

2004 Human Resources Research Development

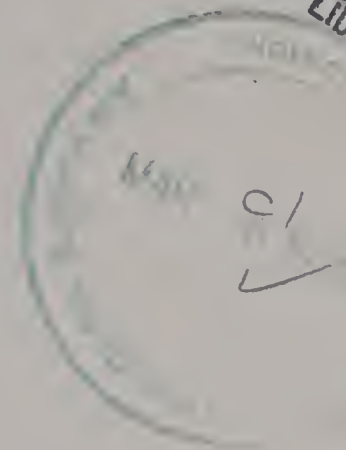
# Appendix D

# THE DIXONVILLE AND BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN AREAS

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# COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT





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**Appendix D**  
**THE DIXONVILLE AND BLUEBERRY**  
**MOUNTAIN AREAS**

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT

**DONALD C. HARPER**

Human Resources Research and Development  
**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL - GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA**

Edmonton, Alberta  
March, 1967



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The background information in the following report has been drawn from the following sources.

"Alberta Industry and Resources", Alberta Bureau of Statistics, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1964.

"Economic Report of Alberta's Peace River Country", The Northern Alberta Development Council, Grande Prairie, Alberta, 1965.

"Statistical Analysis of Census Division 15", Alberta Bureau of Statistics, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1961.

"The Changing Frontier", The Peace River Chamber of Commerce, Peace River, Alberta, and The Northern Alberta Development Council, Edmonton, Alberta, 1965.

MacGregor, J. G., Land of Twelve Foot Davis, Applied Art Products Ltd., Edmonton, Alberta, 1952.

Dawson, C. A., The Settlement of the Peace River Country: A Study of a Pioneer Area, Toronto, Macmillan, 1934.

A special word of acknowledgement should be expressed to Mr. Istvanffy and Mr. Sheppard of the Alberta Bureau of Statistics for their assistance in guiding the author to the appropriate sources.

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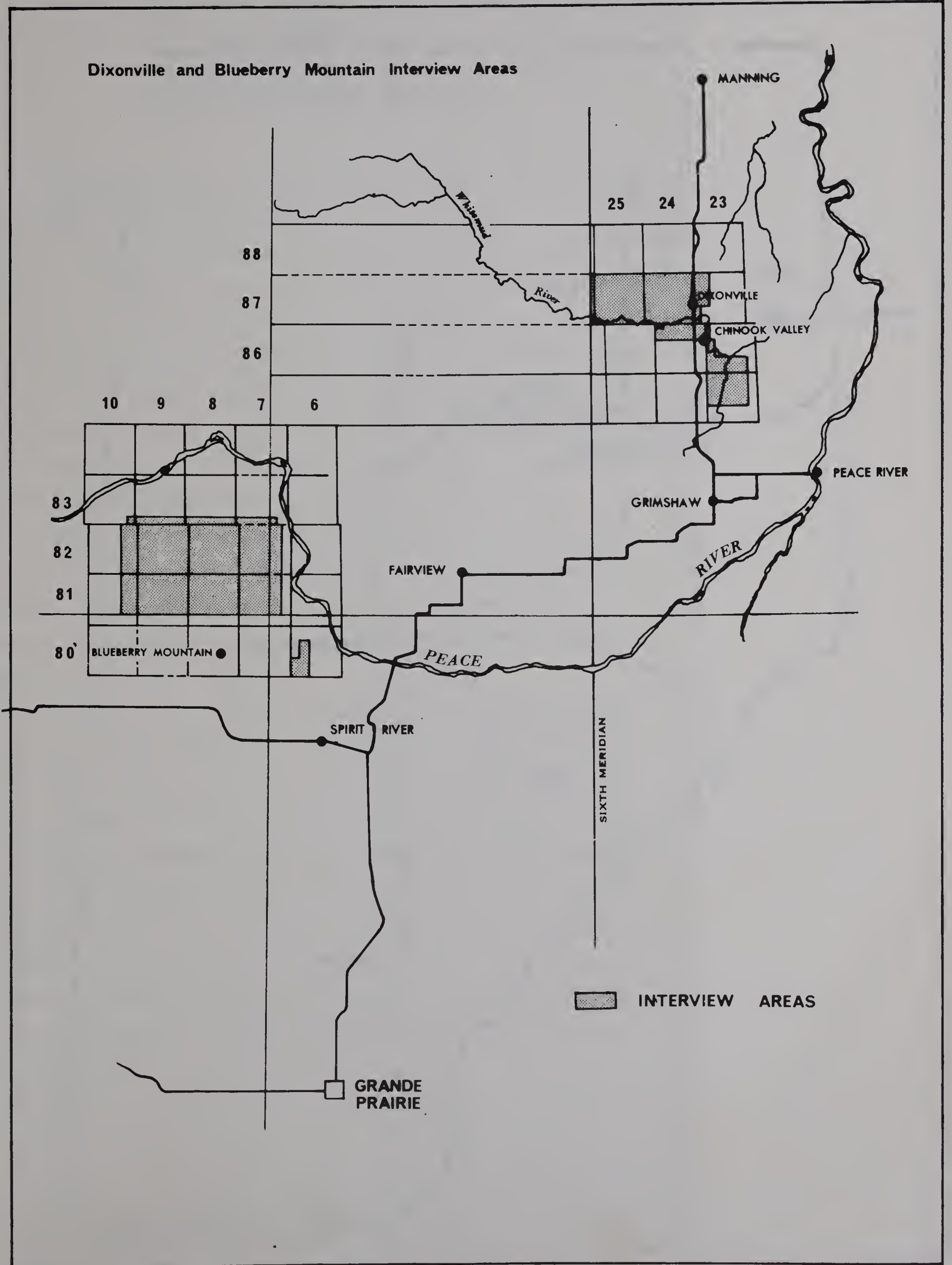


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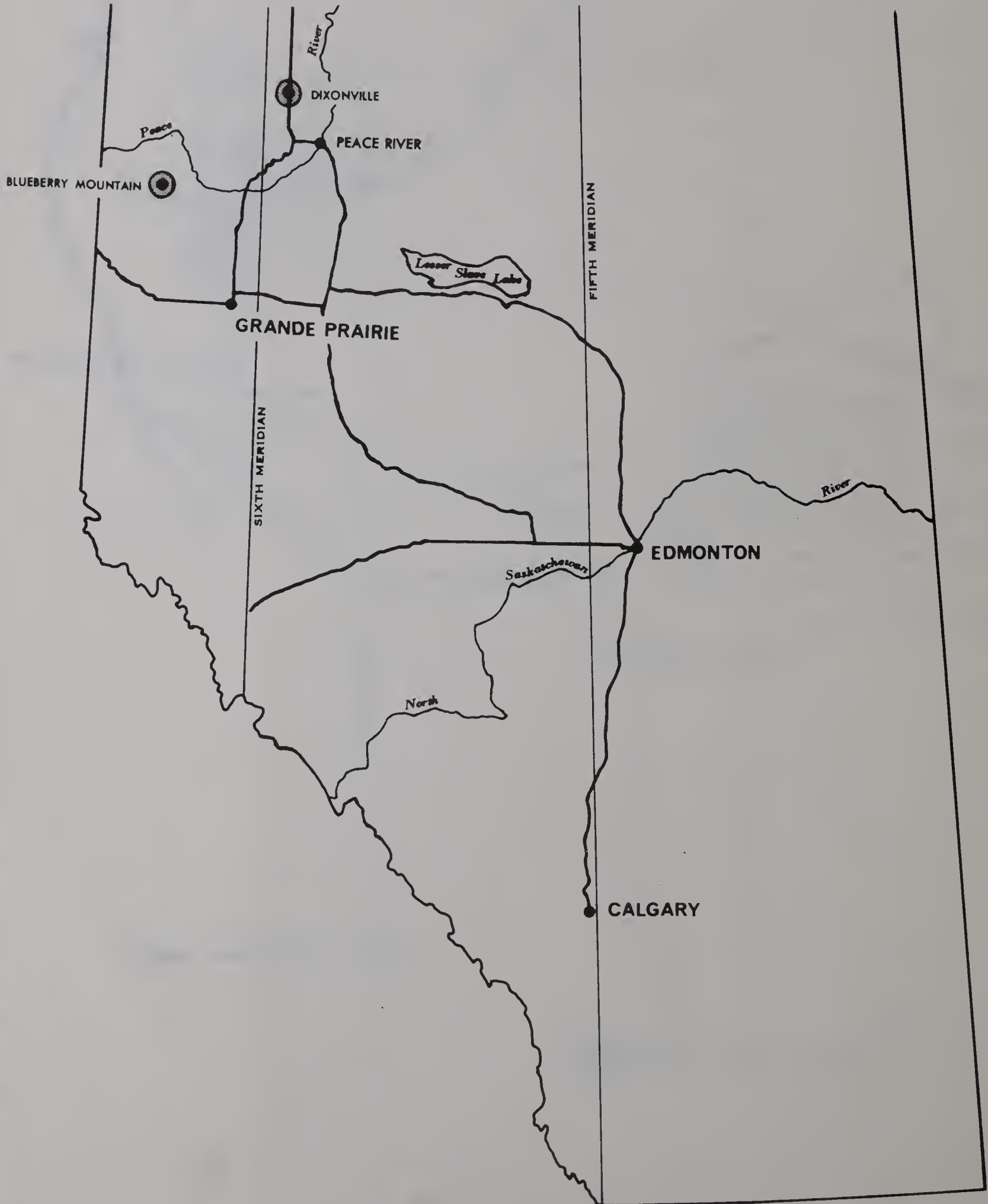
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Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain Interview Areas



Dixonville — Blueberry Mountain Interview Areas in Relation to Edmonton



## CHAPTER I

### LOCATION AND REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE DIXONVILLE AND BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN AREAS

The Dixonville area includes portions of Townships 85, 86 and 87, all in Range 22; the northerly two thirds of Township 86 and all of Township 87 in Range 23; and Township 87 in Range 24, all West of the Fifth Meridian. The Blueberry Mountain area includes all of Township 82 in Ranges 8 and 9, and the major portion of Township 81 in Ranges 8 and 9, all West of the Sixth Meridian. The Blueberry Mountain area also intrudes on neighboring townships to the following degree: Approximately one third of Townships 81 and 82 in Ranges 7 and 10; approximately one sixth of Township 83 in Ranges 8 and 9; and approximately one thirty-sixth of Township 83 in Ranges 7 and 10, all West of the Sixth Meridian.

The above named areas were included in this human resources survey because they might be considered "marginal", or "undeveloped", by certain standards. Another factor influencing the choice was the fact that the area has suffered three successive crop failures -- one through flooding and the last two through drought.

Blueberry Mountain can most properly be called a "frontier" area, in that most of the settling there has occurred within the past ten years. While there is still the occasional homestead being taken out in the Dixonville area, most of the residents have been there since about 1930.

Income figures reveal that a very large majority of the residents of the Dixonville area have received a net income for the past years of something less than \$2,000. This figure has been considered by some as the demarcation between those in poverty and those not. It is not possible to give income figures for the Blueberry Mountain area because many of the homesteaders have yet to harvest a crop and thus have had "no income" during the last few years.



## CHAPTER II

### GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS

#### Topography

The general topography of the two areas herein considered has been described as undulating to rolling. Around Blueberry Mountain there are rough parts along the main drainage courses.

#### Altitude and Climate

In Table 1, figures are given from the nearest meteorological station to the area under study.

CHAPTER II TABLE 1

ALTITUDE, LOCATION AND CLIMATIC FACTORS FOR  
THE DIXONVILLE AND BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN AREAS\*

|                                | <u>Dixonville</u>      | <u>Blueberry Mountain</u> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Altitude</u>                | 1,937 to<br>2,500 feet | 2,072 to<br>2,600 feet    |
| <u>Location</u>                |                        |                           |
| Latitude                       | 56°11'                 | 55°47'                    |
| Longitude                      | 117°36'                | 118°50'                   |
| <u>Temperature</u>             |                        |                           |
| Mean Summer                    | 57° F                  | 54° F                     |
| Mean Winter                    | 17° F                  | 20° F                     |
| Mean Yearly                    | 34° F                  | 34° F                     |
| <u>Precipitation</u>           |                        |                           |
| Mean Annual Rain               | 14.8 inches            | 9.8 inches                |
| Mean Annual Snow               | 48.5 inches            | 63.3 inches               |
| Mean Total Precipitation       | 19.65 inches           | 16.13 inches              |
| <u>Frost-Free Days</u>         |                        |                           |
| Mean Number                    | 91                     | 104                       |
| Maximum Number                 | 164                    | 141                       |
| Mean Date of Last Spring Frost | June 22nd              | May 23rd                  |
| Mean Date of First Fall Frost  | September 1st          | September 24th            |

---

\* "Alberta Industry and Resources," Alberta Bureau of Statistics, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1964.

#### Geology

The Dixonville area (St. John and Peace River formation) is characterized by grey shales with ironstone bands with a surface cover of sandstone

and silica sands. These date back to the Lower Cretaceous era.

The Blueberry Mountain area (Lower Smoky River formation) is characterized by black marine shales with a glacial drift and granite surface covering, which date back to the Upper Cretaceous era.

#### Soil Survey

With little exception, the areas of concern in this study fall into grey wooded soil zones. A profile of this soil type area is found in Table 2.

The Department of Agriculture and the Research Council of Alberta studied these areas around 1930 and described the soil in terms of the following categories (in order of decreasing value for agriculture): A (Parkland), W 1 (Wooded 1), W 2 and W 3. A finer breakdown of a larger area which included the Dixonville area showed that 83 per cent of the soil fell within the wooded categories. Four and a half per cent was W 1, 28 per cent was W 2, and 50 per cent was W 3. In their report, they state that W 3 soil is definitely submarginal and, in many cases, the W 2 soil is as well.

The Blueberry Mountain area is predominantly W 1, with small areas around the edge W 2, and to the southeast, A.

#### CHAPTER II TABLE 2

##### SOIL CONDITIONS FOR AREAS INCLUDING DIXONVILLE AND BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN \*

| <u>Zone</u>     | <u>Dixonville</u> | <u>Blueberry Mountain</u>                          |
|-----------------|-------------------|--|
|                 | Grey wooded       | Grey wooded  |
| <u>Profile</u>  |                   |  |
| Surface Horizon |                   | Semi-decomposed litter                             |
| A 1 Horizon     |                   | Grey-black, brown, or grey                         |
| A 2 Horizon     |                   | Leached and dark grey                              |
| B Horizon       |                   | Dark brown in color, heavy textured, compact, dark |
| Depth to lime   |                   | Thirty to forty inches                             |
| Fertility       |                   | Leaching causes some loss of plant food            |
| Vegetation      |                   | Mainly woodland with heavy tree growth             |
| Land Use        |                   | Mixed farming on small scale                       |

---

\* "Surveys," Industrial Development Branch, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1961.



### Land Use

Dr. C.F. Bentley, soil specialist and Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Alberta, speaking at a conference on the Peace River country in 1965, commented that most of Alberta's potentially arable land is in the Peace River country. With the present state of Canadian agricultural science, this constitutes about one third of Canada's potentially arable land. But, Dr. Bentley also points out that these facts by themselves paint too rosy a picture. A substantial portion of the improved land is below the quality of most improved land in the rest of Alberta, and the land not yet improved is "generally inferior to much of the land that is presently cultivated". (This comment agrees with the sentiments of many of the farmers in the area -- that all the good land has already been cleared, at least around Dixonville.) Dr. Bentley concluded that in the immediate future the greatest potential lies in better utilization of the land at present under cultivation.

Table 3 gives an idea of just how much land in Census Division 15,<sup>1</sup> which includes the area of the Peace River and its tributaries, is in fact in use at present. It is apparent that there is indeed a great deal of undeveloped land, though of course much of it is not of any value for agricultural purposes.

#### CHAPTER II TABLE 3

##### DEVELOPMENT OF LAND FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES IN CENSUS DIVISION 15 - 1961\*

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Total number of farms             | 8,955            |
| Total land area                   | 59,317,760 acres |
| Total area of all farms           | 4,341,245 acres  |
| Percentage of total area in farms | 7%               |
| Mean area of farms                | 484.8 acres      |
| Condition of Land                 |                  |
| Improved                          | 2,533,061 acres  |
| Unimproved                        | 1,808,184 acres  |
| Woodland                          | 440,599 acres    |
| Tenure                            |                  |
| Area operated by owner            | 3,237,882 acres  |
| Area operated by tenant           | 1,103,363 acres  |

---

\* Statistical Analysis of Census Division 15, Alberta Bureau of Statistics, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1961.

Table 4 gives a more detailed breakdown of land usage in Census Division 15 and for the individual improvement districts which include the two areas in question. It is evident that the development of the land in Improvement Districts 134 and 138, which include Blueberry Mountain and Dixonville respectively, has followed virtually the same pattern as has the Census Division on the whole. The one noticeable difference is in the nature of the unimproved land. In I.D. 138, only 18.67 per cent of the unimproved land is woodland, whereas in I.D. 134, 34.32 per cent is woodland. For the Census Division as a whole, the percentage is 24.37. These figures would imply that the potential for further development is greater in Improvement District 134 (which includes Blueberry Mountain).

CHAPTER II TABLE 4

LAND USE IN CENSUS DIVISION 15 AND IN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS WHICH INCLUDE BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN AND DIXONVILLE AREAS - 1961\*

|                   | <u>C.D. 15</u>  | <u>I.D. 134</u> | <u>I.D. 138</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <u>Improved</u>   |                 |                 |                 |
| Total             | 2,533,061 acres | 177,644 acres   | 242,841 acres   |
| Crop              | 1,811,406       | 127,371         | 160,043         |
| Fallow            | 555,494         | 40,276          | 66,705          |
| Pasture           | 106,068         | 5,883           | 9,963           |
| Other             | 60,093          | 4,123           | 6,130           |
| <u>Unimproved</u> |                 |                 |                 |
| Total             | 1,808,184       | 140,083         | 175,249         |
| Woodland          | 440,599         | 48,080          | 32,720          |
| Other             | 1,367,585       | 92,003          | 142,529         |

---

\* Statistical Analysis of Census Division 15, Alberta Bureau of Statistics, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1961.

Table 5 gives figures for the amount of land devoted to the various crops and the average yields for the year 1961 in Census Division 15. For purposes of comparison, the 1961 provincial averages and the ten-year average (1956-1965) for the province are also included. Figures for a ten-year average for Census Division 15 are not available, so the best that can be done is to look at those given in Table 5. There we see that in 1961, Census Division 15 was consistently above the provincial average yield. However, when compared to the ten-year average for the province it does not fare quite as well, though in more cases than not it produced greater yields.

CHAPTER II TABLE 5

ACREAGE AND YIELD FOR CERTAIN GRAIN AND SEED CROPS  
IN CENSUS DIVISION 15 FOR 1961, AND AVERAGE PROVINCIAL  
YIELD FOR 1961 AND OVER A TEN-YEAR PERIOD\*

| Crop   | Acres   | Bushels<br>Produced | Average 1961<br>Yield-C.D. 15 | Average 1961<br>Yield-Alta. | Average Over<br>Ten Year<br>Period-Alta. |
|--------|---------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Wheat  | 388,368 | 9,000,000           | 23.2 bu./acre                 | 15.8 bu./acre               | 21.6 bu./acre                            |
| Oats   | 269,598 | 13,200,000          | 49.0                          | 36.9                        | 41.8                                     |
| Barley | 446,662 | 15,750,000          | 35.3                          | 26.9                        | 30.6                                     |
| Flax   | 85,292  | 930,000             | 10.9                          | 11.0                        | 11.4                                     |
| Rape   | 142,061 | 2,424,300           | 17.5                          | 17.1                        | 15.4                                     |

\* Statistical Analysis of Census Division 15, Alberta Bureau of Statistics, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1961; and personal communications from Department of Agriculture, Government of Alberta.

The production of rape deserves special comment. From 1956 to 1961 the acreage seeded to rape increased at the rate of about 64 per cent per year. In 1961 the Peace River country produced 46 per cent of all the rape grown in the province on 59 per cent of the acreage in the province devoted to its production. With the increasing amounts of rape being grown, Dr. Bentley expressed fears (in 1965) that it might soon become difficult to maintain a favorable selling price.

The obvious conclusion from the above quoted figures has been stated by Dr. Glen Purnell; namely, that because only 46 per cent of the rape produced came from 59 per cent of the acres devoted to it, the growing of rape in Central Alberta is more profitable than it is in the North. However, he also points out that the growing of wheat is comparatively even more profitable in Central Alberta than in the North. The growing of rape in Northern Alberta is more profitable than is the growing of wheat in that area.

Census Division 15 produced 26,835,000 pounds of tame hay in 1961 on 414,598 acres of land. The production of forage seed utilizes less than ten per cent of the cultivated land, yet as Table 6 shows, a large part of Canadian production is in the Peace River country.

CHAPTER II TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CANADIAN PRODUCTION OF  
GRASS AND LEGUME SEED PRODUCED IN C.D. 15 \*\*

| <u>Crop</u>         | <u>Percentage of all Canadian Production*</u> |
|---------------------|---|
| Creeping Red Fescue | 77 - 100                                      |
| Brome Grass         | 35 - 43                                       |
| Alfalfa             | 22 - 40                                       |
| Sweet Clover        | 19 - 20                                       |
| Red Clover          | 10 - 50                                       |
| Alsike Clover       | 36 - 70                                       |

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\*\* Statistical Analysis of Census Division 15, Alberta Bureau of Statistics, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1961; and "Economic Report of Alberta's Peace River Country," The Northern Alberta Development Council, Grande Prairie, Alberta, 1965.

\* A range is given to include the maximum and minimum figures given in different sources.

The use of 1961 figures for Census Division may paint too positive a picture of the area, in that three of the following five years produced little or no crop. In any case, it appears that agriculture is being profitably exploited in the area, though just how much expansion is feasible remains open to question.

---

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Census Division 15 consists of the northwest corner of the province, bounded on the south and east by the approximate course of the Athabasca River.

## CHAPTER III

### HISTORY OF THE DIXONVILLE AND BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN AREAS

Until 1911 the only practical way to reach the Peace River country was by the Athabasca Trail. From Athabasca Landing (located where the modern town by that name stands) the route was up the Athabasca River to the Lesser Slave River, and then up the latter to Lesser Slave Lake. From Lesser Slave Lake Settlement (at the west end of the lake) it followed the Peace River Trail -- 90 miles overland.

In 1873, Captain Butler recommended that the Canadian Pacific Railway cross the mountains through the Peace River Pass. In 1877 the first surveys were made, but somewhere along the way engineers changed their minds. The C.P.R. went through the Kicking Horse Pass from Calgary.

In 1910 the second transcontinental was to be built. There were four possible mountain passes that it could take: Yellowhead, Pine, Peace or Wapiti. The last three passes are all in the Peace River country. The Yellowhead Pass was chosen and again the residents of the Peace River area were disappointed.

This second line, however, did provide a brief solution to the problem faced by the northerners of obtaining a line to the outside. Edson, which was on the new line, was seen as a logical center from which to build a trail to the north. Subsequently, the best provincial engineers were put on the job and a road to Grande Prairie was built. The country was not amenable to good road construction however, and the trail remained open for only five years.

In 1916 the Edmonton Dunvegan and British Columbia (EDBC) Railway reached Peace River Crossing (where the town is now located). That same year another spur reached Spirit River and then turned south to Grande Prairie. In 1922 the link from Peace River to Berwyn was completed and by 1924 it had reached Whitelaw. It reached the Fairway area in 1928, 25 years after the first settlers, and by 1930 it was extended to Hines Creek. The spur to Grande Prairie was extended to Wembley and on past Beaverlodge to Hythe by 1924.

Just as the railways became well established in the north, more roads were being built. The highway through Athabasca, along the southern

shore of Lesser Slave Lake and then north to Peace River was developed around 1922. Then, air transport became common. By the beginning of World War II, the Yukon South Airlines was flying in and out of the country daily.

In 1913, with the beginning of the EDBC Railway, Dunvegan became a magical word. Real estate offices began selling plots of land in the City of Dunvegan, claiming that it was to be the "capital of the north country". This became what was probably the largest scandal in the history of the Peace River country. Lots, many on hillsides so steep that they were essentially useless, were sold to such an unlikely clientele as Scottish bankers, Swedish spinsters and Italian investors. Absolutely no development of the site ever took place. In fact, the Dunvegan church had closed down eight years earlier.

During World War I, there was an exodus from the Peace River country for war service. The per capita enlistment for the area was remarkably high -- not a surprising fact considering the sex ratio (which will be discussed shortly). After the war the covered wagons again headed north in large numbers until the depression of the early 1920's. In 1916 there were 1,307 farms in the Census Division which included the Peace River area. During the next five years there was a three-fold increase in the number of farms and in the total acreage devoted to agriculture. In 1918 there was an epidemic of Spanish flu, which left few families unaffected.

From 1921 to 1926, the number of migrants to the area was exceeded by the number of dissatisfied settlers leaving the area. The total number of farms for the above mentioned Census Division decreased to 782. There was, however, only a slight decrease in the amount of land in agricultural use. The average size of farms in the area increased from 246 acres to 307 acres.

The period from 1926 to 1931 was again a period of vigorous expansion.

As might be expected, the sex ratio among the earlier settlers was very high. Precise figures are given in Table 1, which shows that for the first 15 years of this century, men outnumbered women about two to one, and that a decade later there were still one third more men than women. We see then that the trend to a lower sex ratio, further illustrated in

Chapter IV, has been consistent throughout the history of the area. The sex ratio prior to the establishment of the larger centers in the area is similar to that found in the outlying areas today. (See Table 1, Chapter IV).

CHAPTER III TABLE 1

SEX RATIO OF THE PEACE RIVER AREA -- 1911 - 1926\*

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| 1911 . . . . . | 194 |
| 1916 . . . . . | 202 |
| 1921 . . . . . | 158 |
| 1926 . . . . . | 137 |

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\*C.A. Dawson, The Settlement of the Peace River Country: A Study of a Pioneer Area, (Toronto, Macmillan, 1934), p. 63.

An intensive study of the area of concern, done in 1934, describes the early patterns of going into debt in terms that would well be applicable today.<sup>1</sup> Simply stated it is that those who have large capital investments are capable of borrowing to expand: debt varies directly with investment.

That history has brought few changes to the fringe areas is evidenced in the following quotation,<sup>2</sup> applicable to present conditions with a few minor modifications:

"About four miles from a little country store lives a fringe family who are doing tolerably well, considering their obstacles. Not far away a new school has just been built, which is the only accessible social organization. Twenty-five miles away is the hamlet of Dawson Creek, and the Pouce Coupe hospital is thirty miles distant. As the trails are difficult each of these remote centers is visited but once a year. These limited contacts are the lot of many fringe families."

The changes required to make the above quotation a description of the present fringe families of the Blueberry Mountain area would simply be the substitution of Spirit River for Dawson Creek and Pouce Coupe, acknowledgement of the fact that both roads and automobiles have improved, and comment to the effect that the distances to the above mentioned services are considerably GREATER.

In any frontier area, colorful individuals play their part in the development. An excellent account of the early history -- the fur-trading era -- of the Peace River area is to be found in J.G. MacGregor's book,

The Land of Twelve Foot Davis.<sup>3</sup> The most influential individuals in the Peace River area in the early years of the 20th Century may not have been as exciting as their 19th Century counterparts, but their effect was probably more profound. W.D. Albright moved to the Peace River country in 1913; he came from Ontario. From the beginning, he cultivated experimental plots of grains, grasses, fruits and vegetables to ascertain wherein the greatest potential for the country lay. Eventually he received government recognition and assistance, permitting him to devote full time to these endeavors.

Herman Trelle was an early graduate in Agriculture from the University of Alberta. With wheat grown on land in the Peace River area he won the world wheat championship three years running -- a feat never duplicated before or since. J.G. MacGregor says of this accomplishment:

"The fame of Herman Trelle and his wife was international. Their achievement provided the biggest advertisement the Peace River country has ever had."<sup>4</sup>

This very general discussion of the history of the Peace River district is largely applicable to the area around Dixonville. The first settlers in the area were in the Clear Hills district, west of Dixonville proper. There are several farmers there whose families came in the late 1920's or early 1930's. Settlement of the area north of Blueberry Mountain did not begin until the early 1950's.

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#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>C.A. Dawson, The Settlement of the Peace River Country: A Study of a Pioneer Area, Toronto, Macmillan, 1934, page 85.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., page 159

<sup>3</sup>J.G. MacGregor, The Land of Twelve Foot Davis, Edmonton, Applied Arts Products, 1952.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., page 374.



## CHAPTER IV

### DESCRIPTION OF PRESENT COMMUNITY

#### Physical Facilities

As one might expect, since Dixonville has been settled for a longer period than Blueberry Mountain, the former has built up more community facilities. For the most part the roads are adequate and complaints about them are little more than ritual. With few exceptions homes have power, and within the next year or two (according to promises) the area will also have telephones. Housing depends on the wealth of the farmer, of course, and in that there is a wide spectrum of wealth in the area, housing ranges from the rather elaborate to the very inadequate; that is, one could find a very few houses that would cost \$30,000 or more to construct and one could find, as well, one-room shacks with few, or no conveniences.

In Blueberry Mountain the picture is quite different. The roads are entirely inadequate. One subject interviewed commented as follows:

"The non-existence of roads into a homestead (often as much as ten miles) for as long as five years after the homestead lease is filed is akin to criminal negligence or false representation on the part of the provincial government. The cost in wear and tear on machinery and vehicles as the homesteaders attempt to prove up their homesteads hauling fuel and repairs over miles of mudholes is exceeded only by the wear and tear on themselves."

Another way of pointing up this drastic lack might be that a number of the homesteaders are as far as 50 miles and more by road from the nearest hospital and high school (to name just two of the more vital services). A more adequate road system could reduce this distance by almost half.

During the time that the interviewers were in the field in the Blueberry area, it rained for two days and on these days numerous homesteads could not be reached because of impassable roads.

There are in the Blueberry Mountain area several homes that do not have electric power, though there are power lines to the area. The cost of having power put into a homestead is quite prohibitive for individuals just starting out -- about \$2,000. Many homes are "temporary" shacks or unfinished dwellings that individuals are working to finish in their free time, which of course is very limited.

Some improvements in community services are currently underway in Dixonville, due largely to the organization and initiative of one individual. These improvements include (for the town) a large dugout for a water supply, gravel on the "streets", street lighting, and (for the community at large), increased school bus runs.

Recreational facilities are at a minimum in both areas, though in the Dixonville area again some improvements are being made. These improvements include a hockey rink with accompanying heated shack and a curling rink (to be completed this winter). Both areas have baseball diamonds and two or three community halls.

The schools in both areas provide education only to grade 11 -- a situation which has marked effects on the motivation to go on to higher education. To get grade 12 it is necessary for residents of the Dixonville area to go to Manning, or to Berwyn or Peace River -- a distance of between 35 and 50 miles for many. This necessitates living away from home -- an expense few people in the area can afford to pay. Residents of the Blueberry Mountain area must go to Spirit River which is also in the neighborhood of 50 miles from the outlying areas.

Some adults complained about the complete lack of adult educational facilities in the area. The possibility of some sort of evening vocational classes was mentioned. It should be noted that there are willing and qualified personnel for teaching in both areas: one homesteader in the Blueberry Mountain area had just turned down a \$10,000 a year job offer from the Calgary Technical School to teach diesel mechanics.

In both areas complaints were voiced about the drainage facilities. In the Dixonville area there are a few farmers who, with some regularity, lose crops to the flooding of the Whitemud River. Around Blueberry Mountain the lack of drainage is tied in with the inadequate roads -- approaches and low-lying fields are sometimes washed out or covered with water.

The possibility of developing an irrigation system, at least in the Dixonville area, may be good. A few men in the area seemed to think that with a little professional advice and perhaps some capital it could become a reality.

In summary, then, there are a few important improvements that could be made in the physical facilities in both areas, and many improvements of varying degrees of importance that could be made in the Blueberry Mountain area. Even granting that the latter is a new area, certain facilities seem overdue.

#### Social Composition

Table 1 gives the population of Census Division 15 and of the two relevant Improvement Districts, by sex, for the years 1951, 1956 and 1961. (The I.D. figures are for 1961 only.) This table shows that the sex ratio has been on the decline over the last two decades, but that it is still remarkably high. In the areas that we are specifically concerned with, it is considerably higher than in the Census Division as a whole.

#### CHAPTER IV TABLE 1

POPULATION, BY SEX, OF CENSUS DIVISION 15 FOR 1951, 1956 AND 1961, AND OF IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS 134 AND 138 FOR 1961.\*

|                 | <u>Total</u> | <u>Male</u> | <u>Female</u> | <u>Sex Ratio</u> |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|
| C.D. 15 - 1951  | 61,800       | 33,852      | 27,984        | 121              |
| - 1956          | 70,417       | 38,170      | 32,247        | 118              |
| - 1961          | 76,884       | 41,193      | 35,691        | 115              |
| I.D. 134 - 1961 | 2,505        | 1,401       | 1,104         | 127              |
| I.D. 138 - 1961 | 3,194        | 1,780       | 1,414         | 126              |

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\* *"Statistical Analysis of Census Division 15,"* Alberta Bureau of Statistics, Department of Industry and Development, Government of Alberta, 1961

Table 2 further subdivides the population, this time with respect to rural or urban dwelling, as well as by sex, again for the year 1961. The data show that the population of Census Division 15 is predominantly rural, and that the sex ratio is higher among the rural residents than it is among the urban. From 1951 to 1964 the rural population declined slightly in number, but proportionally it has dropped considerably (76 per cent to 55 per cent). During the same time the urban population has increased from 24 per cent to 45 per cent. Thus, there is in Census Division 15 a trend from rural to urban settlement.

CHAPTER IV TABLE 2

POPULATION, BY SEX, OF CENSUS DIVISION 15 FOR 1961  
- RURAL FARM, RURAL NON-FARM AND URBAN.\*

| <u>Sex</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>Rural</u> |             |                 | <u>Urban</u> |
|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
|            |              | <u>Total</u> | <u>Farm</u> | <u>Non-Farm</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| Male       | 41,193       | 32,235       | 17,677      | 14,558          | 8,958        |
| Female     | 35,691       | 27,242       | 14,403      | 12,839          | 8,449        |
| Total      | 76,884       | 59,447       | 32,080      | 27,397          | 17,407       |

\* *Statistical Analysis of Census Division 15*, op. cit.

Information that may well be relevant to studies of marginal areas is given in Table 3. Herein we can compare the size of families in Census Division 15 to rural Alberta and to Alberta as a whole. Census Division 15 has consistently more families of over six members than does rural Alberta as a whole, or than does the entire province. The average size of families in Census Division 15 is greater than the other two categories as well.

## CHAPTER IV TABLE 3

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN FAMILIES FOR CENSUS DIVISION 15,  
ALBERTA AND RURAL ALBERTA, 1961\*

| <u>No. of<br/>Persons</u> | <u>C.D. 15</u> | <u>% of<br/>C.D. 15</u> | <u>Alberta</u> | <u>% of<br/>Alberta</u> | <u>Rural<br/>Alberta</u> | <u>% of Rural<br/>Alberta</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2                         | 3,530          | 22.64                   | 84,509         | 27.65                   | 25,756                   | 24.43                         |
| 3                         | 2,782          | 17.84                   | 61,676         | 20.18                   | 19,787                   | 18.77                         |
| 4                         | 2,998          | 19.23                   | 67,724         | 22.16                   | 21,359                   | 20.26                         |
| 5                         | 2,281          | 14.63                   | 44,782         | 14.65                   | 15,909                   | 15.09                         |
| 6                         | 1,639          | 10.51                   | 24,904         | 8.15                    | 10,474                   | 9.94                          |
| 7                         | 957            | 6.14                    | 11,358         | 3.72                    | 5,556                    | 5.27                          |
| 8                         | 572            | 3.67                    | 5,398          | 1.77                    | 3,001                    | 2.85                          |
| 9+                        | 831            | 5.33                    | 5,321          | 1.74                    | 3,580                    | 3.40                          |
| Total                     | 15,590         | 100.00                  | 305,671        | 100.00                  | 105,422                  | 100.00                        |
| Average size              | 4.4            |                         | 3.8            |                         | 4.2                      |                               |

\* *"Alberta Industry and Resources,"* op. cit., p. 168.

Table 4 shows the composition of Census Division 15 by racial or ethnic background. There are proportionately far fewer British and far more French in Census Division 15 than there are in the whole of Alberta. There are a few more Dutch and Scandinavians, and slightly fewer Germans and Ukrainians than there are in the rest of the province. The proportion of Indians and Eskimos is considerably larger in Census Division 15 than it is in the rest of the province.

## CHAPTER IV TABLE 4

RACIAL ORIGIN OF RESIDENTS OF CENSUS DIVISION 15,  
WITH COMPARABLE FIGURES FOR ALBERTA, 1961.\*

| <u>Race/Ethnic<br/>Background</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>% of<br/>C.D. 15</u> | <u>% of<br/>Alberta</u> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| British                           | 26,012        | 33.83                   | 45.18                   |
| French                            | 11,585        | 15.07                   | 6.26                    |
| Austrian                          | 823           | 1.02                    | 1.19                    |
| Czech and Slovak                  | 587           | .76                     | .93                     |
| Finnish                           | 106           | .14                     | .28                     |
| German                            | 8,008         | 10.42                   | 13.76                   |
| Hungarian                         | 523           | .68                     | 1.15                    |
| Italian                           | 201           | .26                     | 1.13                    |
| Jewish                            | 17            | .02                     | .33                     |
| Dutch                             | 4,499         | 5.84                    | 4.17                    |
| Polish                            | 2,383         | 3.10                    | 3.04                    |
| Russian                           | 681           | .89                     | 1.35                    |
| Scandinavian                      | 6,394         | 8.32                    | 7.20                    |
| Ukrainian                         | 5,279         | 6.87                    | 7.95                    |
| Other European                    | 1,148         | 1.49                    | 1.87                    |
| Chinese                           | 236           | .31                     | .52                     |
| Japanese                          | 7             | .01                     | .28                     |
| Other Asian                       | 40            | .05                     | .14                     |
| Indian and Eskimo                 | 7,959         | 10.35                   | 2.14                    |
| Negro                             | 8             | .01                     | .10                     |
| Other                             | 388           | .50                     | 1.03                    |
| Total                             | 76,884        | 100.00                  | 100.00                  |

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\*"Alberta Industry and Resources," pp. 162-163.

CHAPTER IV TABLE 5

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION OF RESIDENTS OF CENSUS  
DIVISION 15 (1961) AND PROPORTION OF EACH DENOMINATION IN ALBERTA.\*

| <u>Denomination</u>         | <u>Number</u> | <u>% of<br/>C.D. 15</u> | <u>% of<br/>Alberta</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Adventist                   | 476           | .61                     | .39                     |
| Anglican                    | 8,498         | 11.05                   | 11.76                   |
| Baptist                     | 1,486         | 1.93                    | 3.19                    |
| Christian Reformed          | 114           | .15                     | .84                     |
| Christian Science           | 45            | .06                     | .13                     |
| Church of Christ Disciples  | 142           | .18                     | .20                     |
| Confucian and Buddhist      | 30            | .04                     | .19                     |
| Evangelical United Brethren | 77            | .10                     | .46                     |
| Greek Orthodox              | 2,372         | 3.09                    | 3.56                    |
| Jehovah's Witnesses         | 597           | .78                     | .56                     |
| Jewish                      | 16            | .02                     | .45                     |
| Lutheran                    | 5,876         | 7.64                    | 9.20                    |
| Mennonite                   | 2,577         | 3.35                    | 1.22                    |
| Mormon                      | 202           | .26                     | 1.92                    |
| Pentacostal                 | 692           | .90                     | 1.13                    |
| Presbyterian                | 2,202         | 2.86                    | 4.16                    |
| Roman Catholic              | 28,798        | 37.46                   | 22.43                   |
| Salvation Army              | 258           | .34                     | .25                     |
| Ukrainian (Greek) Catholic  | 1,526         | 1.98                    | 2.65                    |
| United                      | 18,757        | 24.40                   | 31.45                   |
| Other                       | 2,152         | 2.80                    | 3.86                    |
| Total                       | 76,884        | 100.00                  | 100.00                  |

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\* "Alberta Industry and Resources," p. 159

Table 5 breaks down the population of Census Division 15 by religious denomination, giving the proportion that each group constitutes of the total population in the area. By way of comparison, the proportion of each denomination in the province is given in Column 3. It is evident from these data that there are proportionately far more Roman Catholics in Census Division 15 than there are in the province as a whole. There are also more Mennonites than in the province as a whole, and there are fewer members of the United, Presbyterian and Baptist churches in Census Division 15 than there are in the province.

Dixonville, having been settled for a considerably longer period than Blueberry Mountain, has more "churches" than the latter. They cover the complete range, from a "shouter sect" (The Full Gospel Church of Christ) through an "interdenominational" group which calls itself the "New Testament Christian Fellowship", to the Presbyterians. And, of course, there is a Roman Catholic Church as well.

At Blueberry Mountain the best organized church appears to be the Church of God in Christ - Mennonite Brethren. They have two or three services each week. There is also a small group of (Dutch) Christian Reformed who had a missionary preacher resident there for the summer of 1966.

#### Formal Organization

According to a spokesman for the Department of Municipal Affairs of the Government of Alberta, there is in each Improvement District an Advisory Committee appointed by the Minister. In actual fact, however, a public meeting is held and either three or five members (depending on the size of the Improvement District) are elected from the floor. These individuals are then given official appointment by the Minister. The Advisory Committee is responsible directly to the Department of Municipal Affairs.

In Improvement District 138, which includes the Dixonville area, the Advisory Committee apparently has a fair amount of power. Local residents felt that it was given a careful hearing by the Department of Municipal Affairs.



As recently as four years ago, however, residents of the area apparently knew little of the procedures of local government, leaving the situation rife for exploitation by a few of the more active residents. There appears to be a change in this respect now, however, largely through the efforts of a new "informal" leader of the community who has "talked things up" with some of the more active residents and thus stimulated more interest among the people in general.

At Blueberry Mountain, interest in government did not appear to be too intense. Any interest expressed was always in terms of "the people in Edmonton" and not in terms of local representatives. It was not possible to form any really meaningful impressions there because of the shorter time the interview team spent in the area and their lesser involvement in community life.

#### Informal Organization

At Dixonville there is a fairly clear hierarchy of informal power. At the top is the school principal who received almost twice as many nominations as the most influential person in the community as did his closest rival. The principal has resided in the community for only four years. Prior to this he held several different positions with selling firms and finance companies. Virtually all of the recent improvements in the community have been a result of his efforts. In addition to these improvements, he has built eight to ten houses in the town which he rents to teachers and welfare cases.

The second man on the power ladder in Dixonville is the Advisory Committee representative. He is a big amiable fellow -- a very good farmer who got a good start through the Veterans' Land Act and continues to expand. He has a limited formal education himself, but holds education very high on his list of values.

Grouped together behind these two men are four or five others -- big farmers, the town merchant and top men in the U.F.A. Co-op organization and in the Farmers' Union of Alberta.

The leading woman in the community is the wife of the biggest farmer. She also runs a confectionery and cafe. There are no other women high in the power structure.

The informal organization at Blueberry Mountain, if there is any, is not at all evident. Many people were mentioned as having some influence but few received a significant number of votes. "Leadership" in this newly-formed community usually meant organizing functions to get the people together for recreational purposes. Undoubtedly as time goes on a more stable pattern will emerge, but it is not yet apparent.

## CHAPTER V

### SOME SUBJECTIVE IMPRESSIONS OF THE INTERVIEW AREAS

Most of the comments made in this section will be based, of necessity, on the community of Dixonville because here there were more opportunities available to us to become involved in the life of the community, and because more definite patterns have had a chance to develop.

#### The Recreational, Intellectual and Cultural Climate

The fact that there is a school in the community, and consequently a number of people who have achieved a certain level of "higher education", apparently has little effect on the provision of any sort of intellectually stimulating atmosphere. The tendency common to most realms of Western Society for the potential "cultural leaders" to "come down" to the level of mass culture is very evident.<sup>1</sup> Those few individuals who do not involve themselves in the mass culture do not stay long in the community.

Heavy drinking is rather common in the district. When outsiders raise eyebrows, or questions, they are told, "You don't understand us. This is just our form of entertainment." One of the "social leaders" of the community remarked during one of the many parties: "Now can you understand why nobody wants to leave the community?" The comment arose out of the fact that the questionnaire asked a series of questions such as: "Would you like to move? Why or why not?" etc. Indeed, at that point everyone present seemed to be enjoying themselves.

Ball games are a favorite pastime for both players and spectators. They provide an opportunity to get together and chat -- and they also provide a starting point for another party. On this basis, the oft heard remark, "If there were more activities available in the community, people would drink less", might be strongly questioned. In Dixonville, more activities mean more opportunities to get together and proceed as usual from there. But perhaps there is some sort of activity for which this would not be the case.

The amount of wife- and young-girl-chasing that goes on may well not be greater than in any other setting, but it appears to be more evident in the small town and its surrounding rural community. The sex ratio is, as

noted earlier, remarkably high. The result is that not uncommonly older men marry girls considerably younger than themselves. The one marriage that took place while the interviewers were in the field was between a 36-year-old man and a 17-year-old girl -- but this is perhaps an exaggeration of the general condition. An age difference of ten to 12 years is not uncommon.

#### The Religious Atmosphere

The stereotype of rural Alberta as a stronghold of religious fundamentalism does not hold in Dixonville. In some cases, in fact, the "worst people for a community" were characterized by subjects interviewed as "religious people" because they were seen as dividing the community into factions, or attempting to take it over. For the most part, however, people tended to fall in between the two religious extremes.

A rather striking thing about the religious atmosphere was the "live and let live" ethic that predominated. There appears to be little evangelism, with the possible exception of the sect and the Roman Catholic Church. There has been some friction between the Catholic Church and some school personnel over the teaching of religious dogma in the school. There is no religion in the school at present and it appears that there will not be for the near future.

#### Wealth and Welfare.

There is a striking difference between Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain with respect to wealth, receipt of social assistance or "welfare", and attitudes toward "welfare". Quite as one would expect, the older community is more prosperous. There are a few farms worth close to a quarter of a million dollars -- the really big ones being company farms involving several members of a family. There are also small farms that barely, if at all, provide a living for their owners. There is some feeling that in the not too distant future, the small farmer will be squeezed out here, the same as elsewhere.

In Blueberry Mountain everyone is just starting, so the range of prosperity of the farmers is not so great. There is considerably more dependence on social assistance in the Blueberry Mountain area. Some of the recipients have fairly large investments but have received no returns on them for the past three years. Rather than deplete their capital they "go on welfare" and continue to increase their investments through their labors.

Directly related to the amount of social assistance given out in the two districts is the attitude toward it. In Dixonville, most people are quite hostile toward the whole concept of "welfare", and particularly hostile to those who receive it. They justify their hostility with the following rationale. They say that when they were starting out they were unable to make a living from their farms just like many of the smaller farmers today, but instead of "going on welfare" they took outside jobs and invested their earnings in their farms. It may have meant living away from their homes for three to six months at a stretch, or working 14 hours a day, or what have you, but if it was necessary they did it. And, they claim, there are better opportunities to make money today than in their time; for example, on oil rigs or "cat-skinning".

In one or two cases known firsthand, this may be a justifiable criticism: the husband is capable of working out but does not, for various "personal reasons". There are, however, other cases where the husband is unable to work (if, in fact, he is present).

Around Blueberry Mountain, people are optimistic, regardless of their position on the scale of prosperity. They feel sure they can make a go of it if they can just get a decent start, and they can get that start if they can just get a crop. Social assistance is a temporary, though very necessary thing. They feel that the government needs them in the area and thus it behooves the government to keep them fed until they can care for themselves. There is no particular stigma attached to "receiving welfare".

There are in the Blueberry Mountain area as well, cases that appear to offer little hope. One, for example, is the family of an ex-truck driver who has over the past 15 years never held a job for longer than two years at a time, for which the reasons were not clear. Now, unaware of the demanding and complex nature of modern farming, and specifically of the problems of homesteading, he has decided to make a home on the farm. In 15 years of marriage he and his wife have produced eight children, one with a severe speech defect, and the last a Mongoloid. Their income level is so low that any expenses (e.g. medical, educational supplies, etc.) must be paid by the Department of Public Welfare, if they are to be paid at all. Many needed services are simply not received. The house they live in is dirty to the point of being clearly unhealthy, due in part to the fact that they have no regular water supply. Their only source of water is an odorous little creek about a hundred yards from the house, which is in fact only an adequate source after a good rain storm.

One interesting pattern in the area is that the very poorest families tended to name each other as closest friends.

#### The Homesteading Principle

The cost of clearing the land, piling and burning the brush, breaking the land, picking roots, and preparing the land for seeding (including labor which may be supplied by the farmer-homesteader) is about \$45 per acre. It normally requires about five years of cropping for the land to become good farmland. Thus, the cost of making a farm out of the forests of Blueberry Mountain is almost as expensive as buying a farm in any but the black-belt areas -- and the soil around Blueberry Mountain is not black soil. Add to this the required expenses of flood control ditches and it is clear that homesteading is a costly business. It is in no way a "gift" from the government. A man homesteading in this area is investing his labor for remarkably little return. Because of this it would appear that some form of capital assistance is necessary for the small farmer starting out. In most cases, credit is available only to

those who have sufficient collateral to insure that there is no risk involved. Some forms that such assistance might take, mentioned by various people, include the government clearing the land, leaving the homesteader responsible only for the breaking, root-picking and preparation for cropping. Another idea is "supervised spending" of borrowed money for capital improvements.

In any case, the present policy appears not to be working too well. Increasing numbers of homesteaders are being left at the mercy of the finance companies and their extremely high interest rates. For example, one young operator in the Dixonville area, who is holding down a full-time job with the government and trying to clear his own homestead, has been unable to obtain money (he has tried numerous sources) at any less than 18 per cent interest rate. Even at this rate he was able to borrow only about \$1,000. At Blueberry Mountain a young farmer had to take money at interest rates varying from 24 per cent to 27 per cent in order to purchase the necessary equipment to get started. Another family at Blueberry Mountain living on welfare -- as was the first mentioned in this area -- has a total debt of over \$20,000, largely to finance companies. He pays 25 per cent interest. Cases of subjects paying between 12 per cent and 18 per cent interest rates are not at all uncommon in this area.

It would seem, then, that some sort of action could be taken to ease the burden of those who are trying to open up the "promising" north-land.

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<sup>1</sup> Harold Wilensky, "Mass Society and Mass Culture," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 1964, pp. 173-197.





## CHAPTER VI

### POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

#### Universe and Sample

In the Dixonville area, a 100 per cent sample of the Dixonville School District was taken. Due to shortage of time, interviewing in the area south of the Whitemud River and west of the Mackenzie Highway, known as the Greyling Creek area, was not completed and only those families having children in grades 9, 10 and 11 were interviewed.

In the Blueberry Mountain area it was more difficult to obtain a 100 per cent sample due to various factors. The area is much more sparsely settled, the roads are worse, and the time available was considerably shorter. Thus, only the homesteads along the main roads were contacted. Several men were interviewed in the field, in some cases several miles from their homesteads.

#### Rapport with Those Interviewed

There were no problems establishing rapport in either area, generally speaking. In Dixonville, information about the study spread very rapidly so that most people had heard of the study and were curious about it long before they were approached by an interviewer. Some people objected to certain of the attitude items dealing with "moral issues", but with few exceptions they were answered.

In Blueberry Mountain, fewer of the residents had heard about the study but, on the whole, they were interested and eager to help when approached.

#### Interview Settings

Interviews took place in a wide variety of settings, from smelly pig barns to open fields, to yards, to trailers, to cars, to trucks, to kitchens -- and even the occasional livingroom.

### Refusals and Unavailables

In the Dixonville area there were six refusals -- three men and three women. The reasons given for refusing were usually rather vague, such as: "I haven't got time", which was insisted upon even when offers were made to return at any possible time; two of the men fell into this category. The third man to refuse simply and bluntly said, "I don't want anything to do with that damn thing -- it won't do anybody any good". One woman, who had just returned from Oliver Mental Institute and was apparently disturbed, ran the interviewer off the place with her dog, screaming, "No damn university!!" The other two women both seemed very threatened by the thought of talking to strangers and simply insisted that if they didn't have to, they'd rather not answer the questions.

There were nine men in the Dixonville area who were working outside of the district and could not be reached. There were four wives who could not be reached -- one was still in the Old Country, and three were not yet living on new homesteads. Interviews were completed with 147 subjects in the Dixonville area. Of these, 77 were men and 70 were women.

In the Blueberry Mountain area there were no outright refusals. However, there were seven men and four women who could not be reached. It is to be noted that because of lack of time and poor roads -- it rained for two days while the interviewers were in the field -- the area included in the sample did not cover the natural boundaries of this district. In this area a total of 71 subjects were interviewed, 39 men and 32 women.

In the remainder of the report, because of the similarities between these two areas, the data from them will frequently be pooled. The maximum sample size under these circumstances is 218.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RESIDENT

#### Age, Sex, and Marital Status of Subjects Interviewed

Fifty-three per cent of those interviewed in the Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain areas were males. Only 11.5 per cent of the total respondents were unmarried males. One half of one per cent of the respondents were unmarried females.

In the Blueberry Mountain district, 29.6 per cent of the respondents were males under 40 years of age, whereas in the Dixonville area 18.6 per cent were in this category; 29.7 per cent of the respondents in the Dixonville area were females over 40 years of age, compared to 11.3 per cent in the same category for Blueberry Mountain. These figures clearly indicate that the Dixonville area is older and better established, while the Blueberry Mountain area is more a "young man's country".

For the two areas combined, 11.5 per cent of the respondents have never been married; 82.5 per cent are married; 2.8 per cent are divorced or separated; 0.9 per cent are widowed; and 2.3 per cent are married for a second time, having once been widowed.

#### Occupational Characteristics

The occupational backgrounds of the residents of the two areas are very similar. Taking them together, we find that 31.3 per cent have always been on the farm, 47.9 per cent come from backgrounds that were primarily on the farm, 6.5 per cent have backgrounds that were half farm and half non-farm, 14.3 per cent have only a little farming in their backgrounds, and none in either area comes from a completely non-farm background.

There is a fairly great degree of stability in the living patterns of the residents since 11.1 per cent have never moved, and 72.4 per cent have moved only once, twice, or three times in their lives. There are a

few families that have been on the move almost constantly; for example, four from the Blueberry Mountain area and two from the Dixonville area have moved eight or more times in their lives.

Forty per cent of the residents of the Blueberry Mountain area have lived all their lives in Alberta, as compared to just 17.5 per cent of those in the Dixonville area. However, 23.1 per cent of the residents of the Dixonville area have lived in that district all their lives compared to just 12.9 per cent who have lived in the Blueberry Mountain area all their lives. This suggests that there are fewer "old-timers" in the Blueberry Mountain area and that those who have settled there have come from closer points, whereas the residents of the Dixonville area came from farther afield but have been there longer.

Neglecting for the moment the 40 per cent (approximately) of the respondents who were housewives, we see that the largest percentage of the interviewees have spent most of their lives on farms valued at from \$20,000 to \$50,000, which places them at scale position three on the seven-step Hollingshead occupational status scale. There are 19.1 per cent in this category, and the rest distribute normally above and below this modal range.

The backgrounds that the respondents came from were considerably poorer than the present situations that they found themselves in. For example, 38.5 per cent came from what might be called peasant backgrounds, their fathers having less than a grade three education. An additional 32.4 per cent came from farm backgrounds of somewhat higher standing, but only eight per cent came from non-farm backgrounds comparable on the Hollingshead scale to their present positions. The first job held by the majority of respondents was also considerably lower than their present position (82.3 per cent from categories six and seven on the Hollingshead scale).

Respondents in these two northern areas were, without exception, characterized by upward career mobility. Again excluding the housewives, 38.5 per cent of the respondents had gone up three or more categories on the Hollingshead scale (taking their first job as a baseline), 7.5 per cent had gone up two categories, 3.8 per cent had gone up one, and 7.5 per cent had remained the same. There were no cases of downward career mobility.

If we consider just the male working force, we see that 47.6 per cent of the respondents were employed full time, 3.4 per cent were employed part time, and one per cent were retired and living on pension.

#### Educational Characteristics

Taking the two areas together, 1.9 per cent of the respondents had no formal education at all, 1.9 per cent had from one to three years, 13.9 per cent had from four to six years, 32.4 per cent had from seven to eight years, 18.1 per cent had nine years, 21.3 per cent had ten or eleven years, 7.9 per cent had twelve years, 3.3 per cent had some university training, and none of the respondents had a university degree. Cumulating these percentages shows us that about 70 per cent of the respondents had less than a grade ten education.

Some of the respondents in these two areas had some additional training, but 80 per cent had none. The additional training was of a variety of kinds, such as business school, mechanics, agricultural, crafts, technical, etc. No one type of training predominated over the rest.

For the most part, the education of the respondents was greater than that of their parents. Eighty-five per cent of the respondents' fathers had less than a grade ten education, as had 83.4 per cent of the respondents' mothers.

#### Ethnicity

Of all the respondents in the two areas, 73.3 per cent were born in Canada, 5.1 per cent in the British Isles, 5.5 per cent in the United States, 1.8 per cent in Germany or Austria, 2.3 per cent in Scandinavia, 9.2 per cent in the Slavic countries and 2.8 per cent in the rest of Europe. None were born in the Oriental countries.

The fathers of the respondents came from the following areas: 37.5 per cent were Canadian-born, 12 per cent were from the British Isles, 13 per cent were from the United States, 10.6 per cent were from Germany or Austria, 8.2 per cent were from Scandinavia, 19.2 per cent were from the Slavic countries and 4.3 per cent were from the rest of Europe. The origins of the respondents' mothers were very similar.

The paternal grandfathers of the respondents had the following ethnic origins: 13.5 per cent were from Canada, 25.9 per cent were from the British Isles, 7.1 per cent were from the United States, 12.9 per cent were from Germany or Austria, 11.8 per cent were from the Scandinavian countries, 21.8 per cent were from the Slavic countries and 7.1 per cent were from the rest of Europe. Again, the origins of the maternal grandfathers were similar.

It would appear, then, that the countries from which the most settlers in the areas originated were predominantly the British Isles and the Slavic countries, such as Hungary, Poland, Prussia, the Balkans and Russia. There were no Indians or Metis farming in either area, though there were a few Indian or Metis women married to white men.

#### Geographical Characteristics

Of all the respondents in the areas, 44.7 per cent came from farms, 2.3 per cent from villages of fewer than 500 inhabitants, 12.4 per cent from towns, 0.9 per cent from small cities and 3.2 per cent from large cities. The origins of the remainder were not distinguishable.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FARM

#### Type

Farmers in the Dixonville area were engaged predominantly in mixed farming (86.5 per cent) with some straight grain farming (12.2 per cent). Farmers in the Blueberry Mountain area were engaged primarily in grain farming (73.5 per cent) with the remainder (26.5 per cent) in mixed farming.

Around Dixonville, 45.2 per cent of the respondents named barley as their primary crop. Wheat was mentioned by 23.3 per cent and rapeseed was mentioned by 17.8 per cent. A few respondents named other crops as their principal concern, such as oats, flax, hay or forage crops. Oats was named as the secondary crop in 38.4 per cent of the cases, barley in 21.9 per cent of the cases and wheat in 15.1 per cent of the cases.

In the Blueberry Mountain area, wheat was named as the primary crop in 64.9 per cent of the cases, flax was named as primary 10.8 per cent of the time, and oats and rapeseed were each named 5.4 per cent of the time. Barley was named as the secondary crop 45.9 per cent of the time, with flax being mentioned 10.8 per cent of the time, oats 8.1 per cent of the time, and rapeseed and forage crops each 5.4 per cent of the time.

Over 80 per cent of the respondents in the Dixonville area raised some cattle, while only 17 per cent of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area had cattle. In the Dixonville area, 16.4 per cent of the respondents had over 100 head of cattle, whereas in the Blueberry Mountain area none of the respondents had over 75 head. In fact, in the Blueberry Mountain area only 5.4 per cent of the respondents had over ten head of cattle. In the Dixonville area, 39.2 per cent of the respondents owned livestock valued at from \$2,000 to \$5,000, 16.2 per cent had livestock valued at from \$5,000 to \$10,000, and 17.6 per cent had livestock valued at from \$10,000 to \$20,000. Around Blueberry Mountain, however, 13.5 per cent had livestock valued at under \$500, 16.2 per cent had livestock valued at from \$500 to \$1,000, and 5.4 per cent had livestock valued at from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

### Size

In neither area were there any farms of less than 100 acres. In the Dixonville area, 13.3 per cent of the farms were from 100 to 249 acres, 41.3 per cent were from 250 to 499 acres, 20 per cent were from 500 to 749 acres, 6.7 per cent were from 750 to 999 acres, and about 15 per cent were over 1,000 acres. By comparison, just 2.7 per cent of the farms in the Blueberry Mountain area were from 100 to 249 acres, but 62.2 per cent were from 250 to 499 acres. Twenty-seven per cent had from 500 to 749 acres, 5.4 per cent had from 750 to 999 acres, and no respondent had any more than this amount.

In neither area was much land rented. Combined figures show that 64.3 per cent rented no land from others, 14.3 per cent rented from 100 to 249 acres, 12.5 per cent rented from 250 to 499 acres, 5.4 per cent rented from 500 to 1,000 acres, and 3.6 per cent rented more than 1,000 acres.

Very few farmers in either area rented land to anyone else -- 5.4 per cent rented out from 250 to 750 acres, and 94.6 per cent rented out none at all.

In the Blueberry Mountain area, 25 per cent of the farms had less than 30 per cent of their land broken, whereas in the Dixonville area only 12.3 per cent of the farms had this little of their land broken. This finding is not so striking, however, when we see that in the Blueberry Mountain area 41.7 per cent had over 60 per cent of their land broken as compared with only 30.1 per cent of the farms in the Dixonville area which had this much (60 per cent) broken.

For the two areas combined, 47.3 per cent had no pasture land at all, and 19.1 per cent had less than ten per cent of their land devoted to pasture. About 17 per cent had from 11 per cent to 20 per cent of their land devoted to pasture, and only 4.5 per cent had between 50 per cent and 60 per cent pasture. None had larger pasture areas than this.

In the Dixonville area only 15 per cent had less than half of their land cleared, but not yet broken, while in the Blueberry Mountain area 33.3 per cent had less than half of their land in this state. But, again, there is somewhat of a paradox in that 25 per cent of the residents of



the Blueberry Mountain area had no uncleared land as opposed to just 13.7 per cent of those in the Dixonville area. Completing the breakdown reveals the following: in Dixonville 9.6 per cent had less than ten per cent of their land broken (Blueberry Mountain - 8.3 per cent); in Dixonville 13.7 per cent had from 11 per cent to 20 per cent broken (Blueberry Mountain - 8.3 per cent); in Dixonville 12.3 per cent had from 21 per cent to 30 per cent broken (Blueberry Mountain - 8.3 per cent); in Dixonville 17.8 per cent had from 31 per cent to 40 per cent broken (Blueberry Mountain - 8.3 per cent); and in Dixonville 17.8 per cent had from 41 per cent to 50 per cent broken (Blueberry Mountain - 8.3 per cent).

In the two areas there was about the same amount of wasteland per farm -- 38.5 per cent had less than ten per cent, 22 per cent had from 11 per cent to 20 per cent of wasteland, 5.5 per cent had from 21 per cent to 30 per cent, 1.8 per cent had from 31 per cent to 40 per cent, 2.8 per cent had from 41 per cent to 50 per cent, and 29.4 per cent had no wasteland at all.



## CHAPTER IX

### ECONOMIC STATE

#### Value of Holdings

In the Blueberry Mountain area 17.9 per cent of the respondents had machinery valued at less than \$1,000, compared to 5.6 per cent in this category in the Dixonville area. At the other extreme, 13.9 per cent of the Dixonville respondents had machinery valued at over \$20,000, compared to only 2.7 per cent of those in Blueberry Mountain. This is clearly consistent with expectations based on the length of time each area has been settled. The proportion of respondents in the middle of this range was similar for the two areas: about 75 per cent from both areas had from \$2,000 to \$20,000 worth of machinery.

The reported cash values of the farms in the two areas followed similar patterns. There were no farms in the Dixonville area worth less than \$1,500, while in the Blueberry Mountain area about three per cent fell into this category. Again, at the other end of the scale, 12.4 per cent of the Dixonville farms were reported as worth over \$75,000, whereas only about three per cent of those in the Blueberry Mountain area were reported as worth this much. The great majority of farms in the Blueberry Mountain area were worth from \$25,000 to \$50,000 -- 47 per cent of respondents reported farm values in this range. An additional 30.6 per cent of the farms in this area were worth from \$10,000 to \$25,000. In the Dixonville area, 38.4 per cent of the farms were worth from \$10,000 to \$25,000, and 24.7 per cent were worth from \$25,000 to \$50,000. About 15 per cent of the farms in the Dixonville area, compared to just 5.6 per cent of those in the Blueberry Mountain area, were worth from \$1,500 to \$10,000.

#### Debts

In the Blueberry Mountain area, only 25.6 per cent of the farmers were debt-free, and in Dixonville the proportion was 27.4 per cent. One third of the farmers in the Blueberry Mountain area had a debt of less than \$2,000, and in Dixonville the comparable figure was 34.2 per cent. A

total of 41 per cent of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area had a debt of over \$2,000. In Dixonville, 38.4 per cent fell into this category. Although there was a striking similarity as to amount of debt, there was an even more striking difference with regard to the amount of interest paid on loans. In Dixonville, 85.1 per cent paid a standard six per cent or less, while in the Blueberry Mountain area only 57.1 per cent paid interest up to this rate. This leaves 42.9 per cent of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area that paid over six per cent interest on their loans and, as was pointed out in the introduction to the report, some of the interest rates paid are as high as 25 per cent per year. Just one half of the respondents from Blueberry Mountain felt that they would not be able to get out of debt within the next four years, 19.2 per cent thought that it would take them from two to three years, and 30.8 per cent thought that they would be out of debt this year (if they got a crop!). In Dixonville, the respondents were not quite so pessimistic: only 37.3 per cent claimed that they would still be in debt within the next two or three years, and 27.5 per cent claimed that they would be out of debt within the year.

#### Financial Difficulties.

In the Dixonville area, 60.4 per cent of the respondents reported that they had never had difficulty in meeting their debt payments, and 35.9 per cent said that they were presently having difficulty. Only about two per cent reported that they had chronic financial problems. The picture in the Blueberry Mountain area is strikingly different: no respondent there said that he had never had any difficulty meeting his payments. In all cases, there had been some problem within the last two years, and 64.2 per cent had had problems more than twice within this time span.

In the Dixonville area, 11.8 per cent claimed that they had to liquidate part of their capital to meet their payments, and an additional 11.8 per cent worked out to make enough money. There were 70.6 per cent that were able to simply postpone payments, and the remaining 5.9 per cent said that they simply did without certain "necessities" (e.g. "We starved a little.").

In the Blueberry Mountain area, only 57.1 per cent were able to postpone payments. There were 14.3 per cent who simply defaulted payment and did not know what consequences might accrue, 21.4 per cent either borrowed more or refinanced at a higher rate of interest, and 7.1 per cent had to depend on welfare, friends or relatives for help.

Surprisingly, only 7.1 per cent of the respondents in both areas said that their debts were a source of great worry to them. About 22 per cent said that their debts were a source of definite concern.

Two types of aid are available to farmers hit by hard times: insurance and social assistance payments. The most common of the former types of aid are Prairie Farm Assistance and Unemployment Insurance (for those who have worked out). In the Dixonville area, 75.7 per cent of the farmers had received money from the Prairie Farm Assistance fund in the last few years, 2.7 per cent had received Unemployment Insurance, and 5.4 per cent had received both. At Blueberry Mountain, 47.2 per cent had received Prairie Farm Assistance, 5.6 per cent had received Unemployment Insurance, and 19 per cent had received both. In addition to these two types of insurance, 13.6 per cent of the residents of Dixonville received social assistance payments, and 27.8 per cent of the residents of Blueberry Mountain received social assistance payments at some time. Of those who had received these payments, 33.3 per cent of the Dixonville recipients and 88.9 per cent of the Blueberry Mountain recipients had done so within the last year. In most cases (89.6 per cent for both areas) the duration of the time that they were "on welfare" was less than one year.

Taking the two areas together again, we see that 18 per cent of the respondents had medical bills during 1965 amounting to over \$150. In most cases payment was managed somehow, but in 5.7 per cent of the cases it was necessary to postpone or finance payment.

There was a marked difference between the two areas in attitudes toward borrowing money. In Dixonville, 36 per cent said that they definitely would not borrow under any circumstances, whereas only 13.5 per cent in the Blueberry Mountain area felt that way. At the other extreme, 38.7 per cent of the Dixonville residents said that they would borrow if they had the chance to "right now", whereas 64.9 per cent of the Blueberry Mountain residents said that they would.

One of the primary reasons for financial difficulties among farmers was clearly seen as unfair prices for their produce. Combining the two areas, 67.7 per cent gave an unqualified "no" to the question, "Do you think that farmers get a fair price for their products?" Only 11.4 per cent gave an unqualified "yes" to this question, and an additional seven per cent said "yes," but qualified it. Thirteen per cent gave a qualified "no" to the question.

There were few suggestions as to how the farmer might go about obtaining a better price for his produce, except for somewhat desperate comments like "quit growing". Thirty-two per cent of the respondents mentioned that some sort of action involving the government might be the solution. This type of suggestion took various forms -- from simply improving the present facilities to advocating considerably more strict government controls, to a complete repudiation of the present government and its policies. Collective action initiated by the farmers themselves, such as through the Farmers' Union, was suggested by 21.7 per cent of the respondents of the two areas.

There was even greater consensus on the question concerning the price of farm machinery. In this case, 98.2 per cent of the respondents in both areas responded "no" to the question, "Do you think that farm machinery prices are fair?" The 1.8 per cent who did respond "yes" felt it necessary to qualify their answers. In many cases the respondents were able to quote prices and costs over the past 20 years to prove their point that the machinery prices had soared fantastically, while the prices they were receiving for their grain had remained essentially the same.

Again, the most popular solution to the problem of prices was direct government action. This was favored by 47.6 per cent of the respondents in both areas. Other solutions suggested were closer co-operation between farmers, such as co-operative buying (11.5 per cent); refusing to buy new machinery (13.1 per cent); and getting more competition into the market (1.6 per cent).

When asked if there were major problems and difficulties that had held them back, 52.4 per cent of the respondents in both areas named external circumstances such as the weather. The next most frequently-mentioned problem was the lack of financial means to get properly established, reported by 15.4 per cent of the respondents in both Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain. Poor health in the family was mentioned by 12.5 per cent of the respondents in both areas.

#### Productivity and Expansion

The average yields of wheat on the farms interviewed in these areas span a wide range. For wheat, or the wheat equivalent of other crops, 19 per cent reaped from 11 to 15 bushels per acre, 33.3 per cent reaped from 15 to 20 bushels per acre, 28.6 per cent reaped from 21 to 30 bushels per acre, and 9.5 per cent reaped from 31 to 40 bushels per acre. A few cases (7.1 per cent) reaped only from five to ten bushels per acre, but these yields were due principally to crop failures every year since the homesteads were taken out. The range of yields was from zero to about 55 bushels per acre.

#### Use of Extra Help on the Farm

In 8.7% of the cases from both areas the respondents said that individuals other than members of their immediate families were living with them and helped them with the farm work. There were 3.9% of the respondents who had relatives other than members of their immediate families living with them but not supplying any help. This leaves 87.4% of the respondents who had no one outside of their immediate family living with them.

In Dixonville 72.6% of the respondents said that they did not require any more help on their farms. In Blueberry Mountain 62.2% made this statement. There were, however, 35.1% of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area who said that they needed help with their farm work but that they could not afford to pay for it at present. Only 15.1% of the respondents in the Dixonville area were in this predicament. In Dixonville, 11.0% of the respondents said that they needed help, that they could afford to pay it, but that they were unable to obtain it.

### Off-Farm Employment

Only about 25% of the respondents in the two areas worked out for other people. Of those who worked out, 76.8% did not supervise anyone else on the job, 1.8% supervised from 11 to 15 men, 5.4% supervised from six to ten men, and 16.1% supervised fewer than five men. In the Dixonville area there were two contractors interviewed. One of these was a house builder, and the other cleared land on a contract basis.

Taking the two areas together, 59.6% of the respondents had not looked for work off the farm in the past three years, while 24.4% had looked for it in each of the last three years. Lesser numbers of respondents had looked for it once or twice during this period.

Of those who worked off the farm, the largest proportion worked for private companies (64.3%), with 10.7% working for the government and 10.7% working for the municipality. Six per cent worked for other farmers.

In the Dixonville area most of those employed worked within forty miles of their farms (74.5%). However, in the Blueberry Mountain area, 71.0% worked more than forty miles away, and 29.0% worked over 200 miles from home.

Combining the two areas, 17.9% worked over eight months of the year, 17.9% worked about seven months, 9.5% worked six months, 7.1% worked five months, 14.3% worked four months, 11.9% worked three months, 7.1% worked two months and 14.3% worked less than one month. Considering the Blueberry Mountain area alone, we see that 30.3% of the respondents worked over eight months. The largest portion of respondents in the Dixonville area worked seven months (23.5%).

Again, taking the two areas together, 66.3% earned less than \$2,000 from off farm work, while just 6.4% earned over \$6,000. Twenty-two per cent earned between \$2,000 and \$8,000.

Of those who did not work off the farm, 86.4% reported that they did not want off-farm work, 12.9% said that they wanted work but did not actively seek it, and 0.8% said that they sought work by asking prospective employers (farmers).

Considering the two areas together, 32.6% said that there were ample work opportunities in the communities for men who wanted them, while 16.7% claimed that there were no work opportunities for men in the communities. There were 15.1% who reported that there was work available for women, while 38.9% said that there were no such opportunities. Many did not feel that they could answer the question because they had not themselves tried to find work,



nor did they know anyone who had. It would appear that the respondents perceived the opportunities for work fairly accurately in that the estimated distances from available jobs coincided closely with the actual distances reported by those who worked out. That is, 73.5% felt that there were jobs available within forty miles in the Dixonville area, while only 30.4% felt that jobs were available this close in the Blueberry Mountain area.

#### Income

The main source of income for 73.7% of the residents of the Dixonville area was the sale of farm goods. The second most important source in this area was wages and salary (19.7%). In the Blueberry Mountain area the most important source was wages and salaries reported by 51.3% of the respondents and the second was the sale of farm goods reported by 43.6% of the respondents. There were no other significant sources of income in either area.

Those who mentioned sale of farm goods as their most important source of income invariably mentioned wages and salary as their second most important source and vice versa.

The total amount of income was quite similar for the two areas. Combined figures show that 23.3% of the respondents reported net family incomes of less than \$1,000. In the Blueberry Mountain area 28.1% fell into this category, and in Dixonville 17.1% reported that they earned no more than this amount. Again for the combined areas, 14.5% reported earnings of from \$1,000 to \$2,000, 21.8% from \$2,000 to \$5,000, 20.7% from \$5,000 to \$8,000, and 19.7% reported earnings more than \$8,000.



## CHAPTER X

### PLANS AND ASPIRATIONS

#### Present Plans

There was little desire to move on the part of the residents of either of the study areas. About 77% said that they would not like to move and that they did not plan to in the near future. In the Blueberry Mountain area 16.9% said that they would like to move and that they planned to do so in the near future; 7.2% of the respondents in the Dixonville area felt this way. In the Dixonville area there were 15.3% who said that they would like to move, were able to move, but did not intend to move in the near future.

The most frequently mentioned reason for wanting to move was to live in a better climate. Of those who wanted to move, 44.4% of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area and 12.9% of the Dixonville respondents, gave this reason. In Dixonville, 51.6% said that they wanted to move so that they could have a better living in terms of more facilities, better homes, or a better opportunity to get ahead financially. One-third of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area gave similar reasons.

The reasons for wanting to stay in the two areas were very similar. For the two areas combined, 63.5% said that they wanted to stay simply because they were content where they were - this was home. There were, however, 14.6% who said they would stay because they could see no better alternative. The remainder said that they wanted to stay for various reasons such as family ties (1.5%), the cost of moving (4.4%), the people in the area (2.9%), the country (2.2%), and the farm (6.6%). Four per cent said that they would like to stay for the recreational possibilities (e.g. hunting and fishing).

Considering those respondents who wanted to move, no consistent pattern as to where they would prefer to go emerged. In many cases they wanted to move wherever they could find whatever they felt they lacked in their present location (e.g. "Anywhere with a warmer climate", etc.).

Of those who were thinking of moving, about 45% had been thinking of it from one to five years, which would lead one to believe that the adverse climatic conditions of the last three years may have had some influence. There were a few who had been thinking of it for longer periods of time, and a few more who had just thought of it within the last year.

Of those who wanted to and/or planned to move, 60% said that they had not been able to do so due to financial difficulties. Other reasons subjects reported for not moving were that they couldn't get set up as well anywhere else (5.3%), they were not discontent enough to make the necessary effort yet (10.5%), it would be too difficult for the children at this stage -- because they were sick, or at critical stages in school -- (5.3%), or simply because they were too involved in the community (15.8%).

In no cases was there any disagreement between spouses as to whether or not they should move, and in most cases they had discussed the possibility.

Most respondents had plans for improvements in their farms. The clearing of land was probably the largest single concern, with 63.5% of the respondents in the Dixonville area mentioning it, and 80.6% of those in the Blueberry Mountain area mentioning it. The amount that they planned to spend on this varied considerably within the areas, though they showed remarkable similarities to each other. Eighteen per cent planned to spend less than \$1,000 on clearing, 20.9% planned to spend from \$1,000 to \$2,000, 17.3% planned to spend from \$2,000 to \$6,000, and 5.4% planned to spend over \$6,000. Seven per cent failed to specify just how much they would be able to spend on it.

Ninety-two per cent of the respondents in either district were not planning to increase their land holdings. Similarly, few were planning to spend anything on building improvements. There were 78.4% who had no building plans, and an additional 8.1% who planned to spend less than \$500 in this way. Large-scale building improvements (over \$4,000) were contemplated by only 1.4% of the respondents, with the remaining 9.6% planning on spending intermediate amounts.

Remarkably few respondents, for the two areas, planned to spend any money on improving their machinery (95.7%).

In the Dixonville area 33.3% of the respondents planned to increase their livestock holdings, while only 13.9% of the Blueberry Mountain residents had plans along this line. There were 8.4% of the Dixonville respondents who planned to spend over \$6,000 on livestock, while those planning to spend up to \$4,000 included 14% of the Dixonville respondents and 8.4% of the Blueberry Mountain respondents.

In order to finance the improvements they were planning, 46.3% of the respondents said they would take out loans of some sort, while the remainder hoped to finance it in some other way. There were 32.9% who felt they had enough cash on hand to make their planned improvements.

### Plans if Financial Assistance were Available

Respondents were asked what they would like to do if some financial aid were made available to help them obtain a better livelihood. Some mentioned that they would not accept money on any basis, or that they were doing just as well as they wished now (8.3%). The large majority, however, felt that they would use whatever money was available to improve their present holdings, pay off their bills, and perhaps expand a little (78.9%). Only 4.6% wanted to move to another farm, and only 5.5% wanted to move to specific non-farm occupations. Three per cent felt that they would like to leave the farm but did not have any specific ideas as to what they might do. Only four subjects were able to estimate how much help they would need in order to realize their plans. All four said that they would need over \$15,000. Ninety-eight per cent of the respondents were unable to estimate any figure.

Even when offers of financial assistance were considered, none of the respondents had any desire to move out of the province. Of the few who wanted to move, 55% wanted to move to a large city in Alberta, but this group comprised only about 5% of the total sample.

When respondents were asked what they would like to be able to do in the way of improving their farms, regardless of what they were financially able to do, 58.0% said that there was nothing they would like to do over and above what they were able to. An additional 11.1% said that they would make some improvements, but did not specify what they would be. Of those who did mention something that they would like to do, the amount required ranged from less than \$500 to \$15,000.

Ninety-four per cent of the respondents said that they had no desire to obtain more land. Some said they would like to make building improvements, but 58.2% had no desires in this direction. Eleven per cent said they would like to improve their buildings, but could not specify as to how much money they would need. The other 41.8% said that they would need anywhere from less than \$500 to over \$15,000, with no single amount being modal.

About half of the sample said that they would like to be able to improve their houses. Improvements that would cost less than \$3,500 were desired by 11.5% of the respondents, 23.4% wanted improvements worth from \$3,500 to \$15,000, 2.3% wanted improvements that would cost more than this amount, and 13.5% said that they wanted to improve their house but could not specify just how much the desired improvements would cost.

It was mentioned in the last section that 95.7% of the respondents did not plan to spend any money on machinery. Even when the respondent was asked what he would like to be able to do, only an additional 10% said that they would like to buy more machinery.

None of the respondents expressed any desire to increase their livestock holdings beyond the increases that they were currently planning.

Only 1.2% of the respondents for both areas had applied for and received assistance towards the realization of some of the improvements mentioned. Attempts to borrow had been refused in 8.5% of the cases. The reasons for not applying were various: the respondent felt he was too old, or he did not want to fix up his place at this time (7.4%); he wanted to wait until he could finance it with his own cash (22.2%); he felt there was no use trying because he couldn't get any money anyway (12.3%); he felt he was already too deep in debt (9.9%); or, he felt that he could not make use of the loan at this point for various reasons.

Just over half of the respondents had not talked over possible improvements with outsiders. Only 6.4% had talked them over with the District Agriculturist, but 40.3% had talked them over with friends or close relatives. Finance companies had been consulted by about 3% of the respondents.

Of all the respondents, 84.4% felt that they would be able to repay a long-term loan from the increase in earnings which these improvements would bring. Only 13% had any doubts at all about this, and 2% were unsure.

The thinking of the respondents in response to these questions was rated by the interviewers in terms of its specificity or vagueness. In 51.5% of the cases the respondents were rated very specific, 30.3% were rated as rather specific, 10.1% were rated as rather vague, and 2.0% were rated very vague. There were 6.1% who could not be rated.

#### Vocational Aspirations "If You Could do Anything at All"

When asked what sort of work they would like to have if they could have any job at all, 80.8% of the men in the sample said they wanted to remain farmers. Five per cent said they would prefer a white collar job, 12% said they wanted skilled manual work and 2% mentioned unskilled work. Only 30% of the women said they would prefer to be farm housewives. Fifty-two per cent said they would prefer to be employed at a white collar job, and 18% wanted some kind of manual work.

Respondents were rated on how "live" an interest they expressed in this alternate occupation; 4.2% were rated as expressing a "live" interest in occupations that required no more training, 3.1% expressed a "live" interest in occupations that required more training, 0.5% expressed a "dead" interest in occupations which required no more training, and 0.5% expressed a "dead" interest in occupations that required more training. The reasons for seeking the particular type of occupation they chose, did not vary greatly: 26.9% simply stated that they liked that type of work. Some (16.7%) chose as they did because it offered them an opportunity to be independent; 15.6% said that that particular type of work was "in their blood".

Asked if they would need financial help to attain this type of goal, 9.6% said that they definitely would not, 2.8% said that they probably would need some help, and 15.3% said that they definitely would need some financial help to get the necessary training.





CHAPTER XI

HOME AND FAMILY

Home

In this section we will enumerate some of the more basic facilities lacking in homes in the two areas and then mention the scoring of the respondents' homes in the Edwards' Housing Scale.

In the Blueberry Mountain area 86.1% of the homes lacked a heating system, and in the Dixonville area 70.8% were in the same condition. Combining the two areas, a total of 75.9% of the 108 homes for which information is available did not have central heating.

Only 6.2% of the homes visited had a telephone. An electric or a gas washing machine was owned by 87.6% of the respondents, but only 31.5% had a deep freeze. There were 78.6% who did not have indoor bathroom facilities.

Table 1 shows the distribution of Edwards' Housing Scale scores for each district separately, and for the two combined.

CHAPTER XI TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF EDWARDS' HOUSING SCALE SCORES FOR DIXONVILLE, BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN, AND FOR THE TWO AREAS IN COMBINATION

| <u>Community</u> | <u>Edwards' Housing Scale Scores</u> |            |            |             |              |              |              |              |              | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                  | <u>0-2</u>                           | <u>3-5</u> | <u>6-8</u> | <u>9-11</u> | <u>12-14</u> | <u>15-18</u> | <u>19-22</u> | <u>23-26</u> | <u>27-30</u> |              |
| Dixonville       | 1                                    | 2          | 4          | 4           | 8            | 15           | 22           | 19           | 2            | 77           |
| %                | 1.3                                  | 2.6        | 5.2        | 5.2         | 10.4         | 19.5         | 28.6         | 24.7         | 2.6          | 100          |
| Blueberry        | 3                                    | 1          | 3          | 4           | 5            | 13           | 5            | 2            | 0            | 36           |
| %                | 8.3                                  | 2.8        | 8.3        | 11.1        | 13.9         | 36.1         | 13.9         | 5.6          | 0            | 100          |
| Combined         |                                      |            |            |             |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| %                | 3.5                                  | 3.5        | 6.2        | 7.1         | 11.5         | 24.8         | 23.9         | 18.6         | 1.8          | 100          |

From Table 1 we see that 20.3% of the respondents scored lower than 11. The houses of these respondents can be said to fall in the low score range because they lack necessary facilities. Scores ranging from 12 through 22 make up the medium score range. Houses which score at this level lack many of the conveniences that would be considered necessary by city residents today. This category includes 60.2% of the respondents. Only 20.4% have what would be considered a high standard of housing -- comparable to the average urban home today, or for that matter, to the modal home in the more prosperous rural areas (see the discussion of the Innisfail area elsewhere in this report).

To emphasize the poorness of the conditions, a description of two of the houses inhabited by interview subjects is presented. The first, found in the Blueberry Mountain area, scored 5 on the housing scale. It was a log house, having four rooms, which was inhabited by eleven people. It lacked: central heating, electricity, a basement, a cistern (or any other water supply), storm windows, flooring on all the floors, a telephone, an indoor bathroom, a kitchen sink, a separate dining room, any finish on the kitchen floor, any finish on the living room floor, any finish on the living room walls, any paint on the woodwork, a dining room table and buffet, a chesterfield or lounge, an easy chair, a piano, a pumping system, any magazines, television, deep-freeze, or clothes dryer. It had: a clothes closet, a gas washing machine, a bookcase, a few books, and three weekly magazines. There was one large, rough table in the kitchen, and there were two homemade benches to sit on. It should be noted that this score was not the lowest found in this area.

The description of a middle range house (score: 12), also from the Blueberry Mountain area follows. It lacked: central heating, a basement, a cistern, a clothes closet, flooring on all the floors, a telephone, an indoor bathroom, a separate dining room, covering on the kitchen floor, any finish on the living room walls, a dining room table and buffet, an easy chair, a bookcase or desk, a piano, a pumping system, and a clothes dryer. It had: electricity, storm windows, a power washing machine, a kitchen sink, paint on the woodwork, a chesterfield, a few books, two magazine subscriptions, two newspaper subscriptions, television, and a deep-freeze.

A breakdown of the number of rooms per dwelling for each area, and for the two areas together is given in Table 2.

CHAPTER XI TABLE 2

NUMBER OF ROOMS PER DWELLING  
DIXONVILLE, BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN, AND COMBINED FIGURES

| <u>District</u> | <u>No. of Rooms</u> |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |                  | <u>Total</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------------|--------------|
|                 | <u>1</u>            | <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>8</u> | <u>9 or more</u> |              |
| Dixonville      | 1                   | 4        | 9        | 11       | 17       | 7        | 12       | 11       | 1                | 73           |
| %               | 1.4                 | 5.5      | 12.3     | 15.1     | 23.3     | 9.6      | 16.4     | 15.1     | 1.4              | 100          |
| Blueberry       | 6                   | 4        | 7        | 4        | 6        | 3        | 5        | 1        | 0                | 36           |
| %               | 16.7                | 11.1     | 19.4     | 11.1     | 16.7     | 8.3      | 13.9     | 2.8      | 0                | 100          |
| Combined        |                     |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |                  |              |
| %               | 6.4                 | 7.3      | 14.7     | 13.8     | 21.1     | 9.2      | 15.6     | 11.0     | 0.9              | 100          |

In the Blueberry Mountain area, 16.7% of the dwellings had only one room. Combining the first five categories, we see that 74.9% of the homes in this area had fewer than five rooms. In the Dixonville area, 57.6% of the houses had this few rooms.

The number of rooms per house is not by itself of great significance, but when we consider the number of people per room in the house we find the following. In 1.4% of the cases in the Dixonville area there were more than five people per room in the dwelling. In this same area 4.2% of the houses had from 2.1 to 2.5 people per room, 5.6% had from 1.6 to 2.0 people per room, 9.7% of the homes had from 1.1 to 1.5 people per room, 20.8% had one person per room, 27.8% had from .5 to 1 person per room and 30.6 averaged fewer than .5 people per room.

In the Blueberry Mountain area 8.3% of the houses averaged from 2.6 to 3.5 persons per room, 2.8% averaged from 2.6 to 3.5 persons per room, 8.3% averaged from 2.1 to 2.5 people per room, 8.3% averaged from 1.5 to 2.0 people per room, 14.6% averaged from 1.1 to 1.5 people per room, 16.7% averaged one person per room, 19.4% averaged from .5 to 1 person per room, and 11.1% averaged less than .5 people per room.

#### Family Size and Birth Control Views

Both areas considered in this part of the report are characterized by large families. In the Blueberry Mountain area 21.1% of the respondents came from families of nine or more children, 14.1% came from families of eight children, 11.3% came from families of seven children, 11.3% came from families of six children, 12.7% came from families of five children, and just 29.6% came from families having fewer than five children. In the Dixonville area the results are not quite so striking, but they are still quite remarkable. Here, 22.1% came from families of nine or more children, 5.5% came from families of eight children, 14.5% came from families of seven children, 8.3% came from families of six children, 17.2% came from families of five children, and just 32.4% came from families having fewer than five children. For the two areas combined, 68.5% came from families of five or more children, and 32.5% came from families of four or fewer children.

Again, combining the two areas, 55.2% of the respondents reported that none of their mothers' children died at birth or before they were twelve years of age. There were 23.1% who lost one sibling, 12.3% who lost two, 3.3% who lost three, 3.8% who lost four, and 2.3% who lost more than four.

The families of the respondents were not so large on the average as the families from which they came, but this must be qualified by the fact that many of the respondents were young and had not yet finished raising their families. Seventy-three per cent of respondents had four or fewer children, 25.9% had between five and eight children, and 2.6% had nine or more children. Fewer of the respondents had lost children than had their parents -- 75.2% had lost none, 17.1% had lost one, 5.1% had lost two, and 2.7% had lost more than two. In most cases the death occurred through miscarriage or premature birth (65.5%). In 17.2% of the cases the death occurred at an age of from five days to six months. An additional 12.8% died at ages ranging from six months to three years. The remainder (3.4%) died at ages ranging from three to six years.

The respondents were asked what they felt was the ideal family size. Forty-five per cent of the sample members said four children and 25.0 per cent said three children was ideal. Seven per cent mentioned two or fewer and 23.0 per cent said five or more. Ten per cent said they thought seven or more children was the ideal number.

Most of the respondents were in favor of birth control for married couples, 43.5% without qualification and 40.6% with qualification. Only 6.8% were unreservedly against the use of birth control, and 1.0% were opposed but qualified their answers. There were 8.2% who did not answer the question. Twenty-nine per cent of the sample members did not know if birth control information was available in their area. Forty-four per cent said that it was and could specify the source, 9.0% were not sure but knew they could go to find out. Eight per cent thought it was not available but were not sure and 7.5% said they were sure there was no birth control information available in their area.

#### Relative Prosperity

For the two areas, 28.0% of the respondents felt that they "were getting ahead" as well as their brothers and sisters. Eight per cent felt that all of their brothers and sisters had done better than they had, and 34.1% felt that most of their brothers and sisters had done better than they had. About 28% felt that they had done better than all of their brothers and sisters. If we break the figures down for the two areas separately, we see that the respondents from the Blueberry Mountain area do not compare as well with their families as do the respondents from Dixonville. In Blueberry

Mountain 59.1% said that most of their brothers and sisters had done better than they had, whereas in Dixonville only 34.1% felt this way.

### Harmony

There was not a great deal of parent-child conflict in either area, as seventy-eight per cent of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area reported no disharmony, and 54.5% of the residents in the Dixonville area reported that there was no parent-child conflict in their families. For the two areas combined, 61.7% reported no parent-child conflict. In Dixonville, 12.2% of the respondents said that they had differences of opinion about dating or moral questions, but only 3.3% of the Blueberry Mountain respondents said this. For all other areas of possible parent-child conflict, similar amounts were reported for the two areas: education - 4.9%, chores - 2.7%, discipline - 10.4%, personal development (e.g. habits, tidiness) - 2.2%, and 8.7% mentioned other sources of conflict between parents and children.

The incidence of conflict between parents was just slightly greater than that between parents and children. No conflict was reported by 52.7% of the respondents in the two areas. Ten per cent said that they disagreed about money matters, 9.6% said that they disagreed about some aspect of work, 6.6% said they disagreed about matters related to the bringing up of their children, 3.2% said they had disagreements about drinking, 1.1% said they had disagreements about their relatives, and 17.5% named some other source of disagreement.

### Aspirations

When subjects were asked if it was important to them that their children grow up on the farm, 29.4% said that it was very important, 39.0% said that it was quite important, 13.6% said that it was somewhat important, and 18.1% said that it was not at all important. The most common reason for wanting their children to grow up on the farm was simply that "it is a good way of life", or that it provides more freedom and allows the children to keep lots of pets. Forty-three per cent of the respondents gave answers such as this. The next most common answers were that it is easier to raise the children on a farm because there is less trouble for them to get into (17.9%); and "it builds character -- it gives them a better look at life and teaches them responsibility", (15.2%).

In most cases, the respondents said that they wanted their sons to do whatever they wanted (49.4%). Twenty-three per cent said that they would like their sons to be farmers, 12% simply said that they wanted them to do better than their fathers, 9.5% said that they wanted them to go into some profession. Three per cent wanted them to go into some white collar job, and 3.2% said that they wanted them to go into a blue collar job.

The respondents held higher aspirations for their daughters. Only 36.3% left it simply "up to them". In 17.5% of the cases, the respondents said that they would like their daughters to go into some kind of professional work, and 17.0% mentioned semi-professional occupations such as nursing and dietician work. A general reference to "doing better than I am" was made by 16.4% of the respondents, 7.0% wanted their daughters to go into stenographic work, and 1.8% said that they would like to see their girls doing blue collar or domestic work.

About 45% of the respondents said that they would not advise their children either to stay in the area they were living in or to go to any other. They felt that it would have to be the child's decision when the time came. In the Dixonville area, 29.8% said that they would advise their children to leave the area, usually for economic reasons ("they'd have a better chance elsewhere"). Only 9.3% in the Blueberry Mountain area were of a similar opinion. In the Blueberry Mountain area, 40.3% said that they would definitely advise their children to make their homes where they were now living, while only 20.8% of the respondents in the Dixonville area felt this way. This is, perhaps, indicative of the 'pioneer' spirit which predominates in the Blueberry Mountain area. Almost all of the residents of that area feel that theirs is the country of the future, and that given a few breaks for a good start they will be well on the way to prosperous farming.

Of those who felt that their children should leave the area, few specified where a good place to go might be. In fact, 47.1% simply said, "anywhere else", with a few specifying other parts of the province. Edmonton or Calgary were specified by 20.6%.

## CHAPTER XII

### HEALTH

#### Physical Health

Ninety-two per cent of the respondents in the two northern communities reported that they had been in excellent health for the past three years. 45% said that they had been in good health, 22.7% said that they had been in fair health. Eight per cent said their health had been poor, and 2.3% said that they had been in very poor health for the past three years.

Sixty-seven per cent of the respondents said that they had no major problems, 13.5% said that they had some major health problem but that these did not interfere with their daily activity and 19% reported a major health problem which did interfere with their daily activity. Bone conditions such as a 'bad back', fallen arches, arthritis, etc. plagued 9.3%; heart trouble bothered 3.3%; internal problems such as gall bladder trouble, kidney or stomach trouble, diabetes, etc., bothered 3.7%; 1.4% had respiratory problems; and 1.9% suffered from general fatigue -- being run down and/or overweight.

Twenty-three per cent had suffered from illness within the last year; 7.1% had not suffered for more than a year; 3.3% had been free from sickness and accident for more than two years; 4.7% had been sick at some time between three and four years ago; 5.2% between four and five years ago and 6.8% between five and eight years ago. Eighteen per cent reported that they had not been sick at all in the last eight years.

Half of the respondents in the two areas did not have any sort of medical insurance coverage. Twenty-five per cent did have M.S.I., 20.4% had some other medical coverage, and 3.7% had coverage under a pension or welfare scheme. The largest single factor for not having medical insurance was lack of sufficient finances - - 34.7% of the respondents said that they would like to have medical insurance but simply could not afford it. An additional 19.5% had had M.S.I. at one time, but when their policy lapsed during hard times they just never got around to renewing it. A few respondents (1.7%) said that they had applied but were not accepted due to their poor health condition at time of application. There were also 1.7% who said that they did not have it because they did not understand the nature of it. Twelve per cent applied recently, but as yet had not received confirmation of their ap-

plication. The remaining thirty per cent did not have medical insurance for various personal reasons (e.g. "I don't plan on getting sick"; "it wouldn't be honest to join because of my poor health").

Only 1.0% of the respondents had medical bills amounting to over \$350 during 1965, and 52.5% paid less than \$50. Twenty-one per cent paid from \$50 to \$100 during this period. Seventeen and one-half per cent paid from \$100 to \$200, and 8.0% paid from \$200 to \$350. In 87.9% of the cases, the respondents were able to pay cash for their medical bills, and the rest had to work out some other method of meeting them or had done nothing about them.

Of all the ailments mentioned, 17.6% occurred among males under 15 years of age, 5.9% among males 16 to 24 years of age, 11.8% among males 35 to 44 years of age, 21.6% among males over 45 years of age, 17.6% among females less than 15 years of age, 3.9% among females from 16 to 24 years of age, 11.8% among females from 25 to 44 years of age, and 9.8% among females over 45 years of age.

The most common type of ailments mentioned were accidents, poisonings or acts involving violence (31.9%).

Twenty-three per cent of those who suffered within the last year mentioned diseases of the respiratory system. Numerous other ailments were mentioned by the respondents, such as infective and parasitic diseases (8.5%), diseases of the digestive system (8.5%), allergies and endocrine ailments (6.4%), diseases of the circulatory system (6.4%), diseases of the nervous system and sense organs (4.3%), diseases of the genitourinary system (4.3%), diseases of the skin and cellular tissue (4.3%), diseases of the blood and blood-forming organs (2.1%), and diseases of the bones and organs of movement (2.1%).

In 35.4% of the cases the ailments lasted only one week or less, 16.7% lasted two weeks or less, 16.7% lasted three weeks or less, 23.0% lasted from one to three months, 8.4% lasted from four to nine months, and 10.4% lasted for ten months or more.

The method of treatment varied considerably from one area to the other. In Dixonville, 81.5% of the cases were treated by a local general practitioner, while in the Blueberry Mountain area only 54.5% were treated by a local doctor. In the Blueberry Mountain area 22.7% of the respondents either treated their ailment themselves or had another family member treat it, while in the Dixonville area only 3.7% were forced to do this. In the Dixonville area 11.1% of



the cases were treated by a general practitioner from outside the area or by a specialist (either in the area or outside). In the Blueberry Mountain area only 4.5% received such treatment.

As might be expected on the basis of the above figures, only 50.0% of the respondents from the Blueberry Mountain area considered their ailments to be successfully cured. The comparable figure from the Dixonville area is 78.6%. In the Dixonville area 3.6% felt that their ailment was improving and in the Blueberry Mountain area 4.5% felt this way. Thirty-six per cent of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area felt that there was no improvement in their condition, as compared to just 14.3% in the Dixonville area.

Not many of the respondents had complaints about the doctors in their area. Eighty-six per cent had no complaint at all, 7.2% had some complaint about the performance of a doctor in the past, and 6.0% had some 'non-medical complaint' to make, such as "they are interested only in money", "they are indifferent to their patients", etc.

More of the respondents had complaints about the hospitals. Of those who had complaints, 21.1% felt that hospitals were too small and overcrowded, 5.3% felt they lacked necessary equipment, 15.8% made complaints about the performance of nurses, 26.3% said they were insufficiently staffed, and 10.5% said they were poorly managed.

Combining the two areas, 58.9% of the families had no ailments within the last year, 21.0% had one ailment, 6.5% had two ailments, 7.3% had three ailments, 4.0% had four or five ailments, and 2.4% had seven or more ailments. There were 16.9% of the respondents who had one or two accidents in their family within the last year. None had more accidents than this.

#### Mental Health

A neuroticism scale was administered to all respondents, and quite striking differences were evident between the two areas. In the Blueberry Mountain area 64.2% of the respondents scored highly on the scale (highly neurotic) as compared to just 48% in the Dixonville area. The two areas were similar in the proportion scoring in the median range (21.4% in Blueberry Mountain and 21.5% in Dixonville), and they differed again in the lowest range with Blueberry Mountain having 14.3% of its respondents in this category as compared to 30.6% for Dixonville.

As a second index of stress, a list of psychophysical symptoms was administered. This produced a less extreme picture, and which showed a

very similar distribution for the two areas combined. Few symptoms of stress were reported by 34.8% of the respondents, 35.8% reported a medial number of psychophysical symptoms, and 29.4% reported a high number of such symptoms.

It is not surprising that the scores were higher in the Blueberry Mountain area, in that the social and economic situations there appeared to be much less stable. The optimistic attitude mentioned earlier was perhaps combined with some uncertainty, whereas the pessimism in the Dixonville area was by this point, accompanied with a somewhat fatalistic attitude.

CHAPTER XIII

USES OF LEISURE TIME

Sources of Information and the Use of Leisure Time

In the Dixonville area, 5.2% of the respondents did not receive a weekly newspaper, while in the Blueberry Mountain area 16.3% did not receive such a paper. For the two areas combined, 14.7% received only one paper, 25.2% received two, 33.3% received three, 11.6% received four, and the 9.3% received more than four. Twelve per cent of all respondents did not receive a magazine of any sort, including 20.9% of the Blueberry Mountain respondents and 8.6% of the Dixonville respondents. For the two areas combined, 32.4% received one magazine, 22.1% received two, 15.4% received three, 7.4% received four, and 9.6% received more than four. The most widely read magazines were, of course, the farm magazines. Sixty per cent of the respondents read one farm magazine, 8.3% read two, 2.5% read three, and 29.2% did not read any.

Mass circulation magazines such as Life, Look, Saturday Evening Post, etc., were the next most widely read, with 20.8% reading one, 15.0% reading two, and 5.0% reading three, and 58.3% not reading any.

Women's magazines were read by 21.1% of the respondents, and church magazines by 13.7%.

Television is owned by all but 28.6% of the respondents. None of the residents of either area who owned a TV set said that they seldom watched it. Seven per cent said that they watched less than four hours a week, 17.4% said that they watched it from four to ten hours a week, 29.1% said that they watched it from eleven to twenty hours a week, 16.0% said they watched it from thirty-one to forty hours a week, and 2.3% said that they watched it more than forty hours a week.

Table 1 shows the number of hours spent reading by the respondents of the Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain areas for both the winter and summer seasons.

CHAPTER XIII TABLE 1

NUMBER OF HOURS SPENT READING IN WINTER AND IN SUMMER,  
BY RESIDENTS OF DIXONVILLE AND BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN

| Season   | <u>Hours</u> |            |            |            |             |              |                | None |
|----------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|------|
|          | <u>0-½</u>   | <u>½-2</u> | <u>2-5</u> | <u>5-9</u> | <u>9-13</u> | <u>13-17</u> | <u>Over 17</u> |      |
| Winter % | 2.3          | 19.9       | 20.8       | 21.3       | 9.7         | 11.1         | 9.7            | 4.6  |
| Summer % | 4.2          | 36.8       | 23.6       | 17.4       | 4.9         | 5.6          | 1.4            | 6.3  |

As one would expect, more hours were spent reading during the winter than during the summer.

Respondents were asked to specify the three sources of information they most depended upon, selecting these from a list of sources. The results are tabulated in Table 2.

CHAPTER XIII TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING VARIOUS SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR DIXONVILLE AND BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN

| <u>Source of Information</u> | <u>Dixonville</u> | <u>Blueberry Mountain</u> |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Radio                        | 42.8              | 66.2                      |
| Television                   | 50.3              | 23.9                      |
| Magazines                    | 13.8              | 11.4                      |
| Movies                       | 0.7               | 0.0                       |
| Talking with People          | 75.9              | 76.1                      |
| Books                        | 10.3              | 8.5                       |
| Personal Experience          | 27.6              | 30.0                      |
| Church                       | 13.8              | 17.1                      |
| School                       | 7.6               | 11.3                      |
| Newspaper                    | 53.8              | 53.5                      |

From Table 2 we see that "talking with people you know" clearly ranked first as a source of information for the residents of both districts. In Dixonville, where most of the respondents had television, radio was a strong second to talking to people. Newspapers were an important source of information in both areas, but movies, books, the school and magazines were not of great importance.

Educational television programs were the favorite of 21.6% of the respondents from both areas. Five per cent named variety shows as their favorites, 12.4% named news and weather, 0.7% named farm programs, 5.9% named sports programs, 38.6% named drama, 7.8% named comedy, 6.5% named quiz shows, and 1.3% named musical shows. The second choices ranked as follows: drama (36.9%), educational programs (16.9%), comedy (13.1%), variety and quiz shows (each 8.5%), news and weather (7.7%), sports (6.2%), musical (2.3%), and farm programs were not mentioned.

Activities and Preferences

When asked what they did with their friends, many types of activities were mentioned, with 23.7% saying that they played indoor games such as cards, scrabble or chess. Sports were mentioned by 15.1% of the respondents, watching TV by 12.9% and working together (giving a neighbor a hand) by 11.8%. No other

activities were mentioned with any consistency.

When asked what activity they liked the most, 25% said outdoor pastimes such as hiking, hunting, fishing, and going on picnics. Reading was mentioned as a favorite activity by 19.9% of the respondents, and working around the house by 16.3%. Visiting with friends was the favorite of 14.3% and being a spectator at sports events (ball games, rodeos, etc.) was mentioned by 9.2%. Numerous other pastimes were mentioned, but none repeatedly.

The reasons for liking the various activities chosen ranged from "I just like doing it" (27.9%), to the idea that it provided a pleasant change from daily work (22.7%), it provided a chance to associate with other people (15.6%), it provided an opportunity to learn something (11.9%), and it kept you healthy and fit.

Almost half of the respondents (47.4%) claimed that they never went to the pub in winter. Fourteen per cent said that they went once a year, 9.9% said two or three times a year, 23.5% said once every month or perhaps every two months, and 5.2% said that they went once a week or more. The frequency of going to the pub in the summer showed an almost identical pattern.

The most popular leisure activity in the winter was reading (24.3% of the respondents). Eighteen per cent named watching TV as their favorite winter pastime, 15.0% said that just working around the house was most enjoyable, 12.1% mentioned handicrafts and hobbies, and an equal number mentioned more active pastimes such as dancing, fishing, trapping, etc. Just relaxing, or visiting with friends was mentioned by 13.6%.

The most popular leisure activity in the summer was some sort of activity such as sports, dancing, fishing or going on picnics. These were mentioned by 40.8% of the respondents. The next most popular (16.9%) was working around the house or yard, and 15.9% mentioned reading. Being a spectator at sports or watching TV was mentioned by 10.4% of the respondents.

The amounts of leisure available, to the respondents of the two areas combined, are shown in Table 3.

CHAPTER XIII TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS HAVING SPECIFIED AMOUNTS  
OF LEISURE TIME IN SUMMER AND WINTER - DIXONVILLE  
AND BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN COMBINED

| Season   | No. of Hours<br>per Week |      |      |       |       |       |       |               |
|----------|--------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------|
|          | None                     | 0-4  | 4-10 | 11-20 | 21-30 | 31-40 | 41-50 | 51<br>or More |
| Winter % | 6.0                      | 12.4 | 26.2 | 20.8  | 18.8  | 5.4   | 4.5   | 5.9           |
| Summer % | 12.2                     | 28.9 | 27.9 | 11.2  | 5.6   | 2.5   | 2.0   | 9.6           |

As expected, the respondents have considerably more time in the winter for leisure activities than they do in the summer. Over fifty per cent have more than ten hours of leisure time in the winter, while only about thirty per cent have this much in the summer.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ATTITUDES AND VALUES

#### Anomie

The Srole Anomie Scale was designed to measure value, confusion, and despair. A score of zero means complete lack of anomie, and a score of five means highly anomic. The following results were obtained for the combined Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain area. The zero score category included 24.2% of the respondents, 21.3% scored one, 14.5% scored two, 16.4% scored three, 12.1% scored four, and 11.6% scored five.

#### Work ("Protestant Ethic")

For purposes of comparison, a scale was administered to determine the importance of work to the respondents. There was virtually no difference between Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain. Scores on the "Protestant Ethic" Scale ranged from 7.5 to 31.5 in Dixonville with the median score being 17.6. In Blueberry Mountain the range was from 11.5 to 31.5, and the median was 17.8.

#### Values

Respondents were asked, "If you had your choice, which would you rather be - successful, independent, or well-liked?" The response patterns were similar for the two areas, and the combined percentages were as follows: 3.2% did not answer, 21.8% chose success as their primary value, 22.3% chose independence, and 52.7% chose being well-liked.

From a list of value items, the respondents were asked to pick the three most important, and to specify the one (of those three) which was the most important. Table 1 shows the results.

CHAPTER XIV TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS GIVING SPECIFIED ITEMS  
AS THE MOST IMPORTANT VALUE IN LIFE TO THEM

| <u>Item</u>                          | <u>Percentage of<br/>Respondents Endor-<br/>sing Item</u> |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Making money and buying things       | 3.8   |
| Keeping healthy and fit              | 34.4  |
| Politics and community affairs       | 0.0   |
| Religious activities                 | 4.8   |
| Being liked and respected by others  | 12.9  |
| Being highly skilled in what I do    | 3.8   |
| Being a just and honest person       | 18.2  |
| Family ties and relationships        | 10.8  |
| Being independent and one's own boss | 11.5  |

In 23.0% of the cases, "being liked and respected by others" was chosen as one of the two other important values; "keeping healthy and fit" was chosen 20.7% of the time; "being a just and honest person" was chosen 16.9% of the time; "making money and buying things" was chosen 10.3% of the time; "being highly skilled in what I do" was chosen 7.5% of the time; "family ties and relationships" was chosen 6.1% of the time as was "being independent and one's own boss"; "religious activities" was chosen 5.6% of the time; and "politics and community affairs" was chosen 3.8% of the time.

"Being independent and one's own boss" was chosen 32.5% of the time as the third choice; "being a just and honest person" 17.8% of the time; "family ties and relationships" 13.5% of the time; "keeping healthy and fit" and "being like and respected by others" each 11.7% of the time; "being highly skilled in what I do" 7.4% of the time; "religious activities" 3.7% of the time; "making money and buying things" 1.2% of the time; and "politics and community affairs" 0.6% of the time.

The results of a series of value items designed to measure "middle-class orientations" of the respondents, are found in Table 2.

CHAPTER XIV TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON SPECIFIED VALUE SCALES

| <u>Value Item</u>           | <u>Score</u> |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|-----------------------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                             | <u>2</u>     | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>8</u> |
| Future orientation          | 1.4          | 7.7      | 18.2     | 14.8     | 37.8     | 13.9     | 6.2      |
| Success                     | 2.4          | 8.6      | 35.4     | 23.4     | 22.0     | 7.2      | 1.0      |
| "Respectability"            | 10.0         | 13.8     | 32.9     | 22.9     | 10.5     | 7.1      | 2.9      |
| Education                   | 0.5          | 0.5      | 9.5      | 9.0      | 20.4     | 34.6     | 24.2     |
| Manipulation of environment | 5.3          | 2.4      | 11.5     | 38.5     | 8.2      | 9.1      | 25.0     |

It is not possible to read too much into these figures by themselves. Their greatest value lies in comparison with subjects from different areas. However, one or two patterns are quite clear. For example, a large majority of the respondents placed a high value on education. A large proportion of the respondents had a very active, or controlling attitude toward their environment, few resigning themselves to a passive acceptance of things as they are. It appears that success is not a very strong value for most of the respondents, nor is "middle-class respectability".



COMMUNITYPerceptions of Community

A large majority (82%) of the respondents in the two areas felt that the area they lived in was a good one. However, as we discussed earlier, a large number of the residents would not advise their children to stay in the areas they were now in. This was more characteristic of the Dixonville area than of the Blueberry Mountain area.

Only 5.2% of all respondents were critical of the people in their community. In response to the question, "How do you feel about the people around here?" 11.3% said "very good - they are the best"; 34.9% said that they felt the people were "pretty good", and 26.4% were uncritical - "the people are just average"; 14.6% did not praise them highly but allowed that they were friendly; 6.6% said that they were sometimes good and sometimes bad; and 0.5% said that they didn't care!

Sentimental Ties to the Community

Most of the respondents said that they did not have close ties with anyone in the community (67.5%). The proportion having close relatives was 14.6%. Nine per cent said that they had no close relatives but did have close friends, and 8.5% said that they had both close relatives and close friends.

Asked if there were reasons other than close personal ties that would keep them from leaving the community, 34.9% said that they had involvements with the country; 1.4% said they would not want to leave because their spouse did not want to; 1.4% said they did not want to leave because they had too much tied up financially in the area; 1.4% said that they liked the geography of the area (climate); 3.8% said that they would stay just because they were used to it, not necessarily because they like it. Most, however, simply said that they did not want to leave (54.1%), without reporting sentimental ties.

Friends and Neighbors

Most of the respondents said they had several close friends in the neighborhood. Only 9.9% said that they had no close friends, 4.2% said that they had one, 26.9% said that they had from two to five, 31.2% said they had from six to twelve, and 27.4% said that they had more than twelve close friends.

Surprisingly, the residents of the Blueberry Mountain area saw their closest friends more often than those of the Dixonville area. In Blueberry Mountain 19.1% said that they saw their closest friends at least once a day, 22.1% said that they saw their closest friends once every two days, 17.6% said that they saw their closest friends twice a week, and 32.4% said that they saw them once a week. In Dixonville, only 10.2% said that they saw their closest friends at least once a day, 7.3% said that they saw their closest friends once every two days, 23.4% said that they saw them twice a week, and 38.7% saw them once a week. In Blueberry Mountain 4.4% of the respondents saw their best friends two or three times a month, 4.4% saw them about once a month, and none of the respondents saw them less frequently than that. However, in Dixonville, 9.5% saw their best friends two or three times a month, 8.8% saw them once a month, and 2.2% said that they saw them only twice a year.

Asked who in the area they would turn to in time of need - with whom they would, for example, leave their children for a few days if necessary - 2.5% said that there was no one they would feel safe leaving their children with, 35.7% said that they could leave them with a neighbor, 43.2% said that they could leave them with a relative, 3.5% said they could leave them with some organization such as a church, and 10.6% said that they could leave them with an associate such as a landlord or boss.

#### Community Leaders

Most of the people mentioned as community leaders came from occupations which would fall into category 4 of the Hollingshead Index of Social Position. This would include farmers who had an investment of \$10,000 to \$20,000. In the Blueberry Mountain area 84.6% fell within this category, while in the Dixonville area 46.3% of the community leaders were in this group. The Hollingshead category which includes the second largest number of community leaders is the first one. This would include farmers worth over \$125,000, as well as high school principals, professionals, and large contractors. In Dixonville, 31.3% fell within this category, while in Blueberry Mountain only 5.1% did. The explanation is that there are no well-established farmers in the Blueberry Mountain area yet, and that no professional people live in the area.

The second person named by respondents in the two areas, as a community leader, fell into category 4, 73.9% of the time, with only 10.2% falling into the first class.

The activities of people named as the most influential were many and

varied, but they might be grouped as follows: those who worked in and for community organizations and church organizations were the first named 28.2% of the time. People who worked through larger 'official' organizations, such as political parties, school boards, Boards of Trade, or 'civil service' organizations were named first in 21.2% of the cases. People who 'help the farmer' through various organizations such as the Farmers' Union, the United Farmers Association, the Rural Electrification Association, and the 4-H clubs were named first in 22.4% of the cases. The remaining 25% or so were named for such reasons as "They set a good example", "They offered good advice", or that they were active all the time, they provided jobs for the young fellows, etc.

Asked what qualities a community leader should have, 41.5% said that he must be honest, trustworthy, sincere, and have the interest of the community as a whole at heart; 23.0% said that he must be personable, have a good personality, be fair-minded, and able to communicate well with others; 19.7% said that he must be well educated, be competent, show good judgement, be a good speaker and organizer. Other qualities mentioned less frequently included dedication and interest (3.3%), aggressiveness (9.3%), respected and known (1.6%), and God-fearing (1.6%).

#### Incidence and Conceptions of Poverty

The interviewees in each community were asked if they knew of any families that they would consider to be poor. In 67.8% of the cases the answer was "Yes". In 5.9% of these cases, the respondent considered himself to be poor. The number of families that the respondents considered to be poor varied quite remarkably. Six per cent of the respondents mentioned only one poor family, 9.1% mentioned two, 12.1% mentioned three, 12.1% mentioned four, 45.4% mentioned five, and 23.7% mentioned six or more. One-third of the sample said there were no poor people in the area.

In most cases (44.5%), the respondents said they could identify the poor simply because they had a low standard of living - they lacked adequate clothing and food. Poor housing and overcrowding of houses was named as the principal sign of poverty by 17.5% of the respondents, and the fact that the children were ill-clothed and lacked proper general care was named by 9.5% of the respondents. The fact that a family was on welfare was given as a criterion of poverty by 8.8% of the respondents. Too large a family was given as a sign of poverty in 5.1% of the cases. Various other signs of poverty were

mentioned as well - they don't work (0.7%), they are always in debt (2.9%), they don't have any means of transportation (1.5%), they are always struggling - they never make any progress (2.2%), etc.

Asked to distinguish between people who were not doing well and people who were really poor, 19.7% of the respondents said that there was something holding the really poor back, 30.3% said that the really poor don't try, they are less responsible, 10.5% said the really poor were poor managers. Others gave reasons such as the poor have suffered from sickness and ill-health (1.3%), the poor have lots of kids (3.9%), the poor lack education (1.3%), the poor are not acceptable socially, whereas those who are doing well are (1.3%).

Asked what the causes of poverty for the poor families they knew were, 35.6% said it was because these families lacked ambition, 22.3% said it was due to poor management, 13.1% said it was because they had too large families, 7.7% said it was because they had to start with nothing and just couldn't get established. Less frequently mentioned reasons included alcohol problems (5.4%), poor farm (land and layout) (5.4%), health problems (3.8%), bad weather (3.8%), lack of education (2.3%), and the death or desertion of the father (1.5%).

The respondents were asked to say how they thought the poor families felt about their situation. Almost half (48.3%) said that they were quite happy - not concerned about it at all, 29.2% said that they were quite dissatisfied and felt badly because they were not as well off as others, 10.0% said that some of the families were quite content but others were not. Five per cent said that they were too busy trying to get ahead to think about it, 4.2% said that they were indifferent, and 3.3% said that they were happy because they were living well enough on welfare.

In response to the question "Is there anything the government should do to help these families?", 18.1% said that the government should (continue to) give them financial assistance, 8.3% said that the government should supervise the spending of welfare money more closely - should do more in the way of giving vouchers for specific goods rather than just giving money, 6.3% said the government should encourage local industry so that there would be more jobs available, and 8.7% said that the government should direct its efforts at rehabilitation - offer more and/or better education and training. Other suggestions included "Cut off all welfare unless the man is sick or absent" (3.9%), "Make them work or put them in jail" (4.7%), and "Just get farmer a better price for his products and they will do all right" (2.4%).

### Community Participation

Considering all possible types of organization, 43.3% of the respondents from both areas said that they belonged to no organizations of any kind. A larger proportion of the residents of the Dixonville area fell into this group (47.2%) than did those in the Blueberry Mountain area (35.2%). In the Blueberry Mountain area 33.8% reported that they belonged to one organization as compared to just 16.7% in the Dixonville area. Combining these two figures reveals that 22.3% of the two together belonged to just one organization. Further, 17.7% belonged to two organizations (for the two areas combined), 12.6% belonged to three, 2.8% belonged to four organizations, and 1.4% belonged to more than four.

In the Dixonville area 26.2% of the respondents held some office within an organization. Of these, 3.9% had held a position with the Farmers' Union, 6.9% had held an office with some other farm organization, 4.8% had held a position with a sports organization, 3.5% with some church organization, 3.5% in a service club (ladies' auxiliary, fraternal organizations, etc.), 1.4% in government organizations, 0.7% in a union other than the Farmers' Union, and 1.4% in miscellaneous other clubs.

In Blueberry Mountain, there was not so much diversity. Of the total of 29.6% who had ever held a position with an organization, 21.1% had held a position with a service organization, 4.3% with a church organization, 2.8% with a union other than the Farmers' Union, and 1.4% with some farmers' organization (other than the Farmers' Union).

In the Dixonville area, 43.7% said that they had never belonged to the Farmers' Union, 7.0% said that they had belonged at one time but did not belong now, and 49.3% said that they were currently members of the Farmers' Union. In the Blueberry Mountain area, 67.6% of the respondents said that they had never belonged to the Farmers' Union, 11.3% said that they had belonged at one time but were not members at present, and 21.1% said they were members of the Farmers' Union. When they were asked if they would favor some other kind of organization, 75.3% said that the Farmers' Union was as good an organization as any, 11.7% said that they would like to see a stronger farm organization, but could not specify just what form it would have to take, and the rest gave rather vague answers to the effect that some other organization might be better but they hadn't really thought about it.

Table 1 shows the religious affiliations of the population in each of the two areas and for the two areas combined.

CHURCH AFFILIATIONS FOR DIXONVILLE,  
BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN, AND THE COMBINED AREAS

| <u>Religious Category</u>                | <u>Dixonville</u> | <u>Blueberry Mountain</u> | <u>Combined</u> |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Roman Catholic                           | 12.5              | 13.0                      | 12.7            |
| United )<br>Methodist )<br>Presbyterian) | 31.9              | 29.0                      | 31.0            |
| Anglican                                 | 9.7               | 0.0                       | 6.6             |
| Lutheran                                 | 4.2               | 7.2                       | 5.2             |
| Baptist )<br>Mennonite)                  | 0.0               | 23.2                      | 7.5             |
| Sects                                    | 9.0               | 2.9                       | 7.0             |
| Orthodox - Greek<br>(Ukrainian)          | 2.1               | 4.3                       | 2.8             |
| Catholic - Greek<br>(Ukrainian)          |                   |                           |                 |
| NONE                                     | 30.6              | 20.3                      | 27.2            |

From Table 1 we see that in the Blueberry Mountain area there were no members of the Church of England, while there was a small congregation in the older, more well established Dixonville area. In the Blueberry Mountain area there was a large group of Mennonites, while in the Dixonville area there were no Baptist or other conservative Protestant groups. There were some sects in both areas, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, "The Full Gospel Church of God", "New Testament Christians", Salvation Army, and others. There was a considerably higher percentage of respondents claiming no religious affiliation in the Dixonville area than in the Blueberry Mountain area even though the latter area had fewer facilities for religious meetings, and more physical obstacles to getting together.

Respondents were asked to rate themselves as to how religious they were. Combining the two areas, 9.6% said that they were very religious, 43.8% said they were moderately religious, 33.2% said they were not very religious, and 13.5% said that they were not religious at all. The only marked difference between the two areas was in the last rating where a breakdown reveals that 16.7% of the respondents in the Dixonville area said that they were not religious as compared to 7.1% of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area.

The frequency of church attendance was similar for the two areas, with slightly more regular attendance being found in the Blueberry Mountain area. For the two areas combined, 6.0% said that they attended church more than once a week; 18.5% said that they went about once a week, 17.9% said that they attend two or three times a month (less than every time there was a service), 11.9% said they attend about once a month, 32.7% said that they rarely attended

(two or three times a year, "only at funerals and weddings", etc). Thirteen per cent said that they were members of a church but never attended services.

Respondents in each area were asked if they could name their Member of Parliament, and their Member of the Legislative Assembly. The percentage of respondents who correctly named these men for each of the areas is given in Table 2.

CHAPTER XV TABLE 2

RESPONDENTS CORRECTLY NAMING THEIR M.P. AND M.L.A.  
FOR DIXONVILLE, BLUEBERRY MOUNTAIN, AND FOR THE TWO AREAS COMBINED

|               | <u>Dixonville</u> | <u>Blueberry Mountain</u> | <u>Combined</u> |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| M.P. Only     | 8.3               | 1.4                       | 6.0             |
| M.L.A. Only   | 11.8              | 32.4                      | 18.6            |
| M.P. & M.L.A. | 70.8              | 39.4                      | 60.5            |
| Neither       | 9.0               | 26.8                      | 14.9            |

From Table 2 we see that a majority of respondents were able to name both their M.P. and their M.L.A., but by no means was it an overwhelming majority. Political awareness was considerably less in the Blueberry Mountain area, where 26.8% were unable to name either of their elected representatives, and only 39.4% were able to name them both. Fifty-four per cent of the respondents from both areas said that they would feel free to speak to their M.L.A. about local problems. Sixteen per cent said that they probably would speak to him if they felt it necessary, 7.0% were doubtful if they would, and 10.2% said they definitely would not speak to him. Thirteen per cent said they did not know if they would or not. The proportion of respondents who said they definitely would not speak to their M.L.A. was considerably greater in Dixonville than in Blueberry Mountain (14.6% compared to 1.4%).

For the two areas, 12.3% said that talking to their M.L.A. about local problems would definitely do some good, 21.7% said that it probably would do some good, 23.1% said that they were doubtful if it would do any good, 20.8% said that they were sure that it would not do any good, and 22.2% said that they did not know if it would or not.

About 75% of the respondents in both areas said that they had voted in every election that they had been eligible for in the past three years, 6.5% said that they had not voted in any of the recent elections although they had been eligible, and the remainder (about 20%) said that they had voted in some but not all of the last few elections.

Only 11.1% said that they followed federal politics very closely, 34.7% said that they followed it fairly closely, 43.1% said that they did not follow it too closely, and 10.6% said that they did not follow federal politics at all.

For provincial politics, 9.3% said that they followed it very closely, 44.9% said that they followed fairly closely, 34.7% said that they did not follow too closely, and 11.1% said that they did not follow provincial politics at all. The two areas were similar on these two dimensions. Comparing these two responses, again for the combined area, 43.3% reported that they followed both federal and provincial politics either fairly closely or very closely, 42.8% said that they followed both not too closely or not at all, 11.2% said that they followed provincial closely but not federal, and 2.8% said that they followed federal closely but not provincial.

Of those who belonged to organizations, 52.3% said that they attended all the meetings, 11.9% said that they attended most of the meetings, 10.1% said that they attended about half of the meetings, 10.1% said that they attended very rarely, and 15.6% said that they never attended - they "just kept their dues up".

For the two areas combined, 70.1% of the respondents said they had never held an official position with any organization, 9.3% had held one minor position (e.g. member of a board but not chairman), 7.5% had held two or more minor positions, 6.5% had held a major position and one or more minors, 2.3% had held one major position only, and 4.2% had held more than one major position (and possibly several minor ones as well).



ASSESSMENT OF SITUATIONReasons for Coming and Staying Here, and/or Wanting to Leave

In spite of the fact that the two areas of Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain were settled at very different times, the reasons given by the respondents for coming to these areas were very similar. A total of 3.2% said they came north for purely financial reasons, 31.4% said they came because they married someone from the area, 43.6% said they came simply because they always wanted to farm, 10.3% said they came because it offered a chance for a better life - one away from land shortages and crowds of people, 10.3% came because they had family ties in the area, 5.1% because it gave them a chance to get a place of their own, 5.1% came because of a job opportunity, and assorted other reasons were given by the remaining 6.4%.

Families that had moved within the last 10 years were questioned more intensively about their reasons for moving. Of the sixty-two families that fell into this category, 25.8% said that they just wanted to farm, 19.4% said they came because they had married someone from the area, 17.7% said they came because the area offered a better chance to get ahead than where they had previously been, 12.9% came because they had family ties, 6.5% came for purely financial reasons, 6.5% came because a veteran's lease was available, 4.8% came to get a place of their own, and 4.8% came to retire.

In 34.6% of the cases, the respondents had sought no professional advice, concerning their proposed move, before they came. Twenty-nine per cent of the respondents had purposeful discussions with various people, but not with professionals, and 21.2% said they did not talk it over with anyone, but made up their minds all by themselves.

None of the respondents felt that they had received bad advice, either from friends or professionals. In the Blueberry Mountain area particularly, some of the respondents said they had received good advice from professionals (22.7%), while only 4% of the Dixonville residents made this statement. Note that fewer residents of the Dixonville area sought professional advice.

In most cases the move was by mutual consent of husband and wife with only 4% of the wives and none of the husbands being unfavorable to it. Similarly, when there were children old enough to care one way or another, most were in favor of the move. Seven per cent of the families reported that all of their children were unfavorable to the move, and 2.3% said that some of

their children were unfavorable and some were favorable.

In the Blueberry Mountain area, none of the respondents thought about moving for more than five years before they finally moved, 16% said it was on their minds for from two to five years, 44% said it was on their minds for from one to two years, 24% said they thought about it for from 10 months to one year, and 16% said they thought about it less than 10 months. In Dixonville, however, 30% of the respondents said they had thought about it for more than five years before they moved, 15% said they thought about it for from two to five years, 15% said they thought about it for from one to two years, 10% said they thought about it for from 10 months to one year, and 30% said they thought about it for less than 10 months before they moved.

The respondents were asked if there was anything in particular that had helped them make up their minds to move. Sixty-two per cent said that there had been nothing specific. Ten per cent said they disliked their old place because their relatives were always moving in on them, 10% said they moved because they went broke where they were, and 8% said they moved simply because it looked like a good opportunity to get ahead. Various other reasons such as "I had been working too hard where I was", health reasons, "lost my job", etc., were also given.

Asked if they would again move to their present location, if they had it to do over again, 71.5% said they would without any reservations, and an additional 5.0% said they probably would, but with reservations. Twenty-three per cent said that they definitely would not move there again, and 0.6% said that they probably wouldn't, while 0.6% said they just didn't know. The reason most often given for saying that they would come to this country again was simply that they liked the area, the opportunities for outdoor life, and the chance to get a place of their own.

Those who said they would not come to the area again most often felt as they did because they thought that their children were suffering from inferior educational facilities, and that there was generally a poor chance for getting ahead. Some said they would have preferred a different area, where they could try different crops, and some said that the area was plagued by too much bad weather. Asked what they would do instead of moving to the area they were currently living in, many (85%) said they would move again, but that they did not know where for sure. The idea of moving closer to more settled areas was often mentioned, in order to be nearer to better services.

When asked what satisfaction they got from their work, 30.3% said that they enjoyed the feeling of accomplishment it gave them, 19.9% said that they enjoyed the independence and privacy it offered, 10.4% said they enjoyed it because it kept them healthy and fit, 9.5% said it made them feel creative - made them think and come up with new ideas. Ten per cent said that they "just enjoyed it", and could not put other words to their feelings. Seventeen per cent gave various personal reasons for their enjoyment. Two and one-half per cent said they did not enjoy their work at all.

Asked how satisfied they were with their life on their present farm, 42.9% said they were completely satisfied, 41.9% said they were quite satisfied, 4.8% said they were somewhat unsatisfied, and 10.5% said they were definitely dissatisfied. However, in response to another question on how well they thought they were "getting ahead", 19.2% of the respondents reported that they were doing poorly, 10.8% said they were not doing very well, 23.5% said they were just doing well, 28.2% said they were doing quite well, 17.8% said they were doing very well, and 0.5% said they did not know how well they were doing.



## CHAPTER XVII

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Indications of Poverty in the Community

##### Size and Source of Income

In the areas of Blueberry Mountain and Dixonville, 23.3% of the respondents received less than \$1,000 income in 1965, 14.5% earned from \$1,000 to \$2,000, and 21.8% earned from \$2,000 to \$5,000. Forty per cent of those interviewed earned over \$5,000.

In the Blueberry Mountain area over half of the respondents (all of whom were farmers) said that their primary source of income for 1965 was not from the farm, but that they had been forced to earn their livelihood from outside work.

##### Receipt of Welfare

In the Dixonville area 13.6% of the respondents have received welfare within the last three years, and in the Blueberry Mountain area 27.8% of the respondents have received welfare within the same period.

##### Debt

Only 25.6% of the respondents in the Blueberry Mountain area are free of debt. In the Dixonville area this proportion is 27.4%. In Dixonville an additional 32.2% have debt amounting to less than \$2,000, and in Blueberry Mountain this figure is 33.3%. Those respondents having a total debt of over \$2,000 compose 41.0% of the respondents of the Blueberry Mountain area, and 38.4% of the Dixonville area.

In the Dixonville area 85.1% of the respondents pay less than 6% interest on their debts, while in Blueberry Mountain only 57.1% have this low an interest rate. This means then that over 40% of the respondents of the Blueberry Mountain area pay more than 6% interest, and as was pointed out earlier, some interest rates go as high as 25%.

##### Housing

In the Dixonville area 14.3% of the homes were unquestionably substandard, lacking in some essential facilities. In the Blueberry Mountain area, 30.5% of the homes fell into this category. An additional 58.5% of the Dixonville homes were in the middle range on the Edwards' Housing Scale, which includes homes that were lacking in a few of the more essential facilities, but that would not be considered grossly substandard. Only 27.3% of the Dixonville respondents had homes which were in the upper category on the Edwards' Scale --

lacking in no essential facilities. In the Blueberry Mountain area, 63.9% of the homes fell into the middle category, and only 5.6% of the homes could be considered completely adequate.

#### Health

About 20% of the respondents said that they had been plagued by some form of ill-health within the last three years. One-half of the respondents said that they did not have any sort of health insurance - 34.7% because they claimed they simply could not afford it. The majority of respondents did not have any large medical bills to pay within the past year.

In the Dixonville area, 81.5% of the ailments suffered within the last year were treated by local general practitioners, while in Blueberry Mountain only 54.5% of the respondents were able to get such care. It is not surprising then, that in the Dixonville area only 3.7% received only self or family treatment while in Blueberry Mountain 22.7% were forced to this level of treatment.

Again as one might expect, only 50% of the respondents of the Blueberry Mountain area considered their ailments successfully cured, while in Dixonville 78.6% felt that the medical treatment they had received had cured the ailment.

#### Education

For the areas of Dixonville and Blueberry Mountain, 1.9% of all respondents had no formal education at all, 1.9% had from one to three years, 13.9% from four to six years, 32.4% from seven to eight years, 18.1% nine years, and 32.5% had more than nine years of education. In most cases the respondents had more education than did their parents.

#### Social Participation

In the Dixonville area, 26.2% of the respondents had held some office with an organization. In the Blueberry Mountain area the comparable figure was 29.6%. There were, however, fewer organizations in the Blueberry Mountain area.

Similarly there were fewer religious groups in the Blueberry Mountain area, although the religious participation was slightly higher in the Blueberry Mountain area.

In Dixonville 43.7% said that they had never belonged to the Farmers' Union, while in Blueberry Mountain, 67.6% said that they had never belonged. Current membership in the Farmers' Union included 49.3% of the Dixonville farmers and 21.1% of the Blueberry Mountain farmers.

Most respondents were able to name both their M.L.A. and their M.P. in the Dixonville area (70.8%) while in the Blueberry Mountain area, awareness

and participation in the area of politics was considerably lower (39.4% could name both). About 75% of the respondents for both areas said that they had voted in all of the elections that they had been eligible for in the last three years.

In Dixonville 47.2% of the respondents said that they belonged to no organizations of any type whatsoever, and in Blueberry Mountain the proportion was 35.2%

#### Apathetic Despair

Using the Srole Anomie Scale, it was shown that about 40.0% of the respondents were anomic to a greater or lesser degree (score of 3, 4, or 5) while 60% were not anomic (score of 0, 1, or 2).

#### Identification of Self as Poor

In 67.8% of the cases, respondents said that they knew of families in the area they lived in that they thought were poor. In only 5.9% of the cases did the respondents consider themselves to be poor.

#### Poverty as Comparative Advancement

In 42.6% of the cases the respondents felt that they had done relatively poorly compared with the rest of their family, and only 28% felt that they had done better than the rest of their family. Twenty-eight per cent felt that they had done equally as well as had the rest of their family. In the Blueberry Mountain area proportionately more of the respondents felt that they had not done as well as the rest of their family.

#### Conceptions of Poverty

The most commonly mentioned index of poverty was simply a 'low standard of living', evident because of lack of physical goods such as food and clothing. Many felt that the way one could identify a poor family was by overcrowded housing conditions. The fact that a family was on welfare was used as a criterion for distinguishing the poor from the rest of the residents by a lesser number of respondents.

About 30% blamed poverty on lack of initiative and effort, with fewer naming poor management and lack of initial capital as prime sources of poverty.

#### Prospects and Resources for Rehabilitation

##### Value Identifications

Given a choice of being successful, independent, or well-liked, over half of the respondents said that they would choose to be well-liked. Success and independence were chosen evenly by the remainder of the respondents. In

another series of value items, "keeping healthy and fit" was chosen 34% of the time, with "being a just and honest person" the next most popular choice (18.2% of the time). Again "being liked and respected" ranked fairly high (chosen by 12.9% of the respondents).

A large majority of the respondents placed a high value on education. Many (40%) felt that they had a great deal of control over their environment, and about half of the respondents showed much concern with what might be termed "middle-class respectability".

#### Aspirations

Most respondents had plans for improving their farms, but in most cases improvements were of a nature that would require considerable financial resources. In some cases these resources were available, but in many they were not. Over 70% of the respondents said that if they had their choice of any type of work at all, they would still choose farming. Very few (3.1%) said that they would prefer to be in an occupation that would rank higher than their present position.

#### Willingness to Move

There was not a great deal of desire to move on the part of the respondents in either area. In the Blueberry Mountain area about 16% said that they planned to move in the near future, while in the Dixonville area only 7% felt that they would move in the near future. The most commonly given reason for wanting to move was to go to a better climate. When asked to say what they would do if they could get financial assistance, still only a very few said that they would move. Of those who said that they would move, most said it would be to some place in Alberta, about half specifying some large city in the province.

There was not much evidence that the residents of the communities felt strong sentimental attachment to their homes. Over 65% said that they had no close friends or relatives whom it would be difficult to move away from. About 90% said that they did not want to leave, but that there was no particular sentimental reasons for not wanting to.

#### Recommendations: Regional Development or Redevelopment Needs

##### Education

The educational facilities could be considerably improved in both areas. The addition of Grade 12 classes in the schools of both areas would be of great value. Along with this addition would have to go some means of bringing



in more good teachers. This could include both monetary incentives, plus provision of good housing facilities for school staff.

In the absence of Grade 12 in the communities, money should be made available to students who desire to go beyond Grade 11, which at present necessitates their living away from home - a distance of fifty miles or more. Though it was not dealt with specifically in this research, it seems likely that the expense of 'going out' to university would, in many cases, seem prohibitive. The thought of going yet further into debt, even though the money might be available in this form, is prohibitive.

There is a need for adult education programs in both areas. This could be in the form of vocational as well as more generalized education.

#### Services

Assistance in obtaining electric power for homesteaders is acutely needed in the Blueberry Mountain area. The cost at present is completely beyond the capabilities of many of those just starting out, and it is at precisely this stage that it is needed most. There are still a few small homesteads in the Dixonville area that would benefit greatly from this service.

Water supplies are, in many cases, quite inadequate. Some assistance is now given in the acquisition of a dugout, but is not sufficient: families without any reliable source of water can still be found.

Roads are also acutely needed in the Blueberry Mountain area. Both the quality and the quantity of roads could be drastically improved. At present, prolonged spells of bad weather could cut a family off from the outside completely.

Better drainage facilities are required in the vicinity of the White-mud River, south of Dixonville, and in some regions of the Blueberry Mountain area. The possibility of irrigation should be considered for both areas, according to some residents who had experience in this field before going north.

Telephones were lacking in both areas at the time of the study, although they were promised for the Dixonville area by the summer of 1967. The fact that the roads around Blueberry Mountain are inadequate means that communication is that much more difficult. Telephones might be a welcome service there as well.

#### Welfare

There were no signs of gross misuse of welfare payments in the areas, but one cannot help thinking that more careful scrutiny of welfare payments

might somehow do more to alleviate the problems the recipients face, instead of simply removing the symptoms. Those who are receiving welfare are, in almost all cases, clearly in need of it, but perhaps they are not making the best use of it.

#### Homesteading

More strict regulations as to who is allowed to homestead are needed. It is simply inviting disaster to allow a man of limited technical knowledge, and even more limited financial means, to go to the "promising northland" to establish a homestead. Some sort of "pre-homesteading" education might be a partial answer, but clearly there are people taking out homesteads now who will never make independent economical units out of them.

Capital assistance to homesteaders is also needed, if the north is to be developed. This assistance could take any one of several forms. The government might contract to clear the land, leaving the homesteader responsible only for the breaking and root-picking required; capital might be made available on a "supervised spending" basis; money might be loaned with just the land that is to be improved as collateral.

The need for such assistance is, of course, most pressing in the Blueberry Mountain area, but there are some in the Dixonville area who would benefit as well.





HUMAN RESOURCES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

