep breeding activities were concentrated mainly in the Manawatu and Rangitikei areas. Feilding became heavily involved in this activity.

Central Government was beginning to realise that a controlled agricultural policy was essential for the integration of these new inventions, methods and techniques, and also for their successful implementation. There was now a growing need to educate the farmers in order to secure the economic base of the country. Agricultural education and its provision became an important national issue. If farmers were to become efficient then they must become aware of these innovations; if they were to raise their levels of production, then they must have some knowledge of scientific principles. From this basic assumption there arose two discrete approaches to agricultural education, one advocating the education of the farmers through adult training schemes, the other aimed at educating young people before they left the formal educational sector.

Alley and Hall (13) believe that the introduction of refrigeration, heralded an agrarian revolution. Farmers had to adapt and accommodate to new methods very quickly. They had to be responsive to rapid change or otherwise become bankrupt and cease farming altogether. The export trade began to flourish as the frozen meat industry, dairy produce and fresh fruit markets profitted from this new method of preservation. Britain, in attempting to feed its population of over 35 million, was suffering from a severe shortage of fresh meat supplies. New Zealand and Australia were producing a surplus, and, until now were unable to export it. Refrigeration was the necessary solution

to this. It was not an accidental discovery but the result of years of research. The first cargo of meat and butter which left Port Chalmers aboard the "Dunedin" in 1882, sold very successfully on the London markets, and marked the beginning of a new era for both the farmer and the country. In a book commemorating the centenary of the refrigeration, Sir David Beattie says,

"The full impact of refrigeration on the economy was not felt until the late 1890's. But promising signs began to show within the first year or two. In 1882 New Zealand sent less than 9,000 carcasses to Britain while Australia supplied 57,000, but positions reversed in 1883 when New Zealand gained it's traditional place as leader in the sheepmeat trade....In the long run refrigeration brought prosperity" (14).

As wool and wheat prices dropped, meat prices began to soar; the fat lamb trade became very attractive to many farmers. The large scale sheep farmers were finding it increasingly difficult to cope with the sudden decrease in the wool trade and were fast facing inviability and enormous debts. Sharp increases in land prices were forcing a ruthless efficiency on the part of the farmer. This, together with a change in political ideology, brought about radical changes in the distribution of land settlement.

The Liberal Government, elected in 1890, had land reforms as it's top priority. Development of the land for both agricultural and urban use became the focus of political concern, with the Mill's-inspired radicals demanding land nationalisation and the small farmers demanding freehold tenures and some form of land settlement tax McKenzie, the Minister for Land and Agriculture was a fervent supporter of the small farmer and was responsible for the introduction of graduated land tax and Lease-in-Perpetuity titles (999 year leases).

McKenzie was aiming at encouraging intensive farming practices by those farmers who had little capital. Adhering to Seddon's expansionist policies he repurchased large estates for subdivision, thus precipitating the advent of the small dairy and stock farmer. The impenetrable forests of the Manawatu, Rangitikei and Taranaki were being gradually replaced by small farms averaging 40 - 50 acres. This provided a favourable climate for the development of Feilding as a small farming community.

Feilding was relatively fortunate in that it's virgin soil was rich, alluvial silt and, once initial drainage had been carried out, it yielded excellent harvests. Feilding also benefitted from the experience of the earlier New Zealand settlers, and, learning from them, Feilding settlers became conscious of the fact that land could be leached of its mineral content by the continuous growing of successive crops. Pasture management and use of fertilisers were being increasingly drawn to the attention of the farmer. New varieties of wheat were being introduced; the importance of lime and superphosphate were being realised; drilling and harvesting with tractors was taking place; seed treatments for disease control were being experimented with; refrigeration was being commercialised on a large scale and quality control was being regulated. Distribution of these goods was also becoming a major concern.

The Premier was constantly being petitioned for the establishment of a Department of Agriculture in order to co-ordinate these developments, but he

steadfastly maintained that the Ministry of Lands was sufficient. However, at the request of Joseph Ward, he recapitulated, and the first Department of Agriculture was set up on 31st March, 1892.

Dairy farming was soon overtaking the frozen meat trade and dairy factories were springing up all over New Zealand. The first dairy factory to open on the outskirts of the Manchester Block was the Newbury Dairy Factory(15), with three further factories opening in rapid succession. The Manchester Block was rapidly becoming a rich dairying area, it's small farms well-suited to the dairy industry. Transport was crucial in this development and despite the fact that, Marton rather than Feilding had been unpredictably chosen as the major North Island rail junction, Feilding still held a strategic position. The sudden emergence of the dairy export trade required a great deal of efficient management and organisation and, consequently the first national dairy instructor was appointed in 1899.

Agricultural education was being increasingly discussed at a national level, and the Hon. Member for Foxton, J.G. Wilson had long been advocating that, at least in the senior classes, the teaching of science should not be taught straight from the textbook, but that it should be related to the interests and pursuits of the majority of pupils. The implications of this being that in a predominately rural area, agricultural science should be taught. Wilson became the founder and president of the Farmers' Union and a member of the Board of Agriculture. Some years later, was to become an ardent and firm supporter of the ideals held by Feilding Agricultural School which he visited frequently.

The small farmers were growing more prosperous and also, more conservative. They grew deeply resentful that the Government did not heed their pleas and transfer their leasehold properties into freehold. They were fast becoming attracted to the Opposition's policies, under the leadership of William Massey. They looked to him to protect their specialist interests and offered him full support in the 1911 Election. With his "Farmers Government", Massey promoted the rural sector, and even went to the lengths of drafting farmers as special police to help quash the uprising of the militant Wharf Workers who were threatening to disrupt the export of farm produce. Massey soon earned the nickname of "Farmer Bill", and in transferring leasehold tenures to freehold tenures, he was championing the rights of the small farmer. As a small land owner himself he became the stereotypical Twentieth Century Farmer-cum-Politician.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION BEFORE 1920

It can be seen then, that agricultural education was being urged for many reasons. Chief amongst them were the enhancement of national efficiency and the securing of a firmer economic base for a predominately rural nation. If farmers were educated by the formal educational sector then the country's natural resources could be exploited more efficiently. This would lead to higher productivity, higher rates of export and consequently, a more affluent country which managed its agricultural and pastoral industry more effectively. This philosophy underpinned New Zealand's future identity as the 'outlying farm of the British Empire'. However, this development could not occur with the constant migration of agricultural workers into the towns. As numbers of

young people became dissatisfied with a rural and manual-intensive way of life, they were increasingly attracted to the urban areas which provided them with a variety of occupational opportunities. Agricultural education was charged with the function of ensuring that farming was regarded as a profession. This would not only reinforce the rural ideal, it would produce an individual content with a rural life style who could occupy his or her leisure time productively. This led to another reason for urging agricultural education - that of performing as a means of social and moral control. Most recipients of post-primary education were middle class people who could afford to purchase it. Many working-class pupils left school completely after receiving a primary education and agricultural education was thought to be a way of attracting them into secondary education.

There were also less ideological reasons apparent in the new interest in agricultural education. Many conservation problems were becoming apparent in the first two decades of the present century. The continual burning and clearing of natural bush was fast leading to erosion and destruction of the soil's natural balance. The new pasture that was being created amongst the burnt out stumps was unfortunately only of a short-term nature. The introduction of a more stable and permanent pasture for grazing was becoming crucial. Again, it was evident that some form of agricultural education was vital, and the farmers were looking to science to solve their problems. As yet, there was no one viable and integrated scheme of agricultural (or scientific) education available in New Zealand. Piecemeal innovations had appeared in various isolated pockets throughout the country, but no attempt had been made to coordinate these. Despite the fact that the farmers and several political factions had been clamouring for some sort of agricultural education, when it was offered to them in the form of Liberal educational reforms, it was not taken advantage of. One of the reasons for this may have been that George Hogben's scheme of agricultural education was aimed at primary children and was educational in nature, rather than at the farmers themselves, and instructional in character. The Departments of Education and Agriculture, two newly created Ministries, were constantly arguing over their educational territory. This also hampered the initial provision of an integrated system of agricultural education. The reasons advocated for agricultural education were important in themselves, but also very important is what the reasons reveal about educational ideals in a wider historical setting.

A continual tension emerges between vocational education and academic education, throughout the history of New Zealand education. The dominance of the latter at the expense of the former is not a new occurrence, and it appears consistently in most education systems based on the Western tradition. Whilst George Hogben and his contemporaries attempted to supply a relevant and appropriate education which aimed at meeting local needs, the general public, including the farming fraternity, desired an education that lead to the acquisition of nationally recognised certificates of academic attainment. A concern for the end result of the educational process, rather than the content, seemed to be prevalent. Any sort of education which could not be examined and certificated was deemed to be of little use and agricultural education, fell into this category. In fact, Thom's analysis (16) makes the point that Hogben's idea of agricultural education was thought by many to be hindering the pupil's chance of achieving examination passes, with the result that it was largely ignored.

Educational administrators, like Hogben, tried to overcome the demands for a solely academic curriculum. They were facing demands chiefly from two sectors of the community, the consumers of education and the controllers of education. The resistance of parents to vocational education is dealt with very adequately by David McKenzie (17). He suggests that parents insisted on an education for their child which, as Thom also explained, would lead to a public examination credential. This would open up wider possibilities of future employment for their children by offering the choice of either a university education or a guaranteed passport to a "good job". Both of these options were seen as not only conferring occupational success but also as providing a chance of geographical and/or upward social mobility. In fact the parent realising the traditional division of labour managed to manipulate the educational system in an attempt to exploit this.

The employers demanded a level of education which they could easily recognise, and recognition came in the form of the Junior Civil Service Examination, the Matriculation Examination and the Teachers' College Entrance Exam. Snook's definition of a 'credential' being used as a screening or selection device is useful here.(18) Successfully passing recognised examinations indicated a certain level of educational attainment, regardless to the relevance of occupational skills being sought.

Teachers also felt comfortable with an academic education as it maintained their status quo. Most of them had received a British-type of education which was classical in content, and which appeared to have been transplanted inappropriately and with little modification to New Zealand along with the early settlers. They were familiar with this type of education and were qualified to teach it. In order to maintain secure future employment they blatantly promoted it. Furthermore, they had very little personal knowledge of vocational education and felt ill equipped to teach it. Consequently, there was an extreme shortage of staff qualified to teach agricultural education. Teachers were also encumbered with extremely large classes and possessed very little in the way of equipment.

Early New Zealand education had been modelled on the British pattern which was dominated by a preoccupation with the classical curriculum revived at the time of the Renaissance. It seems unfortunate that Roman and early Christian types of education, which included elements of practical knowledge, were entirely omitted. The Ancient Greek ideal of pure, abstract knowledge was valued highly and was regarded as the exclusive privilege of the ruling class. The peasant classes were instructed in more 'useful' and applied, concrete, forms of knowledge. This division had forced a disparate situation into the education system, one which highly regarded the "bright" pupils and channelled them into the more academic forms of education whilst considering those less academically talented as worthy of only a practical, vocational type of education. Nowhere is this more evident than in the history of rural education for girls and boys. Vocational education had little status and little market value and, despite the fact that New Zealand was developing a pastoral economy in her new role as 'Farm of the Empire', there were few takers for agricultural education.

There were some, however, that realised the benefits that could be achieved by developing a sound scheme of agricultural education. The Bishop of Norwich was one of these. He strongly advised the newly created New Zealand Canterbury Association to incorporate an agricultural college into their

plans, and this became one of their central aims. After setting aside one hundred thousand acres in 1872, the Canterbury Agricultural College was opened at Lincoln eight years later. Lincoln College was the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere and the cause of much controversy in later years.

The first Agricultural and Pastoral Association was founded in Auckland in the 1840's and was rapidly succeeded by the creation of many more. Their main purpose was the welfare and education of the rural community, and they subsequently contributed a great deal to agricultural education.

Unlike Britain and Denmark, New Zealand had not worked out a scheme similar to the Cambridge Village Colleges or the Danish Folk High Schools. The former attempted to provide a life-long education for rural people. They also offered a social and cultural centre for their welfare. The Folk High Schools' aims were to facilitate and coordinate knowledge that was relevant to the needs of their own specific communities. They were conceived as a means of equipping rural working class people with the skills of leadership and organisation. These two concepts of rural education did not influence New Zealand until the 1930's, and they are dealt with more fully in the chapter on the Feilding Community Centre.

No formal provision was made for elementary agricultural education in the Provincial period, apart from a few mission stations which taught Maori boys the rudiments of farming and a small butter and cheese factory in Akaroa which undertook a little instruction. The next step came indirectly with the introduction of Bowen's Education Act in 1877. It's intention was the provision of a free, secular and compulsory elementary education, and there were few regulations directed at the provision of a secondary education. His proposed elementary syllabus included not only academic subjects, but also those regarded as, "being essential to the Colony"(19). However, his policy clearly viewed education as a means of reproducing a socially stratified division of labour, as evidenced in this quotation,

"It is not intended to encourage children whose vocation is that of honest labour to waste in the higher schools, time which might be better devoted to learning a trade, when they have not got the talent by which that higher education might be made immediately useful"(20)

In restricting the non-academic pupil to a solely elementary and practical education and in not providing a free system of secondary schooling, (or scholarships for the talented working class pupil), he was confining secondary education to those who could pay for it.

Agricultural education was being promoted by individual educational and agricultural spokespeople as evidenced by a spate of activities relating to agricultural education which occurred in the two final decades of the Nineteenth Century. The first of these was the opening of Lincoln Agricultural College in Canterbury. This was followed by the overseas visit of R. Laishley, at the request of Harry Atkinson, to observe current agricultural practices in Europe and America. In presenting his report he emphasised the fact that as New Zealand was entirely dependent upon agricultural exports, an application of scientific principles to farming should occur in the form of agricultural education. He maintained that agricultural science should be taught in all schools, including those in urban areas. Meanwhile, Kirk, the Chief

Conservator of State Forests, was proposing the idea of specialist agricultural instructors, responsible for both initiating and implementing agricultural courses. The Ruakara Agricultural Research Centre was being set up as a demonstration farm intended for the further education and practical training needs of young people. Not only was it being run as a model farm, it was also being used as a valuable research centre.

Spurred on by the introduction of the Manual and Technical Instruction Act (1895), whereby Education Boards were authorised to provide instruction in the principles of Science, James Reid, with the aid of a grant from Otago Education Board, was successfully implementing an agricultural course at Tokomairiro School in the North Island.(21) Professor A.P.W.Thomas who occupied the Chairs of Biology and Geology at Auckland University College, was establishing Mount Albert Grammar School as a centre for agricultural education. He was also carrying out a rigorous publicity campaign, setting up agricultural scholarships, providing Saturday morning agricultural instruction for teachers and inaugurating a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture.

In 1898, the Director of Technical Education (Wellington Board), A.D.Riley, went abroad to study the agricultural education schemes being carried out in America and Europe. On his return he also urged that the Colony, should be implementing a comprehensive agricultural education system of its own. In his Report(22) he admired the British method of offering free tuition in agricultural education to the primary school teachers as one of the most efficient means of reaching the pupils. He also commended the Americans and French on their establishment of experimental stations which emphasised a more scientific approach to agricultural education and he vigorously proposed setting up a similar scheme. Despite the growing proliferation of recommendations being promoted by the economists and politicians, agricultural education was being received with little enthusiasm. Although the majority of New Zealanders began to comply with enforced State education, it rapidly became evident that they demanded an education which could confer social and geographic benefits. Agricultural education in its current form could not provide this.

THE INFLUENCE OF GEORGE HOGBEN UPON AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Many agricultural educationalists associate George Hogben with increased State provision of agricultural education at all levels of the formal sector. George Hogben, Inspector General (1899 - 1915), revised the Manual and Technical Act in 1900, in an attempt to implement agricultural education at a more local level and overcome the demand for an examination-dominated curriculum. He abolished external exams in the lower standards and compiled an entirely new primary curriculum with an emphasis on practical observation and natural methods. It did not meet with immediate success.

He had inherited a very sparse, thinly scattered secondary education system consisting of only a few privately endowed schools and even fewer District High Schools. There were also at least three Technical Schools which were following the lead of Tokomairiro School in taking advantage of the Manual and Technical Instruction Act. Included in their syllabuses were Botany and Agricultural Science.(23)

Hogben was determined to improve the situation by making provisions more widely available and accessible to the schools. He was instrumental in appointing the country's first two Inspectors, E.C. Isaac and H. Browne (24) whose direct responsibilities consisted of advising schools and providing model lessons in dairy classes and agricultural instruction. Capitation allowances were made available at the increased rate of 50% for rural areas. In his annual report of 1903, he tried to impress strongly to teachers that the whole country would benefit from the provision of agricultural classes. His pleas were attracting some response in the elementary schools where his "Cottage Garden" ideal was being put into practice. Several District High Schools were also beginning to make use of the equipment and substantial grants worth five pounds and ten shillings for every pupil taking the junior elementary course in agriculture (25).

Following his trip to Europe in 1907, he set out a detailed scheme of agricultural education for the whole of New Zealand wherein he prescribed a thorough knowledge of agricultural principles by means of elementary nature study and intensive secondary courses in agricultural sciences. He also recommended tertiary and continuation education at proposed agricultural and horticultural experimental stations. These ideas seemed perfectly feasible and practical and, if successfully implemented, should have eventually led to an informed pool of agricultural experts and potential agricultural teachers.

The rural District High Schools were not fulfilling his expectations. Instead of providing a core of agricultural subjects related to the needs of the local community, they were imitating the Secondary Schools by providing the narrow, rigid academic curriculum already identified.

In describing the plight of the District High Schools, Nash maintains that,

"The institutionalisation of academic knowledge as the only valid means of knowing the world and of academic qualifications as the only means of entry to professional occupations has ensured that sooner or later schools everywhere have been forced to develop academic institutions serving the interests of the majority. The New Zealand district high schools offer a reasonably well documented example of these processes" (26).

The Technical Schools also revealed these processes at work in a further attempt to break down the hegemony of academic knowledge curriculum, Hogben created the Day Technical School which was to be administered under the central control of the Department of Education and which was empowered to offer free-place provision. Again, parent and teacher hostility and apathy, prevented the adoption of manual and skills-orientated subjects. If the schools did not offer the same curriculum as the Secondary Schools, the parents were quick to realise that a stigma of inferiority could be attached to them. The schools claimed that such subjects were expensive to operate and difficult to examine. Another reason for their low participation rate was that the pupils, for whom the agricultural course was intended had already left school to work their own farm!

A network of causative factors has long been proposed for the failure of agricultural education. Despite increased technology and farming techniques, it was never viewed as essential - not even by the farming community. It seems

ironic that, whilst farmers were denying their children the opportunity of a relevant education, they were urgently requesting a science- oriented agricultural curriculum, through the Agricultural and Pastoral Associations and the Farmers' Union.

In the early years of the Twentieth Century, attempts to institute a system of agricultural education intensified. In the 1908 Extract from the Minister of Education, it was stated that

" Instruction in elementary agriculture was given in nearly four hundred schools. In several districts this important branch of elementary education is in charge of itinerant instructors, who, in addition to supervising school gardens and experimental plots, also conduct training classes for teachers as well as for persons in agricultural and pastoral pursuits. In three districts instruction was given in the principles and practice of dairying in addition to work in school gardens. Altogether the progress made in the districts in which special attention is being given to agricultural instruction by controlling authorities cannot be regarded as other than satisfactory"(27).

This implies that attitudes towards agricultural education were changing. However, in the same year the Report of Inspectors of Technical Instruction, when discussing contemporary attitudes stated,

"During the year, four hundred and twenty four classes for elementary agriculture and dairy work were in operation as against two hundred and fifty five in the previous year. We are now able to report a decided increase in the number of classes for this important subject. The appointment of a specialist itinerant instructor in the Wanganui District had made it possible for useful courses on instruction in the principles of dairying to be given in the northern and southern parts of the district. The total number of classes for dairy work was twenty six as against two for the previous year. It has been advanced as a reason why children in dairying districts should not receive instruction in dairying at school, that they have enough dairying in their homes. The conditions of life and labour in the dairying districts of the Dominion no doubt imposes some measure of hardship on the children, but if those who consider that by making a course of dairy work a part of the children's education you impose an additional burden on them, could see the intense interest they take in the simple experiments and the general enthusiastic way they go about the practical work incidental to the course and could hear the intelligent answers given by most of the pupils to questions bearing on the value and meaning of the work done in the class, they would probably come to the conclusion that the instruction.... is viewed rather in the light of a relief from the ordinary subjects of instruction. May not the attitudes of the children toward the work be explained by the fact that in the classes in question they are dealing with a subject closely related to their life"(28).

Parents would surely not find this sort of statement endearing, however

laudable in intent. Under the circumstances, these periods of "light relief" would hardly appeal to parents demanding hard work and a certificate of academic competency from their children. As the Report continues, it grows more condescending in manner and, included in its list of reasons for introducing "nature study with an agricultural trend" into schools, it also lists, "raising the level of attendance by providing an incentive, especially to those considered 'dull'". (29) Other reports of the time have a different emphasis on the need for agricultural education. For example, J.R.Jewell advocated it as the means of inspiring moral, spiritual and aesthetic appreciation. He also viewed it as a sure-fire way of preventing the urban drift and of providing a guaranteed occupation for every person,

"An agricultural education better than any other, makes men, enables one always to fall on his feet, fills him with a confidence that in any stress of circumstances he can obtain a comfortable livelihood from the earth"(30).

It seems unfortunate that this utopia is reserved only for males!

Reports originating from this era also stressed the need for strengthening and conserving the rural population. Migration away from the country areas was being viewed as a serious problem in a country dependent upon it's primary produce. An urban drift was certainly occurring. Watson's figures (31) indicate that in 1896, 55.69% of the total population were residing in the country, this figure decreased to 45.59% in 1916 and 36.81% in 1945. In order to halt this migration to the cities, agricultural education was believed to be the answer. This was intended for male consumption. Females also had a role to play, but it was a role viewed as marginal and supportive in nature. Domestic education for girls was thought to be the equivalent of agricultural education for boys. We shall also discover in a later chapter how it was intended to perform a role in preventing urban drift. Various educationalists argued that if rural values were given more emphasis in the school programme then the increasing fascination with an urban ideology would cease and people would, as a consequence, remain content to live in the country areas.

Most educational Reports from the 1907-1908 era cite these reasons for the introduction of agricultural education into the school curriculum. It seems little wonder that it was not welcomed into the schools.

Following a recommendation from Edwin Hall, the Secretary of the Agricultural and Pastoral Association, several itinerant Inspectors specialising in agricultural instruction were appointed and two years later the Wanganui Education district appointed it's first itinerant dairy instructor, M.H.Browne. J.Grant was also working as an agricultural instructor for the Wanganui District, and between them they organised classes in the principles of dairying and agriculture for schools, adult evening centres and teachers' courses at Feilding and Hawera. Feilding appeared to be situated in an educational area which early recognised the value of agricultural classes, at least with respect to their primary pupils.

Along with Hogben, the Minister of Education, George Fowlds, was also criticising the academic nature of the District High Schools curricula, particularly in rural areas and he was continually drawing attention to the availability of capitation grants for technical education. Realising the importance placed by parents upon exams, he also stressed that the agricultural education was,

"Providing for the needs of pupils preparing for Matriculation or Civil Service Junior Exams. Several schools have well-equipped science laboratories forming an important part of agricultural instruction"(32).

Overall facilities were beginning to improve and teachers were starting to benefit from the natural science classes established in training colleges in 1905.

The Technical Schools were slowly including more agricultural courses. Jones states that in 1909, out of two thousand students attending Technical Schools, only seven took agricultural studies. By 1913, seventy one students were receiving agricultural education. The number of agricultural itinerant inspectors were also on the increase with the Wanganui Education Board now employing three and Otago and Southland being the only areas not employing at least one (33).

Hogben's influence gradually became apparent in the Secondary High Schools with the schools of Dannevirke, Ashburton, Waitaki, Palmerston North, Gore, Blenheim and New Plymouth all introducing some element of agricultural and/or dairy classes, with varying degrees of success. Palmerston North High School had difficulty in procuring sufficient land for experimental purposes and therefore joined forces and formed a cooperative enterprise with the Technical School. Hogben was suitably impressed with the arrangement when he visited Palmerston North in 1916, however, Richdale informs us that he noted the shortage of adequately trained teaching staff in the agricultural areas. In most cases, the Secondary High Schools also felt the need to offer competing facilities with the Technical High Schools.

In 1912 the Mark Cohen Commission was set up to investigate and comment upon the state of education in New Zealand. It's conclusions endorsed Hogben's view that the study of natural science was of intrinsic value and that the acquisition of scientific methods of observation and application, whilst still at school were of immense benefit to the student. As a result of the Commission, the Council of Education was set up. Yet another result was the introduction of the Board for Agriculture which endeavoured to define a more progressive policy towards agricultural education. The personal value of agricultural education to the pupil was now starting to be emphasised. Whether this was a strategy designed to attract further enrolments is a debateable issue, however, it was probably the case.

Following the Cohen Commission, the idea that one, fully-equipped Agricultural College would better serve the country's needs, rather than three or four smaller ones was proposed. Lincoln College was being severely criticised at the time for it's lack of purpose and feeble agricultural policy. Due to poor maintenance, it's grounds, buildings, equipment and fencing were falling into a state of disrepair and it was certainly not contributing to the improvement of agricultural concerns. This had led to the demand for another agricultural college in the North Island, a plea that had been heard before. Both the Council of Education and the Board of Agriculture were busy collecting and collating material on agricultural education in other countries, and the former began to propose many arguments in favour of agricultural high schools which were residential in nature. The Feilding Agricultural and Pastoral Association's President, Mr. Perrett, extended this

argument further and recommended that the proposed residential high schools should have substantial farms of between 50 - 100 acres attached to them. It appears that Feilding was already preparing the way for its own agricultural high school. When the "Conference of Delegates from Agricultural Societies" became the "New Zealand Council of Agriculture" in 1914, agricultural education became a very popular issue, constantly featuring high on its biennial agenda. L.J.Wild (34) later informs us that it was about this time that two opposing factions were beginning to emerge, one advocating the establishment of specialist secondary agricultural high schools and the other emphasising the need for the provision of a good, general scientific background at secondary level. Thus leaving the tertiary and continuing education sectors to deal with specialist agricultural education. In a report for the Council Of Education in 1915, Hogben dismissed what he considered to be these two extreme positions and proposed the introduction of an agricultural course into an otherwise comprehensive curriculum.

Wild quotes Hogben's Report,

"We may say, roughly speaking that three fifths of the work will be common to all pupils, another one fifth of the work will be common to several vocational courses and only one fifth will belong exclusively to the special vocational course and only chosen, except during the last year or so of the pupil's career, when this amount may be considerably increased. It is obvious that this plan of providing agricultural and other vocational courses in the ordinary high school leads to much economy in teaching power" (35).

This quotation indicates Hogben's hopes for the creation of a smooth, efficient school course containing a realistic element of both practical and academic work. His financial and economic considerations placed him firmly on the side of national efficiency. However, it cannot be denied that there appeared a slight element of benign paternalism in his stance, particularly in his attempts to widen the curriculum and make it more accessible to every child. It cannot go unremarked that Hogben did not interfere or tamper with the traditional curriculum of the Secondary High Schools which catered exclusively for the academic elite. One wonders at the consequences resulting from a challenge to the underlying structure and function of the academic curriculum in the bastions of the Secondary High Schools.

McKenzie, Lee and Lee summarise Hogben's position succinctly when they claim,

"What was being argued here [by Hogben] was that while the academic high schools could and should be improved, their function as academic institutions for a selected clientele should not be called into question. Pupils, however, who lacked academic ability should be provided with other forms of post-primary education such as technical education " (36).

Hogben emphasised the need for a more highly skilled rural workforce in order to boost productivity and he attempted to set in operation a scheme, designed to bring this about. This detailed agricultural scheme was introduced in 1916, and Wild summarised his proposals and the practical requirements essential to accomplish them:-

"1) Elementary Stage at Primary School - gardens, nature study.
Required - trained rural teachers.

2) Intermediate Stage - taken by a) students in training colleges. b) Post Primary pupils of agricultural classes. c) pupils in continuation classes.

Required - specialist teachers of agriculture.

3) Further training for those who have taken one of the intermediate courses - a) One year at Agricultural College or approved Experimental Farm. Those coming from Teachers' Training College would be qualified as teachers in rural schools. b) Two years at Agricultural College or approved Farm. Those trained as teachers then qualified as special teachers of agriculture in high schools. From the best of these - special teachers for training colleges and directors of elementary agricultural education could be found." (37)

This was aimed at introducing agricultural education into the school syllabus, from the primary level through to the tertiary level, and it gradually filtered into the educational curriculum. In order to ensure that the rural District High Schools taught agricultural and dairying science, they were made a compulsory part of the syllabus for those District High Schools numbering less than seventy pupils. This was not as good a move as it appeared, as it academicised the teaching of agriculture. This was the complete reversal of Hogben's ambitions. However, Hogben never succeeded in breaking down the major opposition to it from parents and teachers, and he certainly never resolved the dichotomy between academic and practical forms of knowledge. Many of his innovations regarding technical education were only implemented because, at that point in time, Hogben was reflecting contemporary educational wisdom. They would not have occurred in an infrastructure that was not already sympathetic to his views.

FURTHER IDEAS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

The report of 1917 given by the Senior Inspector of Secondary Schools complained bitterly about the perspective adopted by the schools. Some schools, he claimed, were adopting a purely theoretical approach whilst others were tackling only practical work without reference to theory at all. (38) This was not the case at Rangiora High School in the South Island, which was beginning to gain a considerable reputation with the agricultural work that it was undertaking on its experimental plots. It grew even more notable when Strachan became the Headmaster in 1917. Strachan was adamant that vocational courses should be an integral part of the school curriculum. The School had built up an agricultural course under the former Headmaster, Mr. Cresswell, who started with half an acre. After developing this for agricultural research, the School acquired more land, until Strachan set up a Farming Committee in 1917. By now the School was undertaking milk-testing on behalf of the farmers and also carrying out seed experimentation exercises on over twenty two acres. David Gunby explains,

"Mr. Strachan was most enthusiastic about the school plots and the possibilities they provided for an agricultural

education in a rural high school and he always took an active part in the running of the school farm. The overall aim - then, as now - was to have a school property as like as possible to the real thing and all operations were to be carried out as they would be on a typical Canterbury farm"(39).

Finally, someone was actually putting into practice the ideals of many educationalists, and making a success of it. Watson informs us of Strachan's philosophy,

"Rangiora has become known as an agricultural high school, agriculture was not a subject attached grudgingly to the curriculum. It came naturally....He considered agriculture, as a subject, offered unrivalled advantage for the Post Primary school. Because of its living contacts with so many subjects, such as biology, chemistry, mensuration, geography and geology, it was the ideal subject for an integrated course, and Strachan may be regarded as the pioneer in New Zealand of the integrated course. The fact that the Rangiora community is vitally agricultural was consideration enough to make agriculture a central theme of the Rangiora plan of study. All children took a general course, no matter what their work was to be. The more specialised pre-vocational activities, or as Strachan call them, "Functional developments" emerge from this central theme. In an agricultural community such as Rangiora, the main functional development was naturally the agricultural course".(40)

In order to overcome the shortage of teachers, the Agricultural Conference of 1920 proposed incorporating agriculture into the Bachelor of Arts Degree. They also concerned themselves with the problems of those students who, if opting for agriculture, could not take a foreign language, and were then ineligible to take the Matriculation Exam. In his description of New Zealand agricultural education, Richdale writes, "It is a record of unremitting endeavour yielding a comparatively insignificant return"(41). As the three types of post-primary schools in existence had failed to produce a comprehensive, integrated programme of agricultural education, a new type of school had been envisaged - an agricultural high school. The idea had been mooted early in the century, repeated at fairly frequent intervals since then, and again it resurfaced for examination. Perhaps the most interesting of these ideas was that put forward by George George of Auckland in the first decade of the century. He suggested a scheme whereby four agricultural schools were to be set up in rural areas, all with attached farms. The schools were to be residential in character and admit pupils of 16-18 years of age. Mr. Braik, the Chief Inspector for Wanganui had also suggested agricultural high schools and this idea was further developed by the Cohen Commission, and even by Parliament. However it was to be a number of years before their ideas became reality.

CONCLUSION and SUMMARY

The early European settlers of Feilding did not originate from a farming background, however, it is clearly evident that the majority of them migrated to New Zealand with the idea of owning and working their own land. Most of them accomplished this within five years of settlement. The people of Feilding were not initially concerned with educating their children. After they had consolidated their positions, they began to realise the benefits that education could confer. However, it was the traditional and academic form of education which they desired primarily due to its market value. This also offered their children a chance for social and geographical mobility at a time when inflation was high, land prices were steeply rising and land settlement policies had not been introduced. It has been well-documented that throughout the history of agricultural education, there has been a sharp division between low-status, applied knowledge and high-status, pure knowledge. This has led to a demand for the former as it was considered an accessible means of enhancing occupational opportunities.

The most single influential development of the late Nineteenth Century was Refrigeration. This precipitated New Zealand's function as the 'Outlying Farm of the Empire', altered export and trading patterns, and led to the growth of dairying and the fat lamb trade. Rural family structures shifted to accommodate the growth of the small dairy farm based on the nuclear family unit.

Several major themes recur in the history of rural education. Many of these relate to its underlying reasons. With regard to agricultural education, in particular, it was widely accepted that it fulfilled a number of functions. The most important of these was its role as an effective means of strengthening the economic base of a rural nation. Farming techniques were becoming increasingly complex and scientific, and it was thought that in order to maintain and consolidate its function as the 'Outlying Farm of the Empire', New Zealand would have to professionally educate its farmers. This led to the advocacy of two discrete forms of agricultural education. One favoured the training of the adult farmer involving practical training schemes, continuing education and graduate courses; the other proposed the integration of agricultural education into the post-primary curriculum. At this juncture, the Department of Education and the Department of Agriculture had not agreed upon a coordinated policy of agricultural education. Nor had they defined their educational territory.

Agricultural education was also thought to be an effective countermeasure to the increasing urban drift. This was a national trend which was treated with growing alarm by economists and agriculturists. New Zealand was an agricultural nation dependent upon the export of its primary produce and it was believed that higher levels of output could only be achieved by maintaining the size of the rural sector.

It has been necessary to outline the socio-economic context of the early Twentieth Century and also to make reference to the proposed functions and major themes inherent in New Zealand's philosophy of agricultural education. These directly influenced the establishment and development of Feilding Agricultural High School as a post-primary agricultural institution.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL AND ITS SUBSEQUENT HISTORY UNTIL 1946

It is the intention of this chapter to describe the early history of Feilding Agricultural High School, from its inception until 1946. The first quarter of a century of the School's existence coincided with the Principalship of L.J.Wild. This period is responsible for the creation and consolidation of the School's educational philosophy. Under the influence of people such as Wild, Tolley and the Somersets, the School developed several distinguishing features which made it unique in the history of New Zealand Technical High Schools. These features included the evolution of the Self Government system, the establishment of the Community Centre, the development of the School Farm and its accompanying Residential Hostels and the introduction of the Young Farmers' Clubs into New Zealand. These formed the nucleus of the School's policy and will be outlined in subsequent chapters.

Feilding Agricultural High School had a turbulent beginning and it became the pawn in a game played between the Department of Education and the Wanganui Education Board, headed by Fred Pirani. Gaining the support of C.J.Parr, the Minister of Education, the Feilding residents achieved success and this was manifested in the creation of a technical high school for Feilding. Harry Tolley became the Founder of the School and it was due to his initiative and persistence that the School acquired the function of an agricultural high school.

INITIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN FEILDING

The first Feilding Technical School was opened on 11th March 1908 by the Minister of Education and Health, the Hon. George Fowlds. It admitted one hundred and ninety two pupils and it came under the short-lived Directorships of H.Amos and H.Fossey, respectively. The Minister of Education's Report states,

"The Feilding Technical School comprising science, art, woodwork, cookery and plumbing classrooms, a handsome structure in brick, will be ready for occupation when the classes start this year. Mr. H. Fossey whose experience at home and in the Dominion has been varied and ample, has been appointed to the Directorship. Under his direction the school may be expected to prove of immense benefit to the large and prosperous district in which it is situated." (1)

The chief function of the Technical School was to service the needs of the people living in the Feilding district by providing them with evening classes. However, participation in the evening classes, with the exception of the wool-sorting class, was unsatisfactory. This led Fred Pirani, the Chief Education Officer of the Wanganui Education Board, to suggest that the establishment of day technical classes and improved transport facilities might lead to an increase in enrolments. However, as there was already a

District High School in Feilding, thoughts governing the creation of a day technical school were postponed for a while. The District High School, the first Post Primary educational facility in Feilding, had been established by the addition of a secondary department to the existing Manchester Street School in 1901.

When O.A.Banner, from Hawkesbury Agricultural College in New South Wales, succeeded to the Directorship of the Technical School, L.J.Wild, making use of an appropriately rural metaphor, later claimed,

"With the coming of Mr. Banner the seeds of a better system of agricultural instruction provided by Hogben and sown by Mr. Pirani, began to germinate and grow. The soil, however, though naturally fertile, required much cultivation and the ground was covered with a considerable growth of weeds as well as the aftermath of previous unsuitable crops." (2)

Banner, with the encouragement of Fred Pirani, stimulated unprecedented agricultural activity in the Wanganui area. He firmly believed that agricultural education should be taught in a Day Technical School situation as it was not a subject conducive to evening classes. He did not see the possibility of this occurring in the near future. He therefore resigned his Directorship and subsequently turned his attention to the provision of agricultural instruction for teachers at Saturday morning classes. He also organised classes in agriculture at the District High School but he believed that without land this was not as satisfactory as it could be. In addition to these activities, he recruited the help and facilities of the local farmers, organised farm field days and attracted a large number of participants to his Agricultural School Camps. This made him a firm favourite for the Principalship of the new technical high school.

"His work in this direction was the first of its kind in New Zealand. He was a thoroughly practical teacher, knew his work from the standpoint of farm practice and therefore achieved what few instructors achieved in those days - he secured the complete confidence of the farmers and their willing co-operation. From this time forward he was the mainspring of a movement which went steadily forward, though slowed down by the war years, and which culminated in the purchase of land and the building of the Agricultural High School, the disestablishment of the District High School and the setting up of a local Board of Managers, for all practical purposes free from the control of the Education Board." (3)

There appears to have been a great deal of controversy over who actually initiated the idea of an agricultural high school for Feilding. Perrett, the President of Feilding Agricultural and Pastoral Association, has previously been referred to as advocating a farm school with attached land. Wild, on separate occasions, attributed the idea of an agricultural high school to two different candidates O.A.Banner and Harry Tolley, the Chairman of the Technical School Committee. A local historical writer, Tom Ellis, maintained that the idea sprang from Fred Pirani, but in a letter to the Editor of the Feilding Star, Wild indignantly dismissed this by stating,

"The Mr. Fred Pirani who shared with and perhaps inspired in the late Inspector G.D.Braik an intense enthusiasm for something better in agricultural education, advocated the establishment of a technical day school involving the disestablishment of the District High School. That was Mr. Pirani's contribution and a notable one it was, but it can scarcely be claimed for him that he was responsible for establishing the Agricultural High School. What Mr. Pirani aimed at was a technical day school and what the Committee which brought the movement to fruition got, was a Technical High School of which three or four others were established elsewhere in the North Island about the same time. That this Technical High School with only a few acres of land and no stock or equipment began gradually to function as an agricultural high school was entirely due to Mr. Tolley and his Board whose tenacity of purpose alone carried the young school through several difficult years." (4)

From available evidence, it seems that Harry Tolley, if not the originator of the idea, was certainly the person most active in advocating and establishing the Agricultural High School at Feilding.

Banner's rigorous attempts to improve the agricultural courses and to ensure their relevance to local farmers' children were largely unsuccessful. Only a minority became interested, despite the fact that Feilding was the centre of a thriving, fertile region with an emphasis on dairying, sheep farming and seed and grain growing. By 1921, Feilding Borough had a population of 4,601 residents, (5) and the majority of occupations were related to servicing the needs of farmers. The Feilding saleyards and auctions were amongst the largest in New Zealand. The Feilding Farmers' Freezing Company, established in 1914 was taken over by Borthwicks in 1931 and became the largest employer of labour in the Manawatu area. Nathan's factory in neighbouring Bunnythorpe became the pioneer of dried milk production in New Zealand and this expanded into pharmaceuticals and processed cheese operations when it was taken over by Glaxo Laboratories. In addition to these large processing companies major stock and station agencies were well represented in the town. (6) This growing prosperity of Feilding as an agricultural centre should have ensured a plentiful supply of interested clientele for Banner's initiatives. However, this was not the case. Notwithstanding Banner's failure to recruit large numbers to his agricultural course, Tolley and a vocal minority of Feilding residents decided to exert pressure on the Department of Education for an agricultural high school. They maintained that Feilding's rural wealth could only be maintained and further developed by such a move. Tolley also fervently adhered to the policy of locally relevant knowledge being transmitted by a local post-primary school. This ensured that rural education would be distributed by a rural community.

Unfortunately, due to their shortage of land and equipment, both the existing Technical School and the District High School were unable to offer extensive agricultural courses. In response to the growing demands for an agricultural high school, two opposing factions arose within the Feilding District. One faction favoured the disestablishment of the existing District High School and the erection of a completely new school which offered day and evening technical classes; the other advanced a distinctly agricultural high school. Harry Tolley belonged to the latter and he firmly believed that

Feilding needed an agricultural school with residential accommodation, a substantial acreage and plenty of equipment in order to provide the satisfactory basis for an agricultural course. He also maintained that unless the new school had a local Board of Managers, under the central control of the Department of Education, it would continue to furnish inadequate and inappropriate agricultural courses. It was Tolley's group that eventually became victorious, although many other problems had to be overcome. One of these was Tolley's insistence on local control for the school. The Wanganui Education Board was very much opposed to this move as it entailed a considerable loss of prestige on their behalf. Nevertheless, Tolley superseded Pirani's claims and, with the active support of the Department of Education, he obtained a local Board of Managers for the new school.

It was not surprising that the Department of Education aligned themselves with Tolley. Pirani, the Chairman of the Wanganui Education Board, was extremely critical of the Department and it seems that he seized every opportunity to ridicule them. His antagonistic views towards the Department's achievements were summed up in his last report to the Board as Chairman. After warmly acclaiming the efforts of the Wanganui Education Board, under his direction, he continued in scathing terms,

"Amongst the sad relics of central administration which still survive and which are the laughing stock of experts, I may mention their drawing syllabus, the agricultural curriculum, their technical capitation system and the quota on the teachers' classification, to show how much behind the times the Central Department is." (7)

Fred Pirani was also very angry that Tolley and the Feilding group had elected to opt for Departmental Control. This necessitated the move away from an expanded District High School or extended provision for technical classes, and a move towards the establishment of a Technical High School, with its concomitant local Board of School Managers. It was also apparent that Pirani's control of Feilding's post-primary education had been undermined by Tolley's move.

Harry Tolley had been a former small landowner until he transferred to the farm servicing industry and built up a grain, seed and fertiliser company with his partner T.R. Hodder of Palmerston North. He was therefore in an excellent position to observe the necessity of applying scientific principles to the farming industry and its servicing areas. He effectively mobilised local support for the proposed school and in 1917, he was instrumental in arranging a conference between the School Committees of the District High School, Lytton Street Primary School (established in 1901) and the Technical School. Both Tolley and Banner outlined a set of proposals which included the disestablishment of the Manchester Street District High School and its subsequent return to functioning in a primary capacity. Also included was the inauguration of a day technical school with land appropriate to the establishment of a school farm, which would, to all intents and purposes, serve as an agricultural high school.

G.D. Braik, Chief Inspector for the Wanganui area had visited Australia on several occasions and he had not been impressed with their system of agricultural high schools. He maintained that they were failing in their purpose due to the inhibiting presence of examinations. He was a keen advocate

of agricultural instruction. However, he recommended caution in the setting up of an agricultural high school in Feilding. Despite his apprehension, he set out a proposal for the establishment of an agricultural high school where he stipulated ,

"In the first place, let it be an agricultural school. Let it not be a place where passes and other imaginary examination fleshpots are dangled in the public eye. If it is to be connected by way of subordination or correlation with any other school, it is foredoomed to failure."(8)

He then outlined a practically orientated agricultural syllabus which also incorporated instruction for the neighbouring farmers.

After heeding Braik's argument about the failure of agricultural high schools in Australia, Mr. McQueen, the existing Chairman of the Technical School Committee thought that the erection of such an agricultural school in Feilding was too risky. He consequently handed in his resignation and Harry Tolley was immediately elected Chairman. With Pirani's support, at least in relation to this matter, they set about preliminary investigations into such a school for Feilding. Tolley canvassed the official approval of the Director of Education and the Council of Education. Wild quotes the substance of the Council's reply to Tolley,

"The immediate difficulty in the way, apart from the cost of the building at the present time, is the acquisition of a suitable site, and as in the case of the other Technical High School, the Department relies in this matter to a large extent on local effort. It is not considered that a technical high school should be established on less than a very substantial area of ground, providing ample room for the ordinary high school games and also possibly an area for practical work in connection with the agricultural course of instruction ."(9)

Tolley immediately set up a sub-committee of Hugh Atkinson, Hector Booth, James Knight and himself. The sub-committee searched the Feilding area thoroughly in order to locate a potential site and, when this was accomplished, set up appropriate avenues for financial backing. They opted for a site about one mile from the centre of Feilding consisting of ten acres, and in April 1919, acquired the option to purchase. They were amazed at the enthusiastic response of the local Borough Council and the surrounding County Councils when approached for subscriptions towards the new school and its site. Feilding Borough Council contributed £500, Kiwitea offered £300 - double the amount asked, Manawatu Council, of which Sir James Wilson was Chairman, donated £400. Sir James Wilson was also the President of the Farmers' Union and a fervent advocate of agricultural education. The Oroua Council also contributed £400. Kairanga County Council was the only County to refuse a contribution. All the County Councils' contributions were made on condition that the new school would provide hostel accommodation. This would enable their own children to attend. At the first promise of funds, James Knight paid a deposit of £100 to secure the site. He was reimbursed when the County subscriptions were paid into the fund.

As matters were proceeding exceptionally well, the Committee decided to go ahead and secure a further option on an adjacent site of ten acres selling at

£1,250. They were astute enough to utilise this as a bargaining point when negotiating with the Minister of Education. They persuaded the Minister to promise them a hostel in return for the purchase of the new site from local funds. Sir Francis Bell's reply came by telegram,

"Referring to representations made by deputation from Feilding which you recently introduced to me as Member for Oroua, I have to state that if those interested in establishment of Technical School in Feilding provided free of cost to Government, second ten acres proposed to be acquired in addition to ten acres already acquired, Government will out of education grants provide reasonable cost upon plans to be approved by Government of hostel reasonably sufficient for pupils from a distance attending proposed Technical School without requiring contribution in aid of such a grant." (10)

This telegram became critical evidence when a later Minister of Education tried to opt out of their mutual contract.

The Committee went ahead with the purchase of the further ten acres and the Wanganui Education Board began organising the design plans for the new school.

Already smarting from the indignity of losing control of the embryonic school, the Wanganui Education Board in an attempt to preserve the last vestiges of control, advertised for the position of a new director. This was rather a premature move considering that a Board of School Governors was about to be appointed and that the Foundation Stone of the School had not yet been laid! It certainly appeared as if they were strategically seeking a future alliance with the new school by the selection of their own nominee as Principal. Despite the furious protestations of the local Technical School Committee, the Wanganui Education Board went ahead and selected, from ten applicants, N.R.Jacobsen from Napier Technical College. Jacobsen possessed no agricultural qualifications but the Wanganui Education Board did not believe that this posed any problem, as this letter from Pirani indicated,

"I am sure you will agree that the Principal of a Technical High School need not necessarily be an agricultural expert. Something more is needed. We must not overlook the fact that a good proportion of the pupils will be girls and that, strive as we may, only a small proportion of the boys will take up the agricultural course." (11)

Tolley immediately petitioned the Board to withdraw their candidate and asked them to wait until the new school's Board of Managers had been elected. As no positive response was forthcoming, Tolley wrote to the Minister of Education for his intervention. Tolley and his Committee were not only unhappy about the Wanganui Education Board taking upon themselves the responsibility of choosing a new Principal, they also strongly objected to their selection of candidate. They desperately wanted to fulfil their ambitions of an agricultural high school for Feilding. Before this could succeed they required a Principal with agricultural qualifications and experience; Jacobsen did not fulfil this criteria. Their own first choice was Banner. Wild later explained their rationale for this.

"There was more than mere justice in this. Not only had Banner been the inspiration as far as the agricultural high school was concerned, he was also a splendid organiser and had nine years solid work to his credit in which he had made the agricultural teaching in the district a pattern for other Education Boards. More than that, he had contacts with the farmers everywhere in the district and had won their complete confidence, and there is little doubt that this greatly helped in securing the county donations." (12)

Relationships between Tolley and Pirani now deteriorated completely, and both parties were persistent in vocalizing their complaints to the Minister of Education. In the face of constant harsh criticism from Pirani, the Minister decided not to endorse the Wanganui Education Board's final selection of candidate. He diplomatically drew attention to the fact that the salary scales for the appointment had recently changed and therefore advised that the position should be readvertised. Angry correspondence between Parr and the Wanganui Education Board followed with Parr distinctly taking the side of the School Committee. His partisan support was clearly in evidence in the following extract taken from a letter to the Chairman of the Wanganui Education Board. After acknowledging their communication, he stated tersely,

"I regret the tone of it. I have already given your Board the reasons why the appointment has been postponed. If another reason were needed, your letter, it seems to me, supplies it. I am quite unable to understand the somewhat extraordinary persistency your Board desires to make an appointment for a technical high school which is not yet established and six months at least before the new building can be completed. You have referred to the fact that the Feilding Technical High School Committee interviewed me. I am unable to agree with you when you say that these gatherings were a mere handful of people who did not represent anybody in particular and who had no real interest in the school. It is a sufficient reply to remind you that your Board consulted with this Committee about the vacant appointment and asked for its advice. Fourth, may I remind you that through the efforts of this Committee a sum of £2,250 was raised for the purchase of the site. But for the efforts of this Committee it is not very likely that the new school would have been granted, as the fact of a free site was a strong inducement to the Government to finance the building....Briefly there is a strong difference of opinion between the Wanganui Education Board and the Feilding Committee as to the type of man required for Principalship. I agree the people of the Feilding district are the ones 'chiefly concerned'. I therefore propose that the ones chiefly concerned shall have some effective say with regard to the appointment. (13)

This correspondence did little to alleviate the already strained relationships between the Wanganui Education Board and the Feilding contingent. However, it certainly empowered the Feilding Committee to take control of the new Principalship and ensured that the Board relinquished any further dominant control in the matter of the new school. It must also be stated that the Wanganui Education Board was subjected to extreme pressure from the Lytton Street and Manchester Street Schools to establish a new school

as soon as possible. The Manchester Street District High School in particular, was in severe difficulties with the lack of teaching staff and shortage of adequate accommodation for the sixty six secondary pupils on its roll. These pupils were situated temporarily in the old Technical School building and were awaiting a move to the new school as soon as possible.

The position of Principalship was again readvertised and the twelve members of the Board of Managers for the new school were elected in August 1921. They were vested with full powers, subject only to the Department's approval and they comprised two members of the Education Board, three parents, one member of the School Committee, two members of the Local Bodies, two local employers and two local employees. The unanimous and final decision of the newly created School Board did not include either Banner nor Jacobsen as Principal, but a new applicant named L.J. Wild. Wild possessed both academic and agricultural qualifications and was consequently attractive to both Tolley and Pirani. Tolley had stipulated an agricultural qualification as the main criterion, whilst Pirani had desired an academically qualified person. Although it appeared superficially that a compromise candidate had been selected - this was not the case. It was clearly evident that Tolley had stumbled upon a power struggle between the Wanganui Education Board and the Department. In challenging the Board's authority and aligning himself with the Department, his support from the Department was guaranteed.

Wild had been educated at Oraki and Southland Boys' High Schools. He was awarded a Master of Arts Degree (Hons.) by Otago University in 1910, after which he became the Science Master at Marlborough Boys' High School. Following this he received a Bachelor of Science Degree and taught at Wanganui Collegiate for two years. From here he went on to lecture at Lincoln Agricultural College and Christchurch Teachers' College before being appointed to the new Principalship of the Feilding Agricultural High School.

As Tolley had been elected the Chairman of the new School Board, he immediately informed the contributing schools of the new appointment. His circular stated,

"The Board of Managers of the Feilding Technical High School desires it to be known that the school will open next year under the direction of Mr. L.J. Wild, M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., in new buildings erected on a site of 20 acres in North Street. The staff is being selected so as to make it possible to provide both a non-specialised course in Agriculture, or of taking farming as a vocation. A copy of the prospectus can be obtained on application." (14)

Tolley was making it clear at the outset that agriculture was to be the central concern of the school.

Wild was undoubtedly an excellent choice. He had definite ideas of how agricultural education should be taught and practised in schools. He dismissed the current trend of teaching agricultural principles directly from the text book and admitted to two main sources of influences upon the formulation of his plans for the new agricultural school. These were, first, the ideas of his colleagues at Lincoln College where an 'agricultural club' had been formed with the specific intention of introducing agriculture into post-primary schools, and, second, the innovative theories of J.T. Strachan who was

successfully initiating agricultural experiments at Rangiora High School. In his book on agricultural education, Wild quotes extensively from an unpublished paper of Strachan in which Strachan discusses at some length the dichotomy between cultural and vocational education and offers suggestions for teaching agriculture outside the confines of the classroom. Strachan firmly maintained that agriculture should be taught as a subject in its own right and not confused with ruralised physics, botany or chemistry. He believed that agriculture was the perfect medium for the training of the young mind in the scientific method of thinking.

"There is next to no opportunity for a school pupil to discover a new principle in physics. The best he can do is verify principles already well established.it appears to me that a student will become an original thinker and scientific worker much more readily if he gets a little help in planning new experiments, getting new data and framing and testing new hypotheses. For this kind of scientific training, agriculture is much better adapted than chemistry or physics". (15)

Strachan was an ardent advocate of the vocational curriculum and, in fact, for a time, abandoned the academic curriculum in his own school altogether. He proposed that, ideally, post-primary education should fall into three distinct types, each performing a discrete function. These should take the form of Secondary City Schools, Technical City Schools and Agricultural High Schools. It was the Agricultural High School that Wild was most interested in and he envisaged three parallel courses being offered. The first course would integrate a cultural form of agriculture into an otherwise academic course, the second course would concentrate on the vocational aspects of agriculture and would be intended for future farmers, and the third course would be a Home Science course for girls. The first course was intended for the professional farmer and aimed at integrating Art, Music, Literature and modern languages into the curriculum. It was this course that Wild favoured the most. Strachan's theories provided the substance for Wild's new school syllabus.

The recommendations put forward by the 1920 Agricultural Conference influenced Wild very little. This Conference was a joint undertaking between the officials and administrators of the Agricultural Department and those of the Education Department, and will be discussed more exhaustively in the next chapter. Wild disputed the validity of their claim that post-primary schools could adequately teach sound agricultural principles using small plots of land for demonstration purposes. He was in total agreement with Strachan, Banner and Tolley that a proper working farm should be attached to the agricultural school; this would ensure realistic and more accurate conditions for teaching purposes. In order that a school farm could realise its full potential, a hostel for students would be required. The provision of a student hostel was also a condition of the contract that had been initially struck with the Counties who had supplied generous donations in return for accommodation for their outlying pupils. The Committee now had three areas of priority to concern themselves with, the building of the school, the acquisition of a farm and the erection of an attached hostel.

The choice of Parr to lay the Foundation Stone of the School was fortuitous in more ways than one. Not only had he given the school his full support in the matter of their choice of Principal, he was also very well-known for his views on the production of an appropriately structured and form

of education tailored to suit the abilities of different groups of children. He firmly advocated, for the sake of national efficiency, an academic type of education for the future professional sector of the community, and a vocational one for the remainder and majority of the school population (16). In his urgency to keep boys gainfully employed in schools rather than wandering aimlessly around the streets, he envisaged a largely practical education by means of the technical high schools. He was firmly intending that education for these pupils should lie mainly in the direction of social control. Education as an agency for achieving social control was a popular theme in the early decades of the Century. Parr agreed with this theory particularly for the working class youth. The next chapter will describe how social control was viewed as a means of preventing crime and delinquency, and was a theme which cropped up regularly in discussions concerning agricultural education. Parr was therefore, presumably, delighted to assist in the founding of this new technical school. In his opening address, he foresaw the school as chiefly a practical institution, including a general course of instruction, languages and the sciences, however....

"In this district the bias must be on the agricultural side seeing that this was the centre of a great agricultural and pastoral district. They must encourage the boys to stick to the country and help with its development....there was no loss of dignity in honest labour. The professional man was necessary but he was not in it with the man who had 50 acres. The rural course man was the most important of all. This school, he hoped and expected, would produce a race of scientific farmers. The object of any educational system was not to turn out clever boys, but to make good men and women - those who would love their country, their God and their King." (17)

He also added some rather interesting comments about the education of girls. These will be considered in Chapter 4.

OCCUPATION OF THE NEW SCHOOL

The building of Feilding Agricultural High School was completed and occupied on 1st February 1922, with a roll of one hundred and nineteen pupils and a teaching staff of five, including Wild himself. It was a brick building comprising of four classrooms, a long ten feet wide corridor, an incomplete science laboratory and offices. The girls' and boys' cloakrooms and entrances were located on different sides of the building. Furnishings and equipment were also incomplete and the grounds needed clearing, draining and fencing. Tolley and Wild, therefore decided to hold a week long 'Kollege Karnival', which realised the sum of £1,100, to assist with the completion of the school. The support from the people of Feilding and its surrounding districts was enormous; there could be no doubt that they fully welcomed the new agricultural high school.

"The Feilding Folks certainly rose to the occasion in their sustained effort during Mardi Gras week just ended. It was the finest prolonged effort in Feilding's history and it finished with a bang of enthusiasm that delighted everybody..... We heartily and sincerely congratulate all the workers upon the

well-sustained enthusiasm with which they organised, developed and carried out the festival week and trust that the object will be more than achieved, so that the troubles of the Board, Directors of the High School and Agricultural College will be substantially overcome, and the means provided for making that institution all that it should be before such a town and district as Feilding." (18)

It is surprising that in the face of such overwhelming local commitment, the School should flounder in the first three years of its existence.

There has also been some confusion over the official title of the school. The early school prospectuses referred to it as the "Feilding Technical College and High School" and also the "Feilding Agricultural High School and College" - whilst the 1930 and subsequent prospectuses settled for "Feilding Agricultural High School". The Secretary of the Wanganui Education Board, writing under the official heading of the, "Feilding Technical High School" claimed that "the school is to be known as the Feilding Agricultural and Technical High School". It appears that the school magazine, was the only one consistently referring to it as the "Feilding Agricultural High School". In disassociating itself from the title of "Technical School" it seems that not only was the school emphasising its unique agricultural bias, but that it was also attempting to sever itself from the social stigma of inferiority that was rapidly attaching itself to the increasing number of Technical Schools. Despite this, the School was administered and controlled as a Technical High School.

Both Tolley and Wild were determined that the School should establish a very thorough and comprehensive agricultural scheme and this influenced Wild's choice of teaching staff. Dr. H. Allan and W. Tankersley had agricultural and scientific backgrounds. Allan possessed both a Master of Arts and Doctor of Science degree and had held teaching posts at Waikato and Ashburton High Schools, where he had specialised in agricultural science. Tankersley had just received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Lincoln Agricultural College and was personally known to Wild. The two female teaching staff recruited by Wild were H.N. Porter, Master of Arts, who came directly from Christchurch Training College, and A.M. Fox who had received a Diploma of Home Science and who was a former Instructor in Home Science of the Education Board.

This choice of staff reflected the main interests and direction of Wild's proposed curriculum which was to contain an agricultural course for the boys, a domestic science course for the girls, and an academic course for those who required neither of the aforementioned.

The School was officially opened on 11th May 1922 by Prime Minister Massey. His promise of a hostel became reality in 1924. As the number on the roll had risen, the unfinished two-storeyed hostel had to be temporarily transformed into classrooms. However, after quite a lengthy delay it was ceremoniously opened by the Minister of Education, C.J. Parr, in the presence of representatives from each of the local contributing counties, i.e. Oroua, Manawatu, Kiwitea, and Pohangina County Councils and the Feilding Borough Council. D.H. Guthrie, the local M.P. was also present.

After acknowledging his pleasure in opening the Hostel, Parr went on to talk about providing the correct type of education for the girls and boys of Feilding.

"The authorities must give the right type of education. They should endeavour to turn out the good farmer, the good producer, the good business man, the useful engineer and tradesman. He understood that 50% of the boys at the Feilding School were taking the agricultural course and he hoped that later the percentage would be even greater. He looked forward to the time when the University Senate would give the modern scientific course the importance it deserved in the university course. He congratulated the Feilding district on its opportunities for receiving secondary education and scientific agricultural instruction. For its size, Feilding was unrivalled in this respect. He hoped that two out of every three boys attending the school would become farmers." (19)

His theories and comments upon the education of girls are outlined in Chapter 4.

The first twelve boarders moved into School House which had a potential for accommodating up to forty boys. Many of the girls also came from outlying districts, consequently it was thought that a Girl's Hostel should also be provided and, accordingly, an old homestead called "Brabourne" was leased. It was situated on nine and half acres of ground close to the School. Seven acres of this had been earmarked by Wild as a future model dairy farm. The twenty acres surrounding the School itself was divided into two sections, one block allocated for the school buildings and playing fields and the second block for farming purposes. The developments that led to the leasing of the first school farm in 1925 and the acquisition of Ngakaunui Farm and Manawanui Farm will be discussed in Chapter 3.

The old Technical School was still performing in its function of providing evening technical classes for adults and school leavers. As the old School came under the direct control of the Feilding Agricultural High School Board of Managers, it was also providing a site and facilities for Feilding Agricultural High School's domestic science and woodwork classes. The new School had not yet acquired these facilities. Despite the educational retrenchment of the Depression years, many building projects were undertaken. This revealed the high status the expanding agricultural course was given by the Department of Education. After the Napier earthquake of 1931, education building programmes had to conform to strict building regulations. A new brick extension to the School was cancelled and the top storey of the Old Technical School building was removed. This meant that accommodation at the School was extremely cramped until new buildings were erected. These were ready for occupation in the third term of 1931. The new timber-constructed buildings provided the School with some useful space in the form of a) an Agricultural Block consisting of three classrooms, a common room and office, b) a Home Science and Art Building and c) a Woodwork Room. This meant that after almost ten years of existence, the School was finally functioning adequately from a central site. The old Technical School only retained one of its former functions, that of providing evening classes in commercial subjects and arts and crafts. James Knight the Chairman of the Board, constantly advertised the reasonable cost of fees for these classes which were fixed by the Education Board and he also emphasised the fact that the majority of pupils coming straight from Primary School were entitled to Free Places.

At this time the School did not possess an Assembly Hall and any large gatherings of people had to meet in the corridor. Wild desperately felt that the School needed a central focus where the entire school could assemble. He believed that this would provide school unity and assist in fostering the 'school spirit'. With the opening of the James Easby Knight Memorial Hall by J.E.Cobbe, Minister of Education, in 1934, Wild's hopes came to fruition. He believed that the opening of the Memorial Hall signalled the end of one era in the School's history and the beginning of another.

"We can now see the realisation of all the developments that we visualised twelve years ago, namely the consolidation of the school buildings on one site, the development of a boarding establishment, the increase to sixty acres of the area of land adjacent to the School for buildings, playing fields and farm, the acquisition of additional farmlands suitable for cropping and sheep, and last to be realised but first in our original conception, the building of an Assembly Hall." (20)

Cobbe acknowledged the gratitude of the whole community to James Knight who had borne the total cost of building the Hall. It had been erected in memory of his son who was a close friend of Cobbe's own son, who had also recently died. He acknowledged that the Hall was a gift of practical generosity and donated in,

"...recognition of the importance of the great local and national work carried on at the Feilding Agricultural High School, as well as the success of that work. The speciality of the teaching was in practical agriculture and the raising of pedigree stock. The work of the school being of a most practical kind was of a value which could hardly be assessed but which would undoubtedly do much in the future to add to the material wealth of the Dominion." (21)

The hall was furnished by donations from the O.P.A., friends of the School and the Woodwork Department.

The opening of the Memorial Hall was not the only significant event of 1934; this was also the year when the School acquired a set of teaching and display materials from the Carnegie Corporation, New York. This gift consisted of 130 art books and nine hundred pictures which were mounted and indexed. Many New Zealand schools benefitted from the donation of such Arts Sets. This meant that not only could Art classes and clubs gain profitably from them, but that many schools could upgrade their cultural image by displaying the pictures. This cultural injection of the Fine Arts to the Feilding Agricultural High School led to the first public hint that Wild was thinking of developing the old Technical School building into a future Community College. He proposed a Community Centre devoted to the Arts and Crafts. This would involve the community in active participation, instruction, and the exhibition of finished work. It would also have a Library and include a Picture Gallery so that the Carnegie donation could be displayed advantageously. His plans were elaborated in a somewhat romantic manner and his ideals were very similar to the Cambridge Village College concept just established in Britain.

"I have the vision of a school set in a rural atmosphere, sufficiently equipped with farms, workshops, laboratories, work rooms (commonly called classrooms), a hall, a library and playing fields and in close association with a place where music and the arts may be studied and practised. A sufficient number of teachers or guides, competent in various avenues of human activity and enquiry is needed. So equipped a school would give opportunity for studying the world and its peoples, the living things around us and ourselves and for satisfying the needs of the human body and the needs of the human spirit. It would make possible a greater freedom of timetable of choice of 'subjects', especially for the considerable number in the school not tied to any particular examination system." (22)

Again we see the emphasis on 'cultural agriculture' proposed so articulately by Strachan. It also seemed that Wild's 'vision' was progressing towards the attainment of an integrated curriculum, again proposed and implemented earlier by Strachan. However, Wild was perhaps too astute to place too much stress on providing a solely cultural education as this would not be welcomed by the majority of the school clientele. He therefore prudently widened the scope of his plans and directed them at the whole community. The Feilding township was rapidly growing and he thought that this might be the appropriate time to introduce the concept of a Community Centre, under the management of a curator. Fortunately, the old Technical School had just been remodelled and refurbished so Wild transferred the Carnegie donation to these premises. The old cookery room was transformed into a picture gallery and a lecture room, office and reading room were also created.

The year 1935 saw the first official visit to the School of the people who were to play a large part in the creation of Feilding's Community Centre, Mr. and Mrs. Somerset. The chapter dealing with the establishment of the Community Centre describes this in further detail.

Once the Community Centre was underway, Wild was determined that the next stage of the building programme should include the erection of a library. However, he had to wait until 1945 before this was accomplished.

The Education Department, in its anxiety to consolidate the agricultural course, decided that a more pressing need was school accommodation and an annexe was built on to the School House in order to meet the more immediate requirements for hostel accommodation. The present boarding population was approximately sixty boys but seventy five were expected the following year. Plans for a new refectory block were being prepared which included a new kitchen, dining hall and staff quarters. These were completed and occupied in 1937. The rooms that were left unoccupied were remodelled and other additions took place to the Agricultural Block. Most of this building construction was made possible by the School Board's purchase of an adjacent acre upon which the Refectory Block was built and an additional block of two and a half acres for tennis courts and further extensions required by other Departments of the School. The Department gave permission for the appointment of a groundsman to supervise and take care of the grounds, however, this person did not take responsibility for any land being utilised for farming purposes. All of these extensions and improvements initiated by the Education Department were attempts by them to bolster the enrolment rates of the agricultural course. It will be shown in Chapter Four that the agricultural course was dependent upon

recruits from remote rural areas which did not possess their own post-primary facilities.

A new boarding hostel, 'Rangitane House' which catered for one hundred and twenty boys, was built in 1939. As the school roll increased, the number of pupils taking the Agricultural course also increased proportionately. Two years later, a massive enterprise was undertaken by pupils from the Woodwork Department, which consisted of building a Metalwork Room and implement shed which measured over 1700 square feet. 'The whole job has been satisfactorily carried out and will remain for many years to come as a monument to the pupils of 1942' (23)

Three years later, a gathering of the School's friends, pupils, parents and relatives of Old Pupils who were killed during the War, assembled at the School for the dedication and opening of the new Memorial Library by the Minister of Education, H.G.R.Mason. This Library was the result of a very generous donation from James Knight, as was the Assembly Hall eleven years previously. Knight was retiring from the Chairmanship of the School Board of Governors and this was his parting gift. Mason stated in the opening ceremony that the Library was,

"The ideal vehicle for the development of a wide culture and for the realisation of being citizens in a world in which time and space were eliminated!"(24)

The spacious facilities provided by the new Library contrasted vividly to the cramped library conditions formerly endured by the staff and pupils. In 1946, few schools could boast of such a provision. Adequate reference facilities and library accommodation featured high on the list of priorities of High School Principals, according to the Munn-Barr Report published in 1934. This came second only to the desire for smaller classes. Obviously, the provision of such facilities were extremely important to most schools and recognition of this came in 1939 with the advent of a Government grant of one thousand pounds to be divided amongst the post-primary schools for library purposes. Although the maximum allocated by Fraser to individual schools never exceeded twenty pounds, the indication that library and reference facilities were regarded as important by education administrators was very pleasing to the Principals. (25)

By 1949, three years after the completion of Feilding Agricultural High School's Memorial Library, the Chief Inspector of Education had elevated the library grant to a base of ten pounds and an additional capitation grant of one shilling and ninepence was also allocated. This helped to furnish and stock school libraries. It became the custom every year for members of the Feilding Agricultural High School staff, friends and pupils, to donate books or sets of books and, in this way, the library improved its facilities. The supervision of the Library and its affairs had been allocated to the Library Executive Committee which was a branch of the School Council, and in 1946, they reported that the total book stock stood at 4,390. Urgent pleas were annually reiterated for further additions in order to provide an effectively balanced set of books. They also published a 'Library Bulletin' in an endeavour to draw attention to the library and distribute information concerning its activities. (26)

Creation of the School's Tradition

Wild's deep admiration for the English Public School system was considerable and this influence was clearly visible from the beginning of the School's history. This may have originated from his experiences at Wanganui Collegiate. Indeed, Wild may have been attempting to emulate the traditions so conspicuously observed by this private school. The source of many of his developments can be traced directly to the Public School tradition. For example, a four House system was inaugurated by him, as soon as the School came into operation with the first Boys' House being named the School House 'following the custom of many great English Schools'. (27) The remaining Boys' House and the two Girls' Houses being named, respectively, Manawatu, Kiwitea and Oroua in recognition of the donations granted by the surrounding Counties. Wild firmly believed that the House unit, under the guidance of a competent House Captain, was far more effective than the class or form unit. This requirement meant that it was based on a vertical slice of the school population and it therefore led to keen, healthy rivalry on and off the sports field. He believed that the main duty of a House Captain was to induce within each member of his/her House, a spirit of enthusiasm for all aspects of School life - this was inextricably bound with his emphasis upon the inculcation of the values of the School which were summed up in the statement, 'Play the game for the game's sake and don't squeal' (28), and also in an Editorial of the School Magazine which urged,

"May it be possible to write of every House Captain when his period of office comes to an end, in the same strain as was written of another captain,

'So when his glorious task was done
It was not of his fame we thought
It was not of his battle won
But of the pride with which he fought,
But of his zest, his ringing laugh
His trenchant scorn of phase or blame
And so we 'graved his epitaph
'He played the game'." (29)

This English sentiment of emphasising good sportsmanship and fair play above all else, was also present in Wild's selection of the School song which was a slightly amended version of the Harrow Public School's song 'Forty Years On' - and based firmly on the theme of rugby football. Wild was proud of the fact that it was Sir Winston Churchill's old School Song. It included phrases such as 'Visions of boyhood', 'Fights for the Fearless', 'Games to play out whether earnest or fun', Goals for the eager'. The chorus involved the playing fields ringing with the tramp of 'thirty true men'.

This deep fascination with the English Public School system was strangely irreconcilable with Wild's dislike of the academic curriculum. He, like Strachan, deplored the inclusion of Latin in the school curriculum and his contempt for what he maintained to be a dead and useless language, led him to reject a Latin motto for the School. This was very unusual, and even more unusual was his request to Hector Booth, one of the founders of the School, to provide a Maori motto. Booth had been a resident of Feilding since its inception and in fact had provided horse-drawn transport on the last part of the early settlers' journey to the Manchester Block. He was a fluent speaker

of the Maori language and had interpreted for Halcombe when he negotiated various deals with the local Maori people. Booth rejected the usual emphasis of mottoes, which were traditionally associated with patriotism, hard-work and the seeking of the truth, in favour of 'Kia Toa, Kia Ngakaunui'. He explained his choice thus,

"Amongst the Maoris, the Toa was the specially trained all-round warrior. The Kia Toa was the very great warrior. Kia Ngakaunui meant large-hearted, generous, respectful, to do one's best to play fair. It meant to put all your heart and strength into what you are trying to do. On the football field you should play hard, play the game for all its worth, but play fair, play the straight game. Act as men. Amongst the Maori there was always shown respect for the elders. The young ones were taught to treat the elders with respect. I hope you boys will follow their example. I hope all of you will be true to your motto and make a name for your School. The School is giving you a good start in your preparation for your future life. I urge you to hold you end up and make good settlers like the first residents of the district." (30)

This ideal, proving compatible with Wild's own emphasis on good sportsmanship was immediately accepted. It was very evident that the School was directed at establishing a firm male tradition, girls were considered in peripheral terms. However, it was refreshing to see that Wild valued a Maori motto as being of more relevance to a New Zealand School. This did not result from a large presence of Maori pupils or local Maori residents. The 1921 Census does not record the number of Maori people living in the Borough. However, in 1941, only ten Maori people were listed as residing within the township. The surrounding Counties, designated as contributing areas varied in the size of their Maori population. The number of Maori residents in these areas was recorded as: Kiwitea - nil; Pohangina - 10; Oroua - nil; Kairanga - 190; Manawatu - 370. This relatively large number for Manawatu still only represented 3.4% of its total population. (32)

The theme of loyalty to the team and to the School was to be found in most New Zealand schools of this era, and it was obviously analogous to the post-war emphasis on loyalty to the Nation and the Empire. It was popularly thought that the inculcation of the values of loyalty and patriotism during the child's formative school years would remain throughout life. This aimed at the production of a person who would defend his country in time of need. (The emphasis here upon the male pronoun is quite deliberate. Patriotism and sportsmanship were overtly considered male ideals.) Openshaw maintains that the Great War had,

"...two main effects on school patriotism. First, it stimulated an increased awareness of the school's role in sustaining National and Imperial unity through the inculcation of patriotism. Second, it predisposed society in New Zealand to regard outward expressions of loyalty and conformity as being synonymous with patriotism." (32).

Although referring to primary schools, the embodiment of loyalty, patriotism and good sportsmanship into the philosophy of the Feilding Agricultural High School, and its further manifestation in the School song and motto, clearly established the School as a creature of the Post-War Era.

CLUBS AND SPORTING ACTIVITIES

Most of the sporting activities were separated into girls' activities and boys' activities. The boys participated in rugby, cricket, hockey, swimming, life-saving, basketball, boxing, athletics and the Paper Chase (cross-country race). There was very keen inter-house rivalry. Loyalty, discipline and competition were the threefold objectives of sport and physical education. B.L.Evans, former teacher at Feilding Agricultural High School stated,

"House competition has served the School well. Our competition with other schools being somewhat limited by distance, we have looked to our House spirit to provide the focus of competition loyalty necessary to strong adolescence." (33)

The inter-House competitions reached their climax with the annual award of the Cock House Championship to the Boy's House scoring most points. Wild devised an elaborate scheme of totalling the points in order to ensure that each House was treated fairly. Inter-school fixtures took place whenever possible, and the usual assortment of School cups, trophies and shields were awarded annually.

The Cadet Corps played a very important role in the lives of the boys and, during the School's early years, twice weekly parades in full uniform were conducted. Concentrated periods of military training were usually held at the Army Training Camp in Linton. High standards of smartness, efficiency and obedience were aimed at, in addition to the usual prowess in musketry and physical drill. Training to be a good soldier and defender of the Empire was regarded as a highly desirable activity.

The girls' sporting activities included tennis, tennikoits, swimming, life-saving, hockey, basketball, rounders, athletics and eurhythmics. A Physical Training Week for the girls was conducted as a counterpart to the Boys' Military Training week. This is described more fully in Chapter 4.

Of the many social activities and cultural groups organised within the School, the most enduring and prestigious was the Debating Club. Wild placed most emphasis on this and on the School's 'Elocutionary Contests'. Girls' and boys' teams, each representing their own House competed with and against each other, and some of the topics debated between 1924 to 1938 revealed a surprising awareness of international current affairs. The most interesting of these topics included motions such as, 'That the League of Nations is the Only Hope of Saving the World From Future Wars', 'That the Air Force Should Be Britain's First Line of Defence', 'Free Trade versus Protection' and 'That in Order to Preserve the White Races, the States of Europe Should Federate'.

Contemporary New Zealand social and agricultural issues were also examined, and representative of these issues were, 'The Increased Development of the Secondary Industries is Essential to the Continued Prosperity of the People of New Zealand', 'That Parliament Should Provide a Six Hour Day For Manual Workers' and 'That the Development of So-called Dual Purpose Breeds of Livestock is Unsound Scientifically and Economically'.

Topics of a lighter nature were less frequently debated. When they became the focus of debate, they included topics such as, 'The Pen is Mightier Than the Sword', 'Should Exams Be Abolished?' and 'Are We Happier Than Our Grandmothers?'.

The major thrust towards international affairs revealed a definite attempt by Wild to induce a political consciousness amongst the pupils. This political awareness came alongside the desire to promote, in each individual, an appreciation for the democratic rural life of New Zealand. The selected topics for debate, were heavily influenced by Wartime events, and their implications for the British Empire. There appeared to be an overwhelming emphasis on New Zealand as a small cog in the international arena of world politics. Dependence upon Britain remained unchallenged during this School era, and patriotism and loyalty to the Empire were earnestly advocated.

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

Feilding Agricultural High School opened in 1922, under the Directorship of L.J. Wild. The Founder of the School was Harry Tolley, a local businessman and prominent citizen. To Tolley's credit, he managed to achieve the status of a Technical High School for the town's new school. This entitled it to direct access to the Department of Education and thus ensured local control under a board of School Governors. This enabled the School to develop an agricultural emphasis which it would have been unable to do under the control of Fred Pirani, Chairman of the Wanganui Education Board. The embryonic School became involved in an ongoing dispute between the Department of Education and the local Education Board. Tolley astutely realised that more benefits could be gained for the School by their alignment with the more powerful Department of Education.

Once the School was established, it aimed at upgrading its image from a Technical High School to an Agricultural High School which offered a 'cultural' form of rural education. Under Wild's influence it aspired to the values and ideals advocated by a British Public School philosophy. This was clearly evident in the formulation of the School's customs and traditions, and in the creation of many of its sporting, cultural and leisure activities. The prevailing themes of good sportsmanship, loyalty and the development of 'character' were constantly articulated in the School and they became the nucleus of the School's evolving policy.

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CHAPTER THREE

EDUCATION OF THE FARMER

The primary aim of Feilding Agricultural High School, was to develop a sound and comprehensive scheme of agricultural education. This aim was endorsed wholeheartedly by contemporary educationalists, agricultural spokespeople, politicians and economists. A complex and inter-relating network of reasons was expounded in favour of agricultural education and it is the purpose of this chapter to explore these reasons in further detail.

As New Zealand relied heavily on its primary produce and export trade, educational and agricultural reports of the period were agreed in their conviction that knowledge of agricultural principles and practices should be introduced into the educational system. How, when and where these principles should be appropriately included was the source of much controversy. However, the chief element of consent lay with the recommendation that the farmer should be educated.

In the present context, we are mainly concerned with an analysis of the type of post-primary education offered to the **potential** farmer. In the first decades of the century, it was very difficult to distinguish between the diverse forms of agricultural education that were offered by a variety of agencies. Agricultural education was not controlled and directed efficiently until after 1920.

In this chapter we shall identify and explain in some detail some of the reasons being advanced for agricultural education. As these reasons were an integral part of the current social ideology, they were often reflected in the proliferation of Government reports that abounded between the 1920's and the mid 1940's. After discussing these relevant themes, we shall briefly examine some of the important developments occurring in agricultural education during these years and regard their implications for the agricultural course introduced by the Feilding Agricultural High School.

EDUCATING THE FARMER - RATIONALE

Several reasons for educating the farming community have been briefly referred to. In order to discuss them more fully they have been divided into four main categories: Economic, Cultural, Social and Educational.

Economic Factors

Perhaps the most persistent and recurring reason articulated by the advocates of agricultural education was the development and maintenance of New Zealand as the 'Outlying Farm of the British Empire'. This was inextricably linked with ambitions for improving rates of agricultural productivity and raising the export level for primary produce. The direct outcome of these factors was anticipated to result in greater national security, a heightened national identity and a stimulated source of wealth.

Anxious to preserve its function as the Farm of the Empire and aware of rapid, dramatic changes in overseas governments, New Zealand felt a desperate need to forge its own stable identity. If this implied servicing the food consumer needs of the British Empire, in order to guarantee greater national security, then so be it. Despite the fact that the higher food prices and guaranteed markets of the British commandeering system had abruptly ceased in 1921, New Zealand still exported vast quantities of primary produce to Britain. The 1920's was a period of intense overseas borrowing by the New Zealand Government. This glossed over a series of minor, recurring recessions which only postponed the inevitable major Depression of the 1930's. Paradoxically however, agricultural production increased significantly due to improved scientific techniques and increased mechanisation employed by the farmer. Small dairy farms and mixed farming patterns became the norm, especially in the North Island and both relied upon family labour for their successful management. Country women were encouraged to keep fertility rates high and they were subjected to various courses on rural economics and household management. Brooking informs us that,

"The 1926 Census showed that 60% of New Zealand farmers hired no labour and farmers outnumbered rural labourers. These farmers relied entirely on their own labour and that of their families and neighbours. Small wonder that rural fertility rates remained high until the 1930's, or that most farmers favoured mechanisation."(1)

In spite of the fact that almost half of the New Zealand rural population had been transformed into urban residents, and that the secondary and tertiary industrial sectors were also expanding (2), New Zealand still cherished its image as a rural country dependent upon its primary produce.

The rural sector also possessed influential political support in the form of Massey's Government, whose constant rhetoric acknowledged the important role of farmers in establishing the Nation's wealth and security. In order to stimulate a somewhat declining rural support, Massey had introduced a series of Acts which streamlined and regulated the export industry. These consisted of the Meat Export Control Act (1922) and the Dairy Export Control Act (1923). Massey's successor, J.G.Coates, continued this policy of rural appeasement with the Rural Advances Act and the Rural Intermediate Credit Act (1927). These Acts ensured a greater element of protection for New Zealand farmers by tightening export controls, introducing short-term loans and providing assistance with rural mortgages. This cossetting of the rural sector provoked a great deal of resentment in the expanding sector of urban trade and industrial workers.

agricultural workers were being heavily protected. The tension generated by such a move induced a geographical rift between the town and country workers, which further developed into a social and ideological split. The farmers largely supported the Reform Party whilst the town workers lent their support to the fledgling Labour opposition. McLauchlan informs us of the mutual contempt felt by the two groups. The 'townies' staunchly maintained that all farmers were wealthy Capitalists and politically favoured land owners, whilst the farmers believed that the 'townies' were 'Socialist loafers' who acquired the luxury and wealth of urban life without the hard labour that they were subjected to.(3)

The farmers were deeply suspicious of Labour's early policy of Land Nationalisation and they felt threatened by any possibility of land and property confiscation. This precipitated a close scrutiny of Labour's rural policy by Henry Holland, and a new policy was formulated which aimed at the provision of guaranteed prices and secure markets for primary produce. This modified policy, together with an assurance for establishing a pattern of closer land settlement, ensured a broader degree of support and acceptance from the farming sector. This undoubtedly assisted in the transformation of the Opposition Party into the newly elected Labour Government of 1935.

Between the years 1912 and 1935, the farmers evolved into a powerful pressure group. The Farmers' Union grew very strong under the vigorous leadership of James Wilson and this, together with an unquestioned reliance on primary productivity, ensured that the farmers were a political force to be reckoned with. As they were widely believed to be the prime source of the Nation's wealth and security, their demands were rarely ignored. It was accepted that the future of the Nation depended on increasing agricultural productivity and expanding the export market. As the virgin soil of the North Island was fast becoming barren, and the majority of farmers were growing grass in preference to other crops, it became increasingly necessary to transmit knowledge of permanent pasture controls and top dressing techniques. Whilst many farmers thought that an increase in productivity would result from sheer 'hard graft', the Farmers' Union maintained that it could only be brought about by knowledge of scientific principles via agricultural education. The demands of the Farmers' Union grew more vociferous and the Government realised that some sort of educational and research provision would have to be provided. This demand was defining the need for a strictly scientific and research-based agricultural education.

The New Zealand Government was becoming alarmed at the growing drift of the rural population into the towns. Heenan estimated that the urban population had increased dramatically between 1911 and 1926, when over 40% of rural residents became town dwellers. This was the result of either being swallowed up by the encroaching town boundaries, or by actual migration(4). This trend was to continue. However, we are informed by Hurricks(5) that in spite of the fact that New Zealand was rapidly becoming an urban nation, the percentage of national income derived from the agricultural and pastoral industries increased from 70% in 1911 to 94% in 1930. It was little wonder that the Government wished to retain as many agricultural workers as possible. However, quality in addition to quantity was essential to the efficiency of agricultural production and agricultural education was viewed as the chief means of acquiring quality. Hurricks also referred to the concept of the 'balanced economy'. This was a popular economic theory of the time, which upheld a bipartite view of the economy. It considered non-productive urban labour on one side and productive rural labour on the other. The proponents of this theory maintained that if the delicate balance existing between the productive and non-productive sectors was disturbed, then the whole economy would eventually collapse. As the severity of the 1920's unemployment became intensified, the economic theorists blamed the urban drift for the resulting disruption of the economic balance. The shift from productive to non-productive occupations was, in their opinion, the chief cause of this situation. Many held the view that only mandatory land settlement would alleviate the problem. The radical wing of the Labour Party also adopted this perspective and they offered a Socialist solution by advocating policies such as farming co-operatives and land nationalisation. They saw this as an

effective measure to combat rising inflation and a declining export income. To lessen the gravity of the Depression, they maintained that heightened agricultural productivity could only take place by encouraging more workers on to the land. This view dovetailed smoothly into current educational theory which emphasised the value of extolling rural virtues early in the child's life. Both were aimed at strengthening and maintaining the rural population.

Cultural Factors

A rural lifestyle was believed to confer many cultural benefits and agricultural education was popularly acclaimed as a means of propagating the values of this Rural Ideal. The Nineteenth Century Romantic movement which exalted the natural life and the life of the peasant, still held a great deal of influence. Although originating in Britain and Europe, it became one of the motivating factors for migrating away from these countries. Working in close harmony with God and Nature and reaping the bountiful rewards of the harvest, became the ideal of those who had become estranged from the land by industrialisation or land confiscation. Many working-class people lived on the edge of large towns or cities, in cramped and unsanitary conditions. Industrial waste, untreated sewage and decomposing garbage polluted their living environment and to many British migrants, the 'horror' of the slums was closely associated with urban life. In contrast to this, lay the clean, wholesome atmosphere of the country. As New Zealand was primarily a rural country, early British settlers came equipped with the idea that it was an idyllic rural wonderland which offered them a chance to purchase a utopian dream for themselves. However, progress was difficult as inflation and land prices rose and farming enterprises were guaranteed only limited success. Farming was arduous, time-consuming and often very lonely with its unregulated hours and demanding seasonal work.

To many farmers the attraction of town life with its allegedly superior educational, welfare and entertainment facilities was tempting. Yet, as more country people moved into the towns, living conditions were deteriorating and unemployment increased. Although never reaching the dreadful slum conditions of the larger industrial British towns, several small pockets of New Zealand's urban areas became congested, filthy and unhealthy in the early years of this century. In order to counteract the urban drift, it was thought that all children from both country and town, should be exposed to a rural world view and inculcated with the values of honest rural labour. This would not only encourage rural people to stay in the country, it would also engender a sympathy for rural life on behalf of the 'urbanites'. The impact of such educational and cultural ideals on early New Zealand remains enigmatic, but very important.

A common solution to Scotland's urban drift was the use of secondary education as a means of educating and retaining the rural population. Thom quotes the Scottish Advisory Council of Education's Report where this practice was strongly condemned. The Council objected to the view that,

"The prime purpose of rural secondary education should be to stop the drift to the towns and retain country-bred girls and boys in their natural environment." (6)

They contended that specific agricultural education should not be undertaken in the schools, whatever the reason, and they suggested the

alternative of injecting a 'rural colour' into the curriculum. The main point to be gleaned from this, however, is the fact that it was regarded as common practice to use post-primary agricultural education as a means of counteracting the urban drift in Scotland. New Zealanders must have been very aware of this.

As we shall see in the next chapter, women also played a considerable part in attempting to prevent the urban drift. They were charged with the onerous duty of providing a comfortable and attractive country home for their farming husbands in order to dampen any lustful desires for town life.

Social Factors

Another important reason offered for the introduction of agricultural education, was its use as an effective agent for exerting social and moral control. Education as a means of preventing undesirable behaviour was evident in New Zealand as early as 1849 as this quotation from Domett reveals,

"To anticipate and prevent the growth of vice in the infant, must be allowed to be better than only to attempt to check and restrain it in full-grown man. Better and easier to destroy the saplings of vice than to clear away the forest... The policy of education of virtue is profounder than that of punishing for crime; the schoolmaster will one day be confessed a more powerful protector than the judge, and the wisely written though unpretending story book a mightier instrument for good than the elaborate statute book." (7)

This notion became particularly relevant to agricultural education which came to be viewed as an excellent means of 'character-training' for the future farmer. Truby King, the founder of the Plunket Society, was well known for his views on the education of girls and boys. Although not quite as obsessed with the education of boys as with the education of girls, he still commented upon the desirability of a thoroughly practical education. This was to be the main thrust of his address to the Farmers' Union in 1905 in a speech entitled 'Rural Education in Japan'. George Hogben was also present. After discussing his view of the necessity for providing agricultural education for all boys, he subsequently distributed advice on the correct feeding of animals and plants. Haunted by notions of racial degeneracy and an ardent and enthusiastic advocate of national fitness, he believed that two appropriate channels for secondary education were agricultural education for boys and domestic education for girls. This would ensure a physically and mentally healthy rising generation of New Zealanders. Olssen has written of King's preoccupation with the development and formation of 'character' and self-control. (8) This was to be achieved through an over-vigorous regulation of children's early environment. In this rigid, regimental atmosphere children would be moulded into punctual, reliable and industrious citizens who would loyally serve their family, Nation and Empire. This would automatically eradicate social evils such as alcoholism and larrikinism. Larrikinism became increasingly connected to the rising crime rate. However, Shuker (9) supports the view that the crime rate did not actually increase. It only appeared to do so as minor civil infringements took on a more serious significance. The Press, by sensationalising formerly ignored incidents of a minor criminal nature, had helped to incite a 'moral panic' in the rising middle classes. In this climate, youthful misdemeanours had been elevated to the category of

juvenile crime. Shuker further suggests that none of the reasons pinpointed for this upsurge in juvenile delinquency included causative factors arising from a rapidly changing societal structure. Instead they focussed upon the breakdown of family life and lack of parental discipline.

Proposed remedial measures ranged from the provision of parent education to improving recreational facilities and increasing State control. Whilst some factions of society were deploring increased State intervention and bureaucracy, others, particularly the middle classes, were demanding more protective measures from the State. The latter came in the form of swiftly expanding State provision of educational, social, welfare and judicial agencies. Most of these were aimed at designing constructive and energy-absorbing activities for adolescent youth. It was hoped that the implementation of these would keep young people busily occupied and out of trouble.

Education in citizenship and agricultural education were thought by many to be the ideal solution to the control of youth. The Report of the Technical Instructors in 1908 maintained that introducing agricultural education would help pupils realise the 'value of rights and property', would teach them a sense of 'co-operation, ownership and discipline, and would act as a means of social and moral control as 'the time, care and patience essential for growing a tree will encourage the pupil to respect public parks and gardens than all the police which a city can afford to place or watch over them'. (10)

It certainly appears that the Inspectors viewed agricultural education as an implement for enforcing law and order, rather than the personal development of the pupil's agricultural talents or the promotion of a viable agricultural economy.

Educational

Some educationalists, like Hogben, believed that education would become more relevant and meaningful to the pupil if it was undertaken in accordance with their immediate environment. This required that rural children would be taught rural science and not Latin and algebra. Only in this way could education integrate their personal experience of the world. The concept of the school as a community centre was also introduced - although this did not become a reality in New Zealand until Wild introduced a Community Centre at Feilding (as described elsewhere) and Strachan did likewise in Rangiora in 1938. It was thought that this would provide an educational and cultural outlet for country people - as envisaged by the Danish Folk Schools and Cambridge Village Colleges. Thom summarises this ideal when he states ,

"If you want people to go into the country, you must make country life as interesting and human as you can and if you can give your country people some interest in their own literature, without attempting to be too pedantic or too academic in your methods, you have helped to relieve the monotony of country life. You will help to make the country school one of the centres of social life as well as the place where instruction is given." (11)

The theme of agricultural education as a useful means of preparation for adult life was also evident in the period under discussion and, in fact, had

been apparent in educational statements issued as early as 1904. For example, this claim from Hogben when he was articulating the need for agricultural courses

"We all want the hand and eye developed in connection with the brain of the pupils and we want them developed in such a way that the pupils are made ready for the pursuits they will be engaged in afterwards". (12)

This typical view of practical and vocational forms of education could be interpreted in two ways. The first that every adult was entitled to some form of employment as a personal right, and in order to fully benefit from a chosen occupation, some form of preparation or vocational instruction should be made available through an educational agency. This would lead to the development of a fully functioning adult who would gain a great deal of personal satisfaction and fulfilment from their chosen career. The reasons underlying this principle were entirely altruistic. The second interpretation of this view was grounded in practical utilitarianism. It regarded vocational education as a form of undisguised trade training which should be made compulsory for every working class child. This would produce industrious, useful members of society who knew their station in life and would contribute to the common good of the nation. It would also reproduce the existing social class structure and maintain the status quo. The ultimate aim of this latter perspective would be the formulation of a core of industrious small farmers and agricultural labourers who would not critically appraise their rural lifestyle but would contribute unquestioningly to the creation of national productivity and wealth.

It is very evident from the discussion so far that agricultural education was proposed for a variety of reasons, the most important of these was the preservation of New Zealand's function as the outlying 'Farm of the British Empire'. In order to maintain this role it was thought vital that the urban drift be counteracted and rural land settlement be intensified. This would ensure an increasing source of primary produce for export to Britain and would ultimately lead to the security and enhanced efficiency of the Nation.

Demands for agricultural education came from many quarters including the politically powerful Farmers' Union, and we shall now turn to an analysis of the demands embodied in the many reports produced between 1920 and 1946.

ANALYSIS OF REPORTS RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Major reports of the period relating in some way to agricultural education fell into two seemingly distinct categories - educational and agricultural. Although superficially appearing discrete in function, the content of these reports was often very similar. We shall include in our analysis the 1920 Conference on Agricultural Education, the Board of Agriculture's Report on Agricultural Instruction in New Zealand (1925), the Reichel-Tate Commission into University Education in New Zealand (1925), Frank Tate's Report on post-primary education (1925), the New Zealand Technical Teachers' Association Report on Agriculture in Post-Primary Schools (1929), the Atmore Report (1930), the Thomas Report (1944) and, briefly, the Otahuhu Report (1945). We find two main themes emerging - one emphasising 'Agriculture as an Art' with

cultural and frequently vocational trappings and the other stressing 'Agriculture as a Science' with its emphasis on preparation for diploma and graduate courses and the promotion of farming as a profession.

The Conference on Agricultural Education, 1920

Wild was not impressed with the outcome of either the 1920 Conference on Agricultural Education or the Board of Agriculture's Report on Agricultural Instruction in New Zealand in 1925. The first was summoned by the Minister of Education and included officers representing both the Agricultural and the Education Departments. This was mainly an attempt to define the educational territory of each, and, in this respect the Report was successful. It recommended that the Education Department should have total control of agricultural instruction, in the primary, secondary and technical high schools, whilst the responsibility of the Agricultural Department should lie in the direction of educating farmers and youths after leaving the formal education sector. The sharply conflicting ideas of both parties, however, resulted in the production of a negative Report which exhibited a pessimistic view of the future of agricultural education. (13) The Report maintained that agricultural education could never be successfully implemented whilst several factors were in operation. These included:

1. The claim that agricultural instruction was vocational in character and was therefore not suitable for academically-oriented schools or for those pupils who wished to remain at school for longer than two years.
2. That schools who wished to pursue agricultural education were demanding large tracts of land for experimental and demonstration purposes.
3. That the above demand, if satisfied, would ensure a major proportion of school time being devoted to routine, manual and maintenance tasks which were of little educational value.
4. That there was a severe shortage of qualified staff and there were few opportunities to successfully train them.
5. That the brighter students could not take Agricultural Education at university or Matriculation level if they were undertaking an Arts degree.

Until the above obstructions were removed they maintained that they could only 'advise the Principals of secondary schools to delete agriculture from the syllabus of instruction.' (14) They moved three resolutions, the first allocating responsibilities to each Department, the second that only small plots of land be allocated to post-primary schools and the third that the Department of Agriculture should establish Farm Schools in connection with Government Experimental Farms. Wild believed that these ideas were outdated, lacked vitality and were certainly not as innovative as those proposed by Strachan, Tolley and himself. He also violently disagreed with the proposition of allocating small plots of land to those schools teaching agricultural courses. He formulated several points in favour of attached school farms and we shall detail these in our discussion of the Technical Teachers' Report in 1927.

The Three Reports of 1925

In 1925, three Reports were commissioned which are relevant to our discussion. These were the Board of Agriculture's Report, the Reichel-Tate Commission and the Tate Report.

In addition to the dissatisfaction felt by Wild at the recommendations of the 1920 Conference on Agriculture, he was also unhappy with the recommendations proposed by the Board of Agriculture's Report on Agricultural Instruction in New Zealand. This was summoned by the Minister of Agriculture. The Minister desired the Board of Agriculture together with co-opted members, C.J.Reakes, W.S.La Trobe and G.Fowlds, to enquire into and report on selected aspects of Agricultural Instruction. Although dealing mainly with the tertiary sector they maintained that elementary agriculture in the post-primary schools was failing in its aims due to the 'artificial restraint' of the Matriculation Exam. (15) They recommended that

1. Elementary agriculture should be compulsory in all courses leading to the Public Service Exam and Matriculation.
2. The Lower Leaving Certificate be awarded for satisfactory completion of the agricultural course, on condition that pupil performance in English had also been completed to a satisfactory level.
3. Agricultural high schools should cater mainly for diplomas and degree courses.

Wild's agitated response to the first recommendation is revealed in the following quotation:

"They fail to see that while the majority of secondary schools have a traditional bias towards the classical course; while their staff have been trained in purely academic studies; while economic conditions in the country discourage agricultural enterprise; while the intellect and culture of the nation is concentrated in city university colleges; while no serious attempt is made to counteract the magnetic attraction of town life; then merely making agriculture compulsory for Public Service and Matriculation is not merely futile but worse. What is wanted is not compulsion but freedom and facilities to develop the inherent attractiveness of agricultural studies, and the Board has evidently not perceived that this has not been done but has accepted uncritically departmental statements as, for example 'the facilities for agricultural instruction in secondary schools are in excess of the demand'. They are not in Feilding, anyway." (16)

His angry and bitter retort highlighted the fact that the Board had not probed into or supplied any underlying reasons for the lack of support for agricultural instruction. He ardently believed that their proposed solution of compulsory agriculture would exacerbate the situation. He certainly appeared, in this respect, to make a valid point. He made no reply to the second recommendation concerning the Lower Leaving Certificate but, strangely, the third recommendation also provoked cynical comment.

The Report had acknowledged the success of those agricultural high schools which were directed by an enthusiastic and scientifically trained Principal and were situated in the heart of prosperous rural townships. As Feilding Agricultural High School was so situated and directed, Wild obviously believed that the Board's recommendations were aimed directly at his School. When the Board suggested that these schools should cater mainly for those students intending to proceed to advanced, university-level agricultural courses, Wild was extremely annoyed. His reaction was unexpected on two counts. The first was that he had earlier entertained notions of his School and farmland being expanded and developed into the proposed North Island Agricultural College. Secondly, he should have been flattered by the Report's inference that he was offering such a high quality course that it could easily be adapted to a pre-university course. After all, he had boasted on several occasions that his agricultural course was far in advance of those offered by Lincoln College of Agriculture. Perhaps the answer to this lay in the fact that 1925 was the low-point of his Directorship of the new School. He was feeling isolated and discouraged. The Departments of Education and Agriculture had given him little financial support, and even their moral support was dwindling in the face of constant criticism. He did not know if his School could survive, let alone thrive and flourish. His sense of security was definitely being threatened. Wild further stated that if such proposals were implemented then Government assistance by means of Scholarships should be forthcoming. He also declared his displeasure at the lack of support that he had received from the Government and claimed that any success achieved by the School, had been the result of finance, facilities and support provided by the local community.

Wild had very carefully prepared a description of the aims and activities of the School for the Board of Agriculture enquiry in 1925. This had been introduced with the following preamble

"The Feilding Agricultural High School is officially a Technical High School, as it makes agriculture the main branch of technology it is called an agricultural high school and is in that sense the only one of its kind in New Zealand." (17)

He then introduced the members of staff teaching the agricultural course and detailed their agricultural qualifications. These were:

L.J.Wild, M.A., B.Sc., F.G.S., late lecturer in Chemistry at Lincoln College.

H.H.Allen, M.A., D.Sc., F.L.S., late Agriculture Master, Ashburton High School.

G.V.Wild, B.A., (NZ), B.Sc. (Agriculture) Edinburgh

N.S.Tankersley, B.Agric, Diploma Lincoln College. (18)

After a cursory reference to the Professional Course, Home Science Course and Commercial Course, he then itemised the source of his School revenue. As a technical high school they were entitled to receive grants for essential apparatus and material. Incidental expenses were also allowed for and the sum he received in 1924 had amounted to £602 for incidentals such as caretaking, office expenses, materials, repairs etc. He also made a very explicit point of informing the Board that the School had received no extra allowances despite their attempts at developing an innovative agricultural course. Most of their money came from judiciously pruning their 'Incidental' allowance and the

profits realised from their small farm. "Hence progress is slow, depending as it does entirely on our own efforts." (19)

He described the School Farm which consisted at the time of 20 acres of freehold land surrounding the School, 8 acres including the Girls' Hostel which was leased for £200 a year and was derived from their own resources, 14 acres of grazing rights at Victoria Park and the temporary use of 16 acres on the hills west of Feilding. The stock comprised of 100 cross-bred ewes intended for the production of fat lambs and 20 Southdown ewes and their lambs; 1 Red Poll bull and 2 heifers gifted to the School by the agriculturalist Sir Heaton Rhodes; 1 Jersey cow and calf; 3 cross-bred cows; 1 Berkshire boar, 2 sows and 10 weaner pigs. With the exception of Sir Heaton Rhodes' gift and 4 Southdown ewes, all stock had been purchased out of school funds. Wild complained, however, about the small acreage of the School Farm and absence of financial assistance and demanded, 'We MUST have more land'. (20)

The experimental work that they had undertaken so far had included Top Dressing and Fertiliser Experiments and Manurial Experiments with Mangolds. He then described in considerable detail some of the difficulties encountered during the implementation of agricultural courses in post-primary schools. These ranged from the shortage of qualified teaching staff to the domination of the Matriculation Exam and the difficulties of the agricultural pupils in acquiring their own land.

When outlining the Agricultural Course, he included the topics introduced in each year. These were set out as follows: (21)

First Year

1. English, History, Geography
2. Practical Maths, Arithmetic, Book-keeping
3. Botany, Chemistry, Physics, Physiology
4. Elementary Agriculture, Dairy Science
5. Woodwork

Second Year

1. English, Civics
2. Arithmetic, Farm Accounts
3. Chemistry, Botany
4. Agricultural Chemistry, Agricultural Zoology, Agricultural Botany, Dairy Science
5. Agriculture, Live-stock, Wool-classing, Woodwork

Third Year

1. English, Civics
2. Farm Accounts
3. Chemistry, Botany
4. Agriculture Chemistry, Agricultural Zoology, Agricultural Botany
5. Agriculture, Live-stock, Wool-classing
6. Practical Work as opportunity offers

Fourth Year

Advanced College Course

He then concluded his comprehensive description with this provoking and in some places, desperate, statement,

"Regarding Feilding Agricultural High School, this School is unique, not that it is the only technical high school, but that it is the only one specially staffed to foster agricultural training and specially aiming at that. In that respect it is making an experiment that is of great interest and one may say, of national importance. Is the Government going to stand by while we make this desperate struggle with wholly inadequate equipment and finance? Or should the Government recognise the true importance of the experiment at this stage in the development of agricultural education and give us the modest help required? Will the Commission recommend:

- a) Financial Assistance
- b) Scholarships to bring worthy students from other districts?" (22)

The Board of Agriculture's Report had failed to respond to Wild's plea for help. This could also have been another source of his displeasure. However, W.S. La Trobe, The Senior Inspector of Technical Education had been appointed to this Committee and within four years the Technical Teachers' Association were approached to carry out a Special Report on Agriculture in Post-Primary Schools. La Trobe's views on agricultural education were very much in sympathy with Wild's and it may be speculated that the Report was initiated at his insistence, although there is no evidence of this.

The two remaining significant Reports of 1925 were the Reichel-Tate Commission into University Education and the Tate Report. Frank Tate, the Director General of Education in Victoria and a frequent visitor to New Zealand was involved in the production of both Reports. The legitimacy of Tate's Report into Post-Primary Education has been questioned, mainly for the reason that during his six week visit to New Zealand, the schools were closed due to an outbreak of Infantile Paralysis. However, undaunted, he still went ahead and reported upon his investigations. One wonders at the value of such a Report when no actual learning and teaching situations were observed. Nevertheless, his Report was treated in earnest at the time and his proposals carried great weight. With regard to agricultural education, the main thrust of his Report was that as N.Z. was dependent upon its agricultural economy, and as there were many benefits to be derived from agricultural education, then every post-primary school should pursue some aspect of agricultural studies. Aware of the difficulties experienced by existing agricultural courses, he exhorted the schools to persevere. He maintained that agricultural education could improve national efficiency and he remarked on the easy profits made by some farmers who survived due to their large acreage rather than their efficiency of methods. He contrasted the New Zealand situation with the Danish situation and remarked upon the competence of Danish farmers. Despite their severe climate and arduous conditions, they farmed capably and profitably and, he maintained, this was entirely due to the Danish system of agricultural education. (23) Tate also outlined the usual checklist

of factors which disadvantaged the development of agricultural education such as the attractions of town jobs, the high price of land, the long unregimented hours and the difficulty of acquiring sufficient land for farming purposes. He also pre-empted Bourdieu and his concept of cultural capital to some extent, by discussing training and qualifications in terms of capital investment. He maintained that the doctor, engineer and lawyer had acquired sufficient capital through their academic experience and graduate status, to ensure entry into their chosen occupation. Unfortunately the farmer, despite his background and Agricultural Science degree, could find few occupational outlets. (24) Tate agreed with the majority of other contemporary Reports that schools did not require enormous areas of land in order to furnish an agricultural education, as this extract from his Report shows,

"As to whether or not a fairly extensive farm should be attached to the school, my experience is that the expense of doing this well is too great for the result which may be looked for, And, after all it is not the mechanical part of farming, the ploughing, or sowing, or harvesting, or milking, which it is most necessary to teach. These things can be learned quite well on even poorly managed farms." (25)

Wild, who was fervently advocating a large school farm, omitted to mention Tate's contradictory views in his report to the School Board. Instead he quoted a paragraph which supported agricultural education in general,

"The educational opportunities afforded by agriculture as a school subject are so many that on educational grounds alone a determined effort should be made to include it in our courses of study, while its economic importance to the nation is manifest." (28)

Tate was also involved in the Reichel-Tate Commission which surveyed the standards of university education. As this was directed mainly at the tertiary sector, it made very little reference to post-primary education. It did, however, have a great deal to contribute towards agricultural education. After a comprehensive survey of university education, in which it also heard evidence from the Board of Agriculture, it announced the unsatisfactory state of tertiary agricultural education. It maintained that the existing facilities and provision offered by Lincoln Agricultural College were poor and inadequate. Agricultural education was also supplied in a dislocated and haphazard fashion by the Universities at Wellington and Auckland. Sir James Wilson, the President of the Farmers' Union summarised the untidy agricultural provision of the time,

"Canterbury, a Special School of Agriculture, without a Professor; Victoria College, with a Professor and ten students but no School, Auckland with a Professor and neither students nor School." (27)

The Royal Commission proposed one Agricultural College to be situated in the North Island and to combine the facilities of Auckland and Victoria University. This would offer degree and post-graduate courses of an advanced level whilst also supplying diploma courses for youths intending to be farmers, and short, practically-oriented courses for existing farmers. Professors Riddett and Peren combined their ideas and resources and, with the

active support of Prime Minister Coates, the New Zealand Agricultural College Act was passed in 1926. This eventually resulted in the purchase of the Batchelor property at Palmerston North a centrally placed and strategic site for the proposed College. This was opened formally in 1931. The title of the College was changed to Massey Agricultural College as it was considered offensive by the existing College of Agriculture in Canterbury. There was much discussion, controversy and dissent before the final decision to erect an Agricultural College at Palmerston North, and Brooking gives a very full and comprehensive account of the situation in his book on the early years of Massey University. (28)

Lincoln College did not improve its facilities until after the 1937 School of Agriculture Act and Wild maintained that it was only after this that Lincoln Agricultural College came to fulfil the three fold role formerly envisaged by the Royal Commission of 1925. This consisted of teaching, research and extension activities associated with agricultural education.

The scientific education of the farmer urged by spokespeople such as Professors Hunter, Peren, Riddet; Lord Bledisloe; Sir Bruce Levy and many others had been transferred to the tertiary sector and, after the establishment of Massey, was well under way. Of the four Reports that have been considered, Wild probably felt most in sympathy with the ideas of Frank Tate. Despite one or two minor differences, both men advocated agricultural education and both thought a vocational education combined with cultural components was the best answer to the education of the future farmer. Like Strachan and W.S. La Trobe, they were advocating the 'Art' of farming rather than the 'Science' of farming. This is also clearly evident in the analysis of the following Report.

The New Zealand Technical Teachers' Association Report on Agricultural Education

In 1929, Wild was appointed the convenor of a specially appointed Committee by the Technical Teachers' Association to enquire into various aspects of agricultural education. This was commissioned at the request of the Director of Education, and, as referred to previously, one speculates at the involvement of W.S. La Trobe, the Senior Inspector of Technical Education. The Report was indisputably influenced by Wild. In fact, its ideas and aims were so compatible with those of Wild, it could almost have been the product of this sole author. Needless to say, the recommendations embodied in the Report were unanimously adopted by the Technical Teachers' Association.

The Report commenced with a statement that the Agricultural course was best suited to an integrated approach as it was interdependent upon other curriculum areas and should not be taught as a single subject. It also,

"...bears to theory, the relationship rather of practical exercises to theoretical work in drawing, or other craft, than of laboratory exercises to theory in chemistry or other pure science. In other words, agriculture has to be regarded as an art rather than a science, and it is as such that boys are interested in it, and as such that we wish to promote their interest in it." (29)

They also overtly claimed that it was essentially vocational in nature and should be considered as a whole way of life. Chapter Five analyses the School's Prize-giving address of W.S. La Trobe, and it makes reference to the romantic and idyllic picture he paints of farming as a way of life. Whilst the following extract from the Report is not quite so romantic, the theme of 'cultural' education is also dominant:

"While treating agriculture as an art that is at the same time a worthy vocation, vast opportunities are afforded for cultural education. The main aim of Agriculture is that it compels us to view Nature as a Unity, vast in its dimensions, many faceted but indivisible. No matter what aspect of our subject we cast our gaze upon we find ourselves caught up in that marvelous web of life that embraces all branches of knowledge in its threads and connects them into one stupendous whole. The strange neglect of biological sciences in our ordinary secondary school education will no longer be a reproach if we realise that agriculture is essentially a study of life and its control. All branches of natural knowledge will be seen to have their place of value, and the neglect of one will mean the impoverishment of the other." (30)

This idealistic and sentimental portrayal of agricultural education seemed to be wildly incongruous with reality. Agriculture was commonly regarded as a realistic, practical and down-to-earth applied science associated with manual labour. The Technical Teachers wished to disassociate themselves entirely from this latter image. Clearly it was to their advantage that agriculture was taught. It seems that they were deliberately evoking a 'rural Romantic Ideal' in order to attract pupils. They certainly endeavoured to provide a cultural form of agricultural and technical education, as Wild and Strachan have indicated. It is entirely plausible that they were attempting to create a niche for the Technical High Schools which would not overlap with the academic curriculum of the High Schools. Whatever the reason, when they became involved in the designing of a proposed agricultural syllabus, their ideas became a little more realistic, and surprisingly, the 'Art of Farming' became endowed with a heavy scientific content. The Report identified and stipulated the fundamental objectives of agricultural teaching. These were:

1. Knowledge of soil utilisation in relation to climate and physical conditions and improved cultivation methods and use of fertilisers.
2. As biology and allied sciences formed the bases of agricultural knowledge they should be taught to all post-primary pupils. Botany and Zoology provided the foundation for later study of genetics. Animal physiology and anatomy could be applied to humans and be explored in relation to physical activities, swimming, first aid and other such activities.
3. Chemistry and General Experimental Science stressed a scientific method of inquiry which collated facts, tested hypotheses and formulated laws. This would inevitably lead to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the 'life processes of plants and animals, and of soil treatment'. (33)

These three areas laid the foundation for a wide range of optional and vocational, practical agricultural subjects. These ranged from horticulture, dairy farming, pasture management to mere specialised instruction such as

forestry, plant selection and breeding and wool classing.

Related craft work activities were also considered and this meant that Schools should not only possess their own School Farm, but also their own extensive workshop accommodation and trained staff.

They disliked the cramping effect of the Examination system as it discouraged diversity and enterprise. They maintained that agriculture could be dynamic and relevant only in so far as it accommodated to the different ideas of the teachers and took into account the varying school environments. Once conformity was introduced in the form of a national external examination, then diversity and variety were lost. They also believed that good agricultural practices could not be developed from theoretical constructs and that the best method of teaching agriculture was to generate sound theory from practice and continuous observation. This would only evolve through first hand knowledge, preferably developed from working on a School Farm.

The provision of a School Farm was one of Wild's pet themes and he was continually extolling the virtues of such. Again his influence is evident in the Report which argued that the mainstay of agricultural instruction was animal husbandry and soil utilisation. Therefore animals and a sufficient area of land should be made available to all Schools who desired this provision. This allocation should take the form of a School Farm under the regulated and absolute control of the agricultural staff of the School. The School Farm would serve a two-fold purpose. Not only would it assist in the prevention of home-sickness by providing a farm 'atmosphere' for the boarders but it would also 'off-set the lure of the city' whereby the 'boy is assisted to realise the breadth and depth of intellectual and aesthetic interest of rural life'.⁽³²⁾ With reference to the School Farm, the main argument related by the Report, emphasised that a self-contained and self-directed School Farm could combine opportunities for 'observation, investigation and research as well as for unifying instruction in various departments'.⁽³³⁾

Following a detailed list of functions performed by the Feilding Agricultural High School agricultural staff upon their School Farm, it warned Schools not to embark upon a Farm project without realising the total commitment and dedication required by the Staff in order to achieve a successful outcome.

The ideals and aims outlined in this Report were shared by Wild and La Trobe alike. Both desired to elevate the status of agriculture and thus encourage its popularity. They attempted to impose a cultural image of the farmer as a 'gentleman' with all its appropriate refinements and trappings. Wild worked hard at the cultivation of a polished, sophisticated image for his School, and he ensured that his pupils had exposure to drama, music and art appreciation, literature and the self-government system. He was delighted with the Carnegie Art Gift as this meant that he could display quality Art prints on the walls of the School. The British Public Schools' ideal of a 'cultural' education fitted in comfortably with Wild's philosophy and, although he dismissed the academic ethos, he admired and attempted to integrate many of the other Public School values and traditions.

Three years after this Report came the Atmore Report and many of the views expressed by this Report surprisingly coincided with those held by Wild.

The Atmore Report

"The publication of the Atmore Report in 1930 embodied the maturing educational philosophy of the New Zealand Labour Party which was now fully allied with progressive educational thinking... The Atmore Report fully endorsed the comprehensive and co-educational model of schooling. It argued for delayed specialisation, a broad generous education for all and later specialisation in terms of pupils interests." (34)

McKenzie's summary of the Atmore Report highlights the educational reforms envisaged and later implemented by the Labour Government. Despite the fact that it had been commissioned by the Government, the Report rejected the essence of Parr's philosophy which had been based on separate educational provision. This had manifested itself in a socially divisive educational structure and, as McKenzie notes, the Labour Party "were quick to spot the dangers of selective schooling being used as a device to restrict knowledge and reinforce class structure". (35)

As a reaction against this, Labour Party policy embraced the ideals of the Atmore Report and defined post-primary education in terms of a richly-provided liberal and cultural content which was not vocational in nature. Their espousal of the comprehensive model of schooling was compatible with the evolving nature of the country Technical High Schools and this can be seen very clearly in the case of Feilding Agricultural High School. Along with other 'second wave' technical high schools established in the 1920's, Feilding Agricultural High School gradually and imperceptibly developed into a comprehensive school. It was the sole purveyor of post-primary education in a rapidly expanding provincial township and if it wanted to survive the competition from neighbouring Palmerston North High Schools, it had to provide the necessary variety of courses. Wild had learned through personal experience that he had to provide the type of education demanded by the local residents. In 1925 the School had reached a critical point. Wild's disinterest in Matriculation and other academically-oriented exams had led to a very poor level of Examination passes. Preceding this, he had been adamant that his School would not include such academic subjects as Latin in the curriculum. However, in the face of severe criticism from parents and some members of the School Board, Latin was subsequently introduced and more emphasis was given to the passing of examinations. This had led to the provision of an academic course, an agricultural course for the boys, a domestic science course for the girls, and an increasingly popular commercial course. To all intents and purposes, Wild had, of necessity, developed his School into a co-educational comprehensive school catering for all types of pupils. When compiling information for the Report, Atmore had visited the Feilding Agricultural High School and, according to Wild, he had been favourably impressed. Wild wrote,

"Perhaps the most significant incident of the year was the visit of the Hon. H. Atmore. Minister of Education, and in his outspoken declaration, repeated in other parts of the country, that our School in his judgment approaches most nearly the ideal of what a secondary school in New Zealand should be. Practical backing of his statement was received in the shape of grants for an Animal Husbandry Pavilion and for its equipment. This...is symptomatic of a complete change of Departmental attitude

towards the School in the past six years and has been a great encouragement to the Board and to all who realise the contribution the School is making to educational development in New Zealand and to the prosperity of this district in particular." (36)

In an address to the School, Atmore had endorsed the aims of the School and assured them of his continual support. He stated that he appreciated the efforts of the people of Feilding in making such a unique institution possible and he also 'deplored the neglect of agricultural education. In his opinion this had amounted to a grave blunder, particularly when it was realised that the country was entirely dependent upon the products from the soil for his stability'. In a short address Atmore marshalled the usual arguments for agricultural education. These included issues such as the country's dependence on its primary produce; pupils being encouraged to develop a 'proper understanding of the dignity of rural life' and the introduction of counteractive measures to prevent the urban drift. He further promised,

"That all steps possible would be taken to increase the bias for agricultural studies. The mistake has been made in concentrating on the academic side, with the result that our towns and cities were today overcrowded and the basis of the main sources of the country's wealth neglected. He firmly believed that our education system was largely responsible for unemployment. The cream of the country had been lured to the big centres by the attractions offered by professional training." (37)

Whilst offering support to the School and its agricultural studies he maintained that the Dominion could not finance many such Schools and that in-depth, vocational farming studies would not be made available until a viable scheme of land settlement measures had been worked out.

The Atmore Report decided in favour of the abolition of Technical High Schools. As Feilding Agricultural High School was such a school, this appeared to be at odds with Atmore's view of Feilding Agricultural High School as 'the ideal' of a New Zealand secondary school. However, if we conclude that Feilding Agricultural High School was functioning as a co-educational and comprehensive school which offered a general, cultural and practical training, then the aims of Atmore and Wild are reconcilable. It is also clearly evident from Atmore's observations that he was thinking in terms of transferring the vocational element of Wild's agricultural courses, to extension courses outside the post-primary sector. However it is also evident that he placed a high value upon agricultural education and he maintained that a broad-based pre-vocational content should be included in every post-primary curriculum. His analysis of the labour market and his response to political demands for agricultural developments during the Depression years, had led him to theorise that unemployment was a direct consequence of the academic dominance currently endemic to the post-primary sector. He classified the occupations of New Zealanders into four categories and ranked them in order of importance beginning with the agricultural sector and following with, the commercial; technical and professional sectors. (38) Atmore maintained that the New Zealand educational system had to prepare pupils for these occupations:

"The object of teaching agriculture in the schools should be twofold. In the first place it should aim to give every pupil an adequate and vital conception of the country's dependence

upon the farming industry, to elevate the vocation of agriculture to a position of dignity and respect second to none in the Dominion and to inculcate a genuine love the soil and a reasonably theoretical and practical knowledge of the broad fundamental problems that underlie its successful agricultural and pastoral exploitation and conservation. Such an aim, in the opinion of the Committee, is no less capable of realisation in the urban than in the rural areas and no effort should be spared to that end. In the second place, upon this general foundation, there should be organised in the Dominion a wide system of specialised agricultural education for those boys and girls who can be attracted from rural, as well as urban areas, to enter upon vocations connected with the soil. The day is past when farming could be considered the one occupation in life where specialised training is unnecessary." (39)

In this statement, Atmore articulated the need for a liberal foundation of education with a rural bias followed by a subsequent specialised course of vocational education. The Report endorsed the introduction of up to six residential Agricultural High Schools in New Zealand along the lines of Feilding Agricultural High School and Rangiora High School.

McKenzie points out that the proposal to abolish Technical High Schools was naturally opposed by their Principals and advocates and also by those people, like Parr, who believed in maintaining and reproducing social division through society's educational institutions. Wild, unlike other Technical School Principals felt no anxiety about the impending closure of the Technical Schools. There were two reasons for this. The first, that his school was a residential Agricultural High School and, as such, had been held up as a model institution by Atmore. The second reason related to the fact that as he was directing a largely comprehensive and co-educational school. The Minister's support was guaranteed.

From this point on, Feilding Agricultural High School began to receive attention from all over New Zealand and the boarding establishment became inundated with a long waiting list of prospective agricultural students. Another consequence of the Atmore Report, according to Wild, was that,

"Agricultural courses were being polished up and put into the front window of schools almost everywhere and in the years 1930-33, when we were seeking Government assistance for the purchase of land, we were told by a harassed Minister of Education that there were literally dozens of schools asking for farms. Evidently there had been a revolutionary change of outlook in ten years." (40)

Despite the fact that some schools were clamouring for the agricultural courses, the statistics were still revealing that farmers were not receiving an agricultural training. In La Trobe's 1936 Annual Report, he acknowledged that,

"Of the 851 leavers from post-primary schools in 1936 who took up farming pursuits, only about 63% had followed an agricultural course. We are thus faced with the somewhat disquieting fact that of each three recruits to the Dominion's

greatest single industry, one has not passed Form II, one has passed that Standard and left, and one has had one or more years of post-primary education". (41)

Not only were farmers receiving little or no agricultural education, they were also consuming a minimum of post-primary education. The Thomas Report was an attempt to provide measures to counteract that and, simultaneously, to loosen the hegemonic hold of the academic curriculum on the post-primary schools.

The Thomas Report

In 1942, a Committee under the chairmanship of W. Thomas, former Principal of Timaru Boys' High School, was appointed by Mason, the Minister of Education and C.E.Beeby, the Director-General of Education. This committee endeavoured to overhaul the post-primary curriculum and determine the extent to which it was influenced by the examination structure. Its brief also included assessing the potential implications of accrediting for University Entrance and consideration of the balance and content of subjects leading to School Certificate examination. H.C.D.Somerset, the Director of Feilding Community Centre was appointed as joint secretary along with A.E.Campbell. Their recommendations included a more detailed post-primary syllabus which contained a nucleus of compulsory core subjects with a cluster of optional subjects surrounding it. The latter would leave scope for each school to design a series of optional subjects suited to its individual needs and objectives. The 'core' subjects comprised of English, social studies, general science, elementary mathematics, physical education, music, art and/or craft (which usually resulted in homecraft for girls and woodwork or metalwork for boys).

Other changes were introduced as a direct (and sometimes indirect) consequence of the Thomas Report proposals. These included the raising of the school-leaving age to 15 years; the separation of the University Entrance Examination and the School Certificate Examination by the transfer of the former to the Sixth Form; the abolition of the Public Service Exam and the total replacement of Fifth Form exams by the School Certificate Exam; the introduction of accrediting for University Entrance and the removal of agriculture from U.E. subjects.

Many of these recommendations were implemented in the hopes of preventing premature specialisation and promoting a liberal and all-round general education which catered for the individual needs of pupils living in a democracy. "The dual task, said Beeby, was to maintain high standards for the academically able and to provide for the other children courses devised for their own needs and purposes." (42)

Technical High Schools and Secondary High Schools were now offering a nationally prescribed, co-ordinated syllabus and, as such they were operating as multilateral schools. Cumming and Cumming observed that the similarities of the two structures were reinforced when a national and uniform salary scale for post-primary teachers was introduced and when the separate branches of Inspectorates were combined into the Inspectorate of Post-Primary Schools.

Realising the adverse effects of 'academising' agricultural subjects because of their inclusion in the University Entrance Examination, the Thomas Report proposed that agriculture be dropped from the requisite list of

University Entrance Examination subjects and that it should be widened and included in the subjects offered by the School Certification Examination. Its new expanded form comprised of four subjects, general agriculture, animal husbandry, dairying and horticulture. This move revived interest in agricultural education and came at an opportune time. The 1945 Otahuhu Report on agricultural education had urgently demanded that more post-primary agricultural education was needed in order to emphasise the importance of the agricultural industry to the national economy.

"In 1942, of the 1535 who went farming direct from Primary School, 782 had only Primary School (Form II) Certificate. In 1943 of the 1257 who went into farming direct from primary school, 60% had reached the Primary Certificate stage, but over half (631) did not have even a Form II Certificate." (43)

Wild presumably applauded the majority of aims embodied in the Thomas Report. For many years he had been advocating accrediting for University Entrance Examination and he would certainly have approved of the liberalising of the curriculum and the attempted widening of the curriculum. For example, he considered time devoted to Social Studies as very valuable if 'developed in the form of integrated courses in human environment and human relationships'. (44)

As Wild resigned in 1946, his reactions to the proposals recommended by the Thomas Report were never fully recorded nor implemented. This was left to his successor, Mr McKinnon.

THE AGRICULTURAL COURSE OF FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL.

We shall now turn to a description and analysis of the agricultural course developed by the Feilding Agricultural High School.

Harry Tolley, Chairman of the School's Board of Governors from its inception, had a great influence on the type of agricultural education offered by the School. He differed from Wild only in the matter of Matriculation. Like Wild, Tolley advocated 'cultural' education and he firmly envisaged the School producing a professional farmer who was thoroughly educated in agricultural matters. However, unlike Wild, he maintained that the professional farmer could only materialise if subjected to a complementary academic course leading to Matriculation. In a Vocational Guidance pamphlet prepared for the Education Department in 1928, Tolley wrote,

"What kind of boy should go on the land? The boy who loves nature in all her forms, who likes trees, plants, animals, who has capacity for observation and strong initiative. He must have plenty of energy and a liking for work, no lazy man or boy will make a good farmer. For the young farmer at school, farming is one of the professions and a good general education is most essential. An appreciation of good literature and music and the development of social instincts are also matters that should not be neglected. The Education Department has very wisely established at Feilding an Agricultural High School. What does this mean? Not that culture, literature and English and

practical civics should be neglected and that hard work with the spade and agricultural implements should take their place, but that all these things can definitely be taught in the environment and through the medium of the School Farm.....A successful farmer must make a fair acquaintance with many kinds of knowledge such as Government, Law, Surveying, Accounting, Commerce, Botany, Veterinary Science and the boys training at Secondary School should open their avenues of knowledge to him." (45)

Wild preferred a non-academic view of agricultural education. A view which also emphasised the 'cultural' value of the arts, music and literature but which remained free of the confines of the Matriculation course. This posed a serious problem for Wild and he stated that 'from the beginning, it was clear to me that sufficient agriculture could not be included in the Matriculation course'. (46)

In the place of French and Mathematics, Wild substituted Special Agriculture for his Agricultural Course pupils, and he also ensured that the academic class received some instruction in agricultural economics. In his first report to the School Board he informed them that 23 boys out of 67 had enrolled for the Agricultural course and 12 girls out of 52 were undertaking a 'modified' course which would eventually lead to either a domestic or a commercial course. 'All these boys and girls take English, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Drawing, Chemistry and Botany in the same classes and to the same standard as the rest of the School and will, at the end of two years, be prepared to sit the Intermediate or Public Service Entrance Examination'. (47)

The 'rest of the School' had enrolled for the Commercial and Matriculation courses. he latter chiefly at the Intermediate and Matriculation Examinations. Wild had to concede early in the School's history that some pupils desired the Matriculation course and reluctantly included French. However, his complete rejection of Latin led to an early confrontation when the Reverend Miller proposed a motion to the Board of Governors which 'requested the Director to place the subject of Latin on the curriculum'. The Board supported Wild in his omission of Latin by a majority of one vote. However by 1928, Latin was being taught in the Matriculation course. It is therefore assumed that Wild had to yield to local pressure by introducing such high-status academic subjects into the curriculum against his will.

The land available to the School on its opening stood at 20 acres. Half of this had been allocated to the School buildings and playing field facilities and the other half was used for experimental agriculture. Field crops, sheep grazing and top-dressing experiments provided the content of the first agricultural lessons, along with laying paths, establishing and erecting boundaries and planting shrubberies. It soon became apparent to both Tolley and Wild that this acreage of land was not sufficient and Tolley began recruiting support for an area of at least 50 acres for practical agricultural purposes. Wild proposed a 'grand plan' which consisted of a farm of 300-400 acres and which was clearly envisaged by him as the future North Island Agricultural College, an idea that was currently being mooted. However, the reality was that he had to 'beg or borrow' land, wherever he could and by 1925, the School had, in addition to its initial 20 acres; 8 acres of grazing rights on Victoria Park, 8 acres of land surrounding the leased Girls' Hostel

and the use of 14 acres leased temporarily from Mr A.H. Atkinson, one of the School's Board of Managers. This clearly showed that without local support and backing, the School would have possessed few agricultural facilities.

Despite Parr's initial support in the establishment of the School he provided no further financial assistance to the School until Wild had shown evidence of a successful agricultural course.. Wild recorded how, in 1925, Parr was openly critical of the School and Caughley, the Director of Education, had refused the School any subsidy for gifts 'in kind'. These 'gifts' took the form of donations of pedigree livestock from various sources. As Wild had previously received subsidies on donations of money for the scholarship fund, he had petitioned the Director for a cash subsidy on gifts 'in kind' with which he could purchase essential farm equipment. Rather than stating that this was not possible, the Department of Education had replied that, 'it is not satisfied that the purpose for which the subsidy is sought is an urgent necessity in connection with the work of the School'. (48) Tolley, on behalf of the School Managers, replied,

"My Board is not a little disappointed and disheartened by the fact that its claims have not received the sympathetic consideration that the merits of the subject, as indicated by Departmental reports and by official statement in and out of Parliament, would lead it to expect." (49)

Tolley followed this letter by a personal visit to Caughley on 21st April 1925, in order to root out the exact cause of both Caughley's and Parr's displeasure. It appeared that the Department had been closely monitoring the progress of the School and it believed that the School was paying too much attention to the Matriculation course at the expense of the agricultural course. Caughley had informed Tolley that the School was 'rapidly going back' because of the declining number enrolling for the agricultural course. Wild hotly disputed this and he replied to the Director stating that,

"Of 29 male entrants this year, 14 are for agriculture, 14 are for the professional and 1 for the general. Among 2nd year boys, 15 are for agriculture, 21 for professional. You have doubtless considered only the figures given for 1924 (Annual Return No. 6C) which shows: Agriculture 37, Professional (General) 70. But I have previously pointed out that as boys taking a professional course stay longer at school than the others, who are mainly country boys, it results in a majority of professional course boys when the whole roll is taken into account.....It would, of course, be reasonable to expect that the school would be 'rapidly going back' from the point of view you took, for despite notable assistance from the Department in the matter of the building of the hostel and the provision therein of classrooms, we have in some other respects been sadly neglected; for example, we have no adequately equipped laboratory, we have received no extra financial assistance in consideration of our efforts to advance the cause of agriculture.....Far more has been done here by the Board and the people than the Department realises. The Department, however, I submit, cannot regard our experiment and attach importance to our success or non-success unless it sees to it that such experiment is not fore-doomed to failure by lack of adequate assistance." (50)

It was clearly evident that Wild was being pulled in opposite directions. Local parents were enrolling their children for the professional course and were demanding Matriculation subjects whilst the Department of Education was requiring an agricultural course and was withholding financial assistance and support until this had been accomplished. However, as Wild so competently pointed out, he could not provide a satisfactory agricultural course without adequate funds. Wild later claimed that after participating in lengthy correspondence with Parr, he managed to convert his position from one of adamant unco-operation to one of positive and total support. In one of his letters, Parr stated his initial position in uncompromising terms.

"The School was designed for a special purpose which I regret to say has not been accomplished. I repeat that the Department's view in establishing the Feilding High School was that it was to be essentially different from other high schools. It was to be a school in which the great majority, if not all the pupils should take the newer course, namely the agricultural course.....It is my firm belief that we should encourage and indeed require, as much as possible, that the town child as well as the farmer's son should, instead of Matriculation, take a liberal course of technical training such as is given by the agricultural course. The complaint is all too general (and I fear all too well-founded) throughout New Zealand that our system of free high school education is giving the child a bias away from the farm and in the direction of the office and the desk." (51)

In their reply to this, the Board agreed with Parr's sentiments but maintained that the 40% of students taking the agricultural course at Feilding Agricultural High School compared favourably with the national average of other post-primary schools which stood at 15.4%. They also explained the difficulties of wooing parents away from the professional course when they viewed this course as providing better life-chances for their children. They recommended that the agricultural course be given a higher public profile and that bursaries be made available to city boys to attend the Feilding School. As the four concerns of a Chemistry Laboratory, additional land, scholarships and better financial considerations, became their priority, they applied constant pressure on the Department for assistance. Parr's help was at last forthcoming and before he resigned to take up the position of High Commissioner in London he bestowed a parting grant of £2000 pounds towards a Chemistry Laboratory and fittings. Despite his absence from New Zealand, Parr was not protected from Tolley's perseverance, and when Tolley requested a special temporary grant of 200 pounds to cover the rental cost of the Girls' Hostel, he promptly sent the money together with a note stating that 'one of his performances of which he was proudest was the foundation of the Feilding Agricultural High School!'. (52)

The opposing pressures exerted on Wild made him realise that he had to contend with two extreme positions, one demanding a mainly academic course and the other a mainly practical one. It was probably in 1925 that Wild felt this tension at its height. In a similar manner to the other Technical High Schools established in the early 1920's, Feilding Agricultural High School was the sole provider of post-primary education in a growing township and it was clearly obvious to him that he would have to resolve his problem by compromise.

Like the Technical Schools at Hawera, Stratford, Hastings and Pukekohe, Wild developed a multilateral school, which catered for the local needs of its residents. However, in addition, in order to boost his agricultural course and maintain Parr's support, he had to import clients from country areas all over the North Island and, occasionally the South Island. Nicol described Feilding Agricultural High School as the 'Technical High School of the backblocks'. (53) Wild could not stock the agricultural course satisfactorily with local boys, so he expanded the Boys' Hostel and thus he managed to fulfil local demands for an academic course and the Department's requirements for a healthy agricultural course. Once this dilemma had been resolved, the School became a flourishing agricultural institution. The numbers of boys participating in the Agricultural Course are indicated in Table 1a. The total number of pupils enrolled in the School's four courses during the period 1925-1943 are shown in Table 1b.

A detailed description of the School's land and agricultural activities in 1925 has already been given. In 1926, a very welcome addition to the agricultural course came in the form of Merry Hill Farm. This was an estate of 180 acres at Makino and it was made available to the School at a rental of 25 shillings an acre for seven years. It was located about one mile away from the School and it comprised of rolling country and approximately 15 acres of natural bush. However, it was second class land in poor condition with low fertility levels, inadequate drainage and fences in a state of disrepair. A comprehensive programme of land development was designed by the School's agricultural staff and the appointment of a Farm Manager closely followed. Activities on the Farm included clearing, top-dressing, cultivation, stocking, erecting fences and sheds and other general improvements. The School magazine noted that a School Farm was essential for a variety of reasons, the first of these was that it 'secures very definitely the right 'atmosphere' in which agricultural experiments can be carried out'. (54) The second reason involved the availability of land for demonstration and teaching purposes and the need for regenerating and protecting the area of native bush.

In 1926, following a three month visit to Europe and the United States, Wild introduced the Young Farmers' Club into New Zealand. Although the New Zealand Encyclopaedia credits Alexander Cameron as the founder of the Young Farmers' Club in the 1930's (55), Wild was actually responsible for its initial existence. After preliminary meetings with the agricultural staff and students, it was decided to found a Young Farmers' Club, the object of which was 'to promote amongst young farmers of the Feilding district an increased interest in and knowledge of farming'. (56) The elected Committee consisted of staff, students, local farmers and it was presided over by A. Campbell, a Manager of the School Board. Four girls were later added to the Committee. The first annual show and exhibition took place at the School on 8th April, 1926 and the following description appeared in the local newspaper,

"In the cold strong westerly, the first annual show of the Feilding Young Farmers' Club was held at the Feilding Agricultural High School grounds and the school buildings yesterday.....The show has been introduced as a Department of the High School by Mr. L.J. Wild, Headmaster, who got the idea on his trip to America.....Mr Campbell felt that a great honour had been conferred on him in making him the first President of the Young Farmers' Club. Primary production was the principal

TABLE 1a
NUMBER OF BOYS PARTICIPATING IN COURSES OFFERED BY
FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL 1925 - 1943

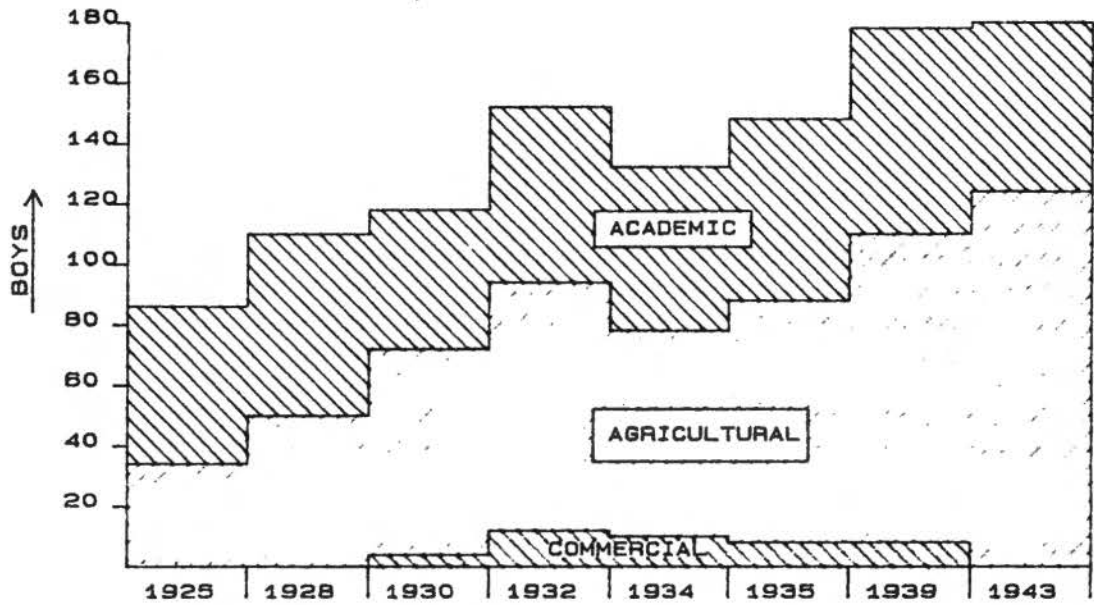


TABLE 1b
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUPILS PARTICIPATING IN COURSES OFFERED BY
FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL 1925 - 1943

YEAR	COMMERCIAL		AGRICULTURE		HOME SCI.		ACADEMIC		TOTAL	
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS
1925	0	35	34	0	0	0	45	52	86	80
1928	0	40	50	0	0	0	61	47	111	87
1930	3	36	69	0	0	0	22	45	117	83
1932	11	38	82	1	0	0	23	59	152	93
1934	10	46	68	0	0	0	28	54	132	95
1935	8	46	81	0	0	0	26	59	148	107
1939	7	54	104	0	0	0	19	66	177	111
1943	0	44	124	0	0	0	6	55	179	87

industry of the country, and the whole prosperity of the country depended on the farmers.....It was certain that the club would prosper and would in all probability be adopted by other centres of New Zealand." (57)

Following the success of the Feilding venture, Young Farmers' Clubs sprang up in other areas of New Zealand, and Cameron was responsible for the co-ordination and establishment of the clubs on a national scale. When this occurred a few years later, the Feilding Young Farmers' Club came under national control and the School lost ownership of it. It was renamed the Feilding District Young Farmers' Club.

Livestock, pasture grasses, root crops, cooking and sewing, art work, typing, photography and writing formed the basis of the exhibitions and thus started an annual tradition of the School. In addition to providing an educational objective for the pupils, the whole project could be viewed as an enterprising exercise in community relations. Wild was not only publicising the agricultural course, he was also advertising the other courses offered by the School, and by providing direct access for the community, he was also attracting new recruits.

The School's agricultural course began drawing boys from distant rural localities and there soon grew a long waiting list of potential customers for the Boys' Hostel.

By 1930, Merry Hill Farm was employed mainly for the sheep and cropping operations, whilst the purchase of a block of 40 acres which was named Ngakaunui Farm and was adjacent to the School was being worked as an intensive dairy farming unit. This was the year of Atmore's visit, following which he subsequently presented the School with a £400 grant for the erection of an Animal Husbandry Pavilion, woolshed and farm workshop. All the building construction work was undertaken by the agricultural boys under the supervision of various members of staff.

Another excellent means of advertising the School's agricultural course, was the venture into exhibiting cattle, sheep and pigs at A & P Shows around the North Island. The School won a vast array of gold and silver medals for their livestock at many of the Shows they entered. For example, a typical year early in their existence (1930-31) resulted in a visit to the Royal Show at Hastings where the cattle they entered received second and third prizes in their various categories; their Ryeland sheep won two first places and Royal Champion Ewe; and their Large White pigs came second and third with the boar receiving the Reserve Championship. The Manawatu and West Coast Show at Palmerston North earned them two championship Ryeland sheep and three first prizes. At the Feilding Show, they exhibited cattle, sheep and pigs and earned commendations in all classes, this resulted in winning the Stuart Cup for most points in the Livestock categories. In the Manawatu group entry, they were awarded the winners of the Provincial 'Group' competition. They enthusiastically extended their activities in this direction and gained the warm approval and notice of various farming communities and organisations around the country.

In the same period, their agricultural activities included experimental work with permanent pasture and soil fertility; growing cereals, clovers and root crops for livestock consumption, rotational practices, garden and

botanical cultivation, tile draining, top-dressing and studying and caring for livestock. The latter included a pedigree Red Poll herd with such romantic names as Kowhai 80, Beatrix Castlewood, Glencarr Rubina, College Portia. The pupils were obviously on familiar terms with the cattle as this short obituary implies,

"During the year two old favourites, Kowhai 79, and Shortie died. Both have served us long and faithfully and we hope their present pastures are broad and lush." (58)

The sheep herds comprised of a Southdown flock and a Ryeland flock and the School was heavily dependent on assistance of neighbouring farmers and friends, such as the gifts from Mr. J. Knight and the demonstrations carried out by other local farmers. With limited space for the pigs, they sold a high proportion of stock and looked forward to the construction of spacious piggeries in the immediate future. Their Large White herd was presided over by a grand matriarch by the name of Tamaki Canadian Alice - 'herself a champion and the mother of champions'. (59)

Other agricultural activities included a School Apiary and the planning and cultivation of a forestry experiment. The agricultural course expanded in aims and content and drew many admiring comments. The majority of visitors and speakers at the School emphasised the unique quality of such an agricultural high school in New Zealand and commented upon the valuable contribution it was making to the national economy by educating the future farmers of the nation. Typical of the speeches was one from Sir Andrew Russell in 1930. In his Prize-Giving address at the end of the year he commented, that,

"Feilding was showing the rest of New Zealand a new line in its attempt to introduce agriculture as a practical subject in the High School curriculum, and though he had heard of the Feilding Agricultural High School he did not expect to see what he had seen that day in visiting the School and its farm. He was impressed by the fact that the School was making such a success of encouraging the boys to take up agriculture. Some time ago he was in Denmark and the agricultural authorities there told him they found it hard to get boys to take an interest in agriculture unless they had some experience of farm life. Here they appeared to give a judicious blend of theoretical and practical agriculture, and were apparently successful in turning the boys' minds in the direction of taking up farming. New Zealand depended for its economic prosperity upon its primary industries." (60)

Most speakers compared New Zealand's agricultural education unfavourably with that of Denmark. Denmark and its system of Danish Folk Schools had always been held as an ideal interpretation of rural education. This was the first time that Denmark has been referred to as also having difficulty in attracting its pupils to its agricultural courses.

In September 1933, a new farm named Manawanui was acquired by the School. It was another farm of 180 acres and very similar in character to the Merry Hill Farm, the lease of which had recently expired. It included a six-room cottage and extensive farm buildings. Wild described his plans thus,

"With the new farm in our ownership, we can take a long view, plan ahead and develop our plans with a sense of security. There is ample scope for instructional work not only in cropping and in pasture formation and management and in every phase of animal husbandry, but in farm forestry, drainage, water supply, fencing and so on. There is immediate productive work ahead of us, and plenty of development and improvement in prospect." (61)

By 1946, the year of Wild's retirement, both Farms were yielding crops of wheat, peas, barley, oats, potatoes, mangolds, turnips, chou moulrier, sweet clover, millet, rape and pampas grass. Farm machinery had been purchased, with tractors taking the place of horses, and haypresses and furrow ploughs being substituted for manual labour. Breeding experiments and milk and butterfat fields from the dairy herds were recorded and analysed conscientiously and lambing percentages were examined and announced to be increasing. Improvements in shearing methods were made and 'fineness' of wool fibre was assessed. The production of bacon and porker pigs was well in progress and pedigree offspring were cared for tenderly. The Woodwork and Metalwork Departments were heavily involved in making and repairing tools, equipment and machinery and also with the erection of sheds and farm buildings. Although there was no Inspection Report for 1946, the records for 1943 describe the Agricultural Course as,

"The principal course in the School, and it continues to attract numbers of boys from outside the district....As in previous years the Agricultural classes have a complete programme of indoor studies; but the possession of two farms makes it possible for the staff to relate their work very closely to farm practice and to take the lessons outdoors as required. A group of boys is drafted for farm work in rotation, and one of the masters spends half his time on the larger farm, freed from ordinary classes but responsible for the oversight of the boys on duty for the week." (62)

The success of the agricultural course was evident from the numbers of boys participating. The total roll of 266 pupils in 1943 consisted of 179 boys and 87 girls. Out of 179 boys, 124 were enrolled in the agricultural course and 110 of these came from areas other than the Borough of Feilding. However, this meant that only 14 boys taking the agricultural course lived within commuting distance of the School. The School would therefore not have achieved such notoriety had it depended only on its immediate contributing area. Its success relied on servicing the needs of those rural New Zealanders who could not afford to purchase for their sons the expensive boarding facilities of private schools such as the Wanganui Collegiate. It must also be emphasised that by 1938, about one third of the male and two thirds of the female primary school leavers attended Feilding Agricultural High School. The remainder attended other post-primary schools or had left school altogether. (63)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has attempted to indicate some of the political, social and educational reasons for the advocacy of agricultural education in New Zealand. It has analysed both the educational and agricultural Reports produced between 1920 and 1946 and it has considered some of the repercussions of these upon

Wild's philosophy of agricultural education. This philosophy was based on the concept of agriculture as an 'Art' with cultural associations. His ideas never entirely coincided with an international movement away from the notion of agricultural education as being chiefly vocational in character. From the 1930's onwards, it was generally thought that delayed specialisation should follow a general and cultural form of secondary education with a rural bias. However Wild still maintained a strongly vocational character in his agricultural course.

Wild was also responsible for introducing the Young Farmers' Club into New Zealand and this was perhaps one of his main contributions to New Zealand agriculture. He also developed a successful agricultural course at Feilding Agricultural High School which was dependent for its intake upon recruits from the backblocks of New Zealand. This could not have been achieved if it had relied solely on local clients. Wild consistently maintained that a large School Farm was necessary for the acquisition of 'cultural capital' essential to the education of New Zealand's future farmers.

The next chapter details the differential roles expected of rural women. Men were to be instructed in the 'science' of farming whilst women were to be instructed in the 'science' of farm-wifery.

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CHAPTER FOUR

EDUCATION OF THE FARMER'S WIFE

"One must not overlook the fact that the education of the rural girl is of equal importance. The principles, aims and ideals guiding the education of girls in rural areas should receive as much attention as the education of boys. Farmers' wives are very important people in the farming industry. Through the years, much has been written and said about agricultural education for boys, very little has been heard of education for rural girls." (1)

Right from the beginning, Wild argued explicitly that the education of girls was important. His conviction was manifested in a variety of ways, from his initial selection of women staff to his implementation of a specific course for girls. However, in keeping with contemporary notions of women's role in society, he maintained that all girls should be given an education which primarily prepared them for home-making, child-care and a source of supplementary labour on the family farm. Whilst the boys were to be educated to become good farmers, the girls were to become good farmers' wives.

As Feilding Agricultural High School was basically an agricultural institution which attempted to pioneer agricultural education, it was directed specifically at the boys. Many resources were allocated to the making of a good farmer and as a consequence, the girls were clearly placed in a secondary and less-esteemed role. With the exception of their active participation in the Self-Government System, they were defined chiefly in subsidiary terms.

This chapter will examine three main areas in detail - all of them related to the education of girls. The first area to be considered will be the supremacy of a domestic ideology and its implications for the historical development of New Zealand's educational theory and practice. The second area will look at the response of Feilding Agricultural High School to this ideology and the way in which it embodied these expectations and attitudes into the curriculum. The third area will highlight striking parallels between agricultural education for boys and domestic education for girls. Both types of education had a great deal in common. Both had a very inferior image, despite the constant and repeated efforts of educationalists to elevate their status. Both came to be considered more educationally appropriate for the less academically able student and both became inextricably involved in the vocational versus academic education debate.

Before discussing these three areas in further detail, we shall first define 'domestic education'. It is a term which has been used interchangeably with Home Economics, Home Science and Domestic Science, and it is used to refer to those curricula subjects traditionally associated with the domestic sphere. This usually comprises subjects such as cookery, sewing, needlework, laundrywork, housecraft, and, in the case of Feilding Agricultural High School, parent education, child-care, child development, child nutrition and home studies. The latter group became more popular with the advent of Gwen Somerset and the opening of the Feilding Community Centre. We shall now examine these three areas more fully.

DOMESTIC IDEOLOGY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

In order to gain an insight into the importance assumed by domestic education at Feilding Agricultural High School, the wider, social role of women preceding 1920 will be briefly examined.

When the School opened in 1922 and Wild had the opportunity of designing his own curriculum, he largely adopted Strachan's ideas and proposed a three-fold curriculum. The first course was devoted to the academic course, the second to agricultural education and the third to a domestic course for girls. It was generally assumed in the 1920's that to be a housewife and mother was the main aim of every girl as it was a fulfilment of her 'natural' role. Hence, most school curricula, with the exception of the pre-1920 Girls' High Schools, gave a great deal of attention to domestic subjects. George George, Director of Auckland Technical School and ardent enthusiast of boy's agricultural education, reported to the Education Conference of 1910 that 'the natural function of every girl was to become a wife and mother' and that, in consequence, the schools should make every effort to educate the girls 'along the lines she ought naturally to go'.⁽²⁾ George had widespread and popular support for his stance and it inevitably led to Wild, among others, developing a gender-specific curriculum which ultimately aimed at the production of 'manly men and womanly women'.⁽³⁾ The domestic course advocated for girls was also socially differentiated and there is clear evidence to suggest that it was designed primarily for the less academically able girls.⁽⁴⁾

Both Strachan and Wild firmly adhered to current opinion that the woman's place was in the home. This concept had probably been imported along with the British settlers and had possibly evolved as a by-product of industrialisation. However it adapted well to a rural environment. According to Sutch ⁽⁵⁾, New Zealand society in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, was structured chiefly according to social and economic criteria and normally defined in terms of the males' occupation. The majority of immigrants into Feilding were of working class origin and the males were largely categorised as tradesmen, craftsmen, agricultural and general labourers. The minority of women that acknowledged their occupations, listed them mainly as dressmakers or domestic servants.⁽⁶⁾ As discussed in the first chapter, the majority of these immigrants were tempted to New Zealand by arcadian visions of a land of plenty. They desperately wished to leave behind a politically torn land that discouraged all attempts at self improvement. The British ruling class of aristocratic landed gentry and emerging industrial entrepreneurs, were deeply distrustful of any means of education for the worker. They regarded education as a primary source of upward social mobility and a potential threat to the economy and to their socially entrenched positions. They were also living uneasily with the repercussions of the French Revolution which had resulted in the overthrow of the ruling class. For these reasons, they were suspicious of and threatened by the growing popularity of working-class movements such as the Co-operative Movement and the Trade Unions. The growing strength and solidarity of such movements alarmed them considerably, and one of the unexpected off-shoots of this was the strengthening of the nuclear family unit. This small, tightly knit structure both divided and diluted the power of the working class and also ensured a continuous replenishment of cheap labour. This placed the woman firmly in the role of supporting the main breadwinner and supplying the future workforce.

Whereas the pre-industrial family structure was centred around equally contributing members which made the home the primary unit of labour, the Industrial and post-Industrial family unit was centred upon the husband who became the chief source of income. He was serviced by a dependent wife who not only provided for his basic needs but also kept him functioning as an efficient worker. The new bourgeois class also favoured this type of nuclear family and it became increasingly regarded as a status symbol with its implicit assumption of an omnipotent husband.

It was also this 'ideal' family structure that the New Zealand Government heartily endorsed and rigorously recruited. Women's role became secondary and supportive and they were frequently viewed as cheap labour and essential appendages to emigrating males. This is evidenced by an unintentionally humorous quotation from A.F. Halcombe during the British recruitment drive of the early 1870's.

"Any man may be an independent freeholder of a comfortable farm of from 100-200 acres within ten years of landing in the Colony, and if, in addition to the qualities of sobriety, thrift and industry, he brings a good head on his shoulders, an active wife on his arm, and some stout boys at his back, so much more rapid and thorough will be his success." (7)

The nuclear family structure flourished in the rural economy of New Zealand. With the growth of the dairy industry, the phenomenon of small, family-operated dairy farms consisting of from 100-200 head of cattle, and tightly run by a family team became an economically viable concern. Their numbers rapidly increased until by the end of the 1970's there were an average of 19,000 such farms operating in New Zealand. (8)

Single women were also actively recruited to New Zealand, not only as a demographic necessity in balancing the predominantly male domination, but also as a good moral influence on the males - a point which will be discussed more fully later in the chapter.

Domesticity and femininity were inextricably linked and early socialisation patterns prepared girls for their future states of motherhood and wifehood. However, different social class patterns were imposed upon the girls. The working class girl was directed towards manual domestic work, whilst the middle class girls' orientation was towards a supervisory and managerial housekeeping role. Expectations of the domestic role played by women were therefore gender and class specific and education became the main agency for equipping women with 'useful' knowledge, i.e. domestic knowledge. Hygiene, cooking and sewing were early classified as 'useful' knowledge and were included resolutely in education for girls. Hygiene, in particular, was a subject with significant implications and it was considered of vital importance to the girl. Its origin lay with the campaign for national efficiency, which was an aftermath of the Boer War. This had unexpectedly revealed the dreadful poverty and poor health of the British working class. The British Government had been alarmed that the mass of their male population had been unable to function as the true defenders of the British Empire. Although the New Zealand contingent of soldiers which joined the British Forces in South Africa in 1899 were in a far superior physical condition, they were still targetted for improvement by the New Zealand Government.

The development and maintenance of a healthy lifestyle became supremely important. The mother working in paid employment outside the home was partially blamed for the poor health of the nation (9) and she was encouraged to stay at home and provide an adequate, nourishing diet and hygienic living conditions for her children. This would ensure a healthy nation which could competently defend its shores. This had immediate repercussions for New Zealanders. Many pioneer settlers were eeking out a living at subsistence level, and, although malnutrition was certainly not as acute as in Britain, stringent reforms were initiated. A comprehensive policy of social legislation came into existence through the Liberal Government reforms of the 1890's.

Before State intervention into education, there was very little formal educational provision made for girls. The earliest formal attempts at education were probably supplied by the missionaries and sewing and learning to read the Bible were essential ingredients of the school curriculum for girls. The first Province to set up a free public system of schools was Nelson in 1856, and it offered a basic elementary education centring on the 3R's, with additional needlework for girls.(10) The planned Wakefield settlements had made little resources available for education, with the exception of the Provinces of Canterbury and Otago. The strict religious ideals of the settlers in these regions had promoted education as an important means of transmitting spiritual and moral knowledge and the Board of Education established in Otago had therefore placed education, for both boys and girls, high on its list of priorities.(11) After the first Education Act of 1877, sewing was still included in the girls' curriculum and Fry informs us that compulsory needlework for girls became enshrined into the New Zealand educational system by an Order in Council which was gazetted on the 1st January 1888.(12) Despite the fact that New Zealand boasted of its free primary schooling for every girl and boy from 7-13 years, it offered a sexually differentiated curriculum as a result of the different roles specified by social expectations. Priority for an academic education was allocated to boys as it was considered that they had the important role of breadwinner to fulfil. Priority for a domestic education was allocated to the girls as they had to support the breadwinner. Needless to say the irrelevancy of such provision may have been a chief factor in the statistics which showed that more males attended school and they attended school for a longer period.(13)

As detailed in Chapter 1, Hogben's revision of the Manual and Technical Instruction Act of 1900 had resulted in the establishment of manual centres providing separate and specialist instruction for girls and boys. Hogben had analysed the schools and, disliking the academic bias which had permeated the school curriculum, had staunchly maintained that the less academically able boys and girls should receive a type of education which suited them. He proposed a non-abstract and non-theoretical form of education which would have some future practical use for the pupils. The answer to this, he believed, lay in agricultural science for boys and domestic science for girls. Unfortunately, as domestic and agricultural education were applied sciences they were never regarded with the same esteem as the pure sciences. Instead they were viewed as weak, even corrupted versions of true science. Nevertheless, Teachers' Training Colleges began turning out male teachers equipped to teach agriculture and female teachers equipped to teach hygiene and sewing (in addition to other subjects). High status academic knowledge was thus being retained as a valuable commodity reserved mainly for those who could afford to purchase it.

Of increasing importance in the first decades of the Century, and a legacy from the national efficiency campaign, came Social Darwinist ideas of the survival of the fittest. This theory became very persuasive and it was generally believed that in order to breed and raise healthy offspring, the mothers themselves had to be healthy, both mentally and physically. The Eugenics Education Society, presided over by Prime Minister Massey, reinforced this theory and attempted to put its principles into practice. In conjunction with a campaign spearheaded by Truby King of the Plunket Society, they proclaimed that anything interfering with or hindering women's health and her primary function of child-rearing should be positively discouraged or even removed from society wherever possible. Secondary and tertiary education came under this heading and were seriously considered a potential and dangerous threat to the health of their daughters. They forcefully argued that any form of advanced education would inevitably lead to the production of sick, weakly children. Self-professed experts on the education of girls scathingly denounced post-primary education for girls and even attributed to it the power to induce a variety of ills.

"The stress placed upon girls by the education system interfered with their physical development, producing 'neurasthenic' females who were unable (or unwilling) to suckle their young, unable to bear the pains of labour as well as their mothers and, as if this were not enough, they suffered in addition from eye failure, headaches, menstrual disturbances and constipation! Physical disabilities apart, these maladjusted young women were also losing the taste for contented home life and were shirking their maternal responsibilities, King warned." (14)

A contemporary medical notion of the time viewed the human body as a fixed storehouse of energy. Every time a girl used up some of this energy, whether in the form of physical exercise or by constant use of her mental faculties, then this capacity of energy was left depleted. This was particularly exacerbated at the vulnerable time of puberty and had dire consequences for child-bearing. Dr. Lindo Ferguson, a Dunedin eye specialist and self-styled 'expert' on girls' education, was reported to have commented,

"I have often doubted as to whether our educational system was not to blame for the prevalence of anaemia, which is so universal among colonial girls....Colonial parents have a very laudable desire to educate their girls that they may be able to support themselves but the slow process of evolution which has during countless ages made girls as they are, has done so not to make them the teachers of backblocks schools, but the mothers of generations to come. Injudicious education may render them unfit to fill the part nature has destined." (15)

That he considered 'judicious' education to be domestic education was indicated by his proposed model syllabus of English, sewing, cooking, dressmaking, knitting, physical education and other female accomplishments: all the accoutrements of a good wife.

"With such a programme, some girls might be lost to teaching but this would be counterbalanced by the benefit to the race....In the great battle of the survival of the fittest, whether our race is to figure as a strong healthy nation, or as

a weedy, neurotic, decadent one, depends very largely on the stamina of the mothers of the future, and it may be that the battle will be won on the playgrounds of our girls' schools."(16)

Implicit in this statement is that the physical health of girls is much more important than their level of educational attainment. His antagonism towards post-primary education for girls was strengthened by the additional and constant refrains of Dr. Truby King and Dr. Batchelor. Olssen describes how King, a former Superintendent of the Mental Asylum at Seacliffe, devoted himself to lowering infant mortality rates and developing sound child-rearing practices through his founding of the Plunket Society. He maintained that the health of the Empire and the Nation was dependent upon the health of the mother and that,

"Academic work weakened self-control among women by deflecting their energies from their proper natural function, motherhood. But civilisation had destroyed women's natural instincts and it had become necessary to educate them."(17)

It was only through domestic education that women, and ultimately the Nation, could reap a reward. The superiority of the white race and the prevention of national degeneracy rested upon the domestic education of girls. This necessitated a sexually differentiated curriculum, particularly from the time of puberty. Their fanatical ramblings were supported by those who feared female independence. King, Ferguson and Bachelor, also appeared to be obsessive in their desire to prevent women taking up careers such as teaching and they seemed to be supported in their stance by educational policy makers. Indeed, their theories commanded a substantial following of the general public. When Dr. Batchelor addressed an audience comprised of leading educational, political and religious administrators upon the 'Effect of Advanced Education of Women on the Vitality of the Race', the following statement won a great deal of applause and support,

"It is essential that the State recognise the necessity for a radical divergence in the education of boys and girls about the age of puberty, after passing the standard usually attained at this age, let the girls' studies be chiefly directed to domestic management, domestic economy, physiology and hygiene.....when numbers of young women are found entering into clerkships, offices, factory work, it seems to me largely attributable to our educational system, that does not aim at preparing our girls for domestic life, but attempts to train them to pass a useless matriculation examination. Does our State system of education encourage our girls to enter domestic service? Yet I confidently assert, the girl employed in domestic duties in a good home with a good mistress is happier, better off, leads a more wholesome and healthier life, will make a better wife and mother and is more likely to rear healthy stock than her sister whose aims, possibly, have been more ambitious. That my views are shared by the majority of mankind is shown by the fact that the competent domestic usually promptly acquires an establishment of her own, while the scholarship girl with a 'D' certificate will probably face many years of teaching in a backblocks school

(APPLAUSE)....Our present educational system encourages and invites young women to enter a course of study for which nature never intended them." (18)

He gave no reason to support his argument that a domestic servant would make a better mother and rear healthier stock than a teacher. When one considers the type of heavy manual work, long hours, isolated conditions and inferior status suffered by domestic servants (19), his statement can hardly be given credence. It was thought desirable that all girls, regardless of their ability or social class, should take up domestic duties. Not only did this provide a blue print for the development of girl's education, it also cleverly aimed at fulfilling a middle class demand for domestic workers. It gained social acceptance as it appeared to be enhancing and complementing the natural instincts of girls.

King and Batchelor were also reacting strongly against the academic curriculum of the Girls' High Schools which excluded domestic subjects except on an optional basis. The curriculum of the first Girls' High School, opened in Otago in 1870, was to influence subsequent curricula until 1920. It consisted of English, Reading, Spelling, Dictation, Grammar, Geography, History and Arithmetic. At the more senior levels, elementary Physics and Botany were also introduced, and the optional subjects comprised Needlework, Knitting, German, Music, Gymnastics and French. (20) This largely followed the English model of the newly opened North London Collegiate for Girls directed by Frances Buss. Both Frances Buss and Learmonth Dalrymple (the founder of the Otago Girls' High School), maintained that in order to give girls equal access to university education, they should be offered the same matriculation subjects and the same academic preparation. The O'Rourke Commission of 1878 endorsed this curriculum with the condition that Greek should not be introduced and Maths be taken only at an elementary level. (21) It must be noted here that Girls' High Schools initially catered for girls between the ages of 7-17 and were not functioning solely as secondary schools at this stage. They found public response to their provision of girls' education quite gratifying, particularly as education was an expensive commodity and usually reserved exclusively for boys. Little financial provision had been made for secondary education by the 1877 Education Act and the Educational Reserves Act of the same year had allocated only one quarter of its endowments towards secondary education. (22)

In 1893, when women had achieved enfranchisement, there was a further push by a group of educated middle-class women for the education of all girls after elementary level. Following the introduction of the Secondary Schools Act of 1903, when at least two years' free educational provision was made for students holding a Proficiency Certificate, the floodgates opened and the High Schools were forced (with varying degrees of compulsion) to admit elementary school pupils into their ranks. Some of the Girls' High Schools were reluctant to admit primary pupils as they were afraid that this might threaten their high standards - the consequence of this being that their students would no longer be able to compete on equal terms with boys. The Girls' schools developed a variety of ways in order to deal with the dramatic increase in numbers. Christchurch Girls' High School, for instance, tentatively included a tripartite course of instruction into their syllabus. The first course was geared towards a professional career for girls taking Matriculation and looking forward to university; the second course, which incorporated shorthand and/or bookkeeping was aimed at a commercial career in clerical or office

work; the third course was the Vocational course which included domestic and home-life courses and was considered suitable for those girls not wishing to pursue a 'career'.(23)

The majority of the less academically able girls, which in reality often meant those who had not previously attended the Junior Departments of the High Schools, inevitably ended up in the Commercial or Vocational Courses. Maria Marchant, Headmistress of Otago Girls' High School, stated that the free-place pupils never stayed long at the school in any case. (24) The Vocational Course was commonly regarded as offering low-status and inferior knowledge and it was this position that King, Batchelor and Ferguson wished to reverse.

The Secondary High Schools were responsible for designing their own curriculum until 1920 when the Department of Education imposed more rigorous controls. The General Council of Education was also responsible for recommending many changes to the secondary curriculum and it became very evident, when these controls were implemented, that they had been influenced to a considerable extent by the Truby King Ideology. Four of these changes had direct implications for girls; these were -

1. That domestic subjects became compulsory for all girls;
2. That Home Science became a Matriculation subject;
3. That Mathematics became optional for girls;
4. That the entire syllabus be simplified for girls.

Despite these implementations, which angered a considerable proportion of female teaching staff, the Girls' High Schools became more exclusive and academic. Like the Boys' High Schools, they came to be rapidly dominated by the whole array of examinations, in particular, Matriculation, Teachers' College Entrance Exam, Higher Leaving Certificate and University Scholarship.

Domestic education also came to be offered in the District High Schools and the Technical High Schools. We have previously examined how George Hogben, the Inspector General of Education, had vigorously attempted to provide an alternative form of education for the majority of pupils who did not benefit from an academic education. Hence the creation and expansion of Technical High Schools and District High Schools. The former were usually situated in urban areas and the latter in rural areas. Their clearly stated objective was to provide a pre-vocational education oriented towards the individual needs of the pupil and the needs of the local community. Hogben expected pupils to spend a third of their school time doing practical work, with the remaining time devoted to general subjects. Fry informs us that the initial year at Technical School offered a,

"...continuation of Standard 6 subjects with special attention paid to practical work in elementary science for both sexes and manual training in woodwork and metalwork for boys and in cooking and advanced plain needlework for girls. It was envisaged that every course would provide a sound secondary education as well as vocational training."(25)

It became increasingly evident that a wide variety of employment opportunities were open to boys and therefore a wide variety of courses were

provided for them. However, girls were confined mainly to clerical or domestic occupations. It was very apparent what their future roles were intended to be. Even as late as the 1950's, girls in Technical Schools were not the main focus of educational attention, as this U.N.E.S.C.O. description of Technical High Schools testifies,

"The pre-vocational courses in the Technical Day Schools turned out a type of boy well fitted to take his place anywhere in a wide range of small, scattered and relatively simple industries. All he needed after that was a period of training on the job." (26)

Girls did not appear in the description, even in a marginal sense. This is a very good example of male-constructed knowledge intended exclusively for male consumption. At Feilding Agricultural High School, which was basically a Technical High School, Wild did attach importance to the education of girls, but it was the type of education advocated by Truby King - that which fitted them to become better wives and mothers. As they lived in a country area, this meant better farmers' wives and rural mothers. Despite this national push towards domestic education, the annual returns of the Department of Education for 1915 revealed that out of 423 secondary school science classes receiving manual grants, 237 classes were offering a pure, academic science completely unconnected with practical life. Only 70 of these 423 classes were related to domestic training and from the Technical High Schools only 16.7% of the students (presumably girls) were taking the domestic course. (27)

After the First World War, the health of the Nation and preservation of national fitness again became the focus for concern, and Hanan, the Minister of Education, devoted much of his time and effort into developing the educational system as a practical medium through which girls could gain knowledge about rearing healthy children. Healthy children grew into healthy adults and were regarded as valuable tools in the post-war reconstruction process.

To summarise thus far, the Domestic Ideology proposed by spokespeople such as Truby King, completely dominated education for girls in the years preceding the establishment of Feilding Agricultural High School. Domestic knowledge, aimed at the scrupulous preparation of girls for their future roles as wives and mothers, was regarded as the most appropriate type of education for girls. The low numbers of girls participating in the domestic education courses indicated that this knowledge was viewed as knowledge of an inferior variety. Truby King and his influential followers attempted to make the domestic course more attractive by elevating it to a professional level. They attached a scientific label to it and stridently claimed its value and importance to the future of a healthy nation. Despite these efforts, even pupils in the Technical High Schools, which were supposedly providing a vocational course for their less-academic pupils, did not enrol in large numbers for the domestic course. In accordance with the recommendations of the King-inspired General Council of Education, domestic science became a compulsory subject introduced into the hallowed 'academic' halls of the Girls' High Schools. This was a reaction against the 'potentially debilitating' effects of allowing girls to take academic subjects. This move, in association with the increasing number of elementary pupils entering the secondary schools, meant that reluctantly provided domestic education was offered to the reluctantly admitted 'free place' pupils - at least in the High Schools.

It became taken for granted by the majority of educationalists that a woman's natural abilities lay in the fields of child-craft and mothercare and that increasing urbanisation was destroying these natural instincts. We shall now turn to the implications of this for the education of girls at Feilding Agricultural High School.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE DOMESTIC IDEOLOGY UPON FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL.

When Parr laid the Foundation Stone of Feilding Agricultural High School, there was no mistaking his intentions with regard to the education of girls. After advising that the School would be a practical institution that would offer both a general course of instruction including languages and the sciences, and a commercial course including book-keeping, typewriting and shorthand, he continued,

"Speaking of the education of girls, they did not want a community of bluestockings (laughter). What they wanted in New Zealand were good wives and better mothers. He would have the girls taught Home Science, including nursing and first aid." (28)

Parr then discussed the national importance of a good educational system and stated that educational objectives should be directed towards the production of loyal men and women who would love their Country, their God and their King. Obviously fine-tuning his speech to suit an audience of prospective technical high school clients, he claimed that academic attainment should come second to this. It was clearly evident that Parr's views on education for girls were restrictive. On several occasions he expressed his profound belief that girls should have a particular education which was in keeping with their natural femininity and domesticity. When officially opening Palmerston North Girls' High School in 1920, he maintained that he would rather have girls 'brought up to love good things - beauty, truth etc., rather than to be merely a good typist'. He believed that the future of the nationhood was dependent upon the education of girls and he went on to define the appropriate education,

"He would like to have every girl taught firstly to consider her physical health, and then such things as English, science, geography and history in the proper way". (29)

Admittedly health was a major concern of New Zealanders at that time, high infant mortality rates together with wartime losses and sporadic national epidemics of various kinds, ensured preoccupation with promoting health and eradicating death and illness. This convinced Parr that girls should not have any other occupation except that of marriage and motherhood. This view paralleled that of the King/Batchelor contingent. As far as they were concerned, any educational provision which prepared the girl for teaching, nursing or typing should be actively discouraged. Parr reinforced this with a decision that was to affect the lives of many women teachers for decades to come. Murdoch (30) informs us that Parr's reign as Minister of Education was only notable for two contributions, the first that he introduced the experimental Junior High Schools, and the second that he was responsible for implementing a national scheme of grading and organising salary scales for teachers in 1925. Whilst involved with the latter, he placed women teachers on

a lower salary scale than their male colleagues. His desire to save money, when taken together with his over-riding concern that women should stay in the home, may be interpreted as a systematic move to discourage women from entering the teaching profession. Arnold tells us that from 1905-1925, women teachers had enjoyed parity of pay. (31) It was not until the 1960's that this was again achieved.

Whilst Parr did not sanction women taking up teaching as an occupation he actively discouraged them from seeking senior positions. He certainly did not envisage a place for them in the Inspectorate,

"...owing to the arduous and difficult journeys that have to be made by Inspectors of School's in visiting schools in remote parts of the Country." (32)

Loyalty to School, Nation and Empire, and becoming a good and useful citizen was also espoused by the Feilding Agricultural High School and the first School Prospectus iterated four main aims. These were:

- (1) to become useful members of the local community,
- (2) to become successful at their chosen occupations,
- (3) to learn how to profitably occupy their leisure hours
- (4) that 'school training must help every boy and girl to keep a healthy body, and active mind and a clean heart.' (33)

This emphasis on physical, mental, moral and spiritual development was further evidenced by the courses of instruction advertised in the Prospectus. A healthy body was to be encouraged by Physical Culture and Games, this included Swedish drill for girls and Military Drill for boys. An active mind was to be fostered by the three-tiered programme. This consisted of a academic course of English, Maths, Natural Science, French, History and Geography and was intended for Matriculation or the Higher Leaving Certificate. The remaining two tiers were devoted to a specialist agricultural course for boys (as described in the previous chapter) and a specialist Home Science course for the girls.

THE PROPOSED GIRLS' CURRICULUM

There were to be no doubts regarding the intended occupational destination of those girls who wished to take advantage of the proposed Domestic Education course. It was to consist of:

"English, Arithmetic, Drawing, Chemistry and Physics as applied to House-craft, House Accounts, Hygiene, First Aid, Home-Management, needlework and Cookery. With the completion of the Girls' Hostel, it will be possible to arrange a course particularly well suited to the requirements of girls who intend to assist in their own homes or who propose to enter the nursing profession." (34)

A slightly less specialised course was also to be offered which would comprise English, Arithmetic, Drawing, French, Home Science, Household Management, History and Geography - this was intended for the girl who wished to either become a teacher, or to enter the Home Science School of Otago University. The first Course description outlines a manually oriented course sounding very grandiose but obviously intended for the less academically able

girl; whilst the second, very similar but with a handful of academic subjects thrown in for good measure was clearly intended for the brighter girl with a teaching career ahead of her. Although girls did enrol for the academic course - **it was initially intended that whatever the ability level and interests of the girl, the home was to be her major destination.** 'Bright' girls were destined for teaching, nursing(34) and the home. The less 'bright' were destined for the home or full-time domestic service. This was unlike the boys' curriculum which was clearly ability-specific, with the academically able boys opting for the academic course and the less able for the agricultural course (despite the attempts of both Tolley and Wild to attract the 'brighter' boys into the agricultural course).

In addition to the ideological causes underlying the provision of a Home Science course, demographic and economic factors must also be considered. Women's occupational statistics, compiled by Olssen (35) from the Census Returns of 1921 (see Table 2) indicate that paid Domestic Workers dominated the structure of the female workforce, these were followed by Dressmakers, Office Workers, Service Industry Workers, Shop Workers, Teachers and Nurses (in ranked descending order [1921]). The figures reveal that the bulk of female workers were employed in the Domestic sector. Did this infer that parents demanded Home Science subjects to prepare their daughters for domestic service? This seems highly unlikely. As Olssen informs us, the demand for domestic labour far exceeded the supply. Social class certainly became a crucial factor in the provision of Home Science for girls. Not only did the majority of middle-class educational, political and medical fraternities support it for a variety of reasons, but middle-class women also approved of it as they needed domestic servants. Numbers of domestic servants declined as alternative, but still limited, occupational opportunities for women were opened and the middle class employers lost their traditional pool of manual labour. A 'sensible' education for girls was encouraged which could serve two purposes simultaneously. Domestic education could not only fulfil the ideals of equipping girls to become better wives and mothers, it could also provide a source of trained domestic labour. Many middle class women lamented the fact that girls were taking up a variety of occupations and deserting domestic service. Fry informs us of a woman journalist who maintained that the British Nation was fading because girls were, '...not being fitted for wives and mothers and daughters, lady-helps or domestic servants'. Instead they were being educated to become 'teachers, type-writers, telegraph operators, lady clerks, cash girls, shop and factory assistants'. The remedy she believed lay in 'less head work and more hand work in our schools'.(36)

Parr and King would certainly have endorsed this sentiment. Wild could not afford to be quite so narrow-minded. Although he initially advocated a Home Science course for girls, he acknowledged the fact that commercial subjects including business methods, shorthand and typing would have to be accommodated. There was also a growing demand for labour in this area, and as typing and shorthand were considered to be socially accepted occupations for women, Olssen informs us that a rapid expansion in this sector of the labour market occurred.(37) Parents also saw the commercial and business world as capable of providing and sustaining a suitable form of occupation for their daughters. It also enabled them to find clerical work in the large urban town, so that it not only offered the chance of upward social mobility, it also provided a source of geographical mobility. This was also true of Feilding. Feilding was a relatively small township and there were limited vacancies for commercially qualified pupils. It proved no exception to the

COMPOSITION OF THE FEMALE WORKFORCE SELECTED OCCUPATIONS 1901 - 1936

(Compiled by E. Olssen, cited in Women in New Zealand Society,
Bunkle & Hughes, 1980, 163.)

OCCUPATIONS	1901	1911	1921	1936
NURSES	748	3403	4393	8721
MIDWIVES	1076	523	1162	N.E.
DOCTORS	6	29	34	83
TEACHERS	3573	5053	7637	7233
GOVERNESSES	386	267	211	16
WAITRESSES	4162	3141	3020	3591
HOTEL SERVANTS	2249	3186	N.E.	3308
COOKS	393	490	2227	1980
WASHERWOMEN	864	912	627	968
DOMESTICS	19189	18795	17955	29262
DRESSMAKERS & MILLINERS	10299	17322	6868	5914
CLOTHING WORKERS	1136	667	4148	12762
SHOP ASSISTANTS	535	627	7007	10779
CLERKS & CASHIERS	1106	4967	8576	12028

national trend of young people leaving small rural townships in search of work.(38) H.C.D.Somerset's survey of Feilding taken in 1938 revealed that twenty nine males and thirty six females left Primary School. In a follow-up survey taken in 1944, he estimated that from the total given in 1938 twenty five males and twenty two females had left the Borough.(39)

THE DOMESTIC COURSE

Wild's original objective was to provide one domestic course for all girls enrolling at the School, regardless of their ability or future occupational desires. However, he had to re-assess this Scheme when he discovered that few girls desired the domestic course whilst an increasing number of girls wished to enrol for the two alternative courses. The numbers enrolling for the Academic Course were not quite so large as those wishing to participate in the Commercial Course. This arose from the fact that an estimated one third of the Primary school leavers were seeking a secondary education outside the Borough.(40) According to Wild, the majority of these sought an academic education in the neighbouring High Schools of Palmerston North.

His publicly acknowledged proposals for a tripartite course, which included a single domestic course for the girls, had to be rapidly discarded. In order to make full use of his specialist domestic science teacher, his solution involved the integration of domestic education into the Commercial and Academic courses. This encumbered the Commercial Course with a substantial content of domestic education, and it appeared at the expense of the usual commercial subjects such as typing and book-keeping. This resulted in a very diluted Commercial Course which was ineffectual in its vocational purpose. In an Inspectoral visit of 1934, La Trobe commented upon the low standard attained by the Commercial Course due to the meagre allowance of time allocated to actual commercial subjects. He objected to the large component of domestic education. He also lamented the low participation rates of the domestic course, despite the fact that Feilding Agricultural High School's female staff were competent and well qualified on the domestic side.

Due to the low standard of the Commercial Course, the local clerical job market preferred to employ girls who had satisfactorily completed the Academic Course. This resulted in La Trobe's following remark concerning the Commercial Course,

"This course is something of a puzzle. It probably attracts more pupils than the town can absorb into its offices in competition with leavers from the Academic Course who have superior educational attainments, and it is also probable that a high degree of specialised skill in Typewriting and Shorthand is not so essential in such offices as a good standard of general education and adaptability."(41)

He then goes on to suggest that the needs of the town would be better fulfilled if a short, intensive course of Book-Keeping, Shorthand and Typewriting were given to those pupils who had successfully acquired the Intermediate or the School Certificate Examinations. He realised that this proposal would not meet the needs of those pupils who only wished to stay at secondary school for a short duration and, cleverly avoiding a personal solution to this, he maintained that 'such a problem can only be attacked by the school'.

As Wild was not attracting a large number of girls to the Domestic Course, he decided to upgrade its image. In 1930 he discussed the possibilities of expanding the Home Science Department into areas which would be of notable benefit to girls' future lives and would complement the roles of their husband-farmers.

"On the home science side of the School, we have a field that has as yet been cultivated scarcely at all, though surely there is to be garnered from it as rich as a harvest of results as we expect from the agricultural side." (42)

His problem of attracting boys to the Agricultural Course had been solved by providing a Residential Hostel and importing boys from the backblocks. Also by injecting a 'cultural' content into the agricultural course. The latter had aimed at the production of a 'professional' farmer who appreciated music, literature and the Fine Arts. He had been forced to abandon the Girls' Hostel when it proved uneconomic, so he attempted his second strategy. This was to inject a 'cultural' content into the domestic course. One way of doing this was to integrate Horticulture into the course. By 1935, the Domestic Course consisted of Cookery, Dressmaking, Home Science and Horticulture.

La Trobe favoured the introduction of horticulture into the Home Science and Commercial courses.

"Horticulture is a subject of the Commercial and Domestic Courses, the idea being to encourage girls to take an interest in the decoration of the home surroundings just as the lessons on Arts and Crafts, House Planning and Cookery have reference to the amenities of the home. The subject is therefore entirely justifiable and is in capable hands." (43)

Another move designed at making the Domestic Course more desirable, was the removal of labourious, routine work. This resulted in a change of emphasis. The course was referred to as the Home Science course and it included a more scientific content. The integration of a horticultural component remained and domestic education took on a more decorative and sophisticated nature. The latter was clearly evidenced in the Cookery Classes. It must be remembered that Cookery Classes were catering especially for girls who were to return to the home farm before marriage and subsequent housewifery claimed them. However, the classes now seemed strangely out of touch with reality. In a Borough whose occupational groups featured largely unskilled and farming sectors, the cookery classes did not aim at the production of cheap and economical dishes. Instead, they offered expensive and fancy recipes such as the making, decorating and attractive presentation of boxes of chocolates. This particular activity was undertaken frequently according to the annual reports of the Home Science Department, at least until the coupon restrictions of the Second World War restrained it. Home Science pupils now undertook a great deal of research into diet and nutrition. They were advised on the essential minerals and vitamins that led to a healthy lifestyle. In 1941, the School obtained a colony of white rats in order to experiment with various aspects of nutrition and the rats were fed on different diets in order to determine which produced the best results.

However, despite all these efforts to increase participation rates, the numbers of girls taking the Home Science Course gradually declined, until only

a very small proportion of girls were enrolled in the course at the outbreak of the Second World War. Obviously the girls were not heeding Caughley's advice when he had previously stated that,

"It ought to be understood that domestic science was a sound educational course in which students working with their hands through their minds, discovered a great educational value not made possible to such a marked degree in other courses. (44)

Since Caughley's visit in 1927, when he had expressed his pleasure at 50% of the boys being involved in the Agricultural course and 50% of the girls participating in the Domestic course, the numbers of girls in the domestic course had dwindled fast. Tables 3a and 3b indicate the number of girls participating in the various school courses from 1925 - 1943. It must be noted that during this period, only one girl was formally recorded as having taken the Agricultural Course, although another girl is also reputed to have undertaken it.

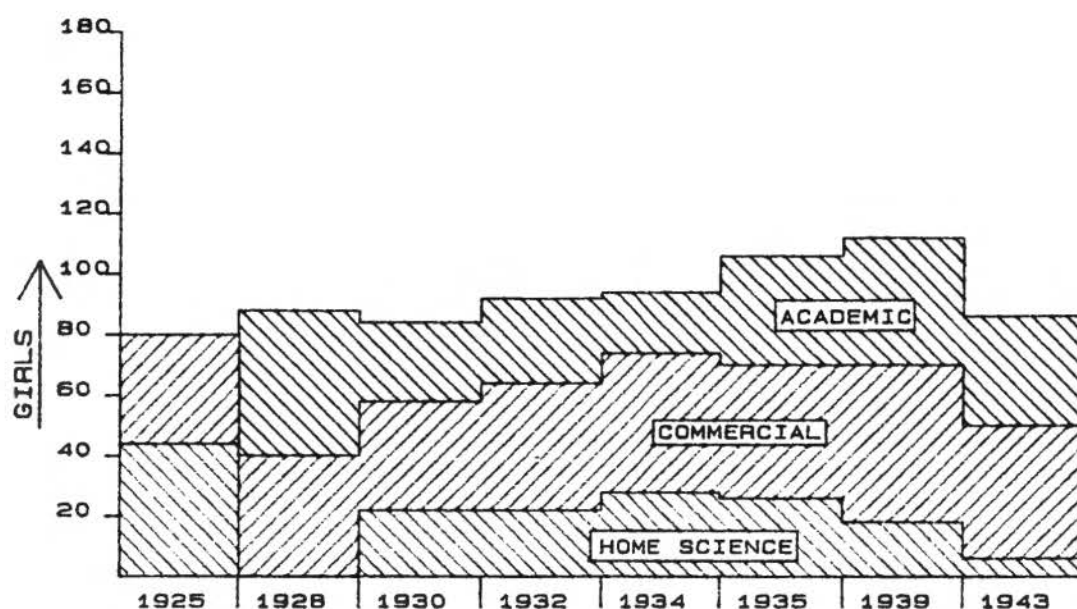
It was during the mid-Thirties that the idea of a Home Science practice cottage was mooted by Wild with the explicit intention of further developing the practical aspects of home-training. As this did not materialise until 1952, when a Model Flat was introduced, it seems that it was not given a high priority. The concept of a model cottage was not a new one and again, Strachan had pre-empted Wild by introducing one for his Home Science girls in the 1920's. In many schools a model cottage, for the intensive and practical training of Home Science, had been considered a viable alternative to the provision of hostel accommodation for the girls. Wild's brief flirtation with a hostel for the girls of Feilding Agricultural High School had not been successful. The hostel, which came in the form of a leasehold property of eight and a half acres complete with homestead, had lasted only two years. The lease had to be surrendered for economic reasons. Wild had reported that the overheads were too high and that the Feilding Agricultural High School could not compete with the many successful girls' schools which had attached hostels. It seemed that the parents who could afford hostel accommodation, did not desire the domestic or commercial variety of vocational education offered by Feilding Agricultural High School. If they did desire boarding accommodation, their choice was likely to be one of the academic Girls' High Schools. This was not a fate shared by the Boys' Hostels of Feilding Agricultural High School which expanded rapidly due to increasing allocation of financial resources from the Education Department.

Life at the Hostel, for the nine girls that enrolled there in its initial year, was devoted to orderliness, cleanliness, healthy activity and practice in the elements of becoming a good housewife. One of the girls described the daily routine of life at Brabourne. This consisted of a compulsory early morning plunge every morning, followed by breakfast, morning Prep. and school. After school, girls chose either music, games practice or enjoying 'such peaceful pursuits as rescuing the clothes from the line or learning the art of cycling'. She then goes on to describe a typical Saturday when they 'revel in the delights of darning and mending and the more vigorous among us find the pleasure we are told is to be found in a brisk walk in the sunshine.' (45)

In the descriptions of the Boys' Hostel there is no mention made of boys rescuing clothes from the line or darning and mending. Hostel provision for the boys was also probably considered more economically viable as the boys

TABLE 3a

NUMBER OF GIRLS PARTICIPATING IN COURSES OFFERED BY
FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL 1925 - 1943

TABLE 3b

TOTAL NUMBER OF PUPILS PARTICIPATING IN COURSES OFFERED BY
FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL 1925 - 1943

YEAR	COMMERCIAL		AGRICULTURE		HOME SCI.		ACADEMIC		TOTAL	
	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS
1925	0	35	34	0	0	45	52	0	86	80
1928	0	40	50	0	0	0	61	47	111	87
1930	3	36	69	0	0	22	45	25	117	83
1932	11	38	82	1	0	23	59	31	152	93
1934	10	46	68	0	0	28	54	21	132	95
1935	8	46	81	0	0	26	59	35	148	107
1939	7	54	104	0	0	19	66	38	177	111
1943	0	44	124	0	0	6	55	37	179	87

spent some part of every weekend attending to the seasonal work of the farm. Their labour was essential to the smooth running of the farm, due to its demanding and labour intensive work with seasonal crops and livestock. The girls did not participate in this, therefore their permanent presence could not be justified in terms of financial returns.

Wild also thought that the horticultural course offered to the girls should also be extended. He thought that they might profit from a study of keeping fowls and bees, in addition to that practical work with vegetables and flowers. His intentions were very evident. He was attempting to produce a woman who would not only provide a comfortable, attractive home for her husband but would also act as a source of trained labour in the lighter tasks of the farm. In short, a good farmer's wife.

The girls also undertook the care and responsibility of the School gardens and 'beautified' the School grounds. The Gardening Committee met with different Forms twice a week and marked and reported on their gardens. Competitions and trophies were introduced to further promote this activity.

PREPARATION FOR MOTHERHOOD

During the years following the First World War, children were even more highly regarded as the Nation's most valuable resource with their correct upbringing relying heavily upon the enlightenment of their parents, especially their mothers. At the request of the vociferous Truby King and Plunket supporters, schools took upon themselves the task of child study and parent education. In Feilding, this manifested itself in the establishment of a Malnutrition Clinic. Dr. Elizabeth Gunn, Wanganui's School Medical Officer, visited the Feilding area in March 1922. Dr. Gunn had long been associated with treating undernourished and frail children and she had been responsible for setting up several summer camps which provided medical assistance for such children. The first of these was opened in 1919 and they eventually resulted in the formation of the National Health Federation of 1936.(46) During her visit to Feilding in 1922, Dr. Gunn had initiated the idea of a Malnutrition Clinic and she enlisted the assistance of some of the Feilding Agricultural High School girls. Wild was delighted to participate in such a scheme and the Fifth Form Home Science girls 'adopted' four 'malnutrits' each. The girls became 'school mothers' and they were responsible for supervising and recording the development of these severely undernourished Feilding children. The girls visited the children's homes and advised the children's parents upon such things as the required amount of rest needed by each child and their diet deficiencies. They also suggested causes for the underweight conditions of the children. Two of the School's Home Science teachers were also involved with the Malnutrition Clinic and they talked to the girls and the children's parents upon a variety of health-related topics. Each 'school mother' maintained a full and detailed note book with regular fortnightly entries recording the weight and measurement of the children. They also included reports upon the progress of the children, together with evaluations of their health and home conditions. After the Clinic had been in operation for four months, it was noted that all the children had undergone appreciable gains in weight and if, on occasions, their weight had reduced, they were very disappointed and promised to gain weight before the next session. A list of health rules had been constructed in conjunction with Dr. Gunn and these had been supplied to each child. The girls had also made special badges for the children which were distributed when the children showed noticeable weight

gains.

Wild and Dr. Gunn obviously felt that the result of such a rigorous and philanthropic campaign over-rode any claims to parental autonomy. The Home Science girls were probably imbued with altruistic ideals which were thought of as moral assets to a farmer's wife and a good preparation for their future roles as Women's Institute members. Even more important, however, was the fact that activities like these were almost guaranteed to produce well-informed mothers. This was later emphasised with the advent of Gwen Somerset and the opening of the Feilding Community Centre in 1938. In the late 1930's, Susan Isaacs, a British psychologist visited New Zealand. She presented several papers on the psychological aspects of child development and she rendered theoretical weight to the notion that the early years of life were crucial to character formation.(47) She was also very interested in Parent Education. After her visit, Theories of Child Development became popular and fashionable topics for adult education classes, and the Community Centre at Feilding was in the vanguard of such provision. The first years of the Community Centre saw the introduction of such courses as Child Development and Home Decoration. These were so popular that the following year, Child Development was offered at two levels, the elementary and the advanced. Not only were Theories of Child Development explored, but under the guidance of Gwen Somerset, they were also implemented as a 'practical demonstration of the principles taught in these classes.' (48) To further explore these principles, a Nursery School was opened.

The Nursery School was primarily intended for the educational benefit of the Feilding parents. The Fourth and Fifth Form girls from Feilding Agricultural High School's Home Science classes were also encouraged to participate. Child Development was integrated into their course and their practical work consisted of supervising the pre-school children at the new Nursery School. This was viewed as the ideal training of their maternal instincts. The idea that urbanisation and increasing civilisation had gradually eroded these natural instincts had been introduced by Truby King, and the Plunket Society ensured the widespread transmission of such ideas. Training in childcare was seen as the ultimate solution. The scheme was actively encouraged by Wild who not only realised the implications of this but also saw the Nursery School as providing a valuable service to the community. Once again, Wild's ideas coincided with those of Strachan, who in the same year, had also opened a Nursery School in conjunction with his High School at Rangiora. The ideals of the Rangiora Nursery School were similar - to provide a practically-oriented Child Development course for the Home Science girls; to become a practical demonstration centre for parents; and to fulfil a need in the community.(49)

During this period Maori girls were also subjected to intensive courses in European mothercraft and when Apirana Ngata visited the School, he made some provocative comments about the role of Maori women.

"It is the women who cause all the discontent in the world, so we began to educate the young Maori girls who soon became discontented with the conditions in the pas. They learned how they should live and returned home demanding that those things of which they had been taught be introduced there. Thus immense strides were made - the women is ever a reformer, though her notions must go forward, even if it be only in the direction of

comfort." (50)

The contemporary policy of assimilation ensured that Maori girls became instructed in European notions of motherhood and domesticity.

In a preceding statement, Apirana Ngata had maintained that it was through the education and efforts of Te Aute men, that radical changes in the living conditions of the Maori people had taken place. He urged the pupils of Feilding Agricultural High School to help and encourage the Maori people in their efforts towards the development and maintenance of a healthy lifestyle. It seemed that girls played a significant part in the implementation of this. The ideals of European domesticity had now been expanded to include Maori girls.

DESIRABLE ACTIVITIES

Religious and philanthropic ideals underpinned the School's ideology of domesticity for girls from its inception. This was illustrated by the advent of various clubs and societies, such as the Young Helpers' League, the Students' Christian Union and the Malnutrition Clinic which has already been described. Many of these concentrated upon helping the poor and needy in society and they were all aimed primarily at the girls. This was particularly noticeable during the School's 'War Effort' in 1940. Girls knitted, sewed, collected scrap material and 'responded wonderfully' to the appeals of the Red Cross, the Plunket Society and the Lady Galway Fund. They cleaned and repaired cast-off clothing for refugees and they collected and cleaned ergot seeds which were in demand by the British Government. Charitable institutions and worthy causes were the main focus of concern and these became essential appendages to female education, especially during the War Years.

Physical education was also stressed. The philosophy that girls needed to be fit, both mentally and physically, in order to bear healthy children was not such a powerful theme. It lurked in the background of educational thought as a shadowy ideal, but after the 1920's, physical education came to be viewed as a constructive outlet for the surplus energy generated by adolescence. It was advocated as morally desirable that girls channel their energies into activities that were socially acceptable such as Eurhythmics and Tennis. Hockey and Swimming were also considered suitable outlets. After 1930, Tennikoits was introduced as a girls' sport by Wild following his visit to America. Swedish Drill was also undertaken as an alternative to the boys' Military Drill. In 1931, a new physical training week was inaugurated for the girls whilst the boys were away at Military Training Camp. It was described thus,

"The objects aimed at were not just simply the development of muscle and chest expansion, but co-ordination of mind and muscle, deportment and self control. The subjects taught were fencing, folk dancing, eurhythmics, marching, swimming, life-saving and singing, interspersed with lectures on local movements by prominent citizens namely: On Women's National Reserve, Women's Division of Farmers' Union, Dental Hygiene, Physical Culture and a lecture on India." (51)

Due to the fact that the boys were undergoing military training, the girls likewise, attempted to inject a regimental flavour into their activities and

they were divided into 'four platoons under a commander and after assembly and inspection every morning, marched to their various grounds for instruction'. (52)

Remarks from the girls were both keen and enthusiastic and they obviously gained a great deal from such a week - unfortunately in order for it to be viewed as important, they had to impose a military stamp on the proceedings. The girls' physical training week was undertaken for many years, and on a number of occasions when the boys stayed at school for their Military Training Drill, the girls became intensely irritated by constant demands and interference from the boys. They had certainly enjoyed the enforced absence of the boys on previous occasions. This reinforces recent research which indicates that in a co-educational setting, girls feel freer and less pressured and dominated in the absence of boys. (53)

THE 'HIDDEN' CURRICULUM

We have examined the school curriculum and the many aspects which reinforced the notion of separate spheres for girls and boys. Let us now consider some of the more subtle pressures and demands that also played such a significant part in defining the girls' roles as secondary ones. These were not as explicitly obvious as, say, the channelling of girls and boys into different activities, but nevertheless, they were apparent in the sets of expectations and attitudes of various people associated with the School. In a School which was devoted mainly to agricultural education, a largely male preserve, the actual title of the School may have led to a feeling of exclusion by some of the girls.

As many important speakers were invited to address the School on a regular basis, and as the School was renowned as an agricultural institution, many of the speeches were agricultural in content and directed specifically to those pupils engaged in the Agricultural Course. This meant that the girls were rarely included - or, and this seemed to be more common, the girls were referred to in the preamble or introduction of the speech, but as the speaker became more involved with the actual content of the speech, the girls were forgotten. This was evident on the majority of occasions between 1920-1945. The first Commemoration Day address, delivered by Cockayne, followed the above pattern. Although Cockayne made a point of addressing both the girls and boys in the opening to his speech, as he became engrossed in delivering its essential content, he made it clear that he was exclusively addressing the boys.

"What is wanted then, is that the young man before he goes on the land should have been taught a sufficiency of the accumulated farming knowledge of the country, so that his time will be saved." (54)

The rest of his speech was in the same vein.

The male ideal was constantly held up as a model for all pupils to follow. This is illustrated in the School Song and the School Motto. One concerning Rugby and School Honour and the other urging the pupils to 'be a man, be expert, be generous, be large hearted'. Even the goal of education should be the 'production of a perfect man'. (55)

The girls were always placed in a subordinate role to the farmer who was always assumed to be male, as evidenced by this statement,

"The task of the farmer, which depended on the help of his wife and children was the noblest task to which any man or woman could turn his or her hand." (56)

The last quotation by Lord Bledisloe looks reasonable until it is realised that women rarely have wives!

An ex-teacher and important scientist in his own right, returned to the School to give a Commemorative Day address. His brief was to discuss the average schoolboy or schoolgirl and he entitled his address, 'Tom, Dick and Harry'. Whilst he did make some initial reference to 'Emily, Jane and Mary', he stated that the,

"...type he had in mind was an ordinary lad who played games in a mediocre fashion, graced the tail of class lists, but had a slight measure of ability that rescued him from being that colourless, non-existent average boy. He had a keen eye and he now served somewhere on the battle front." (57)

The female role, particularly that of the Home Science girls (and, at some time or another, this referred to all girls) was devoted to one of useful service. They prepared luncheons and afternoon teas for visitors, speakers, sports teams and most social occasions. It was noted in 1937 that the Staff had afternoon tea in the Cookery Room and were sometimes treated to a 'Cookery Special'. (58) Not only the school curriculum, but the whole pattern of expectations was clearly differentiated. The sexual division of labour was distinctly apparent. Whilst the boys were being trained as the providers, the girls were being trained and socialised into a role as supporters and servicers of others. A maternal and caring role was thought to be an appropriate initiation into their future occupations as farmers' wives.

PARALLELS BETWEEN AGRICULTURAL AND DOMESTIC EDUCATION

From the chapter so far, it can be seen that both agricultural education and domestic education were considered vocational in nature and that there were many similarities between the two. These similarities are here reviewed.

As a result of the early intervention of Hogben, whenever possible, provision was made for the less academically able. It was thought that only a practical, manual type of education could be undertaken with any degree of success by those pupils who entertained few academic aspirations. A policy of providing agricultural education for boys and domestic education for girls was widely held as the solution to this, especially as increasing numbers of pupils with lower levels of attainments were entering the secondary schools. This policy encouraged the development and provision of gender-specific education. It also aggravated the situation where high-status knowledge was thought to be synonymous with academic knowledge and low-status knowledge was equated with vocational knowledge. Hogben never seriously challenged the hegemony of academic knowledge. He did attempt to raise the status of vocational knowledge but he never succeeded. In fact, the reverse occurred and

it is now well documented that the Technical High Schools and the District High Schools, who were charged with the task of presenting a vocational education, gradually became more academic in nature. Hogben was concerned that all pupils should not be subjected to an academic and exam-dominated curriculum and, as a result, agricultural education was supplied for the less academically able boy.

This was certainly the situation with domestic education. It was originally intended for the less academically able girl. However, as popular social theory was inclined to regard all girls as less intellectually able, it gradually became mandatory in all secondary schools. It even became an integral part of the education of those girls desiring a professional career. This happened gradually. Domestic Science began to replace all other forms of science for girls and in 1914, Home Science became an examinable subject for the Public Service Examinations and the Intermediate Examinations. The recommendations of the General Council of Education advised that Home Science become compulsory fare for all secondary school girls by replacing the 'pure' sciences of physics and chemistry. It was not only considered an easier and more suitable science subject for girls, it was also cheaper, required less expensive equipment and facilities, and was seen to be more useful for the future occupations of women. This move was not applauded by the growing number of women who wished to specialise in science at an advanced level. It placed them at a distinct disadvantage when compared to boys who had previously studied physics and chemistry. Due to its vocational and practical nature, however, domestic education suffered the same fate as agricultural education, and neither were popular choices of the pupils. If girls had to choose between domestic and commercial education, they usually opted for the latter. This was very much the case at Feilding Agricultural High School.

In his attempts to elevate the status of both agricultural education and domestic education, Hogben attempted to give them both a higher public profile by emphasising their scientific content. Both subjects were elevated to Matriculation subjects. At the same time as the degree-conferring status of Lincoln Agricultural College in the South Island was being emphasised, a new School of Home Science was opened in Dunedin in 1911. A Chair of Home Science had been instituted at Otago University College through the philanthropic gestures of Colonel Studholme of Canterbury. This move was ardently supported by the Truby King faction. The first women Home Science graduates began appearing three years later. However, despite the excellent quality of the Home Science degree course designed by New Zealand's first woman professor, Winifred Boys-Smith, the numbers of girls taking Home Science never reached overwhelming proportions. Feilding Agricultural High School seemed to fit this pattern and despite Wild's choice of Miss Fox, a graduate of this School of Home Science, as his Domestic Science Teacher, the girls of Feilding Agricultural High School never enrolled for the course in large numbers.

Wild himself was placed in a predicament with the implementation of his desired three-tiered curriculum. He disliked the academic curriculum and overwhelming domination of the Matriculation Exam, and undoubtedly he would have liked to jettison it altogether, as Strachan had done. He realised, however, that if he wished to make a success of his School, he would have to capitulate to some degree to parental demands. In a statement to his Board of Governors, Wild discussed the selection of courses and he maintained that these relied mainly upon the inclination and aptitude of the pupils together with the parents' opinions and desires. He claimed that there were no problems

with pupils seeking a university education for the professions. He encouraged these pupils to take the Matriculation course for, no matter how much he personally disliked it, he realised that it was the 'Open Sesame' to employment opportunities. He also reported no problems with those pupils wishing to return to their country homes, as they would be encouraged to select either the agricultural course or the home science course. In the case of girls who wished to take up office work until called to a 'higher profession' (59), the School's commercial teacher was competent and familiar with modern business methods. As the commercial course had a large domestic science content, this course would be suitable for them. He thought that problems were mainly caused by those pupils wishing to take up a professional occupation but desiring a commercial course. In this case, he advised them to take the Matriculation course. This was very sensible advice as a good general education was believed to be the first requirement of a commercial career. This discussion took place in 1923 and came in response to harsh local criticism that he was not providing a satisfactory Matriculation course.

Although complying to a great extent with parental demands by providing an academic course, there was no doubt that Wild's affections lay primarily with the provision of a satisfactory agricultural course. When this was safely established and he had guided it through its teething problems, he then turned his attention to creating an equally prestigious course for the girls, centred inevitably upon domestic education.

It is very evident that both agricultural education and domestic education had been tarnished with an inferior image as they had been associated with technical education. This had reinforced their suitability for the less academically able pupil and, as a direct consequence, parents did not wish their children to take such courses. Academic, and to a certain extent, Commercial Education, were seen as more desirable as they led to the possession of 'credentials'. This enhanced their personal and occupational prospects. Both types of education (agricultural and domestic) aimed at turning out a complete product, either a farmer or a farmer's wife. These occupations were desperately advocated by political and economic decision makers, as they were regarded as offering a solution to the urban drift. In a serious attempt to prevent the population shift to the larger towns and cities, they attempted to make country life appear as attractive as possible and they constantly reiterated the dignity of rural labour. Women played a vital role in the wholesome and healthy country life scenario. Domestic education was the key to ensuring that the country girl would be able to provide a comfortable and tasteful home for her husband-farmer.

In addition to servicing her husband's needs, her physical fitness would also ensure that she could help him with the work of the farm.

Both types of education were also advocated as producing a marked beneficial effect on the formation of 'character' and the development of a good citizen. It was clearly intended to turn out the magnanimous and caring citizen. In a curious and morally righteous address entitled, 'If Youth But Knew!', the Reverend Petrie urged all pupils regardless of their future occupation, to realise the worth of an academic education. Speaking in the tones of a parent rather than an educator, he maintained that if youth were aware of the advantages of such an education, there would be,

"...far less grumbling from schoolboys, yes and schoolgirls too, as they sat over their home lessons. What in the world can it matter to a good housewife whether it is true or not that the square on the hypotenuse of a right angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides? Or what boy is there who can really see how Greek or Latin is going to be of the slightest use to him as an accountant, or as an engineer or a farmer, especially a farmer? I confess that I cannot explain to you why it should matter to a housewife...but I do know this, that every housewife that is able to prove the proposition is glad that she did so. I do not know why a farmer is glad that he took the trouble to learn Latin, psychology, history or something else that has nothing to do with his daily work, but I know that he is glad. And it is just because it is so hard to let you know why, that I have fallen back on the phrase 'If Youth But Knew'." (60)

This was clearly contrary to the views held by Wild and one wonders at his reaction to it. He may not have agreed with the remainder of Reverend Petrie's address either, when he talked disparagingly about boys who spent the evenings on the streets, in the billiard saloons or in young men's clubs rather than fulfilling the real purpose of life which was reading or learning. Petrie despised the adolescents' obsession with superficial beauty which was expressed in,

"...silks and lace and fancy waistcoats and socks, in powder puffs and rouge. They rejected their former preoccupation with natural health and lost their athletic ideal as their developing bodies produced developing passions". (61)

After urging them to regularly attend Church, he requested that they live up to the best traditions of the School as the School was judged on their conduct.

Although the Reverend Petrie's statement was an extreme one, it contained the germ of a fear that many people seemed to hold, especially the 'concerned' middle class. The fear of youths, (usually depicted as working class), roaming the streets and threatening their security was perceived as a real threat, as Shuker's research shows. (62) A middle class solution to this was to provide agricultural education for the boys and domestic education for the girls. Agricultural education would offer the boys a practical and constructive alternative to the attractions of the street. Girls, who were successfully trained in domestic subjects, would offer the boys better prospects of courtship and marriage and generally exert a more civilising influence on them. Consequently the schools who were offering these types of education, could be viewed as agents transmitting the social and moral values of the middle classes. (63) The curriculum of Feilding Agricultural High School provided a good example of the educational system playing an integral and significant part in social and cultural reproduction.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

The historical development of domestic and agricultural education have revealed many common characteristics. Proponents of both types of education have usually emphasised three main aims. These aims are summarised as follows:-

- 1) That they could provide a viable and more suitable alternative to the academic curriculum dominated by the Matriculation Examination.
- 2) That both types of education were philosophically acceptable forms of social and moral control. They provided a constructive outlet for youthful energy and would consequently aid in the control of the working class larrikinism and its female counterpart.
- 3) They were purposefully intended to prevent the wholesale shift of the rural population into the urban areas. By creating a professional and scientific image for the farmer and by providing him with a domestically trained wife, the farmer would be more likely to retain his rural existence.

This chapter has attempted to show the ideological, political and historical motives underlying the structural provision of education for girls.

In the early years of the Twentieth Century medical spokespeople like Truby King and Drs. Batchelor and Ferguson, maintained that academic education was not a suitable option for post-primary girls as it led to irreparable damage of the reproductive facilities. They advocated that all girls should receive 'useful knowledge' in the form of domestic education. This would best fit them for the higher professions of wifehood and motherhood. They also prescribed curricula activities that led to the development of a healthy body and a healthy mind. These would facilitate the propagation of a superior race which could adequately defend its shores. The theme of National Efficiency was constantly reiterated. The Council of Education's recommendations in the Twenties resulted in compulsory domestic education and a simplification of the secondary syllabus for girls. This was to influence the direction of girls' education in forthcoming years. Despite the mandatory inclusion of domestic subjects and their elevation to the status of a science subject, they were never popular. This was mainly due to the fact that they were regarded as offering only low-status knowledge, hence they did not facilitate social or geographical mobility. Feilding Agricultural High School, in keeping with the times, offered a sexually-differentiated curriculum. Agricultural education was intended for the majority of the boys. Domestic education was intended for the majority of the girls. Wild had to revise these intentions, however, when the numbers of girls enrolling for the Domestic Course declined rapidly. The addition of horticulture into the domestic education course was explicitly aimed at producing a competent farmers' assistant.

In conclusion, whilst Wild viewed the education of girls at Feilding Agricultural High School with importance, it was a domestic education which best fitted her for becoming a good mother and a good farmer's wife.

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CHAPTER FIVE

COMMEMORATION DAY AND SELECTED ADDRESSES

Wild inaugurated a celebration of the School's history with the creation of Commemoration Day. This was a vital step in the formation of the School's tradition and was again adopted from the distinctive British tradition of the Public Schools. Commemoration Day had been celebrated by these schools since the time of the Reformation. They involved annually setting aside a day for the School's reunion of their ex-pupils and the honouring of the School's founders and benefactors. At Feilding Agricultural High School, the Commemoration Days were developed for the same purpose and they relied heavily upon the gratuitous assistance of the Old Pupils' Association, which had been formed during the first year of the School's existence. The format of the first Commemoration Day, which was held on 24th August 1922, was clearly defined by Wild and the O.P.A. and by 1946, the year of Wild's retirement, the pattern of the ceremony had changed very little.

The proceedings always commenced with an emphasis on the spiritual values of the School by means of a religious ceremony celebrated rotationally in Feilding Churches of different denominations. These were held on the Sunday preceding Commemoration Day proper. The latter began with a roll call of past and present pupils at 9 a.m. in the School. Before the Assembly Hall was erected, this took place in the corridor, and the school magazine records in detail the entire proceedings of every Commemoration Day up to the present day. Following the capping of the First Fifteen Football team, the ex-pupils dispersed to their former classrooms until morning break. The whole school would then assemble for the formal ceremony together with the old pupils, the Principal and his wife, the Board of Managers, friends of the School and the guest speaker. This Ceremony began with prayers, readings and hymns, and led to the addresses of the Principal and guest speaker. These were followed by votes of thanks from the Chairman of the School Board and the President of the O.P.A. After this the School Song was sung and everyone assembled outside the building whilst the guest speaker planted a tree. The afternoon session was devoted to team games between the past and present pupils and it concluded with the Principal's traditional tea of 'ham and pickles'. The final event of the day took the form of a social evening with dancing, competitions and games organised by the School Council. In the early years of the School's history, the annual Commemoration Day was a very popular event, always well attended and guaranteed to assist in the formation of the School's identity.

Rather than citing an endless list of Commemorative speakers and their choice of topics, hopefully a more valuable and fruitful method has been employed by the detailed examination of specific addresses. These were documented ad verbatim by the School's recorders at the time of their occurrence. They are of particular interest to this Thesis as they indicate some of the current ideologies and educational policies that a certain segment of post-primary pupils were exposed to during the years between 1922 and the mid-Forties. These were the years that the Technical High Schools were attempting to forge their own identity. Post-primary schools aimed at providing an alternative to academic education were in their infancy, and the onus was on them to prove their effectiveness. Some of these addresses provided a portrait (sometimes subtle, sometimes heavy-handed), of the external emphases assigned to these schools in order to maintain their own

special character. This was particularly noticeable in a rural town school such as Feilding Agricultural High School.

An analysis of the content of the addresses made by visiting speakers at Commemoration Day celebrations and also at Prize Giving functions, revealed that they fell into three main categories:-

- 1) The first category contained a set of speeches and addresses not united by any one particular theme. Their content and aims were varied and assorted.
- 2) The second category contained speeches which were all based on a broadly historical theme. They ranged from the local history of Maori and European settlers to the history of pioneer scientists.
- 3) The third category included addresses devoted to the education of the Farmer. They concentrated mainly on the professional and cultural education of the rural community and emphasised the moral and spiritual benefits of rural life as opposed to urban life. In an attempt to attract more boys to the agricultural course, the image of the farmer as a professional man and scientist was constantly reiterated.

The speakers included Prime Ministers, Governors General, Ministers of Education, Ministers of Agriculture, local M.P.'s, prominent Maori spokesmen, scientists, agriculturalists, neighbouring School Principals and many others. In the minority were those speakers representing various agencies such as the Young Citizens League, the Bible Society, the Missionary Society, W.E.A. tutors, Barnado Homes, R.S.A., The Young Helpers' League, the Students' Christian Union, League of Nations, Music Societies, Geographical Societies, etc. Interest in the moral, political and social welfare of the pupils was clearly the concern of many of these societies.

The three categories will now be analysed in detail.

1) ASSORTED THEMES

These speeches did not appear with such regularity and intensity as the two subsequent categories. They included speeches which focussed on explicit descriptions of the British Public School system, together with their 'glorious' trappings and traditions. Also featured were speeches and addresses that occurred during the Second World War and which were devoted entirely to the participation of the School and Nation in the 'War Effort'. They also included commemorative addresses by the Prime Minister, Peter Fraser (1943), Sir Harry Batterbee (1942), the first woman Commemoration speaker, W.J. Polson (1944), Keith Elliot (1944) and Major General W.G. Stevens (1946).

Perhaps the speaker most cherished by Feilding Agricultural High School was Keith Elliot, an ex-pupil of the School and a recipient of the Victoria Cross. A recent television documentary (1) on Keith Elliot highlighted the bravery and courage displayed by him during the Second World War. As one of only six New Zealanders to win this award, the School was very proud of him and he was invited to speak to the School on numerous occasions. During his Prize-giving address given just before the close of the War in 1944, Elliot exhorted the pupils to maintain and uphold the great traditions of the British Empire. He discussed the roles of both men and women during the War and the valuable contributions that they could make to New Zealand in its post-War recovery period. Along with the other speeches in this category, he honoured

the soldiers who had given their lives in the War, praised the distinctions awarded to the heroes of the War and generously thanked New Zealand primary producers for their contribution to the country's war effort.

Peter Fraser's speech made reference to all of these, and, in addition, included his favourite theme, that of providing equal educational opportunities for all New Zealanders,

"In the eyes of the Creator, all are entitled to equal opportunities and that, after all, was the reason why pupils were attending High School... The pupils of today must make the most of their opportunities to equip themselves educationally and technically, to take their share of life. They should know something of the best of literature and of art, but they would be deprived of all that unless they opposed tyranny." (2)

Throughout his Ministry, Fraser constantly stressed the theme of secondary education for all and Shaker informs us that he placed such enormous value upon the benefits of education, that even during the War, annual expenditure of the Labour Government upon Education remained consistently high. (3)

That Fraser aimed at equality of educational access and provision for every individual is not under debate here. However C.E. Beeby, who became Director General of Education in 1940, has recently claimed authorship of Fraser's famous statement which upheld educational equality. (4) The statement is here quoted,

"The Government's intention, broadly expressed, is that every person, whatever his academic ability, whether he be rich or poor, whether he lives in town or country, has the right as a citizen to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted, and to the fullest extent of his powers. (5)

Regardless of who actually wrote this statement, it was to have a profound effect on the future direction of New Zealand education. It succinctly expressed contemporary Labour Government's educational philosophy. As Beeby would be the first to admit, educational equality was never acquired by an estimated twenty percent of secondary school pupils. Despite this, his statement coincided so harmoniously with the current egalitarian ideal that it came to be widely accepted and regarded as the cornerstone of New Zealand's modern educational philosophy. That this cornerstone has been resting on a 'noble myth' is now being realised.

2) HISTORICAL THEMES

Let us now turn to an examination of one of the dominant themes that pervaded the majority of the addresses given by visiting speakers during the first twenty five years of the School's history. The most conspicuous theme is that of the history of New Zealand, and the first Commemorative address given by Hector Booth concentrated upon the arrival of the first European settlers to the Manchester Block. The second Commemorative speaker was Sir James Wilson, and despite his position as President of the Farmers' Union and Wild's reference to him as the 'Father of Agricultural Science', he chose not

to address the School about farming issues. Instead, he spoke about the Maori settlements of the Manawatu and Rangitikei districts. It seems, however, that whatever the theme of these earlier addresses, the majority of speakers could not resist the temptation to refer to the development of 'character'. Wilson was no exception and the conclusion of his speech ends with a flourish of emphasis upon the importance of character training. The recorder notes...

"Sir James urged the importance of character not only to the individual but to the nation. If the character of the people was not good, the nation would fall. The influence of Masters and the School helped to form the character of the pupils and their after life would also have an influence on their character, for science meant truth. The Scout Movement he strongly recommended for its effect on character. Self-discipline was most essential, not only in school work but in all things. Games played a great part in teaching unselfishness. Everyone should play games as long as he was able to do so." (6)

Again we find advocacy of physical training and self discipline endemic to the concept of character building. The Scout Movement was admired and advocated by most secondary schools of the era, not only for its stress upon character formation but also for its training in practical citizenship and patriotism - this was also clearly evident in the activities of the Cadet Corps. The prevailing ideal of the truly democratic nation was generally thought to remain unfulfilled until every member of the community had a thorough grasp of how to behave and act like a good citizen. This, in turn, was dependent upon the character of the individual, and it was thought that the main role of educators was to inculcate the requisite values and standards that would shape the individual's character. The newly emergent science of psychology was emphasising the fact that an individual was susceptible to training during the formative years of childhood and, in fact, Hitler's policies with regard to the young people of Germany seemed to be confirming this conclusion. It was being constantly reiterated that the State's most precious resource was its young people. This required that they should be maintained at the peak of physical fitness, through sports and games, and trained to possess the 'correct' mental attitude towards their Nation. This was executed through activities that emphasised 'character', 'duty', team spirit and loyalty. This provided a form of 'human insurance' in case national security was threatened. This emphasis appeared to increase during the Thirties.

A great deal of energy, organisation and financial maintenance had to go into the making of a good citizen with a good character, and more countries were confidently predicting that this investment would yield a successful return. The New Zealand Syllabus of Primary School Instruction stated emphatically that,

"There should be in the teacher's mind no narrow conception of what comprises character-building. In its widest sense - and this is the sense in which the teacher should regard his duty in this connection - character training includes not only right conduct so far as morality is concerned, but also desire for accuracy, love of beauty and nobility, willingness to co-operate with others, readiness to sacrifice selfish

desires, eagerness to give more than is asked. In its widest sense, too, character training includes even the development of initiative on the part of the pupils. If children are 'spoon-fed' at school, they cannot be expected to have strength of character. In after-life they will be the weaklings among the world's workers." (7)

Whilst it was not explicitly stated, it was not coincidental that the qualities demanded of the good worker were also those attributed to the good soldier. The Primary Syllabus then continued, in much the same vein as Sir James Wilson's address to the pupils of Feilding Agricultural High School.

"It has been said, and with a good deal of truth, that in no part of his school activities does the child reveal his true character so clearly as in the playground. There he comes in contact with his fellows and has a chance of displaying qualities of endurance, self-control, concentration, leadership and respect for the rights of others. He learns to accept defeat without becoming despondent and victory without being duly elated...Physical training and school games, rightly used, are therefore a powerful factor in training and influencing not only the health but the character of the child." (8)

Many of Feilding Agricultural High School's speakers devoted most, or part, of their addresses to the importance of character training in school and on the sportsfield. This often meant referring to the ideals embodied in the School Song, School Motto or their experiment into Self-Government. Te Rangi Hiroa's (Sir Peter Buck) Commemoration address in 1925 centred upon the migration of the Maori people to New Zealand. He urged New Zealand schools to place more emphasis on Maori history and he gave his approval to the School Motto. At Wild's request, he translated the School Motto, 'Kia Toa, Kia Ngakaunui' which, he believed exemplified the beauty of the Maori language and, as such, possessed a wealth of associations connected with it. He emphasised the ideals of courage and achievement and he concluded that the 'girls and boys of Feilding Agricultural High School should desire greatly, and by the exercise of their courage, they would achieve.' He also added that the School's choice of the huia feathers as their symbol was an excellent one, as they were the,

"...sign of the chieftainship. The huia might become extinct also the Maori chieftains, but the symbol would live on. The spirit of chieftainship, of leadership, of devotion to great causes would continue to be symbolised by the huia feathers." (9)

The value attached to 'leadership' was perhaps taken to extreme lengths in the address of another Maori leader, Apirana Ngata. In line with the paternalistic stance of the Government of the day, he enlisted the help and encouragement of the Pakeha in restructuring the lifestyle of the Maori people. He informed the pupils of the difficulties of the Maori people in coming to terms with Pakeha ideas - how through illness and lack of knowledge about European diseases, they had to radically change their lifestyle in order to survive,

"We want to follow the customs and occupations of the Pakeha, and the Pakeha says 'What a mess you are making of it!' This is heartbreaking to the Maori - encourage him, pat him on the back and he will do better. The worst disservice you can do the Maori is to laugh. Derision pains and hurts him. If you have taken up the White Man's Burden, then take it up properly. If you can understand our difficulties you can be of service to the Maori race." (10)

The ruthless policy of 'assimilation' could only have been strengthened by views such as these. Before the 1930's, the Maori people were often portrayed, as in this speech, as passive, inferior and totally dependent upon the Pakeha for an improved lifestyle. In contrast, Pakehas were viewed as safely entrenched in their position of superiority and could therefore afford to be magnanimous in their concern for the welfare of the Maori people. The whole Colonial policy of total domination is summarised by the use of Apirana Ngata's phrase, 'the White Man's Burden'. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss this policy and its gradual evolution resulting in the policy of the present day. However, it must be noted that these well-intentioned policies were to become dangerously divisive.

Other speakers who fell into his 'historical' mode were Prime Minister Coates who gave a biographical address on his predecessor, Massey. He informed the School assembly that Massey was a 'practical worker on the land and a firm friend of the farming classes'. Not only was he a farmer and a friend of farmers he was also a staunch supporter of the British Empire and friend of the soldier. Coates describes him as,

"...one of the staunchest and most optimistic patriots during the Great War. Never in the darkest days did he think the Empire would crumble or that the Allies would be defeated. He was a great Imperialist. Sympathy was a strong point in his character and returned soldiers and their relatives had no truer friend." (11)

Coates was obviously holding him up as the perfect role-model for the pupils of the School to emulate.

Addresses detailing the history of the Pioneer Scientists and Pioneer Farmers of New Zealand were given by Dr.E.Marsden (1931), Director of Scientific Research, and Professor Riddet (1935) Massey College, respectively. These were descriptions of people and events which were both useful and informative and free from the moral exhortations usually directed at the pupils. H.F.Von Haast, son of the famous geologist, Sir Julius Haast, addressed the School on two occasions. The first occasion occurred at Prize Giving 1933, where he distributed trophies and certificates and emphasised loyalty to the team, the school, the country and the Empire. This was the era where a great deal of faith had been placed upon the cohesive function of the League of Nations. It was thought that only through the construction of such an agency could co-operation between nations be attained and war discouraged. Sinclair informs us that in the late Twenties the Labour Party became very involved with foreign policy and they became 'steadfastly internationalist'. He also stated 'The existence of the League of Nations Union showed that there was, in the late Twenties, a growing minority which took an intelligent interest in World affairs.' (12) The growing preoccupation with international

issues intensified in the Thirties. This was very evident in the content of speeches by Wild and visitors to the School. It was also evident by the high numbers attending Somerset's 'Open Forum' at the Community Centre in the late Thirties. This was devoted to an examination and discussion of recent international events.

H.F.Von Haast extolled the merits of the League and stressed that world security would never be achieved unless the League was given unrestricted loyalty and support. His Commemoration Day address in 1935 was devoted to a description of the activities and adventures of his father and he presented the School with an autographed photograph of him.

The last speaker that came within this historical mode was the Right Rev. F.A.Bennett, Bishop of Aotearoa. Like Te Rangi Hiroa, he emphasised the importance of the Maori legacy to New Zealand history and he generously presented the School with a magnificent shield containing specimens of native timber which was to be presented to the pupil writing the best essay on local history.

3) THEMES CONCERNING EDUCATION OF THE FARMER

As stated previously, although some of the historical speakers gave interesting accounts and interpretations of New Zealand history, many of them used their speeches as vehicles for promoting and reinforcing the development of 'good character'. Under a different guise, this theme was also referred to in the second category of speeches which were devoted primarily to elevating the status of the farmer. It was becoming obvious to most educational administrators that agricultural education was not in demand and was certainly providing little competition to the academic courses offered in the post-primary schools. To the majority of the population, post-primary education, per se, was still a comparatively new phenomenon. Even in 1938, almost one third of Feilding's male primary school leavers received no post-primary or continuing education.(13) Although there is no hard evidence to prove that these school leavers came from the lower socio-economic groups, it is usually assumed that this group comprised a large percentage of the school leavers. La Trobe was constantly complaining that the majority of farmers had received no secondary education. If a secondary education was undertaken, it was viewed as providing pupils with skills leading to alternative forms of occupation. Most local parents resisted wholeheartedly any form of education which fitted their children solely for entry into farming. A complex structure of factors combined to make agricultural education a very unattractive option and these have been previously explored. In an attempt to change this active opposition, the educational authorities evolved a number of strategies. One of the most obvious was to elevate the status of the farmer to that of a profession in order to legitimise the body of knowledge that they wished to distribute. This is the position taken by most of the speakers belonging to this third category.

Dr. L. Cockayne, F.R.S., the prominent scientist, delivered the School's first Prize-Giving address in which he listed the reasons for agricultural education. He also discussed the scope and methods of agricultural education. Like all of the proponents of agricultural education, he maintained that as New Zealand was an agricultural country and most of its saleable products were derived from farming, the education of the farmer was of national significance. The extent of this significance could only be fully realised

when it was acknowledged that a great deal of specialised knowledge had to be accumulated before a farmer could be successful. This inevitably resulted in professionalising the farmer. Cockayne advocated that this knowledge was comprised of both theoretical constructs, for example, when dealing with the many sciences essential to agriculture; and practical constructs, when the farmer was involved in buying, growing and selling. As most professions had evolved their own specialist training schools, e.g. doctors, lawyers, teachers etc., then there must be equal provision for the farmer. Apart from Lincoln College, there was no means for the farmer to obtain a higher agricultural education. He admired the 'splendid aims of Feilding School where the idea, the spirit of agriculture is to permeate the teaching.' (14) He also advocated that practical and theoretical agricultural education should be accorded equal status and that it should be taught early in the pupil's life. This was prior to the establishment of Massey Agricultural College. The following year Dr. Cockayne's son, A.H. Cockayne, Director of the Fields Division of the Department of Agriculture reiterated the same ideals as his father. However he went one step further and advocated that the role of the post-primary school was to provide an essentially all-round general education which would provide the foundation upon which a specialised, tertiary education could begin in earnest. This position which did not encourage agricultural education at the secondary level was to prove a thorn in the side of advocates of secondary agricultural education until the Atmore Report of the Thirties. In the Twenties, the Department of Agriculture gained responsibility for all areas of agricultural education outside the formal educational sector. It was therefore in their interest to emphasise the professionalism of the farmer and to postpone any form of specialised agricultural education until they had charge of it.

It must be noted here that these views were not in accordance with those of Wild or Strachan. Two views of agricultural education became evident. One view which stressed a cultural and vocational notion of agricultural education provided at the post-primary level. The other, which stressed the scientific nature of farming and the fact that this could only be done satisfactorily at the post-secondary level. Whilst these views were substantially discrete. In spite of Wild's support for the first view, his aims also espoused the professionalism of the farmer and endorsed the scientific content of agricultural education. However, he maintained that these could be incorporated into the post-primary curriculum. One of the structural differences between the two views was that whilst one was attempting to establish a scientific and economic base, the other was aimed at the development of a cultural and social base.

The main thrust of Professor Peren's Prize-Giving address was economic. He maintained that the State should strengthen and build up its agricultural industry. It could only achieve this through agricultural education and research. He deplored the fact that agricultural education was not attracting the 'brighter' boy and was considered a lower status subject,

"The tendency was to think that if a boy was no good, he should be put on the land. That was wrong. The farmer needed to be a good all-round man. The country needed an education system that would encourage the best boys to go on the land." (15)

Professor J.B. Condliffe at the following Prize-Giving address apparently

agreed with these sentiments. In keeping with the ideas of Strachan and Wild, he believed that New Zealand should completely dispose of the old classical education system imported from Britain and should encourage an agricultural education more suited to New Zealand's unique conditions.

"The great English schools were founded for the purposes of training a small percentage to govern the masses. Schools in New Zealand must train its young people in winning wealth from the soil and not encourage them to look at the cities, as was the deplored tendency at present. In its efficiency in farming interests New Zealand had nothing to learn from other countries. Why not introduce the same efficiency in its education system?" (16)

Condliffe also deplored the act of 'cramming' for exams. That agricultural education could help to prevent the urban drift was not a new theory. Preceding chapters have referred to the fact that years earlier, Hogben had attempted to inject an agricultural bias into the District High Schools, not only to provide relevant educational experience for the pupils, but also to regulate perceptions of the rural lifestyle. A performance decrement in the country's economy was inevitable if the primary industries could not be maintained, therefore the country's administrators applauded and encouraged all attempts to minimise the drift of the population to the cities. Despite the fact that by the 1920's, over half of the population resided in the cities and boroughs, there seemed to be a deep distrust of city life rooted in the New Zealand mentality. The city was regarded as a congested, artificial construction, a source of physical and moral disease and a breeding ground for the evils of Capitalism. (17) It especially attracted young people and was thought to lure them into a life of crime and poverty. In contrast, the country was regarded as clean, healthy and wholesome and was brimming over with opportunities for the hard-working and ambitious. It seems contradictory that this idealised, utopian vision endured despite the emergent reality of increasing rural depopulation. Even more remarkable was the fact that prominent politicians felt the need to constantly reiterate the charms of country life. This was the case when W.S. La Trobe visited Feilding Agricultural High School, not in his capacity as Inspector of Technical Education but as the distributor of prizes in 1927.

Despite his office, La Trobe's vision of agricultural education was highly romanticised and in his speech, he seized the opportunity of attributing a creative and cultural element to the status of the farmer, thus making it appear a more attractive proposition to young people contemplating their future careers.

"In this School of yours, the distinguishing course is that of Agriculture which is at once a business, a science and a creative art. Properly treated it has therefore a high cultural value. To realise to the full its cultural value, the work of the classroom and laboratory must be based on the creative work of the farm. The atmosphere must be that of the craft, just as in the literary course, the atmosphere must be that of the poet, the orator and the philosopher. There is no craft that deals more directly or comprehensively with the things of nature than agriculture, none more subject to the vicissitudes of natural conditions nor will any deny that it

is a truly creative art. In its most scientific application it deals with the inner mysteries of life. It deals with life as the poet deals with words. In this School, the Board and the Principal have sought to establish those conditions, to create the atmosphere in which the full value of the training can best be realised. The work of the classroom is based on the work of the field, the atmosphere is as far as possible the atmosphere of the farm. To that end the School has been provided with a real farm. not as a training ground for ploughmen or harvesters, or other farm workers but as a place where the boys may smell the things of the farm, see the sights of the farm, feel the life of the farm, learn the crafts of the farm and gather materials for understanding the science of the farm. It is only thus that they may become cultured through the creative art of the farm - become in fact farmers." (39)

He was exploiting the idealised rural myth to the full. Unlike Caughley, the Director of Education, who, although promulgating a similar sentiment, was much more practical in his approach. Caughley, addressing the School in the last week of his Directorship, had sanctified all forms of manual work whether Domestic Science or Agriculture,

"....students working with their hands through their minds discovered a great educational value not made possible to such a marked degree in other courses. The boy whether he intended to be a farmer or had not thought of going on the land, obtained better value in the scientific and practical study of agriculture than in any other course open to him." (19)

Caughley's proposal of State financial support in order to offer a definite prospect of land settlement to the school leaver upon the successful acquisition of an agricultural education seemed a pragmatic solution to the financial difficulties of the small farmer. This method had been successfully implemented in Queensland, Australia and he saw no reason why it should not be adopted here. He also advocated the intensive-type of cultivation found in Denmark and believed that if New Zealand employed the 'Folk School' ideal, then agricultural education could be a life-long experience and the success of New Zealand's primary production would be guaranteed. Tolley, the School Board's Chairman, was very appreciative of the interest and effort shown by Caughley towards the development of the agricultural course in the School and he thanked Caughley for his participation in the securing the School's new farm in Makino. Caughley's ideals were similar to those of Wild. Both campaigned for the comprehensive type of school in which parallel courses endeavouring to offer both non-academic and academic courses could be provided. This type of school had, of necessity, evolved in the township of Feilding as it catered for the majority pupils desiring a range of courses. It was fast becoming evident that Wild's original intention of a purely agricultural school was becoming tempered by the residents of Feilding who were seeking academic options for their children. Consequently, in essence, Feilding Agricultural High School was, and still is, functioning as a comprehensive school.

In 1929, the year preceding the visit of H. Atmore as Minister of Education, fifty boys out of a total of one hundred and ninety eight pupils were enrolled for the agricultural course at Feilding Agricultural High School. This caused Atmore to deplore the general lack of interest in agricultural education especially when New Zealand was totally dependent upon primary industries for its stability. He promised that as Minister of Education, he would advance the cause of agricultural education and would integrate it into all of the post-primary schools of New Zealand. He also returned to the theme of agricultural education as the antidote to urban drift,

"...The mistake had been made in concentrating on the academic side, with the result that our towns and cities were today overcrowded and the basis of the main sources of the country's wealth neglected." (20)

He believed that the education system was responsible for unemployment and that the,

"...cream of the country had been lured to the big centres by the attractions offered by professional training....what was desired was that our boys and girls should have a proper understanding of the dignity of rural life." (21)

Wild was very pleased with Atmore's positive and supportive response. We have previously noted that in the Head's contribution to the School magazine, Wild stated that Atmore's visit was the most significant event of the year due to his public declaration that the Feilding Agricultural High School was the ideal expression of a New Zealand secondary school. (43)

Like Wild, Atmore wished to see a revitalisation of the education system and he maintained that it had been forced into the academic mould for too long. Atmore's commitment to a reactionary policy led him to a desire for parity of status between the practical and academic courses.

Professor T. Hunter from Wellington also maintained that the academic curriculum was the source of New Zealand's educational problems. At the 1932 Prize-Giving ceremony, he stated that,

"Education had started on the wrong lines in New Zealand. Instead of concentrating on the scientific study of agriculture and of the Polynesian races, the educational authorities had promoted the study of Latin and mathematics." (22)

He saw this as a tragic mistake and recommended that,

"the country should concentrate on making agriculture interesting and profitable to the people on the land and at the same time preventing land from greatly increasing in price every time it changed hands." (23)

Also praising the work of Wild in conjunction with the agricultural component of the School's curriculum, Lord Bledisloe stated during his visit in 1931 that he,

"...knew of no more vitalising form of education in any high

school than that being conducted at the Feilding institution - possessing an agricultural bias." (24)

Lord Bledisloe was Governor General of New Zealand at the time and he was an ardent enthusiast for all things agricultural. He firmly maintained that farming was the 'noblest' of all occupations. (25) He went on to stress the need for knowledge about the new art of managing grasslands and obtaining the best results from cultivating pasture. He deplored the trend of moving into towns and he believed that New Zealanders needed 'spaciousness of outlook' which could not be achieved in towns. 'There was no greater handicap than being cooped up in a town.' (26) After discussing the importance of New Zealand women and their significant role in the Empire, he then went on to extol the merits of Red Poll cattle! He then touched upon a raw nerve of Wild's by referring to the fact that throughout the School Prospectus the word 'co-operation' was missing. Wild hastily explained this omission later by remarking that although not explicitly referred to - it was implicitly stated in the whole of the School's policy.

Bledisloe also maintained that the three greatest discoveries relating to agriculture during recent years and which all pupils must be aware, were:

- 1) That four inches below the soil surface was an army of micro-organisms permanently working to make the land fertile - this discovery had revolutionised agricultural development.
- 2) Grass four inches high contained more nutrients than the richest cattle cake.
- 3) The Canadian discovery of producing stronger wheat containing more gluten. This was better suited to breadmaking.

Although his speech touched upon a number of topics it was basically calling for the provision of a professional agricultural education for the farmer and for his wife.

A few years later this theme was again emphasised by Peter Fraser who was visiting the School in his role as Minister of Education. Although Fraser's visit preceded the one discussed earlier by four years, his speech contained the seeds of his educational philosophy that remained with him during his subsequent years as Prime Minister. He propagated an ideal of education which was 'onward and upward!' and he maintained that a good, overall education should also embrace cultural opportunities or it would be 'no education at all!' This would gradually improve the quality of the nation as a whole. Speaking of the young people of New Zealand he maintained that,

" They should be better than the adults of today ... they had more and better facilities to make them so ... Wider education not confined to stereotyped ideas, the wonders of science and of many other things were all in their favour to make of their life a still better thing." (27)

He spoke of the value to the New Zealand educational system of schools like Feilding Agricultural High School,

"Modern schools gave opportunities to excel in what they really could do and the Feilding High School was particularly designed for this. It was doing this in many ways, carrying its work on into agriculture, the workshop, science and many other activities. Many people were prone to complain about the work carried on in schools of Feilding's type. With these

statements he was generally very tolerant and patient, but education must go on. There was no standing still in education ... stagnation in education meant its death and so in changing ideas on education, there was not necessarily a stoppage in the work." (28)

Unfortunately it is difficult to establish who these opponents of the 'new' education were. It must be assumed that he was referring to those traditional educators who upheld the sole legitimacy of academic knowledge.

His ideals of education were summed up in the comprehensive type of education offered by institutions such as Feilding Agricultural High School. It offered a commercial course, an academic course and a vocational course and all three courses offered by Feilding Agricultural High School were pervaded by Wild's emphasis on 'culture'. This latter was derived from Wild's deep admiration of the British Public Schools. It was not the academic bias that he valued but the cultural opportunities afforded to the pupils in such schools. For example, Wild seized upon the chance to profit from the art and music gifts donated by the Carnegie Corporation. He attempted to inject an appreciation of the 'finer things' in life to all his pupils. This fitted perfectly with the enhanced professional image that the educational administrators wished to bestow upon farmers. They realised that the country's economic and financial status was dependent at the time upon primary produce. They were earnest in their attempts to strengthen the agricultural industry which was seriously being undermined by the move of the rural population into the cities and into the manufacturing and commercial sectors of industry. One method of accomplishing this was to provide an education which attracted the 'right type' of client. They must have been aware that schools such as the Wanganui Collegiate were providing an academic education at the behest of their wealthy farming clientele. Consequently in order to provide an education suitable for the smaller and not so wealthy farmers, they packaged the manual and vocational courses with glossy 'cultural' wrappings. Therefore, Fraser's ideals and his optimistic view of a suitable education for all, was reinforcing the different types of education being offered to different social and economic groups. He did not really question the underlying structure of society, and academic education as distributed through the private and prestigious high schools was left intact and unaltered.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Commemoration Day was an annual School celebration that encouraged the development of 'esprit de corps'. Many visitors to the School were invited to give Commemorative addresses and these fell into three main categories. The most important of these was the category dealing with the Education of the Farmer. We find the usual themes incorporated into these speeches, such as the professionalisation of the New Zealand farmer and the prevention of the urban drift. The addresses in this category emphasised two major goals of agricultural education. One was aimed at providing the nation with a sound economic base. As the country depended upon its export of primary produce, then it advocated giving the farmer a professional and scientific education, preferably at post-secondary level. This goal was reminiscent of the Danish Folk School concept, which aimed at providing farmers with relevant agricultural and scientific principles and equipping them with appropriate political knowledge and skills. This group included speakers such as A.F. Cockayne, Professors Peren and Riddet, and Lord Bledisloe. The second major goal of agricultural education was concerned with strengthening the social and cultural base of the community. Wild, Strachan and La Trobe fell into this group. They maintained that rural education should be a life-long activity. As they were involved in the distribution of secondary education, this is the area that they were deeply concerned with. In order to make life-long provision and provide a social and cultural centre for the Feilding residents, Wild introduced the Community Centre. This second ideal of agricultural education was modelled on the Cambridge Village College concept. A further, and perhaps arbitrary distinction, was that whilst one group viewed Agriculture as a 'Science', the other viewed it as an 'Art'.

This chapter has attempted to provide an external appraisal of views, attitudes and expectations that technical school pupils were exposed to during the years 1922-1946.

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CHAPTER SIX

SELF-GOVERNMENT: A MICROCOSM OF DEMOCRACY

"In the Nineteenth Century, democratic government was seen mainly in terms of equality of political and legal rights, of the right to vote, to express differing political opinions and to organise political opinion through political parties, of the right of elected representatives to supervise or control the activities of the government of the day." (1)

This Nineteenth Century definition of democracy accurately describes Wild's theory of Self Government. The establishment of the Self Government system became an important distinguishing feature of Feilding Agricultural High School.

The School opened in 1922, shortly after the First World War. During this period of increasing international tension, many New Zealanders had their political awareness raised. In the following years they were to experience a world-wide depression, the creation of overseas extremist governments and a second World War. Military rule, authoritarian state control, and the adoption of Marxist principles were frequently regarded as a serious threat to the democratic fabric of many nations. This fear of extremism had encouraged the wide spread adoption of political democracy in New Zealand. Democratic ideals became intensely cherished, and political slogans containing words such as 'freedom', 'equality', 'consent' and 'dialogue' were frequently brandished by the Press and the country's politicians. Many institutions came to be regarded as miniature democracies and this was the case at Feilding Agricultural High School.

Wild constantly acknowledged his indebtedness to Strachan for the idea of Self Government. Strachan had implemented this system a year earlier (1921) at Rangiora High School. Unfortunately, the School Council at Rangiora was dissolved in 1950 due to the nature of its judicial function and its system of administering punishments. This had proved unacceptable to the staff of the School, and the School Council and its Self Governing procedures were abandoned. However, it still remains strongly in operation at Feilding Agricultural High School today. Wild's rationale for the evolution of the Self-Government system aimed at equipping the pupil with the skills and knowledge relevant to the creation of a good citizen living in a democracy. It was also regarded by Wild as an effective method of maintaining social and moral control and a means of fostering 'school spirit'.

In the 1920's, A.S.Neill was also experimenting with Self-Government according to democratic principles at his new school, 'Summerhill', in Britain. However, Neill's school was a private school catering for a middle class 'elite' and he was not compelled to work within the constraints of the examination system. Examinations were only undertaken by the pupils if that was their preference. Wild, however, was forced to work within the New Zealand state system and had therefore to accept the limitations that an exam-oriented curriculum imposed, however much he fought against it. This obviously entailed some form of central control and administrative organisation, as Wild himself observed.

"Control there must be, unless one is prepared to concede absolute freedom". (This was Neill's policy.) "Study periods must be arranged, instruction provided for and the demands of a system that makes examination passes an entry to employment must be met. Moreover, pupils must learn to accommodate the claims of the individual to the rival claims of the community. They must learn to be unselfish and to co-operate, the more so because they will later enter upon the heritage of a competitive society." (2)

It is upon this point that Wild's views differed from those of Neill's. Whilst Neill used the Self-Government system to induce a critical appraisal of the existing rules and conventions, Wild used it as a medium through which the pupils learned to accept the values and laws of their present society. As Wild himself remarked,

"This system of government had taught the pupils responsibility. It made the School a community of citizens and gave them a civic pride in the institution, each one having something to do toward keeping the School in order and maintaining its spirit. Self Government did not mean no government. It was not merely a matter of privileges, but of responsibilities for the making of laws and rules and seeing that these laws and rules were carried out." (3)

He further maintained that these rules could be used as a means of effectively producing good, law-abiding citizens. It was the latter that Wild believed was of the utmost importance,

"...Good citizenship consists not in obeying the laws because of the constraint of the police, but in obeying the laws because of respect for the claims of society of which each citizen is a responsible member. School life offers opportunities not only for breaking down self-centredness but for replacing it with the sense of community responsibility, for encouraging an appreciation on the part of the individual not only of his own rights but the rights of his fellows, and for getting the respective rights, duties and claims of the individual and the community in proper relationships." (4)

This emphasis on the individual's submission to the good of society was a philosophy that was also advocated by the British Public Schools with their emphasis on excessive loyalty to the team, the school, the country and the Empire. As we have previously discussed, Wild was very influenced by the Public Schools. However, he disliked the way that the Public Schools, (and those New Zealand schools that emulated them), attempted to enforce loyalty and good citizenship through a rigid, prefect-controlled system. The prefect system aimed at inculcating a high standard of moral behaviour through subjecting the pupils to a harsh system of physical punishment. He scorned the prefect system of schools such as the Wanganui Collegiate, where he had taught for a period of two years.

"Previous experience had made me familiar with one form of so-called Self-Government - the prefect system in the Wanganui

Collegiate School as introduced by Epsom. Prefects, however, are appointed by and responsible to a headmaster. They can be, and usually are, very helpful to teachers but their duties are outlined by the headmaster and their responsibility is directly to the headmaster. They do not therefore, bring Self-Government into the school any more than the appointment of non-commissioned officers makes a regiment a self-governed unit in the army." (5)

Wild states here that the Wanganui Collegiate referred to its prefect system as a form of Self-Government introduced by Epsom at the turn of the century. However, it is not thought of as such today. In Sangster's 'History of the Wanganui Collegiate School', he records that Epsom was responsible, not for inaugurating a Self Government system, but for reforming the School's system of pupil authority. He invested a great deal of authority in the Prefects and they controlled many of the School's activities from leisure and social pursuits to arranging their own meals and organising inter-school sporting fixtures. (6)

It appears that Wild's ideas differed from Epsom's, not in the functions of their 'officers' or 'prefects', but in their selection procedures. Wild based his electoral system on New Zealand's constitutional electoral procedures, where the pupils themselves elected Form and House Captains. The latter consequently took charge of various organisational and administrative procedures. At Wanganui Collegiate, however, the Headmaster was solely responsible for the appointment of his prefects. Wild therefore maintained that it was the nature of the electoral system that entitled Feilding Agricultural High School to label itself as a self-governing school.

From the School's early days, each form had at least one period a week which was devoted to 'Form Meetings' and Wild was usually present at these meetings in the role of chairman and in later years as 'advisor to the captain in the proper methods of procedure'. Wild purposely did not devise a system of school rules or penalties, instead, he decided to wait until the pupils themselves requested judicial action.

The first combined meeting of the staff, the Form Officers and the Captains of Swimming and Cricket met on 9th February 1922. They formed under the official title of the Consolidated Sports Fund Committee, and their agenda consisted of devising various means of distributing the levy of five shillings per head per term, that Wild had imposed upon all pupils for the purchase of games equipment. Within the Committee the staff had no absolute authority, but were allocated the same rights as all of the other members. These were the right to vote and the right to express an opinion. At the second meeting of the Consolidated Sports Fund Committee, the Committee awarded itself the control of all the public business of the School, in addition to that of the Sports Fund. The proposed motion which was carried unanimously was,

"...that this meeting comprising members of the staff, form captains, house captains and captains of all sports clubs be known as the Feilding High School Council, that it have control of the Consolidated Sports Fund and generally of all the public business of the School". (7)

Officers were appointed and the first School Council had come into

existence. The formation of rules and procedures were further refined and added to at successive meetings, and, in this way, a Constitution for the School Council gradually evolved.

In his capacity as Inspector of Technical Education, W.S. La Trobe seemed fairly impressed with the beginnings of the Self-Government system. In the first Inspection Report of the School, he stated,

"A modified system of Self-Government has been instituted by the Director among the pupils and appears to be working very well. There is no doubt that if the individual pupil can be brought to realise his responsibilities as a citizen of the School, the best results must follow not only in his school career, but also in his readier assumptions of the more important responsibilities which he will have later on as a citizen of the State. How far it will be possible by means of junior republics of this kind to teach the young boy or girl to assume responsibilities which are more often than not neglected by adults remains to be seen." (8)

The matter of discipline and control soon pre-occupied the Council and the first incident which prompted the Council to set up a Judicial Committee involved a group of pupils found loitering outside the room in which a Council meeting was underway. Part of the proceedings recorded by the Secretary of the Council, who, in this instance, signed himself the 'Clerk of the Court' are quoted with legalistic fervour:

"Proceedings of the sitting of the School Court on 7th March

President Sugden on the Bench

First case. H --, J--, and S-- were brought before the Court charged with

- (1) that they did loiter in the corridor,
- (2) that they did make an unseemly noise detrimental to the proceedings of the Council,
- (3) that they did show contempt of authority in that they did disobey the President when ordered to come into the room and explain their presence.

Defence: J--: (1) that the caretaker told them to go into the corridor while he swept the cloakroom.

(2) that he was not making a noise. H--: the same. S--: none. The prisoners were then ordered to retire. The court found J-- and H-- guilty and S-- not guilty. Mr Wild moved and Kilgour seconded that J-- and H-- be called before the Court, the seriousness of their offence pointed out and that they be reprimanded. The accused were then called in. S-- was discharged, and J-- and H-- convicted, reprimanded and discharged." (9)

Two points are at issue in the situation described here and both, from a present-day perspective, seem to be highly unethical. The first is the setting up of a 'trial by peers' procedure within a simulated Judicial Court framework, and the second is the reference to the pupils as 'prisoners'. Wild certainly endorsed this form of judicial system as a successful measure and yet, curiously, he abhorred the authority vested in senior pupils by the prefect-system. Under both systems pupils themselves were allowed to

administer punishments, and this included corporal punishment. Wild consistently maintained that trial by peers was a superior form of dispensing justice because he believed that pupils had access to information that the teaching staff did not. This automatically placed them in a better position from which to judge the errors of and assess the appropriate penalties for, those pupils committing misdemeanours.

In order to streamline procedures and prevent the assembly of the entire School Council every time an infraction of the rules occurred, a motion was put to the Council,

"that form and house captains, boys for boys and girls for girls, be constituted into a Judicial Committee to try all minor offences to obviate too frequent meetings of the Council and that anyone accumulating more than twelve days fatigue in four weeks be sent up to Mr Wild for further correction." (10)

In the case of physical punishment, the erring pupil could choose whether it was to be administered by the House Captain or by the Director. This never exceeded four strokes and was always conducted in the presence of at least three 'Prefects of the Week'. Wild appeared to have condoned the presence of 'prefects', providing that they functioned in a primarily monitoring capacity. 'Fatigue' was the usual punishment to be administered and this took the form of tidying up the grounds and doing other similar jobs around the school, either between 10.30 a.m. and 10.45 a.m. or 1.00 p.m. and 1.25 p.m. If the pupil had to undertake more than ten days fatigue within a period of twenty days, then he or she had to appear before the Committee for 'further correction'. Recording of the punishment, whatever its form, had to be done immediately.

The behaviour of entire classes also became the concern of the School Council and Form Captains were largely responsible for imbibing a spirit of loyalty and co-operation throughout the members of the class. 'Form spirit' seemed to be the criterion by which a class was considered to be either 'good' or 'bad' and if the latter, then the School Council examined the reasons underlying this and after a great deal of interviewing and observation, they drew up a set of recommendations. An example of this occurred in 1927 when Form Four AB was brought to the attention of the Council for possessing no 'corporate spirit'. Form Four AB was a combination class composed of the 'A' group who were the Agricultural Class and the 'B' group who were the academic class. These two groups came together for common instruction in some subjects. After examining the causes for the absence of 'team spirit', the School Council appointed a special committee consisting of two masters and four pupils. Within a few days the committee proposed various measures which included electing new Form Officers and a 'Vigilance Committee'. The latter recorded any deviance from the norm, no matter how trivial, and also recommended a generous dose of positive reinforcement from the Judicial Committee whenever the class displayed good conduct. They also recommended that class teachers,

"...during the next few weeks refrain as far as possible from any direct disciplinary measures so that the form may realise that it has been put on its honour in order that it may have an opportunity of regaining its self respect and putting its own house in order." (11)

It also suggested the awarding of external tokens for rewarding success such as the erection of an honours board to record 'meritorious effort toward the welfare of the form', a debit and credit record for daily observation of 'class spirit' and a work board to display the best piece of work of the day! Punitive measures and penalties were also advocated and other prescriptions based on moral persuasion whereby the, "...leading members can impress upon the rank and file the necessity of good form spirit, if the tone of the houses and the school is to be maintained at a high level".(12)

In order to prevent any further erosion of 'school spirit', the sub-committee advised that the class in question be closely monitored and any further signs of deflection from the corporate cause be immediately suppressed.

One can only speculate as to the quality and quantity of the contributions made by the pupils within these appointed sub-committees. Wild assures us that the intervention of the teaching staff into such recommendations was minimal, but certainly, in the early days at least, Wild's dominant personality must have had some influence on the formation of the pupils' ideas and proposals. To give him credit, Wild himself, was very conscious of this, and in an alleged case of cheating, he left the School Council, minus staff members, completely to its own devices. This aimed at the creation of a policy which dealt with the cheating issue. After a lengthy interval and many meetings, Wild was impressed with the thoroughness of their examination of the evidence. Also at their presentation of a set of recommendations which advised a 'series of punishments adjusted to the seriousness of individual cases and to the standing of the pupils in the school.'(13) They varied from reprimands in private to corporal punishment.

The British Parliamentary System had provided the model for the development of New Zealand's governing system, and it was this system that Wild wished to replicate. His intention was that the structure of the School's Self-Government system and its concomitant electoral procedures, should be an effective and meaningful exercise in training for citizenship within a democratic framework. His opinion was, '...that such practical work is a better training for citizenship than the usual lessons on how Parliament is elected and how it makes laws'.(14)

The School Council was also responsible for presenting various petitions and proposals to the Borough Council, especially when these concerned improvements and/or repairs to the School. Of necessity, they had to first acquaint themselves with the facts and procedures involved in this. They also organised the social programme of the School and appointed a Social Committee to take charge of administration and management of particular social events. Usually, they distributed funds to the various sporting and social clubs, library, school magazine etc., by allocating them certain sums of money from the subscriptions that they had received from each pupil.

Through a gradual process of trial and error, it was decided that before the new entrants to the School could become fully participative in the process of Self-Government, they should first pass through a probationary period. During this interval of initiation, members of the Council and teaching staff would familiarise pupils with the operations and functions of the system. When this was successfully accomplished a small, formal ceremony was conducted at

morning assembly wherein the pupils, if they desired, could swear their allegiance to the system. With hand raised, they would repeat after the Principal. 'I accept the privileges and responsibilities of Self-Government'. This was optional but Wild declared that very few declined to take part in the proceedings. The inauguration of the members of the new School Council was much more formal and it involved the members swearing an oath to the loyalty of the School,

"As a representative of my fellow pupils on this, the Feilding Agricultural High School Council, I do solemnly declare that I will use this privilege to further the interests, safeguard the honour, and uphold the traditions of the School". (15)

Most visitors to the School were impressed with the self-governing system, some however, such as P.C.Renyard and W.C.Austin, the visiting Inspectors in 1928, believed that the pupils had too much authority and they were sceptical of the effectiveness of such a system. They suspected that it may be the possible cause of a lack of respect for the teaching staff. However they reversed this view after a subsequent visit.

"With regard to the class work generally it has to be said that at a previous visit it was noted that, probably as a result of the measures of Self-Government relegated to the pupils in connection with the operations of the School Council, the teachers did not appear to have the full confidence and respect of his pupils. On this occasion however, there was little evidence that the proper deference to the teacher was in any way withheld and the work at all times was characterised by a very desirable heartiness and goodwill." (16)

Throughout the years, various amendments were made to the Constitution, however changes were never made without the final consent of the Principal. He was ultimately responsible for the organisation and welfare of pupils. Performing in his role of 'Governor General' he also possessed the power of veto on Council legislation and he had the right to "advise, guide and be heard". (17)

Training for citizenship was perceived as particularly important in the Thirties when there was a definite move away from any extreme political position. Political democracy appeared to steer a mid - course between Fascism and Communism. Both of these extremes were abhorred by the general public at this time and democracy came to be viewed as the ideal form of organisation for political and social groups. Strachan and Wild were probably the first to apply democratic principles to the internal governing structures of New Zealand Schools. Loyalty and dedication to the community, the established values of the democratic constitution, still remained an integral part of educational curricula. At Feilding Agricultural High School, the emphasis on citizenship and history, together with the activities of the Cadet Corps and the Self Government system, ensured adherence to these values.

The intensity of national fervour and pride had waned since the Twenties and had been replaced by an extolling of international harmony and world peace. (18) In a survey of School Journals preceding 1939, Openshaw found a strong anti-war theme and an awareness of the dangers of Fascism. (19) Peace, International cooperation and the League of Nations were themes also evident

in the policies of Feilding Agricultural High School. Wild, the staff and visiting speakers, constantly stressed these and encouraged the pupils to become politically aware of current World affairs. This influenced activities such as debating topics, the majority of which usually related to contemporary World issues.

Egalitarian and democratic ideals became synonymous, and education was charged with bringing this about. Advanced education was not only viewed as a necessary countermeasure to extremist propaganda, it was also regarded as the chief means through which an eligible electorate could prudently exercise their enfranchisement rights. The boom in numbers receiving a State secondary education also brought a growing understanding of the dangers that mass education could bring. Educational institutions in Nazi Germany had demonstrated how a whole cohort of young people could be indoctrinated by propagandist policies. This may also have been another reason for New Zealand's strong emphasis on the democratic nature of their educational system. Writing in the early 1940's, Murdoch urges that adolescents should be taught to critically assess propagandist literature and political statements. This concern was also felt by H.C.D. Somerset and it became the basis of one of the courses offered by him at the Feilding Community Centre. Murdoch also rejected the easy path followed by doctrines such as Fascism in favour of the difficulties inherent in democracy,

"We have chosen a harder road. Amid much that may discourage or distress, we find much to encourage and inspire. Our response in time of war has already been noted: the heroism of our fighting men; the fundamental decency and kindness of ordinary folk; the unflinching determination of all classes to destroy, whatever the cost, this terrible foe that has risen against us. And in times of peace we have that same steady resolve to give fair play to all classes, that attitude of tolerance and humanity, that dislike of cant and hypocrisy, that spirit of good citizenship which shows itself in so much unpaid public service, in financial assistance to any worthy cause. In the preservation and intensification of all that makes for the development of this spirit lies the hope of democracy." (20)

Murdoch's view, although somewhat complacent and self-congratulatory, crystallised New Zealand public opinion in the late Thirties and early Forties. It coincided well with the egalitarian and democratic ideals of the Labour Welfare State and its growing preoccupation with foreign policy and international initiatives. (21)

Democratic procedures were gradually introduced into the teaching methods of many Schools during this period. In these schools there was a decided move against authoritarian methods and towards greater pupil participation. This was aimed at encouraging responsibility and independence - the objectives of the Self-Government system of Feilding Agricultural High School.

It was thought that the full benefits of a democracy could only be reaped if the citizens were fully trained in the privileges and responsibilities that such a form of government could offer. On numerous occasions, the Sheaf reminded the pupils that it was their duty to exercise the rights bestowed upon them by a democratic state in a responsible manner. The Self-Government system was seen as a practical preparation for this and the School was

frequently viewed as a microcosm of society.

"In our School, we have a system of responsible government which gives all members of our small community a voice in affairs and a share in the responsibility and privilege of creating an environment here that will ensure to all, full opportunities for the best development of which he is capable whether in body, mind or spirit....On the whole we think we do so, and further we are learning to appreciate the full meaning of citizenship so that we may in due time take our place as responsible members of a democratic community." (22)

The Editor of the School Magazine stridently rejected the 'dictatorships', 'autocracies' and 'despotism' which were beginning to take hold in Europe. In order to prevent these from occurring in New Zealand, the Editorial concluded that it was important to reinforce and strengthen the truly democratic nature of the Parliamentary Institutions of the Dominion and Great Britain so that they could withstand external political pressures. This could only be achieved through a competent and conscientious training at school,

"Hence education in the duties of democratic citizenship is essential and hence also the value not only to ourselves but to our country of the opportunities provided here by our School system. We may pride ourselves a little that at least in our School, we have performed a part of our duty to the Dominion, but let us not rest at that but in time do our part to see that Lincoln's noble ideal of democracy - Government of the people by the people, for the people - shall be established as firmly in the minds of a thinking as in the hearts of an appreciative people". (23)

Amongst the visitors who seemed impressed by the system of Self-Government and the activities of the School Council, was Professor Hunter from Wellington. He maintained that, from an educational viewpoint, ever since the ancient Greeks had advocated it, Self-Government had been a very important principle which would leave a life-long effect on the character of the pupils,

"True education, as described by Henry James was to enable us to know a good man when we see him...Education must not only increase our knowledge, but must deepen our sympathies, help us to realise and understand and sympathise with the lives of the peoples of other nations....The development of self government would develop the capacity for so doing, therefore the Self-Government taught in this School would help the pupils to face the world's problems with insight, with sympathy and with co-operation." (24)

Although the benefits of the democratic ideal to the Nation, were pursued relentlessly by many visitors to the School, Hunter as illustrated by this quotation, admired the system for the development of personal enrichment and independence that he believed was brought about through such a means. We also find reference in Hunter's address to the first democracy created in ancient Greece. The ancient Greek experiment into democracy had not been repeated until the gradual evolution of the British Parliamentary system, the formulation of the American Constitution and the creation of French

Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen.(25) Philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke had also extolled the virtues of democracy and this had been taken up by later philosophers such as John Stuart Mills, Jeremy Bentham and John Dewey. Professor Hunter was probably very aware of this, and his radical affiliations with the Labour Party led him to applaud the democratic system practised at the School. One of Wild's colleagues from the University Senate congratulated the School on its method of Self-Government and praised the way in which it provided the pupils with an aim in life. He maintained that it was an integral part of the teaching of civics which was to prove vital to the successful development of future international relationships.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, the democratic ideal not only received increased public emphasis, it also became the panacea for all political ills. In an Editorial entitled, 'Seeds of Democracy', the Feilding Agricultural High School magazine stated that,

"In these days of international crisis the question must arise as to whether education has failed democracy, and then turning to ourselves we ask 'Is the Feilding Agricultural High School preparing its youth to face responsibility in this changing world? Basing all education on a sense of reality and loyal co-operation, this School aims to train boys and girls for present day life through keenness, health, self-discipline and understanding, using such modern methods as are of proven value. It makes co-operation a day-by-day reality giving each individual a sense of responsibility.....There are opportunities for all to share in the government of the School, there is scope for initiative and creative self-expression. There is training in clear thought and sensible action. It is a practical preparation for life, for it gives responsibility which develops the power to create, to make combinations and to meet emergencies....We believe in equal educational opportunities for all children irrespective of economic and social status of parents - in the elimination of racial prejudices and disabilities, and in the inculcating of the idea of international brotherhood and justice. We abhor the cultivation of intolerance, racial, social, political or religious and the deliberate use of fear, hatred and distrust as a means of education for a national purpose." (26)

This definition of the democratic aims of the School and the Nation could well have been written by any member of the Labour Government! It accurately described the prevailing egalitarian ethic of the Thirties and Forties.

On a similar theme in the same issue of the Sheaf, we find Wild saddened at the disintegration of the League of Nations and angry at Hitler's disregard for international agreements with his attack on the foundations of democracy. Wild maintained that the only antidote to this lay in the training of the individual to become a loyal and dutiful citizen and the best preparation for this occurred through the practical course of civics that the pupils of Feilding Agricultural High School were obtaining through their participation in the Self-Government of the School. Wild's brother, G.V.Wild, who had previously taught at the School and had received promotion to Technical Inspector of Schools, visited the School and reported on the self-governing

system. Not surprisingly, he was thoroughly enamoured with it and he referred to it in glowing terms maintaining that the Self-Government system possessed inherent value and it enhanced the 'development of the young citizen'. (27)

Not everyone was enthused with the idea of School Self Government, however, and Murdoch was one of these. He was very critical of Schools which observed the 'mechanisms' rather than the 'spirit' of democracy. (28) This meant emphasising civics, handling finance, and organising committees and social activities, at the expense of learning how to live and work together cooperatively. He thought that schools could never accurately replicate society due to the artificial constraints of time, functions and goals; maintaining that a school democracy could never be successfully implemented within the hierarchical framework of the school. He also considered that adolescents needed firm direction, guidance and control and that thrusting premature responsibility and freedom upon the pupil could be harmful. His theory that training for citizenship could not be compartmentalised and taught only in one small period of an individual's life, concurred with that of H.C.D. Somerset. Both agreed that training in citizenship should be a lifelong experience and undertaken in places such as the Feilding Community Centre.

Although his criticism was not aimed specifically at Feilding Agricultural High School's system of Self -Government, the School was certainly included in his description. Later, a former teacher of the School was to repudiate Murdoch's criticism that Schools like Feilding Agricultural High School were overly concerned with the 'mechanism' of democracy,

"Pupils have to be taught more than the mere mechanics of the system. They must be continually reminded of their responsibilities and privileges, of the importance of tradition and their part in maintaining it, of the good name and tone of the School, and all these exercises in one way or another are embodied in the practical operations of Self Government." (29)

In all fairness to Wild, he made every effort to overcome the 'mechanisms' of the Self Government system and he attempted to foster what Murdoch refers to as the 'spirit' of democracy.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Democracy was viewed as a moderate philosophy and political ideal. Fear of political extremism and overseas Government instability led to the propagation of the benign, caring and democratic Welfare State where national security was assured. Democratic ideals became embodied into State educational and welfare systems and this usually involved commitment to an egalitarian ethic. This was evident in the Labour Government's philosophy during the Thirties and Forties. Wild was concerned that New Zealand should function successfully as a democratic nation and that the most successful method for achieving this was to educate its future citizens. He thought that the introduction of a Self Government system which replicated national democratic ideals and procedures, was the type of education needed at his School. In consequence, he created a system which initiated pupils into correct electoral procedures, assisted them to administer School finances and helped them to organise sub-committees, socials and school facilities. He also thought it very important that a

judicial component be included in the work of the elected School Council. This led to the introduction of a Judicial Committee. The responsibility of this Committee involved rewarding and punishing pupils for appropriate and inappropriate forms of behaviour. They evaluated intangible characteristics such as 'form spirit' and if any form deviated from an acceptable standard, they were subjected to a variety of remedial measures proposed by the Committee. Wild regarded this as an effective method of gaining obedience, control and self discipline.

In addition to this measure of social control, Wild maintained that the Self Government system was, above all, a means of equipping the pupil with the requisite skills and knowledge for functioning as a responsible citizen in a democratic society.

"A democracy can only function safely if it knows how to choose good leaders and if every member has a sense of responsibility and the education that leads to clear as well as independent thinking'. (30)

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FEILDING COMMUNITY CENTRE

Undoubtedly, the Danish Folk High School was the single most influential factor underlying Strachan and Wild's concept of a 'cultural' form of agricultural education. As agricultural educationalists, they must have been very aware of the specialised function of the Danish Folk High Schools in educating their adult rural population. The efficiency of the Danish system of rural education was frequently upheld as a model for New Zealand to emulate. Like New Zealand, the Danish economy was dependent upon its primary produce and its population was small and widely scattered. However, unlike New Zealand, Denmark had a long 'closed' winter which was conducive to the setting up of residential colleges aimed at educating the farmer. The cultural, historic and social factors underlying the establishment of the Folk Schools in Denmark were also very different, and this made such a concept impossible to replicate elsewhere. However, it possessed some important principles which could be implemented successfully into New Zealand's system of rural education, and Wild took advantage of these when setting up a Community Centre for Feilding.

Wild's first public hint that he was considering the development of a Community College came in 1934, in response to the Carnegie Art donation. He stated,

"As for the pictures and other art materials, I have in mind the possibility of renovating the old Technical School. This building has certain advantages, including that of a central situation and therefore of accessibility to the community. It contains sufficient room for galleries, for storage and for a work-room or studio. The equipment for pottery is already there and it could conceivably become a centre of work and of study in arts and crafts. The present difficulty of providing for supervision by a competent curator is not, I imagine, insuperable." (1)

He then proposed an Art and Craft Centre, with library facilities, that could be used by the local community. Its facilities could also provide the basis of an extended course for the School's non-examination pupils.

His 'curator' came in the form of H.C.D. Somerset. Somerset was very knowledgeable about the Cambridge Village Colleges, a British interpretation of rural education. He was also an ardent advocate of lifelong education. The fusion of Wild's and Somerset's ideas was to provide the basis for the creation of the Community Centre.

Towards the end of 1934, Wild had been approached by Somerset who was seeking a teaching position. The precise nature of the position is unclear, but Wild's response indicated that if a classified teaching position arose at the School, he would contact Somerset. Wild concluded his letter to Somerset with this statement,

"I am quite sure there is the work for you here, if we could afford to finance it; and it is most unfortunate that it must remain untouched." (2)

The work did not remain untouched for long. Six months later, Wild made an application to the Carnegie Corporation seeking a grant of £2,500 with which to finance a proposed joint venture with Somerset. This was to result in "the development of an educational scheme in this district, with this School as its starting point." (3)

Wild's application to the Corporation provided a brief description of the High School, the old Technical School building and the community of Feilding. He then elaborated a scheme whereby the Feilding community could not only take advantage of the Fine Art Set donated by the Corporation, but could also develop a 'very promising adventure in education' under the auspices of Somerset. (4) Wild had already gained the enthusiastic support of his School Board of Managers who had pledged finance for the upkeep and maintenance of the Centre. Wild's application was intended to supply funds which would cover the cost of Somerset's salary at £500 per annum for a period of five years. Wild additionally requested a Travelling Grant from the Corporation. Both applications were endorsed by N.Z.C.E.R., as were the applications of H.C.D. Somerset and his wife, Gwen Somerset. Although Wild was not awarded the 2,500 pounds grant, both himself and the Somersets were awarded a Travelling Grant which enabled them to study adult education schemes in Britain, Europe and the U.S.A.. They left in 1937 for a four month visit.

The Somersets had both come from educational backgrounds. H.C.D. Somerset had taught at Oxford District High School and had gained experience as a residential Workers' Education Association tutor at Oxford. He had also collated material for his sociological study of a small, rural community which was to result in his book, 'Littledene'. His specialist areas ranged from Rural Education and Social Psychology to Political History, Art and English Literature. He was also very interested in current International Affairs. Gwen had taught infant children in a North Canterbury Primary School for sixteen years. She had become the Secretary of the Oxford Branch of the Workers' Education Association in 1924 and was also the producer of the local Drama Group. Both Somersets were interested in adult education and viewed education as a lifelong process. Both were concerned with the lack of educational, social and cultural facilities in the rural areas.

H.C.D. Somerset had long been inspired by the Cambridge Village Colleges of Henry Morris and he had been in contact with Morris for several years. (5) He was very eager to develop the proposed Feilding Community Centre along the lines of the Village Colleges. The dual aims of both Morris and Somerset were directed at making the content of their courses relevant to the special needs of their local community and also to provide a link between school, the home and the community. The practical and agricultural needs of the rural community were to be emphasised. Whilst the Cambridge Village Colleges were organised by a Headteacher-cum-Warden and made provision for compulsory, secondary education and informal adult education, the Community Centre at Feilding separated these functions. The Feilding Agricultural High School concentrated on offering a secondary course and evening technical classes, whilst the Community Centre focussed upon informal adult education.

The Somersets took advantage of their Travelling Scholarship to observe the first of the Cambridge Colleges which was opened in Sawston in 1930. Other Colleges were opened at Bottisham and Impington shortly after their visit. (6) Nash informs us that Morris's original plans envisaged,

"the co-ordination and development of all forms of education: primary, secondary, further and adult education, including agricultural education, together with social and recreational facilities, and at the same time furnish a community centre for the neighbourhood." (7)

These were to become the aims of the Somersets. They also visited and became very impressed with the Danish Folk High Schools and H.C.D.Somerset later produced a paper which traced their origin and development in Denmark. The Folk Schools were privately owned and received various Government subsidies. H.C.D.Somerset heartily endorsed the Danish Government's regulations which stipulated a minimum enrolment age of sixteen years. The only restrictions of the Government upon the curricula of the Folk Schools was that physical education should be made compulsory. Somerset concluded his paper with this observation,

"The result of their policy is that each school is stamped with an individuality of its own. To draw a subsidy, it must continue to attract pupils; to do this most Principals keep closely in touch with the needs of the community they serve. The people themselves are the judges of the schools, so there need be no examinations and few inspections. There are, of course, no diplomas, degrees or credits as a result of attendance at a Folk School." (8)

H.C.D.Somerset's observations in Denmark confirmed the influence of such schools and led him to endorse the Danish conviction that from one third to one quarter of Danish farm owners had made 'effective attendance at the Schools'. (9)

The success and widespread Scandinavian acceptance of the Folk Schools is well known. Their initial aim was two fold. The first aimed at preserving and strengthening the Danish culture, language and traditions when threatened by a hostile neighbouring country. The second was concerned with equipping the working farmer with leadership skills and agricultural knowledge essential to their successful take-over during a social revolution.

Wild also visited the Danish Folk High Schools during his overseas tour of 1937. He was very interested in the rural bias that they had successfully integrated into curricula subjects such as literature, art, history etc. This was the ideal that he had long been advocating and that Strachan had been successfully implementing in New Zealand. Wild was most impressed with the Folk High Schools' reliance upon the 'living word' as a means of learning. This referred to the open sharing and discussion of ideas between teachers and students which was a special feature of the evening discussion forums. These were similar to the Workers' Education Association political forums that H.C.D.Somerset had been familiar with when tutoring at Oxford, and they were to become an essential feature of the Community Centre. The Somersets also observed the Workers' Education Association structures that had developed in England and studied the Studebaker Forums of the U.S.A.

On his return, Wild was determined that a Community Centre would benefit New Zealand adult education. As funds for the Somersets' salary were not forthcoming from the Carnegie Corporation, he applied to Peter Fraser, the Minister of Education, for financial assistance. Gwen Somerset later informed us that,

"The plan was simple, it suggested that we both be appointed to the staff of Feilding Agricultural High School to develop a scheme of further education in the town and with headquarters in the old Technical School Building." (10)

Financial assistance was granted, and the Community Centre was opened in May, 1938. As members of the High School teaching staff, the Somersets were guaranteed security of tenure and the rights and status of regular teaching staff. The Sheaf Editorial proclaimed,

"This year marks the most important educational advancement in the Feilding district since the founding of our High School in 1921. We refer to the opening of the Community Centre....The idea of folk education is an entirely new one to New Zealand, so new as to make its immediate success doubtful." (11)

Wild, in the same issue of Sheaf described it thus,

"A kind of upper department to the School, something of a Rural People's University, devoted to the cause of adult education in the community.....It must not be thought however, that the Centre is merely a continuation school. Far from it. It does not teach subjects for exams; it seeks those people who want to go on thinking in this seemingly unthinking world." (12)

In accordance with providing education of a locally relevant character, the Somersets surveyed the township of Feilding shortly after their arrival in order to assess the needs of the community. They also wished to offer an educational and social service that was not duplicated by any other club or institution in the area.

The renovated Centre comprised of two brick buildings. The main building, with its top storey removed in accordance with new building regulations, consisted of two large rooms and two small rooms, an improvised kitchen, one toilet and a large attic. The smaller building was used for physical education until its conversion into a theatre. Initially, the Centre had to supply accommodation for the cookery and woodworking needs of the Feilding Agricultural High School pupils, but as these facilities were gradually made available at the School's central site, the Community Centre was now able to concentrate on offering adult courses. It also provided a suitable venue for other Feilding groups.

The courses developed at the Community Centre attempted to meet educational demands not otherwise catered for in the Feilding area. Feilding, although possessing a population of almost 5,000 (13), had no town hall facilities or other convenient, inexpensive meeting halls. The Feilding Borough Library was also very poorly equipped. The Somersets managed to gain free access to the Library for the residents of the Borough and insisted that the Country Library Service make special provision for supplying books to the Library. H.C.D. Somerset also managed to house the Nuffield Educational Foundation Library at the Community Centre.

Gwen Somerset also had a strong interest in pre-education and had been in contact with Dr. Susan Isaacs, world-renowned child psychologist and author. This had led to the development of two of the most popular courses offered by

the Community Centre - the Nursery School and the associated parent education classes. By 1943, Gwen Somerset had organised five Child Study Groups with a total enrolment of 164 mothers and 114 children. (14)

As the demand for the Nursery School was high, admission was restricted to those children who came from homes where the father was on active War Service or where the mother was working outside the home. All mothers were members of the Nursery School Council, and they attended the nursery sessions in small groups in order to observe and assist.

Gwen Somerset was very insistent that she was not providing a baby-minding service, as evidenced by this remark,

"On Market Days (Fridays), country mothers leave their children in the nursery class while they do their shopping, but they are not allowed to use the class merely as a convenience and must undertake some kind of child study." (15)

In her anxiety to prove that an educational purpose should be served by her Nursery School, she was aligning herself with the socially 'acceptable' form of Child-Care provision. Pre-school child provision had been historically forced into two disparate categories, one which aspired to the espousal of educational objectives and the other which came to be viewed as a 'dumping ground' for children of mothers working in paid employment. This had resulted in the separate development of 'desirable' agencies such as Play Centres and Kindergartens, and 'undesirable' agencies such as Child Care Centres. The former were philosophically acceptable as they had an educational label attached to them, however loosely. As this ensured a comfortable fit with an ideology which exalted the sanctity of motherhood and the domestic sphere, it made childcare respectable. Child care was regarded as strictly a women's issue and women were responsible for their children for twenty four hours a day. Any separation might endanger the development of 'bonding' and 'attachment' between the mother and child (John Bowlby). This put psychological pressure on the mother to stay in the home. In society generally, the increasing reality of mothers working outside the home was ignored and Governmental policies on child care remained impervious to fluctuating economic pressures and changing family structures. The Government could not afford to be seen condoning the practice of supplying Child Care facilities which supported women's paid employment outside the home.

Helen Cook, in outlining the development of pre-school provision (16), highlights the critical and divisive role of social class structure in the historical evolution of child care provision. The middle class mother was viewed as the successful model of motherhood and this ideal was supported by contemporary psychological findings which stressed constant and unbroken interaction between the child and her 'natural' mother. She did not work outside the home and she took her child to Playcentre or Kindergarten where she participated, observed the child-centred activities and learned how to become a good mother. Her aims were entirely compatible with current developmental psychology and educational theory.

The working class mother, in contrast, often had very little choice about taking up paid employment, nor did the solo mother or the mother whose husband was on active War Service. They were forced onto the labour market in order to survive. This situation also occurred during the years of the Depression.

Child care provision could only be deemed acceptable if it was seen to be fulfilling a charitable and benign purpose, and it was undertaken by the middle class for the benefit of the working class.

To give her credit, Gwen Somerset, although reinforcing this middle class ideal, was acutely conscious that for parent education to succeed it must never be 'approached with patronage, or dogmatically, or in a spirit that ignores the difficulties of a typical mother who must manage her home single handed and on a small income'.(17) It must be conceded, however, that she never seriously questioned the prevailing notion that the mother should maintain a permanent presence in the home with her children. She regarded that for most women, mothercraft was a 'full time and all-absorbing job' and that parenthood was undeniably a profession. Hence the title of her course which was 'The Profession of Being a Parent'.(18)

In 1938, three other Nursery Schools were opened, one of them under the supervision of Doreen Dalton at Strachan's Rangiora High School. In all these nursery school developments, Susan Isaac's guiding spirit can be discerned.

Gwen Somerset, however, realised that her theories regarding pre-school children could not be put into practice without educating the parents, in particular, the mother. Her aims were therefore, to integrate parent education into the provision of child-centred activities for the young child. In association with this, she also designed a Nursery School programme for the Fourth and Fifth Form girls of Feilding Agricultural High School. The Fourth Form course aimed at teaching the girls the skills of mothercraft, whilst the older girls were, additionally, being prepared for a Teacher Training course. She emphasised Child Development and the provision of a stimulating environment which promoted the strong, healthy growth of the child's body, mind and character. The girls assisted with the supervision of the children and they carried out systematic and extensive measurements of the children. The theoretical content of their study relied heavily on Susan Isaac's book 'The Nursery Years'. Much of the work was done in association with the Plunket Society. There was also a monthly pre-school clinic operated by an officer from the Department of Health. Campbell informs us that the Nursery School was the one course most nearly representative of all social sections of the Feilding community. Most of the other courses were heavily represented by the Clerical or 'White Collar' sector.(19)

Due to the successful functioning of the Kindergarten movement, Nursery Schools did not spread to other centres and they were gradually phased out of existence. The Playcentre Movement was introduced into New Zealand during 1941 by a group of Wellington women whose primary aim was to provide assistance for housebound mothers whose husbands were serving overseas. Their goals were a reiteration of Gwen Somerset's - to provide educational opportunities for both the child and the mother. In response to Mrs. Beeby's remark that the Nursery School was functioning as a Playcentre, Gwen Somerset, changed the name of the Nursery School to the Feilding Nursery Playcentre.

Other courses, directed specifically at women, and organised by Gwen Somerset, were the Marriage Planning Course and the Home Decoration course. The former came in response to a request from a group of newly married or engaged women, 'most of them unable to begin housekeeping until the War is over'.(20) The latter dealt with colour schemes, tasteful home design, furniture, flower arranging, lighting etc., and was aimed at the women living on a small budget.

All these courses seemed to be created for the benefit of women living alone and many of them were viewed as temporary war-time measures. H.C.D.Somerset was anxious in his reassurance that the home-related courses were not be regarded as home-centred.

"They do not deal in recipes, gadgets, etc....The courses are designed to give overworked women some relief from the home by taking away some of its worries and by pointing the way to a new art of home-life." (21)

Other centres conducted by the Centre included the Family Film Club designed as a common experience to aid the cohesion of the family unit; the Drama Society - the main group, called the 'Community Players', consisted of over one hundred members and was responsible for converting the former woodwork room into the 'Little Theatre' with an audience capacity of one hundred and fifty; Physical Education; Music and Art Courses using the Carnegie gifts; Psychology classes aimed at the maintenance of a healthy standard of 'mental hygiene'. Mental hygiene classes must have been particularly fascinating, aiming as they did at bolstering the individual against 'personal maladjustment' and helping to develop a 'psychological sophistication' which 'prevented him from being fooled too often by the propagandist tricks of the less scrupulous kind of politicians, leader-writer and advertiser' (22); In addition there were courses on English Language and Literature; Maori; Foreign Languages; the Practical Arts such as Bee and Poultry Keeping, Horticulture and Spinning (in response to a war-time demand for home-spun wool); the Open Forum which discussed World Affairs and New Zealand social problems. The latter was influenced by the Danish Folk Schools' Open Forums and grew from Somerset's participation in the Workers' Education Association classes. This was organised along the traditional Workers' Education Association tutorial pattern of lecture followed by open discussion. During 1940, membership of the Open Forum attained a peak of over one hundred members, however, when the War drew to a close, numbers declined to less than fifty.

H.C.D.Somerset also ran Child Guidance Clinics for children with behavioural or academic problems and he offered vocational guidance to school leavers. He also conducted individual coaching sessions for examinations, taught remedial reading and offered professional advice to teachers. Campbell describes the Somersets as 'general practitioners of education' who attempted to fill the educational gaps left by other agencies. (23)

Lectures and press articles were also produced by the Somersets and they offered the Centre as a meeting place for groups ranging from Women's Institutes, the Plunket Society and the British Music Society to the Dairy Producers' Association and the Young Farmers' Club. The Feilding Agricultural High School Board of Managers also held their monthly committee meetings at the Centre. The New Educational Fellowship group, under the Secretaryship of H.C.D.Somerset, also undertook various research projects, using the Centre as its base. It carried out research into the teaching of reading, the transition from primary to secondary school, home-school relationships, the in-service training of teaching and other educational issues.

The Centre functioned under the direct administrative control of Wild and his School Board and, as the Somersets also worked at the School, relationships between the School and Centre were close and co-operative.

Despite the breadth of courses offered, and the well-meaning desires of Wild and the Somersets to appeal to a cross-section of New Zealand society, especially the working class, the reality still fell short of the ideal. H.C.D.Somerset's sociological survey of the occupational distribution within the Borough of Feilding during the 1941-1944 period, revealed the two dominant occupational groups to be the Unskilled workers and the Farmers. (See Table 4.)

Somerset's data clearly shows that the lower the occupation grouping, the lower the enrolment at the Community centre. The occupational group most actively participating in the Centre's activities was the Clerical sector.

The Community Centre also produced a biennial publication, 'The Community Centre News' which advertised its courses, and it also published an annual report of its undertakings in the School Magazine. The latter was also used as a vehicle for attracting potential recruits to the Centre upon leaving school. However, H.C.D.Somerset's survey revealed that few young people stayed in Feilding to take advantage of the Community Centre. (24) He found that out of the 29 boys leaving Primary School in Feilding in 1938, 10 boys attended Feilding Agricultural High School, 10 attended other secondary schools and 9 left school completely. By 1944, 25 of these boys had left Feilding altogether. With regard to the girls. In 1938, the female school leavers amounted to 36, 25 of these went to Feilding Agricultural High School, 8 to other post-primary schools and 3 left school altogether. By 1944, 22 girls had left the township and of the 14 remaining, all had left school and 5 were attending courses at the Community Centre. Two of the most striking differences between the girls and boys was the considerably high number of girls attending Feilding Agricultural High School upon leaving primary school and, also, the high number of boys who received no secondary education. Also worth repeating is that almost a third of the boys and a quarter of the girls received secondary education outside the Borough. It can be assumed from Wild's statements that the majority of these pupils received an academic education at the High Schools of the neighbouring city of Palmerston North. It would have been of interest if a similar survey could have been carried out in post-War Feilding. Perhaps the loss of young people to the district would not have been so great. Nevertheless, this did not prevent H.C.D.Somerset from advertising the Centre in the School Magazine, as he maintained that participation in adult education was essential to the development of a good citizen living in a democracy. In 1943, after referring to the pupils as the 'makers of the spirit of the little democracy that exists on those school acres down there in North Street', he addressed the school leavers thus,

"But soon you will be leaving school. You will carry with you into the larger world the principles of self-government that you have learned. You will have a greater freedom than ever before, if the war ends soon, to decide what you will do with your lives. There is one great difference between the world you are leaving and the world you are entering, however - a difference so great as to be nothing less than tragic. It is this, for the majority of people there is no provision for further study. Except for those who go on to the university or to the training college, very few ever continue with properly organised thinking. Remember that when you leave school, you have greater powers of self-government than you ever had at school. You can decide for yourselves what you will study. It is important for

TABLE 4

OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS REPRESENTED
ON ROLL OF COMMUNITY CENTRE COMPARED WITH ESTIMATED
DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS IN
FEILDING BOROUGH 1941 - 1944

Cited in The Feilding Community Centre A.E.Campbell, (1945), 21

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS	ESTIMATED NUMBER IN BOROUGH	HOUSEHOLDS			
		1941		1944	
		No. REPRESENTED ON ROLL 1941	PER CENT OF EST. No. IN BOROUGH	No. REPRESENTED ON ROLL 1944	PER CENT OF EST. No. IN BOROUGH
I (PROFESSIONAL)	46	17	37	15	34
II (CLERICAL)	84	44	52	34	40
III (FARMING Etc.)	302	53	18	65	21
IV (BUSINESS Etc.)	105	23	22	46	44
V (SHOPS Etc.)	119	19	16	31	26
VI (SKILLED)	242	21	9	44	18
VII (SEMI-SKILLED)	190	14	7	22	12
VIII (UNSKILLED)	314	25	8	37	12
TOTALS	1402	216	-	294	-

Based on N.Z.C.E.R. Occupational Grouping Scale

you, and for your country too, that your thinking should go on in one way or another." (25)

The Somersets left the Feilding Community Centre after ten years. H.C.D. Somerset took up a senior lectureship and an associate professorship in Education at Victoria University until his retirement in 1963. He was a member of the National Council on Adult Education, a former president of the Association for Study of Childhood, a member of the British Psychological Society and a member of the International Education Commission of U.N.E.S.C.O. He died in 1968. (26)

When Gwen Somerset left Feilding, she was appointed the President of the newly created N.Z. Federation of Nursery Play Centre Associations. She also became the author of several books for and about children, wrote a Manual for Playcentre workers, and published an account of the Somerset's experiments into adult education at Oxford and Feilding. She received an honorary degree of Doctor of Law from Victoria University in 1975 and she is still residing in the Wellington area.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

The Danish Folk School concept, together with the donation of the Carnegie Art Set and the availability of the old Technical School building, provided Wild with the germ of an idea for developing an Arts and Crafts Centre for community use and also for the use of his non-examination pupils. He was very determined that his agricultural School should be seen to be furnishing a liberal and cultural form of education. This image could only be enhanced by such an addition to the School. Following increased communication with H.C.D. Somerset, Wild decided to expand his ideas to encompass a Community Centre which offered a wide range of educational facilities. This motivated him to apply for a Carnegie grant to cover the salary of Somerset as Director of the Centre and whilst this was not forthcoming, the Carnegie Corporation provided a Travelling Grant to the Somersets and to Wild to enable them to study adult education agencies abroad. Peter Fraser, the Minister for Education, agreed to the Somersets becoming Directors of the Community Centre and they were appointed to the staff of Feilding Agricultural High School. Wild and the Somersets were deeply influenced by the ideals of the Cambridge Village Colleges and the Danish Folk High Schools. They attempted to put into practice several of these ideals, and referred to the Community Centre as a 'Rural People's University'. Amongst the ideals they sought to emulate were,

- 1) the development of a special character suited to and in response to, the local demands of the Community;
- 2) the strengthening of the rural population and prevention of urban drift by providing a cultural, social and more importantly, an educational centre;
- 3) the provision of non-certificated, informal education which would help to develop a good citizen living in a democracy.

These aims, with the exception of the second, were partially fulfilled. The development of suitable courses at the Community Centre were planned after a sociological survey had ascertained the needs of the people residing in and around the Borough. The Somersets made every possible effort to accommodate to

these needs. However, it must be noted that their courses did not successfully reach the two groups of people they most wished to reach - the farming sector and the unskilled sector. Therefore, in this respect they did not successfully fulfil all the aims of the Folk High Schools or the Cambridge Village Colleges. That they provided non-certificated adult education, which proved popular is unquestioned. The two most popular courses were the Nursery School in conjunction with the Child Study Group and the Open Forum. The latter declined in popularity when victory in the Second World War was assured. The first was successful in that it provided an educational form of pre-school child care which was socially acceptable at the time. They also provided a social centre and venue for the various groups and clubs existing in Feilding, and H.C.D.Somerset carried out a great deal of Vocational and Guidance Counselling work. It could be argued that the School should be performing the latter function, but, as H.C.D.Somerset was also a member of the High School staff, he was probably functioning as such.

In conclusion, whilst the Somersets made a successful venture into providing adult education in Feilding, their vision of reproducing a Community Centre along the lines of the Danish Folk High Schools was never realised. In reality they came closer to the Cambridge Village College ideal, however, they separated the functions of secondary education from pre-school and adult education and whilst the Feilding Agricultural High School concentrated upon the former, they concentrated upon the latter.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Throughout the history of formal schooling in New Zealand, there have been pervasive tensions between academic and vocational education. By studying the early, and often crucial, years of a specific school, it is possible to more clearly analyse the nature of these tensions and their influence upon institutions. The claims of certain sectors of the community for specific types of education have seldom been compatible, and Chapters Three and Four in particular, highlight the different social and cultural theories upon which varying definitions of 'useful knowledge' are predicated. Powerful sectors of the New Zealand bureaucracy set the boundaries of, and scope for, educational provision. In so doing, they allocate 'appropriate' types of knowledge to specific socio-economic sections of society. However, the intended consumers of this knowledge have not always passively complied with the types of knowledge deemed 'appropriate' for them. Rather, they have identified the benefits that could accrue from high-status knowledge and demanded this type of education for their children, despite the intentions of the educational theorist and bureaucrat. This has resulted in a sharp distinction between ideology and practicality.

The preceding chapters have clearly indicated the conflicting requirements of educational provision made by the consumers of education on one hand, and the providers on the other. It is the purpose of this concluding chapter to briefly summarise these differential demands expected of schooling with reference to agricultural education and domestic education. This will be undertaken at the two levels of school and society.

PROPOSED FUNCTIONS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL.

In New Zealand, the main reasons for promoting agricultural and domestic education fell into three main categories. These were ideological, social and economic.

The ideological reasons included the development and maintenance of individual and national efficiency. During the period in question (1920's-1940's), it was generally regarded that one of New Zealand's chief objectives was to provide a fit healthy race that could defend its country and Empire. This was summed up in the philosophy of Truby King and the development of the Plunket Society. King maintained that civilisation had endangered the human race by weakening 'women's instincts and removing men from the hardy virtues of a natural life'.(1)

King's proposed remedy was domestic education for girls and agricultural education for boys. While he was clearly referring to the non-academic boy, King does not appear to have distinguished between girls of varying abilities or from different social and ethnic groups. He simply wished to abolish all types of academic education for girls as he thought that it impaired their reproductive capacities. The situation was different for boys. He believed that they should be encouraged to exercise both their mental and physical faculties to the full.(2) Both sexes had differential roles to play in

ombatting the enemies of the Empire and promoting a race of healthy, loyal New Zealanders. This philosophy was warmly applauded by a small, isolated country which was secured firmly to the apron strings of its 'Mother Country'.

It was a philosophy also inextricably bound up with attitudes toward youth and future citizens. It came to be widely accepted that the development of character and self-discipline would serve the function of preventing arrikinism, juvenile delinquency and its female counterpart. (Which, incidentally was never defined.) Agricultural education was believed to lead to the development of 'character' and would also assist in ensuring the constructive channelling of youth's excess energies. Domestic education was aimed at providing girls with the necessary tools for successfully courting and marrying the boys. When they had accomplished this desirable goal, their vitally important careers as wives and mothers would begin. Schooling had long been viewed as an agent of social control. This had been one of the prime justifications for the enforcement of State schooling. The State also increasingly took upon itself the former socialising role of the family, in response to the demands of a newly emerging middle class for additional protection from perceived juvenile crime.(3)

The most important reason promoted for practical education, particularly agricultural education, was the continuance of New Zealand's functional identity as the 'Outlying Farm of Britain'. Britain's manufacturing and industrial sector was rapidly expanding at the expense of its declining rural sector. Population growth was such that it could not provide sufficient quantities of primary produce for the efficient running of its economy. New Zealand fulfilled this requirement and in so doing, expanded its export industry. Refrigeration, the development of breeding techniques, pasture management and other advances in farming technology boosted rural industry and also changed the pattern of farming. All this combined to produce dramatic demographic and social changes in New Zealand. The key role of agricultural education was to enhance the rural economy by improving the quality and quantity of farming output. Domestic education, particularly in rural schools, was aimed at providing a capable and competent assistant to this new, efficient farmer, and more importantly, producing free labour for the family farm.

All of these demands must be seen as a response to a rapidly changing pioneer society. In the early years of this century, a pastoral economy was consolidated and as a direct consequence of refrigeration, intensive farming became the norm. Sheep, dairy and mixed farming predominated and meeting the demands of the British consumer market led to the development of a thriving export industry in primary produce. In accordance with these changes, the family structure of the rural population shifted to accommodate increased small, owner-operated farms run by a tightly-knit family network. Land settlement and rural tax and mortgage policies were being emphasised by the Liberal Government, and rural pressure groups, such as the Farmers' Union and the Agricultural and Pastoral Associations, were gaining more political clout. The Liberal-inspired welfare state was put into operation and was later reinforced by the actions of the new Labour Government elected in the mid-Thirties. A rural and urban dichotomy sprang up - each group having its own political and cultural affiliations. The migration of large numbers of the rural population to the urban areas caused severe social and economic problems. However, it also resulted in an accompanying expansion of the tertiary sector and, along with this came the creation of a new middle class

which stimulated the demand for a particular type of education. Evidence seems to indicate that the rural working class family viewed access to the more privileged 'new' middle class through education and particularly credentialling. Successful achievement of the latter provided a direct route to upward social, and also geographical, mobility. Most facets of life, whether private or public, were coming under increasing State regulation and control, and the ideals of the 'new' middle class were becoming the norm.

The State assumed responsibility for educational provision and, frequently, the type of education they considered suitable for the majority of the population, was not accepted. This proved to be the case with practical education and we shall now summarise some of the factors involved in its demise.

The Conflict between Academic and Vocational Education

In spite of the fact that vocational education was energetically promoted by many educational spokespeople, it was never successful. High status knowledge had long been conceived in terms of academic knowledge in the majority of societies patterning their formal educational systems upon the Western tradition. This was a direct legacy from the ancient Greeks, and it was probably Platonic notions that were responsible for the sharp divergence between pure and applied forms of knowledge. This distinction has probably affected past and present school curricula more than any other single factor. Pure and high-status knowledge became associated with the aristocracy whilst applied and low-status knowledge was designed for the consumption of the working and peasant classes. This inevitably linked knowledge with power. As educational institutions can be regarded as social artifacts, they tended to reinforce and maintain existing social divisions of society. High status knowledge, hence power, became the preserve of the ruling class and the aristocratic pattern of education was set. This remained unquestioned only in so far as it exclusively served the ruling class. However, with the introduction of Humanist philosophies, Socialist and Marxist perspectives, and the advent of the Scientific and Industrial era, the hegemony of the aristocratic mode was challenged. It withstood the challenge intact.

With the democratic ideal of 'equality for all' being promoted in New Zealand and the growing need for a minimally literate workforce which could successfully exercise its enfranchisement rights, elementary education for the mass of the population was introduced. Working class people were realising the power-conferring attributes that could be acquired through the medium of education. However, they were also quick to grasp that it was only the aristocratic pattern of education that could buy power. If they were to achieve equity, then manual and applied forms of knowledge must be avoided as they were associated with low-status knowledge, and this would strengthen their lowly status rather than improve it. As a result of this growing public pressure for education from organised bodies of the working people, the Liberal Government at the turn of the century, increasingly preoccupied themselves with education and social welfare. As the desired education was chiefly of the high-status, academic variety, the primary and post-primary schools responded by providing programmes which inclined heavily in this direction. The expanding infra-structure of State bureaucracy both created and absorbed a pool of newly educated young people. The labour market became more diverse and technical and it began to demand a higher range of expertise and skills. For example, the Hunt Commission of 1912 recommended increased

efficiency in the Public Service sector by introducing more regulated measures and standardised procedures for selection. It also emphasised the need for employing people who had the requisite technical and educational skills.(4) It looked to the educational sector not only to furnish these skills, but also to provide evidence of satisfactory completion. This came to be a major function of the examination system. Examinations came to be viewed not only as terminal qualifications, but also as portable commodities, in the sense that all sectors of the labour market began to use them as general certificates of educational attainment.

McKenzie cites the notable example of the Junior Civil Service Examination.(5) He claims that this was the first time in New Zealand that an examination came to be used in the credentialling sense. The Junior Civil Service Examination was devised as an entrance qualification for the Public Service sector in the mid 1880's. It soon came to be used as a selection device for other sectors of the labour market. It was a national examination and, as such, it provided a putatively uniform criterion of success. Prospective employers found this attractive and convenient.

With New Zealand's efforts to become economically autonomous, education in the sciences was viewed as essential to the development of both the individual and the nation. New Zealand was primarily a rural nation, dependent upon the production and export of high levels of primary produce. The science that was popularly thought to be relevant to this rural context was Agricultural Science. Unfortunately, when this form of science was introduced into the school curriculum it was regarded as an inferior and applied science which was expensive to implement and difficult to examine. Although included in many examination prescriptions, it was not popular as it was accorded little comparative value. The weighting given to Agriculture and Dairy Science in the Junior Civil Service Examinations, for instance, was a great deal lower than that given to English and the Languages.(6) This reinforced its low-status and gave less value to the consumer.

Despite the extensive efforts of educationalists such as Hogben, La Trobe, Strachan and Wild, to upgrade agriculture to the level of high-status knowledge by declaring that farming was a profession - this never occurred. As agricultural and domestic education were regarded as belonging to this practical and inferior genus, they could never confer power, even upon those students who had successfully achieved them.

Credentials and Social and Geographical Mobility

"If there is one insistent theme in rural secondary education, it is the tension between the demand for courses leading to work in the industries of the local community, and the demand for courses leading to qualifications offering the opportunity for social and geographical mobility."(7)

Nash's perceptive quotation adequately summarises the polarity of expectations inherent in rural post-primary education. On one hand, the producers of agricultural education were endeavouring to foster knowledge thought appropriate to country areas and, on the other, the rural consumers were demanding a type of knowledge which would facilitate their move to the town. Most research in this area has reached the conclusion that an academic education leads to a credential which is negotiable on the open labour market.

This enhanced the individual's life chances by offering occupational success and improved social status. However, the proposition that credentialling also accelerated geographical mobility has been taken for granted and not extensively researched. Yet, in the context of a rapidly declining rural population, this is very important. Lee, in his paper on the Junior Civil Service Examination, informs us that,

"Examinations, like the 'Junior' Examination served to allow young boys and girls, an opportunity to escape from the country and to obtain jobs in offices, shops and factories in the towns. Undoubtedly, any attempt on the part of officialdom to interfere with this mobility would have been met with extreme hostility." (8)

We have considered the urban drift at some length and referred to the fact that educational qualifications were being used as a passport to urban occupations. Possession of credentials, particularly if they had scarcity value, presented the school leaver with a range of career options. As early as 1900, John McKenzie, Minister of Lands in the Liberal Government, witnessed this occurrence when he stated,

"If in an agricultural district you trace the occupations followed afterwards by pupils passing the higher standards, you will find that a large proportion of them go into fancy occupations such as clerking, etc. than go to agriculture." (9)

Central to this brief consideration of social and geographical mobility is an analysis of the social class structure of New Zealand society during this period. Whilst little definitive research has been undertaken in this area, we have certain indications of social class divisions although these do not appear to be as sharply delineated as the social class structure of Britain. In his research into social and occupational stratification in New Zealand, Olssen (10) maintains that during the period of 1890-1940, a new middle class emerged and rapidly expanded. He maintained that a tripartite social strata existed which comprised of an entrepreneurial class, a skilled middle class, and an unskilled class. He described three sub-categories of the Entrepreneurial Class, these were the wealthy farmers, bankers and businessmen, next came the less affluent business people, merchants and members of professions such as law and medicine, finally came the small business people and small farmers. The Skilled Class comprised of artisans and tradesmen. It is difficult to ascertain which members of the rural sectors equate with this group. Olssen informs us that after the First World War the division between the top of this social grouping and the bottom of the Entrepreneurial Class grew wider and more discernible. The Unskilled Class included agricultural and industrial labourers, seasonal workers etc. and referred to arduous and poorly paid manual occupations. Categories of occupations also changed to keep pace with technological demands. This shifting structure of social and occupational positions facilitated the process of social and geographical mobility. Thom's quotation indicates the difficulty of gaining upward social mobility once a rural occupation had been established. He maintained that the social divisions of the farming sector were rigid and inflexible, and in his research into the District High Schools, he described the social strata thus,

"At the top there is the farmer who is well established and who may have several farms, each under a manager. From this more prosperous group, the rural courses in District High Schools, receive only limited support; the children are often sent to boarding school and, in any case, their parents often want them to have an education of a more conventional academic type. As we come down the scale, we reach the marginal farmer who is perilously near the line that divides the owner from the labourer. A bad season or falling prices may mean he has to give up his farm (temporarily or permanently) and become an agricultural labourer. Transition upwards is not easy. Farm managers and Sharemilkers may acquire sufficient capital to launch out on their own, especially if they have a large family who can help with milking.....The ambitious boy who goes on the land has very serious obstacles to surmount. This is often true even of the sons of quite prosperous farmers." (11)

It seems fairly evident that education was seen as presenting the school leaver with a wider variety of occupational options from which to choose. A.E.Campbell notes that one particular social group used education successfully in order to gain social mobility,

"The agitation for free post-primary education was essentially a move on the part of lower middle class families for the opportunity to 'get on' within the existing scheme of things. It was not a move for a 'new' education for a 'new' democracy; on the contrary, the desire to 'get on' was rarely balanced by a strong interest even in personal culture." (12)

This quotation reveals that it was not the content or nature of education that preoccupied the educational consumer, but that it was chiefly its function. Its function was manifested in the valuable marketable credential obtained at the end of a period of successful schooling. This implies that if a practical, educational content was made available which resulted in the same credential as that obtained through an academic course, then pupils would enrol for it. However, this is difficult to verify due to the fact that if a subject, like Agriculture, was made available at Matriculation and tertiary level, then it was quickly divided into a practical content which produced a practical farmer or an academic content which led to the production of an agricultural specialist, teacher or researcher. When Hogben integrated agricultural education into the prescriptions for Matriculation, in an attempt to provide an agricultural course which yielded the same qualification as an academic course, the result was a highly academic, text book subject which completely neglected practical work. Thom refers to this as a 'formidable dilemma', as 'to include a subject or activity in the examination system is to run the risk of having it formalised, to exclude it is to run the risk of having it neglected'. (13)

To a certain extent, the Commercial course was atypical. Like agricultural and domestic education, it offered low status knowledge; but, unlike them, it was very popular and it regularly attracted a high number of enrolments. It also had a sympathetic labour market with a surplus number of clerical jobs. This may have been the reason for its success. It also offered a means of geographical mobility, particularly for females, by offering them the opportunity of a town job.

Many sectors of society increasingly demanded credentials. Credentials were largely administered by the educational sector and they were generally accepted by employers (and parents) as an easy reference to the educational ability of the pupil. McKenzie (14) maintains that it was chiefly the labour market's use of credentials that shaped the type of education thought desirable. Employers demanded a certain qualification, for example, the Matriculation Examination, and pupils entered into a course of study leading to this. Consequently Matriculation lost its intended function of preparing pupils for University and became a passport to alternative forms of employment. The labour market was also able to demand a more advanced level of knowledge. If there was a surplus of candidates, then it could select those with the highest qualification and thus maintain scarcity value.

Many researchers including Thom, Jones, Shuker and Nash (15) have maintained that Matriculation and the academic course were demanded by parents who desired to provide the 'best' for their children. It was regarded as the 'best' because of its credential value, its high status and its access to upward social mobility. Despite this, some factions of society, mainly educationalists, have deplored the cramping and restricting influence of the Matriculation upon the curriculum, however, they have had to succumb to pressure from employers and parents and provide it. The constant demands for Matriculation ensured a fertile environment for the growth and development of an elitist education.

There was much debate between the 1920's and 1940's, with regard to the setting in which education should be administered. It was debated whether it should be provided in separate institutions, each following its own specialist course; or, whether a number of courses should be incorporated under one roof in accordance with the multilateral, comprehensive model. Each view reflected the underlying principles of two different philosophies. Parr's views were representative of the separatist philosophy. Parr maintained that each school should perform a different function for a different clientele. The Secondary High Schools should provide an academic course for sons and daughters of the professional class, whilst the Technical High Schools should provide agricultural and/or industrial training of a practical nature for the sons and daughters of tradespeople and artisans. Parr's views concerning girls' education did not feature strongly in his philosophy and he would have restricted them to Domestic subjects, whatever their talents, abilities or social class. Fraser's views of a multipurpose school, was representative of the second philosophy, and it had the popular attraction of subscribing to a democratic and egalitarian ethic. However, this led to a false impression because it was still offering three separate and distinct courses. Feilding Agricultural High School came under this category.

The Influence of Educational Psychology

Educational psychology was gathering momentum in the first half of this Century, and as it attracted more followers it began to influence views on the type and setting of education in New Zealand. An example of this was clearly evident in the various theories of Learning and Transfer. Before the Twentieth Century, the Formal Discipline Theory, proposed by the Faculty Psychologists, was generally accepted. This had been directly influenced by the aristocratic heritage of academic education. The mind was viewed as a muscle, and, as such, was to be subjected to constant exercise and rigorous discipline in order to remain in perfect working order.

The Faculty Psychologists maintained that only through academic subjects such as Latin, Greek and advanced Mathematics, could the mind receive the stimulation and exercise it needed. This prevented the mind from weakening with disuse and improved the ability to transfer learning to other situations. This theory was, however, questioned in the early Twentieth Century by E.L.Thorndike. Thorndike introduced a Behavioural view of learning; the Stimulus-Response Theory. He maintained that knowledge gained through studying ancient languages could not directly assist the learning of subjects such as history, music, geography etc. He developed a method of learning transference known as the Theory of Identical Elements. This theory held that the degree to which knowledge of one learning situation could be transferred to another was entirely dependent upon the degree to which the stimuli of the two situations were similar. Thorndike's theory influenced the school curriculum to a great extent as it directly affected subject content and teaching methodology. Schools began to actively prepare their pupils for their future career. Subjects such as domestic science, animal husbandry, book-keeping and modern languages were introduced as providing the type of knowledge which could be readily transferable to selected occupations. Course requirements began to change and adapt to fit the needs of the clientele and teachers injected a practical content into the curriculum in order to integrate their pupils' future job requirements. There is a clear parallel here between the type of education offered by the traditional secondary high schools and the new vocational education offered by Hogben in his Technical Schools.

Educational psychologists maintained that Thorndike's theory was too narrow and restrictive. They proposed the Generalisation Theory which emphasised the desirability of gaining knowledge about the underlying principles of learning situations. They maintained that the more different two situations were, the more important it was to grasp the general elements of the two situations, as opposed to the identical elements. This theory, although introduced in the United States, was contemporary with Fraser's era and his philosophy of providing a broad, general educational foundation, preceding specialisation contains similar characteristics. That Fraser was committed to such a policy cannot be doubted as his following definition of technical education reveals,

"Any attempt in the future under this Government, or a different administration to railroad children of a premature age into vocational occupations will be resisted by the Labour Party.....I hold most firmly that a man or woman's occupation should be ensured by giving them the benefits of the best possible education." (16)

It can be seen that each of these theories had a remarkable influence on the curriculum and pedagogy of New Zealand schooling particularly with respect to vocational education. Changes in school curricula do not occur in a vacuum but in response to educational theory and current ideology, and they will only be endorsed by school clientele if they offer distinct social and educational advantages.

THE POSITION OF FEILDING AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL

Howell and La Trobe, along with Hogben, were credited with the role of initiators of the Day Technical School. Howell, in particular, shared similar aims and ideas with Wild and Strachan. Although accused of inconsistency in his philosophy of technical education (18), his Principalship of Christchurch Technical High School which commenced in 1907, was directed towards the integration of social and cultural activities into technical education. Nicol informs us that,

"In the Day Technical School, and as far as possible in evening classes, he sought to develop an urbanity of manners and catholicity of spirit which New Zealand had not yet dreamed of associating with the vocational or pre-vocational training of clerks, domestic workers or apprentices. Girls and boys who would later on have to perform routine tasks in the home, the office or the factory had, he believed as much need and right to be brought into living touch with literature and art as the sons and daughters of society's 'most favoured households'." (19)

This view, although appearing benignly philanthropic, certainly did not question the practice of providing a separate education according to social class divisions. However, he was attempting to temper this education for the lower occupational strata with 'culture'. His rationale for providing a cultural, technical education was to enhance the corporate spirit and loyalty of the pupils. In addition to espousing this rationale, Wild went one step further and, perhaps influenced by his Wanganui Collegiate experience, attempted to overlay his agricultural course with a veneer of 'public school' sophistication. Wild's advocacy of a cultural form of technical education was used chiefly to upgrade the image of, and attract pupils to, the unpopular courses of agricultural and domestic education. That these courses were unpopular is accounted for by looking at the statistics. Immediately preceding the second 'wave' of Technical High Schools, agricultural courses were very poorly supported. For example, the following figures show the number of boys enrolled for agricultural education at technical high schools in 1917: Auckland, 61, Christchurch, 55; Wanganui, 29; Napier, 21; Dunedin, 20; Invercargill, 17. This accounted for 16% of the total male population of Technical High Schools. (20) With regard to the domestic course in 1917, 291 girls out of a total of 1,237 enrolled at Technical High Schools, which is approximately 23.5% of total female enrolments at Technical High Schools, this figure rose slightly to 31% in 1937. This rise was probably due to the increased emphasis on the importance of nutrition and diet during the Depression years. It compares unfavourably with the growing popularity of the commercial course which attracted 76% of female enrolments at Technical High Schools in 1917 and 52% in 1937. (21)

Five Technical High Schools (including Feilding Agricultural High School) were established in the early Twenties. These were Stratford, Pukekohe, Hawera and Hastings and they all shared similar characteristics. All of them replaced the former District High Schools, which were then disestablished and they became multilateral schools, each serving a small township. (22) The reasons for the creation of Technical High Schools rather than the expansion of existing District High Schools must be speculated upon. In addition to

Hogben's desire for the provision of technical education, Nicol maintains that public support was in favour of the comprehensive type of structure and preferred it to the single purpose secondary schools. However the reasons may also go further than this. The administrative nature of the District High Schools and the Technical High Schools were very different and this highlighted the discrepancies between salaries, capitation grants, and other grants and allowances. Also, the Inspectorate were different. Whereas the Technical High School had its own Board of Governors with direct access to the Department of Education, the District High School had to conduct its business with the Department of Education via the Education Boards, and therefore suffered from loss of direct contact, time, immediate resources etc. Thom describes the financial discrepancies thus,

"Looking at the more fortunate of the independent post-primary schools, with their well-equipped laboratories, spacious playing fields and amenities for staff, many secondary assistants in District High Schools have felt strongly that their own institutions were poorly equipped and starved for money." (23)

In comparing the payments allocated to District High Schools and other post-primary schools, Thom maintained that the former received £565 as against the latter's £888. Comparing estimated allowances per capita, the District High Schools received £205 and 10 shillings whilst other secondary schools received £520. (24)

It seems little wonder that local communities, like Feilding, put pressure on the Department of Education for a Technical High School, rather than expanding their existing District High Schools. As the Technical High Schools were obviously more expensive to build and administer, the Department of Education must have been totally committed to the philosophy of technical education. It was also rejecting the academic emphasis of the District High School curriculum and increasing the extent of its direct control over the post-primary area. This certainly appeared to be the case at Feilding. Tolley had a fierce battle with Fred Pirani, Chairman of the Wanganui Education Board, as the latter did not wish to relinquish his control over the post-primary educational facilities offered at Feilding.

A distinct diversion of role appeared between these second wave Technical High Schools and their larger cousins situated in the more densely populated towns. The smaller, country Technical High Schools served a multipurpose cause by offering a comprehensive and co-educational school for their contributing rural areas. The town Technical High Schools were larger, and served a single purpose - that of preparing pupils for a vocation. They did not include an academic course leading to the professions, as there was usually a secondary high school in the town fulfilling this role. They also conformed more to La Trobe's original conception of a Technical High School by acting as the 'nursery' of the evening technical classes and also by preparing their pupils for future industrial or home-life occupations.

Feilding Agricultural High School fell into the country Technical High School category and distinguished itself from these by concentrating upon its agricultural course. It rejected the title of Technical High School in favour of Agricultural High School and Wild viewed himself as an agricultural educator rather than a technical educator. Feilding Agricultural High School

also offered a domestic course for girls. It was not popular, and, like countless other Technical High Schools, it injected a domestic input into the commercial and academic courses to ensure that all girls received some domestic education. It catered for all sections of the community in that it provided an agricultural course, an academic course, a domestic course and a commercial course. We have discussed in some depth how Wild had to concede to the conflicting demands of two sectors, the parents and the Department of Education. It is to Wild's credit that he managed to extricate himself from a crisis situation by appeasing both sectors. This was done by providing an academic course (including Latin) aimed at Matriculation and thus capturing some of the clientele commuting daily to the Palmerston North Secondary High Schools; and by expanding the hostels in conjunction with the agricultural course. Without the hostels, Wild could not have filled the agricultural course. This meant that he had to seek recruits from further afield. He successfully advertised the agricultural course by introducing the Young Farmers' Club and by exhibiting livestock throughout the North Island. He also invited famous agricultural and educational spokespeople to the School and gained their interest in his cause. He could not have resolved his dilemma without some degree of ingenuity. That he was enthusiastic, knowledgeable and dedicated to providing a unique role for his School remains unquestioned. He could not have accomplished this, however, without Tolley and the support of neighbouring Counties. It was the latter that provided him with financial support for the development of the School hostels, without these, Wild's agricultural course would surely have failed. He was compelled to import clientele from remote country areas in order to expand his agricultural course and this earned him the applause and, more importantly, further financial assistance from the Department of Education. This enabled him to eventually purchase two permanent farms and extra hostel accommodation, which boosted his agricultural course further. As far as possible, the School Farms were conducted as a commercial enterprise and, once established, managed to achieve a firm, financial footing, especially in periods of affluence. The addition of the School Farms provided the pupils with a real farm environment, an ideal cherished by Wild, Tolley and La Trobe.

In keeping with the prevailing philosophy of the time, the girls, with the exception of one or two, did not participate in farm work or the agricultural course, instead their activities were directed to home-life courses with the addition of a little horticulture and poultry-keeping. It is unfortunate that remarks by people like C.L. Gillies of Auckland Teachers' Training College were not heeded. Writing in 1945 under the heading, 'From Agriculture to Rural Life', Gillies maintained that teachers should approach agricultural education with a deep understanding of and sympathy with rural life, rather than fragments of knowledge about soil and animal husbandry. He set out a broad agricultural scheme which included topics such as the history and current problems of farming, conservation of the rural environment -including its flora and fauna; the functions of the rural school; the relationship of the pupil with family and community. However, most importantly he concluded his article with this statement, "I would not differentiate in such a course for men and women, nor do I feel that it would be necessary to do so for boys and girls." (25) It is regrettable that the dominating ideology of the time confined agricultural facilities mainly to boy's education.

The majority of girls enrolled for the commercial course, but this was not the original intention of Wild. Girls' education was considered secondary to the important task of educating the boys along agricultural lines, as evidenced in the following quotation from his Valedictory Address.

"As we considered the agricultural course the most important in the interest alike of School and Nation, we should have on the staff only men who had the vision of good farming as the good life and some definite contribution to make on the agricultural side, even though they were also required to teach in the academic or other courses as well." (26)

In the same address, Wild also referred to the three main aims of the early School. These included the provision of 'academic and technical' courses suitable for the community; the provision of a 'specialised vocational agricultural course based on farm activities; and the development of hostel accommodation. He then looked at how far the School had fulfilled these aims over the past twenty five years and concluded that all three had been successfully achieved. (27)

In association with the Somersets, Wild also introduced the first Community Centre into New Zealand. This was an attempt to establish an educational and social centre for the local community and it was based on the Cambridge Village College and Danish Folk School concepts. Whilst it successfully provided a number of courses for adults, the most popular of which were the Nursery School Class in conjunction with Parent Education classes, and the Open Forum, these never reached the majority of unskilled and farming sectors of the locality.

Although Wild, along with many other contemporary technical educators, deplored the hegemony of the academic tradition, he was compelled to reproduce it. If he had not compromised between the demands for a dominant agricultural course made by the Department of Education and those for an academic course issuing from the parents, Feilding Agricultural High School would not have expanded as it did. The School survived the abolition of the Technical High Schools by providing a comprehensive, multilateral education and this appealed to the egalitarian ethic so dominant in New Zealand during the period of his Directorship. In many ways it remains a tribute to Wild's personage and vision, but it also, in a perverse way, epitomises the dilemma of the educational purist.

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