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*St. Britain - Agriculture*

**UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM**

**Department of Agricultural Economics**

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**FARM AMALGAMATION**

1950 — 1964

# FARM AMALGAMATION

1950 - 1964

An enquiry into the amalgamation of  
Farm Holdings on Estates in England  
and Wales



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This was kindly supplied by C. David Edgar, Radcliffe-on-Trent.

## Summary

1. The results in this report are based on 72 estates. These were the respondents from a stratified random sample of 292 C.L.A. members. In many instances the returns from fewer than 72 estates are used in particular analyses, according to the response to each question.
2. The responding estates tend to be larger than would have been expected from other evidence about the overall size distribution of estates. In the analysis, the estates have been divided into three size groups according to their acreage of agricultural land in 1964.
3. The majority of estates of all sizes have declined in their size and their number of holdings since 1950. An increasing proportion of total estate acreage and an increasing actual acreage has been taken in hand since 1950. These changes in estate sizes and in the number of their holdings provide *prima facie* evidence of substantial sales of land and of the amalgamation of holdings.
4. Fifty-seven of the 72 estates have undertaken some amalgamation during the past 15 years.
5. Estate management considerations (e.g. removal of poor buildings, improvement of layout, increased rental) have been predominant among the reasons for the amalgamation so far carried out.
6. In terms of the factors which will influence future amalgamations, estate management again ranks highest, with especial importance being attached to considerations surrounding the supply, maintenance or replacement of fixed equipment.
7. The factors which are more likely to govern the decisions of estate owners regarding future amalgamations are predominantly stated to be those which relate to the favourable *consequences* of amalgamation as estate owners perceive them (such as improved layout and easier estate management) rather than favourable *circumstances* (such as adequacy of fixed equipment).
8. Expansions to Home Farms have been given priority in amalgamation operations (except on some of the larger estates). Home Farms have been increased proportionately more than other estate holdings as a result of more and bigger holdings being added to them. Consequently the difference in size between them and other estate holdings has increased during the past 15 years.
9. Most of the expansions to estate holdings have been of a "simple" type. The amalgamations to Home Farms have been more "complex". (These types are described in the report).
10. The majority of amalgamations which have occurred since 1950 have been carried out only when holdings have become vacant as a result of the death, retirement or movement of the tenant.
11. Amalgamation has frequently been accompanied by the re-modelling of buildings on the enlarged holdings.

## 1. Background to the Enquiry

For some time the Country Landowners' Association has been concerned lest technical advances in farming should outstrip adaptations in structure or, in other words, whether the present structure of farms is adequate to the requirements of modern methods of farming.

The C.L.A. has therefore been led to consider what positive policy on structure may be needed in order to keep pace with technical and economic developments and to play a part in maintenance of an efficient agriculture.

The working out of such a policy has been hampered by the lack of sufficient information, particularly about the extent to which alterations in the farm structure have been taking place in recent years and about the circumstances which have facilitated or prevented such alterations.

For this reason the C.L.A. decided to sponsor an investigation into the facts, and asked the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Nottingham to assist in its preparation and to analyse the results.

Grateful acknowledgement is made to all those landowners and agents who undertook the formidable task of completing the questionnaire.

## 2. The Survey

The method of obtaining data was to send a questionnaire to a sample of C.L.A. members. The complicated and varied nature of the amalgamation carried out on estates necessarily meant that the questionnaire had to be rather intricate in design, and it required detailed factual information. Thanks are due to all those who went to the considerable trouble involved in completing it.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Section A sought general information on the member's estate as a whole—its size and number of holdings in 1950 and 1964, both for the whole estate and the land in hand, the nature of any completed or intended amalgamation of holdings, and factors affecting the owner's decision to amalgamate farms. Section B attempted to obtain detailed information of all cases of amalgamation actually undertaken by an estate since 1950. This required particulars of the size of the holdings which were amalgamated, the year in which this occurred and the circumstances surrounding the action.

A completely accurate account of estate activities in farm amalgamation during the past 15 years would require full and correct information from *all* estates. However, this was out of the question with the limited resources available, and it was thought that a reasonably accurate appreciation of the actual state of affairs could be obtained from a sample. It was decided that an overall sample of about 10%, properly drawn, would provide adequate information from which to generalise.

The sample was drawn from a C.L.A. membership list of *circa* 1960 which included details of members' county of residence and subscription. The subscription figure corresponds roughly to the total area of

each estate, according to the C.L.A. schedule of membership dues, except in cases where estates include moorlands or other land of low agricultural value. Since a substantial proportion of C.L.A. members appear to be owner-occupiers, and since it was initially postulated that the greatest incidence of amalgamation would occur on larger estates, it was decided to omit estates of 500 acres and under from the enquiry and from the sampling procedure. Estates owned by Municipal Corporations and by Trusts were also excluded on the grounds that their policies might, for various reasons, be significantly different from those of the ordinary estate owner. The resulting list numbered 2,663 estates (Table 1(a)).

The sample drawn from this total was selected at random within a framework of 56 strata—seven size-group strata and eight regions. A sampling fraction was determined for each of the 56 strata which was proportional to the estimated average size of estate in that stratum.<sup>(1)</sup> To this was added the restriction that the minimum sampling fraction in any stratum should be three per cent. The total sample selected in this way necessarily gave more weight to the larger estates—a feature which was desirable in this enquiry since most amalgamations may be expected to have occurred on them. The total sample drawn numbered 292 estates (Table 1).

#### THE SAMPLE

TABLE 1

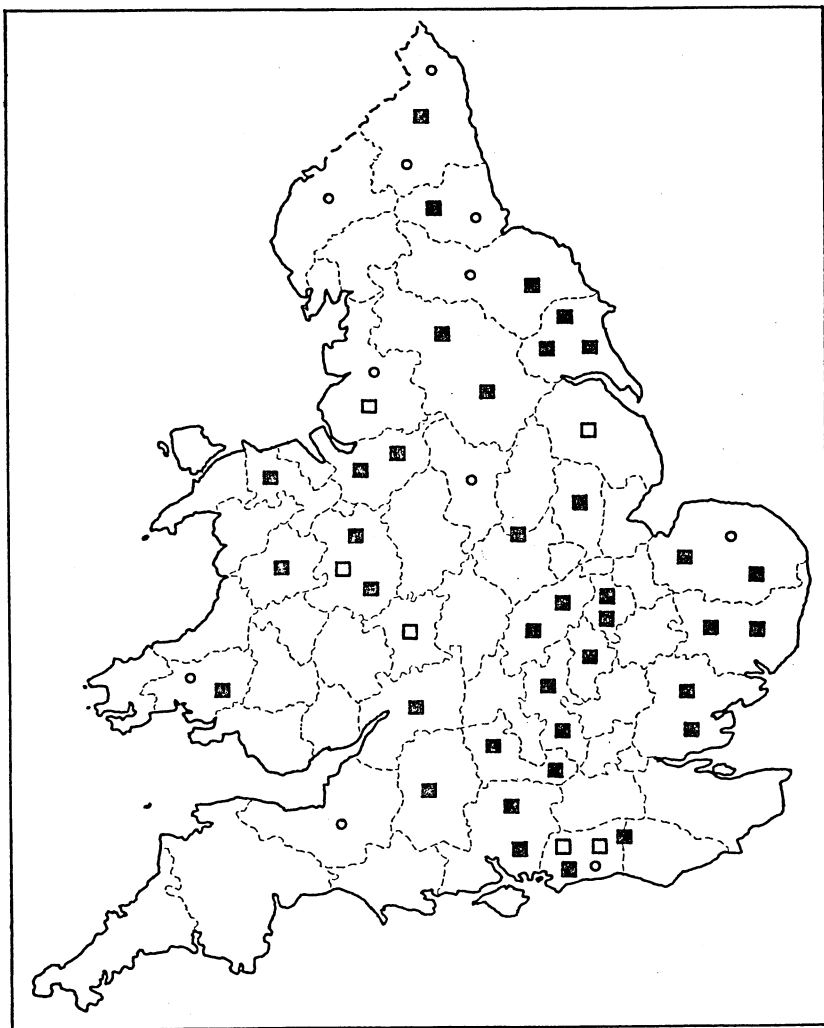
(a) By REGION (N.A.A.S. Regions approximately)

Region	Total Population Sampled	Sample Number	Region	Total Population Sampled	Sample Number
Northern	269.	38	South Eastern	479	48
Lancs. & Yorks.	170	25	South Western	439	43
E. Midland	331	40	Wales	154	20
W. Midland	304	35			
Eastern	517	43	ENGLAND & WALES	2,663	292

(b) By SIZE (based on subscriptions due)

Approximate acreage	Total Population Sampled	Sample Number	Resulting Sampling Fraction Approximately
501—1000	1,251	37	1 in 34
1001—2000	690	20	1 in 34
2001—3000	272	25	1 in 11
3001—4000	147	34	1 in 4
4001—5000	104	46	1 in 2
5001—10000	141	72	1 in 2
10001 & over	58	58	all
	2,663	292	1 in 9

(1) Acknowledgement is due to Mr. J. E. Bessell for valuable help in determining the most efficient method of sampling.



Estates of known location (County).

- Usable data on amalgamation;
- Usable, but some doubt in reconciliation of amalgamation data;
- Useless for amalgamation data.

The emphasis laid initially on drawing a statistically sound sample was considered essential if valid generalisations were to be made from the survey data. Consequently, a considerable effort was devoted to the sample selection.

In the event, the response was disappointing. Of the sample of 292 only 72 usable completed questionnaires were received—a response rate of 25 per cent. Since the forms did not systematically seek the location of the estates no comparison can be made of the varying response from various regions. Replies from estates in which information as to their county of location is given have been plotted on the Map. There is a tendency for replies to concentrate in East Anglia, the Home Counties and the South East, but a large proportion of the required sample lay in these regions. The South West and Wales are particularly poorly represented in the replies. In terms of size, the questionnaires required no information as to subscription to the C.L.A. around 1960. However, accepting the approximate equivalence to estate acreage it may be stated that in the total population about 83 per cent were under 3,000 acres (2,213 out of 2,663, see Table 1), but in the sample 28 per cent should have been below this size (82 out of 292). Turning now to the 72 who replied out of the sample of 292, it was found that 32 per cent of them had under 3,000 acres of agricultural land in 1964. In other words, the response rate was not greatly different among the smaller estates than among the larger.

Unfortunately it cannot be assumed that the non-respondents are similar to the respondents. Consequently, in reviewing the succeeding analysis of the replies received *there would be no justification for assuming that the figures represent accurately the situation in the country as a whole*. The figures show only what is happening on the 72 estates concerned. However, it can be said that they are likely to be *indicative* of certain pronounced general trends.

### 3. The Analysis

It has already been pointed out that the sampling procedure deliberately sought to obtain replies from a higher proportion of the larger estates than of the smaller ones, so as to obtain more information about amalgamations. In other words, the average size of estates providing replies to this enquiry is larger than the true average size of estates in England and Wales.

Table 2 compares the distribution of the total size of 71 responding estates in 1950 with the more comprehensive, sample coverage of the C.L.A. Rent enquiry of that year.<sup>(2)</sup> The major land uses of the estates in 1950 as revealed by the present and the 1950 enquiries respectively are given in Table 3. Both these tables indicate the larger size of the estates replying to this farm amalgamation investigation.

It should be mentioned that if an adequate response had been obtained from the selected sample, the effect of the size of estate bias could have been corrected in the analysis. In the remainder of this report, however, all data are drawn directly from the 1964 enquiry, without adjustment.

For the purpose of the analysis, the replies have been divided into three primary groups according to *the estate acreage of agricultural land in 1964*. These three size-groups have been termed and defined as:—

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<sup>(2)</sup> County Landowners' Association: *An Enquiry into Agricultural Rents and Expenses of Landowners in England and Wales, 1950 and 1951*. C.L.A. 1953.



“Small”—under 3,000 acres of agricultural land;  
 “Medium”—3,000—6,999 acres of agricultural land;  
 “Large”—7,000 acres and over of agricultural land.

This division has been based on the size distribution of the available and usable 72 replies in order to obtain an approximately equal number in each size group.

A COMPARISON OF ESTATE SIZES IN 1950 OF THE C.L.A. RENT ENQUIRY WITH THE RESULTS FROM THE PRESENT ENQUIRY

TABLE 2

Size (Total acres)*	1950 C.L.A. Rent Enquiry		1950 according to 1964 Amalgamation Enquiry	
	No. of Estates	%	No. of Estates	%
under 3000	131	51.8	15	21.1
3000—6999	68	26.9	26	36.6
7000 & over	54	21.3	30	42.3
	253	100.0	71**	100.0

NOTES: \* The size distribution according to *agricultural land* cannot be used here, since the Rent Enquiry Report gives size distribution according to Total area only.

\*\* One estate did not provide information of its acreage in 1950. In the remainder of the report the size of this estate has been assumed to be unchanged from 1950 to 1964.

AVERAGE EXTENT OF MAJOR LAND USES PER ESTATE IN 1950 ACCORDING TO C.L.A. RENT ENQUIRY AND PRESENT ENQUIRY

TABLE 3

Major Land Use	1950 C.L.A. Rent Enquiry			1950 according to 1964 Amalgamation Enquiry		
	Total	Let	In hand	Total	Let	In hand
	acres					
Agricultural Land	5088	4945	143	6991	6249½	741½
Woodland	379½	288	91½	1048	236½	811½
Moorland, etc.	464	24	440	765	559½	205½
Total	5931½	5257	674½	8804	7045½	1758½

Apart from this division of estates by size, one other distinction of importance in the succeeding analysis should be mentioned. Where general information only is required, details obtained from all the 72 respondents (or however many have replied to particular questions) have been used. In analysing more specific questions of amalgamation, however, replies were available from a smaller number of estates. Only 57 of the estates have had any experience of farm amalgamation, so that information extracted on this subject could not relate to more than this number. Furthermore, section B of the questionnaire, which sought more detailed information on specific amalgamations since 1950, was satisfactorily completed by only 43 of the 57 estates. Thus, any analysis of the actual process of amalgamation is confined to these 43 estates.

#### 4. The Size of Estates

One of the major features, characteristic of estates of all sizes, is that they have become smaller during the past 15 years. Table 4 presents the average acreage of the 72 estates in 1950 and in 1964. The decline in acreage has been proportionately greatest on the "Small" estates and least on the "Large" ones. Overall, this contraction in acreage has affected the woodland and moorland as well as the agricultural land, but only in the case of agricultural land is the decline consistent on estates of all three sizes. The actual extent of this decrease in agricultural land is almost constant, at a level of approximately 500 acres decrease, on estates of all sizes.

Accompanying the reduction in acreage there has also occurred a decrease in the average number of holdings per estate. Again, the proportionate decrease is greatest on the "Small" estates and least on the "Large". In this instance, however, the absolute decrease in the number of holdings is, on average, seven on the "Small" estates, 11 on the "Medium" estates and 15 on the "Large" estates. The greater proportional decline in the number of holdings than in the estate acreage is *prima facie* evidence that amalgamation has occurred. But the mere fact that the acreage has fallen is also evidence of sales. Many of the replies make specific reference to their sales of land, usually as complete holdings, in order to meet death duties or due to housing development in the area. Other reasons given include the need to "tidy up" the boundaries of the estate.

Although the overall tendency has been for estates to contract in size, there is an equally clear trend for an increasing acreage and proportion of the land to be taken in hand. (Tables 5A and 7). Most of the land in hand is regarded as the Home Farm. Between 1950 and 1964 this acreage in hand has been expanded by 200 to 300 acres on most estates, amounting to an expansion of over one third on "Small" estates and of one quarter on the "Medium" estates. Much of this expansion has been due to the taking in hand of more moorland. There is no evidence as to the reasons for this, but it may be speculated that tenants may have been anxious to be relieved of such land in many areas. However, the expansion of agricultural land in hand is equally noteworthy, particularly on the "Medium" estates. This suggests that many of the amalgamations on estates have been to the Home Farm.

The decline in the acreage and numbers of holdings let is thus of an even greater extent than suggested by the overall position of estates. (Compare the percentages of Table 5B with those of Table 4).

In the course of these changes in the size of estates, there has been an inevitable tendency for the average size of their holdings to increase (Table 6). Although the greatest proportional expansion of holding size has occurred on the estate holdings rather than to the Home Farm and other land in hand (except on "Medium" estates), the absolute increases present a different picture. The expansion of the Home Farms and other holdings in hand, suggested above, has on the whole averaged over 100 acres compared with an expansion of only about 30 acres on the estate holdings.

AVERAGE SIZE OF ESTATES, 1950 AND 1964, AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1950—1964, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE IN 1964.

TABLE 4

Major Land Use	" Small " (N=24)			" Medium " (N=28)			" Large " (N=20)			Total (N=72)		
	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change
	----- acres -----											
Agricultural Land	2011	1558½	-22.5	5223½	4633½	-11.3	15440½	14900½	- 3.5	6991	6460½	- 7.6
Woodland	617½	462½	-25.2	1024	1008	- 1.6	1597½	1660½	+ 3.9	1048	1007½	- 3.9
Moorland, etc.	637½	445½	-30.1	269½	329½	+22.0	1612	1419	-12.0	765	670½	-12.3
TOTAL	3266	2465½	-24.5	6517½	5970½	- 8.4	18650½	17980	- 3.6	8804	8138½	- 7.6
Average NUMBER of HOLDINGS*	16	9	-43.0	34	23	-31.3	83	68	-18.8	41	31	-25.8

NOTE: \* The average number of holdings per estate has been rounded to the nearest whole number; the percentage change is based on the total number of holdings in each size group.

o  
 AVERAGE SIZE OF (A) LAND IN HAND AND (B) LAND LET PER ESTATE IN 1950 AND 1964, AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1950-1964, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE

TABLE 5  
 (A) LAND IN HAND

Major Land Use	" SMALL "			" MEDIUM "			" LARGE "			TOTAL		
	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change
	acres											
Agricultural Land	239½	354½	+47.9	484½	796½	+64.4	1703½	1862½	+ 9.4	741½	945½	+27.5
Woodland	256½	251½	- 2.1	737½	733½	- 0.6	1580½	1556½	- 1.5	811½	801½	- 1.3
Moorland, etc.	206½	353½	+71.1	30½	35½	+17.1	451	516½	+14.6	205½	275	+33.6
TOTAL	702½	958½	+36.4	1252½	1565½	+25.0	3734½	3936	+ 5.4	1758½	2021½	+14.9

(B) LAND LET

Major Land Use	" SMALL "			" MEDIUM "			" LARGE "			TOTAL		
	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change
	acres											
Agricultural Land	1771½	1204	-32.0	4739	3836½	-19.0	13737½	13037½	- 5.1	6249½	5515	-11.8
Woodland	361	211	-41.5	286½	274½	- 4.0	17½	104	+507.6	236½	206	-12.8
Moorland, etc.	430½	92	-78.7	239½	293½	+22.7	1161	902½	- 22.3	559½	395½	-29.3
TOTAL	2563½	1507	-41.2	5264½	4405	-16.3	14915½	14044	- 5.8	7045½	6116½	-13.2

AVERAGE SIZE OF HOLDINGS ON ESTATES

(Agricultural Land only) in 1950 and 1964, and Percentage Change 1950-64, according to land in hand (mainly Home Farms) and estate holdings, and according to Estate Size.

TABLE 6

Estate Size	All Holdings			Land in Hand			Land Let		
	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change	1950	1964	% Change
	acres								
" Small "	129	175½	+36.0	479¼	500¼	+ 4.4	117½	147½	+25.5
" Medium "	155¼	200½	+29.1	502½	719½	+43.2	145	174½	+20.2
" Large "	185½	220¼	+18.8	851½	980¼	+15.1	169	198½	+17.4
TOTAL	168½	210¼	+24.5	675½	791½	+17.1	155	186½	+20.4

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PERCENTAGE OF LAND LET IN 1950 AND 1964 ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE

TABLE 7

Major Land Use	" Small "		" Medium "		" Large "		Total	
	1950	1964	1950	1964	1950	1964	1950	1964
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agricultural Land	88.1	77.3	90.7	82.8	89.0	87.5	89.4	85.4
Woodland	58.4	45.6	28.0	27.3	1.1	6.3	28.6	20.5
Moorland, etc.	67.6	20.6	88.8	89.8	72.0	63.5	73.1	59.0
TOTAL	78.5	61.1	80.8	73.8	80.0	78.1	80.0	75.2

This brief analysis of the changing size and number of holdings suggests certain marked trends during the past 15 years. Underlying these trends, however, one may postulate a complex pattern of change, involving both farm amalgamations distributed between Home Farms and estate holdings, and the sale of land. The result in 1964 is that, on average, holdings in hand are considerably larger than the other estate holdings, while the average size of both kinds of holdings increases as the estate size increases.

The major concern of the succeeding analysis will be to assess the nature of the changes which have occurred during the period since 1950.

### 5. Experience of farm amalgamation

Among the 72 estates, approximately 4/5ths (57) have undertaken some farm amalgamation between 1950 and 1964. As might be expected, the proportion of estates with such experience, increases with estate size (Table 8). But even on the "Small" estates, two thirds of the estates have joined some farms together.

This does not mean, however, that all these estates have a "planned policy" regarding amalgamation. Approximately half of the 57 (29) stated they had such a "planned policy". Many interpretations were placed on the question which asked: "Have you a planned policy for reducing the number of holdings on your estate by amalgamation?" The higher proportion of affirmative replies from the "Small" estates is only partly a reflection of the true position. Many of the larger estates interpreted the question *precisely*, emphasising the word "planned", and truthfully answered "No". It is probably true to say that well under one half of the estates have an amalgamation plan and even on these it is rarely more than a 'pipe-dream'. This is obvious from the vague replies to "when do you expect it to be completed?" Two dates commonly recurred—1984 and 2000!

However, more weight may be attached to the date at which such a "planned policy" was commenced. One originated as early as 1924, and several others during the 1940's. Since 1950 policies have been initiated at a fairly constant rate, with a slight (but hardly significant) tendency to accelerate in recent years. (Table 9).

ESTATES WITH AMALGAMATION EXPERIENCE AND POLICIES ACCORDING TO SIZE  
TABLE 8

Estate Size	Total Number of Estates	Estates which have amalgamated holdings		Estates which state they have an amalgamation policy	
		No.	% of size group	No.	% of size group
" Small "	24	16	66.7	15	62.5
" Medium "	28	23	82.1	14	50.0
" Large "	20	18	90.0	7	35.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>79.2</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>50.0</b>

NOTE: It should NOT be concluded that all the estates with amalgamation policies have actually undertaken amalgamation and are therefore included among those with amalgamation experience. The coincidence is of a high order, but it is not exact. See text for a discussion of amalgamation policy.

Among the estates stating that they had a policy regarding the amalgamation of holdings, most were unequivocally in favour of eliminating holdings which cannot by themselves provide a sufficient livelihood for full-time tenants. However, this does not preclude estates from maintaining *some* small holdings, or even part-time holdings, as a first rung on the farming ladder for their tenants. This was especially prevalent among the "Large" estates.

YEAR GIVEN WHEN ESTATE BEGAN ITS AMALGAMATION POLICY (ANSWERED BY 33 OF 36 ESTATES WHICH HAVE A POLICY), ACCORDING TO ESTATES SIZE

TABLE 9

Period	" Small "	" Medium "	" Large "	Total
Before 1950	3	4	1	8
1950—52	2	1	1	4
1953—55	2	3	—	5
1956—58	1	3	—	4
1959—61	3	1	1	5
1962—64	2	2	3	7

## 6. Factors involved in Farm Amalgamation

In two ways the questionnaire sought information from estate owners about the factors involved in farm amalgamation. First, estates which already have had experience of amalgamation were asked to indicate the reasons for their action in a general way. Secondly, all estates were asked to indicate, in their order of importance, what factors would govern their decisions on joining farms; this was answered by 53 estate owners.

The replies to these two questions need not correspond, very closely. The first seeks actual reasons for past actions. The second is more hypothetical, but replies must obviously be influenced by the previous experience of estate owners and their observation of amalgamations on other estates. When the replies to the two questions are presented in the form of averages for each estate size group and the total, the likelihood of correspondence is further diminished since the 53 estates answering the second question are not all included among the 57 estates replying to the first.

The reasons given by the 57 estates for having undertaken farm amalgamation have been grouped, according to the context, into four categories. (Table 10). The main reason, on estates of all sizes, involved estate management considerations. On the "Medium" estates such reasons accounted for over half the replies. Of second importance have been reasons taking account of the tenant's situation, particularly his financial position. There is slight evidence that this reason increases in importance as estate size increases. The third category of reasons given for amalgamating farms in the past refers to the linking of holdings to the Home Farm. This accounts for over one fifth of the replies on the "Small" estates but decreases to approximately 1 in 8 on "Large" estates. The final groups of reasons for amalgamation are termed "immediate" causes e.g. those due to the vacant possession of an estate

REASONS GIVEN FOR FARM AMALGAMATIONS UNDERTAKEN BEFORE 1964 BY THE 57 ESTATES WITH SUCH EXPERIENCE, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE

TABLE 10

Main Categories of Reasons	Number of Reasons				Percentage Distribution of Reasons			
	" Small " (N=16)	" Medium " (N=23)	" Large " (N=18)	Total (N=57)	" Small "	" Medium "	" Large "	Total
1. To increase the Home Farm	7	8	4	19	22.6	16.7	12.1	17.0
2. For reasons of Estate Management	12	26	12	50	38.7	54.2	36.4	44.6
3. For reasons of Tenant's Position	8	13	11	32	25.8	27.1	33.3	28.6
4. Immediate cause or situation	4	1	6	11	12.9	2.0	18.2	9.8
TOTAL	31	48	33	112	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

NOTES: Examples of reasons included under

- (2) remove poor, dilapidated buildings; improve layouts; increase rental.
- (3) improve tenant's financial position or viability; assure tenant adequate living.
- (4) vacant possession; death or retirement of tenant.



holding as a result of the death or retirement of a tenant. These have been most numerous on the "Large" estates and least important on the "Medium" estates.

The analysis of the more hypothetical question regarding the factors which will govern future decisions to join farms is more complex. One of the important features of the answers is the fact that estate owners were asked to present them in their order of importance. This should be taken into account when studying the analysis. Further, in several instances a particular answer of a single order of importance frequently contains a reply which involves more than one factor, e.g. a reply given as second in order of importance might read: "provide larger units for existing tenants who should be encouraged."<sup>(3)</sup> This reply is partly economic and partly social. Consequently the analysis might attempt to take such split answers into account.

Four methods have been used to analyse this question (Table 11 and footnote). The two methods which take account of the order of the replies and give a varying weight to replies according to their order give relatively similar results. The use of a weighted method may be agreed to be essential since the question required the order of importance to be a main consideration in the reply. However, the two weighted methods (III and IV) are sufficiently similar to suggest that there is no need to use the more complicated 'divided, weighted method' (IV).

Table 11 presents the analysis of this question, according to the four methods for the replies of 53 estates. The individual answers have been classified into six groups—factors involving estate management considerations; those involving farm management, i.e. managerial aspects for which the tenant is responsible; general economic factors which frequently have implications for both estate and farm management, but are not exclusively or entirely in either or both of these first two categories; social and legal factors which take account of the social and/or legal status of the tenant and of the rural community; amenity factors which involve considerations such as the development of the area or the provision of services; and finally, geographical or locational factors concerned with the location, soil type, layout, etc. of holdings. The estate management factor has been sub-divided into four further groups where answers specifically mention issues concerned with the provision, replacement or maintenance of fixed equipment; rental considerations; or the taking of land in hand; with a final miscellaneous sub-group of estate management factors.

The answers to this question on the factors which will affect amalgamations, analysed by the 'weighted method' (Method III) are presented in Table 12 in relation to size of estate. In estates of all sizes factors involving estate management considerations are foremost, accounting for slightly under 40 per cent. of the answers. General economic factors account for about 20 per cent. of the answers ("Medium" estates are relatively more concerned with this category of factors), with farm management factors lying third in order of import-

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<sup>(3)</sup> This is an actual reply.

**FACTORS GIVEN IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE BY ESTATES AS AFFECTING ANY AMALGAMATION DECISIONS. (ANSWERS GIVEN BY 53 ESTATES)**

Percentage Distribution of Factors for ALL ESTATES assessed by Four Methods  
(see below for explanation)

**TABLE 11**

Factors	Method			
	I %	II %	III %	IV %
<b>1. Estate Management factors:</b>				
—re fixed equipment	19.1	21.9	16.2	18.3
—re rent	4.7	4.3	3.9	3.6
—taking land in hand	4.3	4.7	5.0	5.5
—other	13.6	12.9	13.1	11.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>43.8</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>39.2</b>
<b>2. Farm Management factors</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>12.9</b>
<b>3. General or unspecified Economic factors</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>23.8</b>
<b>4. Social/Legal factors</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>11.5</b>
<b>5. Amenity factors</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>6. Geographical/Locational factors</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>10.1</b>
	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Methods of analysing factors affecting amalgamation :**

Method I—each reason, whatever its order, given a value of 1—“Straight Count.”

Method II—where two or more answers given within one answer, value of 1 divided equally—“Divided Count.”

Method III—first reason given value of 3; second reason given value of 2; third and subsequent reasons given value of 1—“Weighted Count.”

Method IV—weightings as in Method III, but if more than one reason within one answer, the weighted value divided equally—“Divided, Weighted Count.”

**EXAMPLE:**

REASONS GIVEN	ANALYSED REASONS	Value by Method			
		I	II	III	IV
1. Elimination of farms not providing reasonable living	Part farm management Part general economic	1+1=2	$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 1$	3+3=6	$1\frac{1}{2} + 1\frac{1}{2} = 3$
2. Land adjacent to family holding.	Part Social Part Geographical	1+1=2	$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 1$	2+2=4	1 + 1 = 2
3. Lower administration costs.	Estate Management	1	1	1	1

Tabulation of factors	By Method			
	I	II	III	IV
1. Estate Management	1	1	1	1
2. Farm Management	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	$1\frac{1}{2}$
3. Economic	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	$1\frac{1}{2}$
4. Social/Legal	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1
5. Amenity	—	—	—	—
6. Geographical	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1

ance. Social-cum-legal factors account for under 10 per cent. of the answers on "Small" and "Medium" estates, but are about twice as important on "Large" estates—this may reflect a more benevolent attitude, and certainly a keener awareness of social realities on the part of the larger estate owners. Geographical factors tend to diminish slightly in importance as estate size increases. Finally, amenity factors are relatively unimportant in the overall averages, but they clearly are of importance on a few estates where the provision of services, or the development of land and housing needs for non-agricultural use are pressing issues. The estates which have previous experience of amalgamation (48 of the 53) do not deviate in any significant way from the above pattern.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FACTORS AFFECTING ANY AMALGAMATION DECISIONS, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE AND AMALGAMATION EXPERIENCE (ASSESSED ACCORDING TO "WEIGHTED COUNT"—METHOD III)

TABLE 12

Factors	"Small" %	"Medium" %	"Large" %	Total %	Estates which have amalgamation experience %
1. Estate Management factors:					
—re fixed equipment	15.0	14.3	19.7	16.2	15.7
—re rent	7.5	4.6	—	3.9	4.1
—taking land in hand	3.7	8.0	2.2	5.0	4.9
—other	10.3	13.7	14.6	13.1	14.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>40.6</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>38.9</b>
2. Farm Management factors	18.7	13.1	16.8	15.8	15.2
3. General or unspecified Economic factors	21.5	27.5	18.3	22.9	20.9
4. Social/Legal factors	8.4	7.4	17.5	11.0	11.9
5. Amenity factors	3.7	1.1	3.6	2.6	2.8
6. Geographical/Locational factors	11.2	10.3	7.3	9.5	10.3
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total NUMBER of ESTATES providing answers	15	22	16	53	48

As stated earlier in this section, the replies to these two questions seeking the reasons for past amalgamations and the factors governing future amalgamations need not correspond closely. However, the dominance of estate management considerations is clear in the replies to both. Moreover, most of the other replies are in terms of the conditions on the individual estate. This independence is reflected also in the low proportion of the 57 estates which, having had amalgamation experience, consider that "outside" (Governmental or quasi-Governmental) aid would help them to pursue a more active amalgamation policy (see Table 12A below). "Large" estates are most in favour of such a proposal. Of those who mentioned the form of aid they might welcome the vast majority envisaged a situation where only elderly farmers at the point of retirement would be involved. Thus the kinds of financial help mentioned were mainly in terms of compensation or pensions for

retiring farmers and for aid on their rehousing. The only other kind of assistance mentioned was some form of increase in Farm Improvement Scheme grants specifically to facilitate the reorganisation of buildings, etc. subsequent upon any amalgamation.

REACTIONS TO POSSIBILITY OF OUTSIDE FINANCIAL HELP AS INDUCEMENT TO AMALGAMATION, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE

TABLE 12A

	" Small "	" Medium "	" Large "	Total
Total number of Estates with amalgamation experience	16	23	18	57
Number of Estates in favour of outside help	3	4	7	14

Very few owners, in mentioning the factors which would affect their future policy were concerned with the national situation of agriculture or national policies affecting agriculture. Such reasons, where they were mentioned, have been included in the 'general economic' category, which includes under a fifth of the factors in most cases.

This reasoning is confirmed by a re-classification of the answers to the question on factors affecting future amalgamation into:

- (a) those which are in terms of factors facilitating or enabling amalgamation (e.g. situation or condition of land or fixed equipment, availability of holdings, etc.)
- and (b) those which imply the perceived results of amalgamations (e.g. improved layout, easier estate management, more satisfactory farm units for the tenants, etc.).

Not all replies could be classified into either of these categories, but those which have been classified in this way are given in Table 13. Whether one takes all these replies, or merely those given first or second in the order of importance, the perceived results to the particular estate from amalgamation are the more important. (The relative importance is greater when the first and second order questions only are considered).

## 7. Processes and Types of Amalgamation

Section B of the questionnaire was designed to indicate some of the main characteristics of actual amalgamations carried out by estates. The aim was that all instances of amalgamations since 1950 should be cited. This would show how many holdings had 'disappeared' since 1950 and the circumstances surrounding their amalgamation to other farms. In conjunction with the numbers of holdings sold or acquired during the period, the data recorded in this way should be reconcilable with the change in the number of holdings for the estate as a whole recorded in Question 1 of Section A. Several estates partially completed Section B but the data did not allow a reconciliation with the information in Section A. Forty-three estates provided satisfactory and usable answers to Section B, although the number of holdings sold by some estates had to be slightly adjusted in order to achieve an exact reconciliation.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FACTORS AFFECTING AMALGAMATION DECISIONS INTERPRETED AS :

- (A) Factors which facilitate or enable amalgamation  
 or (B) Factors which are perceived as favourable consequences of amalgamation—according to Estate Size and Amalgamation Experience.

TABLE 13

Factors which	" Small " %	" Medium " %	" Large " %	Total %	Estates which have amalgamation experience %
<b>TOTAL CLASSIFIABLE ANSWERS :</b>					
—facilitate amalgamation	31.8	52.0	37.7	42.1	44.4
—are perceived as favourable consequences of amalgamation	68.2	48.0	62.3	57.9	55.6
<b>Total Number of Answers Classified</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>CLASSIFIABLE ANSWERS GIVEN AS FIRST OR SECOND IN IMPORTANCE :</b>					
—facilitate amalgamation	27.3	42.9	42.9	38.8	42.3
—are perceived as favourable consequences of amalgamation	72.7	57.1	57.1	61.2	57.7
<b>Total Number of Answers Classified</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>79</b>

Overall, the number of holdings on all 72 estates has declined by nearly 26 per cent since 1950. The percentage reduction in the number of holdings on the 43 estates providing details of their amalgamations is slightly greater than the overall average. The lower reduction on the estates which did not provide details of their amalgamations is due to a relatively wide difference on the "Medium" estates where a very low proportionate reduction occurred in the number of holdings.

The number of holdings has declined by 28 per cent on the estates which have provided details of their amalgamations. Approximately 60 per cent of this reduction, however, has been due to sales, a proportion which is surprisingly consistent on estates of all sizes. (Table 14). Consequently, only a minority of the holdings which have disappeared on these estates since 1950 have resulted from amalgamations. The consistency of this finding for all three estate sizes suggests a general conclusion that, during the past 15 years, the reduction in the number of holdings on estates has been largely due to sales. This corroborates the deduction from the information on estates according to their size changes given earlier. It also adds weight to the point that farm amalgamation within estates is nothing like as prevalent as the gross reduction in the number of holdings might suggest.

On the 43 estates providing details, most amalgamation programmes involved the addition of holdings *both* to the Home Farms and to estate holdings, although on the "Small" estates additions to *either* the Home Farm *or* to estate holdings were commoner (Table 15). A total of 179 complete holdings, together with 33 part-holdings, have been joined to 125 other farms on these 43 estates since 1950. In several instances the part-holdings had previously formed a complete holding which was split at amalgamation between two or more other holdings. Of these complete and part-holdings which have thus 'disappeared' as a result of farm amalgamation, approximately 40 per cent (72 complete holdings and 14 part-holdings) have been attached to 31 Home Farms (or only about 25 per cent of all the holdings which have been enlarged by amalgamation). This proportion is relatively high in terms of the number of Home Farms involved. It is only on the "Large" estates that the addition of farms to other estate holdings is more nearly equivalent to the numbers involved.

The differential pattern of amalgamating farms to Home Farms compared with the additions to other estate holdings deserves further examination, since it is one of the more significant findings of this enquiry. Most of the additions since 1950 to the estate holdings have consisted of a single complete holding or of a part-holding only. Approximately three quarters of 94 estate holdings which have been enlarged by amalgamation involved such an addition of only a single complete or part-holding (Table 16). On the other hand, only 40 per cent of the Home Farms which were enlarged had a similar amalgamation history during the past 15 years. Approximately one third of the Home Farms have been increased by the addition of four or five complete holdings, frequently with one or more part-holdings as well. This pattern is particularly marked on the "Medium" estates, but it is not significantly different on the "Small" and "Large" ones.

PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN NUMBER OF HOLDINGS, 1950—1964, WITH DETAILS OF CAUSES FOR CHANGE ON ESTATES WITH AMALGAMATION DETAILS.

TABLE 14

	"Small"	"Medium"	"Large"	Total
All Estates (N=72 estates)	-43.0	-31.3	-18.8	-25.8
Estates for which NO DETAILS available of their amalgamations, or on which no amalgamations have occurred (N=29 estates)	-40.5	-11.5	-20.3	-22.4
Estates for which amalgamation details are available (N=43 estates)	-45.5	-35.0	-17.4	-27.8
—due to amalgamations	-16.9	-13.2	-5.3	-10.6
—net of sales and acquisitions	-28.6	-21.8	-12.1	-17.2
OR of the holdings which have "disappeared" (number in brackets)	(86)	(278)	(151)	(515)
% of loss due to amalgamations	37.2	41.4	39.1	38.1
% of loss due to net difference of sales and acquisitions	62.8	58.6	60.9	61.9

AMALGAMATION DETAILS (WHICH ARE FULL AND ACCURATE) PROVIDED BY 43 OF THE 57 ESTATES ON WHICH SOME AMALGAMATIONS HAVE OCCURRED SINCE 1950, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE

TABLE 15

Number of Estates on which :	"Small"	"Medium"	"Large"	Total
Additions made to Home Farms only	5	2	—	7
Additions made to Estate Holdings only	4	7	3	14
Additions made to both Home Farms and Estate Holdings	2	12	8	22
Total Number of Estates	11	21	11	43
Number of complete Holdings added to:				
Home Farms	14	43	15	72
Estate Farms	16	57	34	107
Total Number of Complete Holdings "lost" on Estates by amalgamation	30	100	49	179
Number of Part Holdings* added to :				
Home Farms	3	4	7	14
Estate Farms	3	6	10	19
Total number of Part Holdings "lost" on Estates by amalgamation	6	10	17	33

\* 2 or more part-holdings may originally have formed a Complete holding, but since they were added to separate holdings they are regarded here as Part Holdings.

The greater concentration of effort by estate-owners on enlarging Home Farms, to which this analysis clearly points, is further borne out by the changing average size since 1950 of the Home Farms known to have been expanded compared with the estate holdings which have been enlarged by amalgamation (Table 17). In 1950 the Home Farms were two to three times larger than the other estate holdings. Such an

ON 43 ESTATES WITH AMALGAMATION DETAILS NUMBER OF HOLDINGS TO WHICH HAVE BEEN ADDED OTHER PART AND COMPLETE HOLDINGS SINCE 1950, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE, DISTINGUISHING ADDITIONS TO HOME FARMS AND TO ESTATE FARMS.

TABLE 16

Holdings enlarged by amalgamation of :	" Small "		" Medium "		" Large "		Total		Grand Total
	Home Farms	Estate Holdings	Home Farms**	Estate Holdings	Home Farms	Estate Holdings	Home Farms**	Holdings	
Part Holding only	1	2	1	6	2	9	4	17	21
1. Complete Holdings*	2	8	3	25	3	21	8	54	62
2. Complete Holdings*	2	4	3	9	1	5	6	18	24
3. Complete Holdings*	—	—	1	3	2	1	3	4	7
4. Complete Holdings*	2	—	4	—	1	—	7	—	7
5. Complete Holdings*	—	—	3	1	—	—	3	1	4

\* These in some cases include one or more part holdings.

\*\* This excludes one Home Farm which, although slightly expanded at one stage 1950-1964, has decreased in total size by the sale of some of its "component holdings." It is included in Tables 17 and 18.



CHANGE IN SIZE OF HOLDING KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN ENLARGED BY AMALGAMATION ON 43 ESTATES, 1950-1964, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE,  
DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN HOME FARMS AND ESTATE HOLDINGS

TABLE 17

	Home Farms				Estate Holdings*			
	" Small "	" Medium "	" Large "	Total	" Small "	" Medium "	" Large "	Total
	----- acres -----							
<b>A. According to MEAN SIZE</b>								
Before expansion	346½	574½	1096½	671½	114	186½	238½	194½
After expansion	784½	1078	1428½	1112½	159	278	344	284½
% increase	+126.2	+87.6	+30.3	+65.6	+39.5	+49.3	+44.4	+46.3
<b>B. According to MEDIAN SIZE</b>								
Before expansion	348	389	471	424½	103	130	200½	130½
After expansion	700	900	1075	871	156½	235	296	194½
% increase	+101.2	+131.4	+128.2	+105.2	+51.9	+80.8	+47.6	+49.0
Number of Holdings involved	7	16	9	32	14	43	34	91

\* The size of 3 estate holdings (1 on a "Medium" estate and 2 on "Large" estates) is unknown and, although included in Table 16, they are necessarily excluded in this Table and Table 18.

average difference was true for estates of all three sizes; the average sizes and the differences are fairly consistent when the assessment is made according to the arithmetic means or the median sizes. As a result of amalgamations to both Home and estate farms during the past 15 years the difference has become greater. The enlarged Home Farms are now four to five times as big as the enlarged estate holdings. The greater proportionate increase to the Home Farms is particularly marked on the "Small" estates, although if attention is focused on the median sizes in each size-group the Home Farms have been more than doubled in agricultural area on estates of all sizes. The enlargement of the estate holdings, however assessed, has been of a much lower order—in percentage terms the overall enlargement has not been more than 50 per cent. since 1950.

The result has been a marked shift in the size distribution of Home Farms towards the large sizes. (Table 18A). On the 43 estates, of the 32 Home Farms which have been enlarged, 25 per cent. were under 300 acres in 1950 while 10 per cent. were 1,500 acres or more. By now, none are under 300 acres while 25 per cent. exceed 1,500 acres. By contrast, the majority of estate holdings which have been enlarged have remained under 300 acres (83 per cent. in 1950, 65 per cent. in 1964).

It is also significant that the farms which have been added to the Home Farms have been three to four times larger than those added to estate holdings. (Table 18B). Of the 88 holdings and part-holdings added

SIZE DISTRIBUTION OF HOME FARMS AND ESTATE HOLDINGS BEFORE AND AFTER THE AMALGAMATION OF OTHER HOLDINGS TO THEM ON 43 ESTATES, 1950-1964.

TABLE 18A

		Acreage Size Groups						
		Under 50	50-99	100-299	300-499	500-999	1000-1499	1500+ over
Home Farms	1950	1	2	5	13	5	3	3
	1964	—	—	—	4	14	6	8
Estate Holdings*	1950	9	14	53	13	—	2	—
	1964	6	4	49	23	6	3	—

\* See footnote Table 17

SIZE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLDINGS AND PART-HOLDINGS ADDED TO HOME FARMS AND ESTATE HOLDINGS ON 43 ESTATES DURING 1950-1964 PERIOD




TABLE 18B

		Acreage Size Groups						
		Under 50	50-99	100-299	300-499	500-999	1000-1499	1500+ over
Added to Home Farms		29	9	31	14	5	—	—
Added to Estate Holdings		73	24	24	4	—	—	—

	Mean Size	Median Size
Holdings added to Home Farms -	163½ acres	109 acres
Holdings added to Estate Holdings	63½ acres	25 acres

to Home Farms 43 per cent. have been under 100 acres but over 20 per cent. have been 300 acres or larger. On the other hand, of the 125 holdings and part-holdings added to estate farms over three quarters have been under 100 acres while only four (3 per cent.) have been 300 acres or over.

The processes of amalgamation, by which Home and estate farms have been enlarged, may be further analysed according to a type classification. This may be clarified by the aid of simple diagrams typifying certain common situations. For the diagrams which follow, certain diagrammatic conventions have been designed and used:

1.  Signifies a Home Farm which has been enlarged.
2.  Signifies an estate holding which has been enlarged.
3.  Signifies an estate holding which has been amalgamated to (1) or (2), and has consequently disappeared as a separate holding.

The actual acreage of each diagrammatic farm unit is given within the conventional symbol, but the size of the symbol has not been drawn to scale. The date given on the lefthand side of the symbol signifies the year of amalgamation, indicated by the arrows. The upper row thus indicates the size of the holding which has been enlarged *in 1950* whatever the first year in which an amalgamation occurred. The final row of the diagram indicates the 1964 situation.

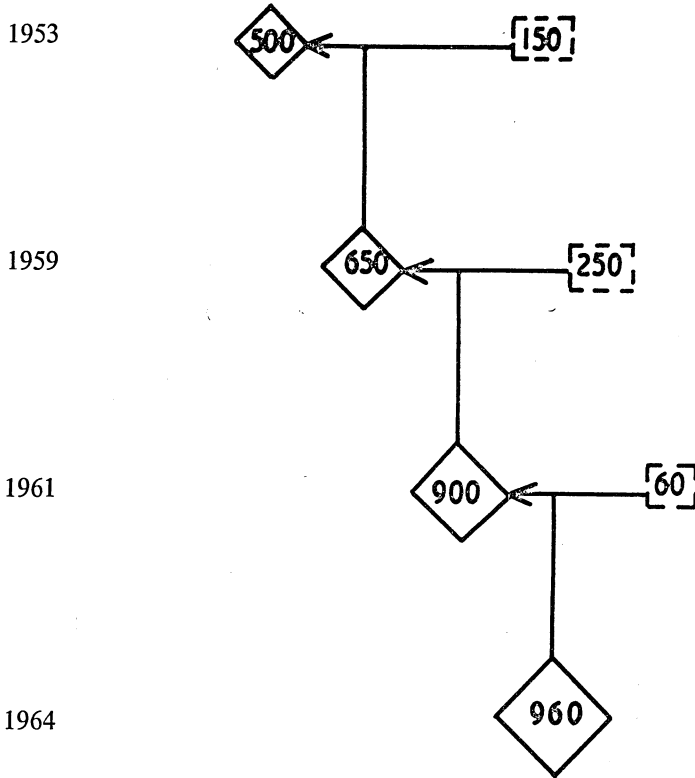
The predominant type of amalgamation may be termed "Simple." Frequently this type consists merely of a single complete holding or part-holding being added to an existent Home Farm or estate holding in a particular year. Where several such additions have occurred during the period 1950-1964 this may be termed "multi-stage," but it is still basically of the "Simple" type, repeated several times. Figures A and B are such examples.

Some of the amalgamations which have occurred since 1950, and thus brought the existent holdings into their present form, have been more complex. The "Complex" type of amalgamation may have arisen from a variety of processes. These include the splitting of one holding between two, possibly followed by one or more amalgamations of a similar, or of a "Simple" kind (e.g. Figure C). In several instances, more than one holding have been added to one other at one time, followed by other complex re-arrangements of land; this might include the sale or acquisition of parts of the area of the holdings as they exist in 1964 (e.g. Figure D).

Of the 105 individual holdings enlarged by amalgamation since 1950 and for which the date of its occurrence (or of the first stage of a multi-stage expansion) is known, approximately two thirds have been of the "Simple" type (Table 19). However, in the cases of enlargements to Home Farms, over 70 per cent. of the cases are of a "Complex" type; this compares with under 30 per cent of this type on the enlarged estate

Figure A

A Home Farm enlarged by the amalgamation of three estate holdings to it. A Simple Multi-Stage amalgamation.



holdings. This partly explains how the Home Farms have been able to expand to the extent noted earlier. It has not only been a case of adding more and larger holdings to them than to the estate holdings; much of their expansion has resulted from complex processes of land re-arrangement in which they have tended to take a priority in claiming the amalgamation to them of any holding or part-holding in a suitable location.

“Complex” amalgamations have also been commoner on the “Small” and “Medium” estates than on the “Large” estates. This largely reflects the lower proportion of Home Farms among the enlarged holdings on the “Large” estates.

The overriding impression in this analysis is therefore that amalgamations which have been carried out on estates of under 7,000 acres have been primarily to the enlargement of the Home Farms. This has resulted in some complex land re-arrangements since 1950. On the larger

Figure B

An estate holding enlarged by the amalgamation of one other holding.  
A Simple Single-Stage amalgamation.

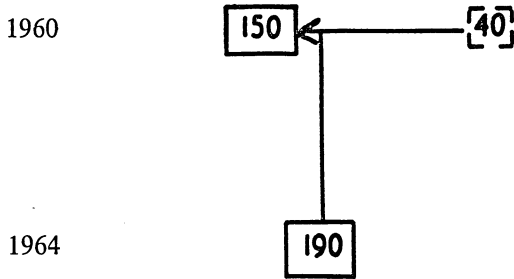


Figure C

The enlargement of a Home Farm and an estate holding during the period 1950-1964. A Complex amalgamation.

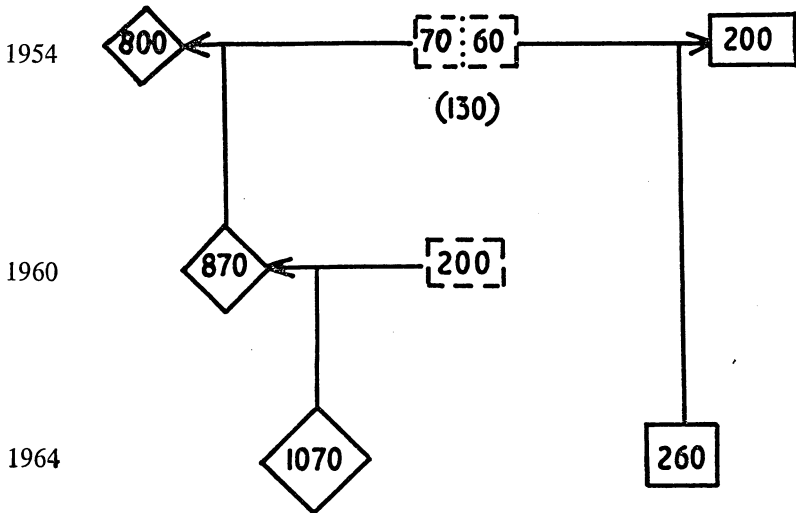
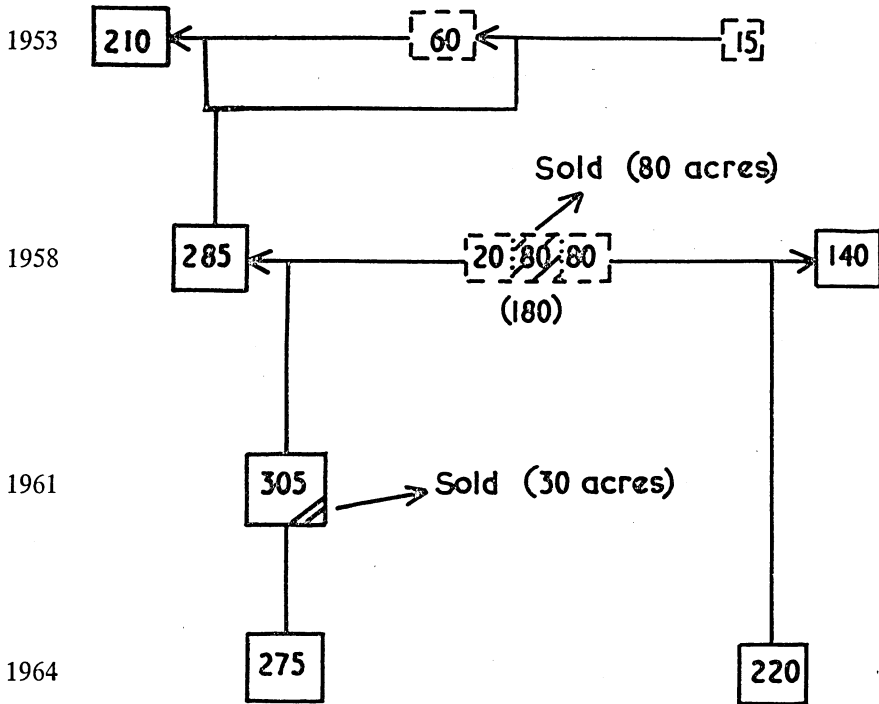


Figure D

The enlargement of two estate holdings during the period 1950-1964.  
A Complex amalgamation.



estates there has been at least an equal concern with increasing the size of estate holdings as with increasing the Home Farms. The amalgamations pursued on the "Large" estates have thus tended to be of the "Simple" type. Of course, their Home Farms were already large in 1950 so that the need or incentive (economic or other) for further expanding them has not been as pressing as on the "Small" and "Medium" estates.

Table 19 suggests one further point of interest. In terms of the dates (since 1950) when amalgamations were carried out or begun (if they have been multi-stage) there is a tendency for the movement towards amalgamation to have accelerated in recent years. This is particularly obvious in the case of the "Simple" amalgamations. But, of course, it cannot be implied that farms which have been expanded during the past 15 years will not be expanded any further. The evidence of the period since 1950 suggests that those amalgamations begun earliest have tended to become complex. It might be inferred from this that recent examples of "Simple" amalgamations may be forerunners of a

complex process of expansion which will take place in future years. The accelerating trend in the rate of farm amalgamations undertaken by estates is further borne out by noting the date of each *instance* of the amalgamation of a complete or part-holding to another farm (Table 20). The acceleration in recent years has been particularly marked on the "Small" estates. As far as the "Small" estates which have provided this enquiry with details of their amalgamations are concerned, it is only during the past 5 years that there has been any real interest in farm amalgamation and enlargement—and consequently the resulting estate reorganisation.

#### 8. Circumstances surrounding actual amalgamations

For 185 instances where a complete holding on an estate has "disappeared" by its amalgamation to another, details are available of some of the immediate circumstances. Despite the earlier analysis where reasons of estate and farm management and economy were shown to be the major factors favouring amalgamation, the actual immediate reasons have been overwhelmingly due to a farm becoming vacant. This has been either at the death of the tenant, or where he has retired, or where he has voluntarily surrendered his tenancy and moved off the estate. These three situations account for nearly 90 per cent. of the instances of amalgamation where details have been given (Table 21). The main reason for the availability of the farm is due to the turnover of tenants arising from their movement to other estates or when they have purchased their own farm. Death and retirement together are of equal importance. The incidence of all three of these circumstances has been relatively equal on estates of all sizes.

In a few cases, especially on the larger estates, a farm has become vacant after a tenant has moved (whether by his own choice or at the inducement of his landlord is not known) to another farm on the same estate. Landlords were able to give notice to quit on well under 10 per cent. of the holdings which they required for amalgamation. In some of these cases, tenants were given a financial consideration or compensation, but more usually certain peculiar circumstances were present (e.g. the tenant became bankrupt).

It is thus reasonable to conclude that, at a maximum, less than 15 per cent. of the holdings which have been amalgamated to others within estates since 1950 have been part of any active amalgamation policy on the part of the estate owner. However, it should be added that when farms have fallen vacant landlords have not been slow to amalgamate them to the Home Farm or to other estate holdings. Allied to the amalgamation there has frequently been substantial addition to or re-modelling of buildings on the enlarged holdings. Among the estates of all three sizes, approximately 70 per cent. have re-modelled or substantially improved the buildings at or soon after holdings have been enlarged, and on the estates where this has been undertaken most (but not all) of the enlarged holdings have benefited in this way. (Table 22). These new or improved buildings have predominantly been of three kinds. First, new or enlarged barns and grain storage and drying facilities; secondly, modernised or new milking and dairying facilities. These are

EXPANSIONS/AMALGAMATIONS FOR WHICH DATE KNOWN ON 43 ESTATES ACCORDING TO PERIOD IN WHICH CARRIED OUT (FOR SIMPLE AMALGAMATIONS) OR IN WHICH BEGUN (IF MULTI-STAGE OR COMPLEX AMALGAMATIONS)

TABLE 19

Period	According to Estate Size						Additions to				Totals		Grand Total
	" Small "		" Medium "		" Large "		Home Farms		Estate Holdings		Simple	Complex	
	Simple	Complex	Simple	Complex	Simple	Complex	Simple	Complex	Simple	Complex			
1950-52	1	1	—	2	2	4	—	7	3	—	3	7	10
1953-55	—	1	3	9	1	4	2	7	2	7	4	14	18
1956-58	—	1	7	9	3	1	1	4	9	7	10	11	21
1959-61	3	5	11	2	5	3	2	4	17	6	19	10	29
1962-64	7	—	8	—	12	—	3	—	24	—	27	—	27
Totals	11	8	29	22	23	12	8	22	55	20	63	42	105

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ALL INSTANCES\* OF EXPANSIONS/AMALGAMATIONS FOR WHICH DATE KNOWN ON 43 ESTATES, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE

TABLE 20

Period	" Small "	" Medium "	" Large "	Total
1950-52	3	2	6	11
1953-55	1	18	8	27
1956-58	2	23	7	32
1959-61	13	27	11	51
1962-64	14	20	21	55

\* Each stage in a multi-stage amalgamation process or in a complex process regarded as one instance.



both necessary technological improvements without which much of the advantage of increased area would have been lost. Thirdly, farm cottages have frequently been modernised.

CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING INSTANCES OF AMALGAMATION (WHERE GIVEN) ON 43 ESTATES, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE.

TABLE 21

	" Small "	" Medium "	" Large "	Total
Number of instances where circumstances known	35	96	54	185
1. Tenant deceased	% 22.8	% 19.8	% 29.6	% 23.2
2. Tenant surrendered holding				
—moved off estate or no details	40.0	46.9	42.6	44.3
—retired and/or stayed in house or rehoused on estate	25.7	22.9	12.9	20.6
—moved to another farm on estate	—	3.1	5.6	3.2
	65.7	72.9	61.1	68.1
3. Landlord gave notice to quit	8.6	7.3	9.3	8.1
4. Other reasons	2.9	—	—	0.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average number of instances per estate	3	5	5	4

BUILDING RE-MODELLING AND IMPROVEMENT ON ESTATES GIVING DETAILS OF AMALGAMATION, ACCORDING TO ESTATE SIZE (WHERE DETAILS AVAILABLE).

TABLE 22

Estate Size	No. of Estates	No. of Estates with cases of building re-modelling	No. of present holdings enlarged by amalgamation since 1950 on which :	
			some building re-modelling has occurred	no building re-modelling has occurred
" Small "	11	7	12	3
" Medium "	21	16	25	1
" Large "	11	8	16	3
TOTAL	43	31	53	7

## 9. Discussion and Conclusions

This enquiry must be regarded as a pilot investigation into the factors, processes and extent of farm amalgamation on estates in England and Wales. The low response to the lengthy questionnaire detracts from the possibility of making any firm general conclusions. However, some of the major findings do appear to contain sufficient consistency to enable conclusions to be drawn which might be reasonably postulated as fairly general.

Most estates may have rather vague plans of amalgamations of their holdings which they might ideally like to achieve. These ideas are backed by certain rational views of the factors which would determine the nature of their policy, predominant among such factors being considerations of estate management. In many cases estate owners and their agents evidently view the estate primarily as a business to be managed economically, although this may be in conflict with the more traditional ideas of "benevolent squirearchy." The more traditional views, where they still exist, appear more prevalent on the larger estates, but on these the sizes of the Home Farms and estate holdings are often more in tune with modern needs than on smaller estates.

However well defined the ideas and plans of an estate may be regarding farm amalgamation, the fulfilment of the ideal is largely blocked by the security of tenure which tenants now enjoy. One might postulate that but for this some estates might well be pursuing an aggressive amalgamation policy. The consequence, however, is that amalgamations can in fact seldom occur except when holdings fall vacant due to the death, retirement or voluntary movement of a tenant. These *ad hoc* vacancies may, of course, not be in an order, or at a time, which is ideal for their amalgamation according to any plan. As a result of this (in part at least) many of the holdings which have fallen vacant have been taken in hand by the estate owner and operated as part of the Home Farm. The trend to get rid of uneconomic holdings (from the point of view either of the estate or of a prospective tenant) is, however, accelerating as more and more amalgamations are being undertaken.

It should not be forgotten, however, that much of the estate reorganisation which is proceeding is resulting from the sale of holdings. From a point of view of estate management this is certainly leading to the tidying up of both individual farm boundaries and the layout of the whole estate. In many instances, sales have been essential to meet Death Duties but they must often have provided additional capital necessary to finance farm amalgamations and the consequent demands for improved or new fixed equipment.

The overall impression is that estate owners have not been able to proceed very actively with farm amalgamation. Legal and social factors prevent a hasty adjustment towards a situation which would appear to be more desirable economically and more rational. This may not be altogether a bad thing. Many landowners appear to sense this, and still maintain a strong social conscience with regard to their tenantry and the local rural community and their amenities.

Finally, it cannot be over-stressed that much of the information contained in this report can only be read *strictly* in terms of the estates which gave replies. Many of the conclusions drawn must be regarded as speculative in any national sense. However, the estate owner is still an important force in the rural landscape of Britain and his actions can have a significant if not crucial effect on the future of British agriculture. The ideas, aims and practices of the estate owners deserve much more detailed research which could lead to a better understanding for the owners themselves of their present role in shaping agriculture. It could also provide important guides to the trends which are currently present and active in a large sector of British farming.

## APPENDIX—THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### SECTION A. GENERAL INFORMATION AND ESTATE POLICY

1. (a) TOTAL SIZE of Estate 1950 and 1964:

	TOTAL		OF WHICH IN HAND*	
	1950 acres	1964 acres	1950 acres	1964 acres
Agricultural land				
Woodland				
Moorland, etc.				
TOTAL				
(*including Home Farm)	No.	No.	No.	No.
(b) TOTAL NUMBER of Holdings, 1950 and 1964				

- (c) If any holdings have disappeared as such within the estate since 1950 by being split up between two or more other holdings, please indicate:  
 How many holdings disappeared in this way?  
 What were their individual acreages prior to their disappearance?  
 How many other holdings were enlarged as a result of this?

NOTE: If the total number of holdings shown in question 1(b) is not the same in 1964 and in 1950 and the difference is not accounted for by amalgamation (see Section B) or by disappearance through splitting up (see 1(c)), please give any further explanation here.

- 
2. (a) Have you a planned policy for reducing the number of holdings on your estate by amalgamation? Yes/No
- (b) If so, do you plan:
- (i) to eliminate holdings which cannot by themselves provide a sufficient livelihood for a full-time tenant? Yes/No
  - (ii) to provide and maintain a number of small and/or part-time holdings (e.g. to help provide a farming ladder)? Yes/No
- NOTE: There is no inconsistency between (i) and (ii) above.
- (c) If you have a planned amalgamation policy:
- (i) since when (year) has such a policy been in operation?
  - (ii) by when (year) do you expect it to be completed? (if it has already been completed, enter year when this occurred.)
  - (iii) what NUMBER of holdings do you expect to have, ON THE PRESENT ESTATE, when the scheme is complete?
  - (iv) do you expect it will be necessary to overcome any resistance by your tenants to your policy? Yes/No
  - (v) if so, give brief details of any plans you may have (e.g. financial inducements, notice to quit, improvements, etc.)

- 
3. (a) If you have already amalgamated farms on your estate, for what reasons, financial or otherwise, have you done so?
- (b) Insofar as you can do so by practical example, please mention the *benefits* in particular cases.
- (c) If an attempt or attempts have been made to amalgamate holdings, and these attempts have *NOT* been successful, please state briefly what the main reasons for the lack of success were, mentioning the approximate year of your attempt.

4. If outside financial help were to be provided  
(a) would you pursue a more active amalgamation policy? Yes/No  
(b) what form of financial help would you think most beneficial?
- 

5. What factors (in order of importance) will govern your decision on the joining of farms on your estate?

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| 1. | 5. |
| 2. | 6. |
| 3. | 7. |
| 4. | 8. |
- 

6. It would be appreciated if you can make any other general observations which occur to you on the problems of farm management on estates:

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#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR SECTION B. DEFINITION OF AMALGAMATION AND NOTES

DEFINITION: "NEW" holdings resulting from AMALGAMATION SINCE 1950.

These should include ALL HOLDINGS which were in SEPARATE EXISTENCE AND farmed by SEPARATE TENANTS IN 1950, and have undergone amalgamation since that year in one of the following ways:

as a result of holdings, which were let in 1950, being united to the Home Farm, or other land in hand, and farmed as one unit;

as a result of two or more adjacent holdings which were held under separate tenancy agreements in 1950 being now held under ONE agreement, and farmed as one unit;

or as a result of land which was NOT part of the estate in 1950 being purchased AND added to existing holdings on the estate, and farmed as one unit;

NOTE: If a tenant has taken the lease of another farm and is farming it under a separate or combined agreement but the farms are not adjacent, this is *not* to be regarded as an amalgamation.

#### NOTES:

1. Enter the Home Farm in the first column of the form if it has been enlarged by amalgamation since 1950.
2. Means of facilitating amalgamation (Question V):
  - A—Notice by tenant to quit, surrender or by agreement.
  - B—Notice to quit by landlord to tenant.
  - C—Notice to quit by landlord to executors of deceased tenant.
  - D—Other (enter brief details after holding number).
3. Housing of outgoing tenant at amalgamation (Question VIII):
  - E—Tenant deceased.
  - F—Remained in house.
  - G—Moved to another farm and house *ON* estate
  - H—Moved to another farm *OFF* estate
  - J—House alone provided on estate.
  - K—Other (enter brief details after holding number).

SECTION B. AMALGAMATION INTO "NEW" HOLDINGS SINCE 1950  
(See Definition on Instructions Sheet)

I. COUNTY of "New" holding	
II. Acreage of "New" holding in 1964	Is this the Home Farm Yes/No
III. Acreages, before amalgamation, of Separate Holdings which were joined to create II between 1950 and 1964. (Place a CIRCLE around any which were PURCHASED from 1950 onwards)	1 2 3 4 5 6
IV. Numbering the holdings as in II above, show WHICH WERE JOINED TO WHICH, AND THE YEAR THIS OCCURRED (e.g. 1 to 4, 1958; or if after two were joined another was later added to them— e.g. 1+4 to 3, 1960.)	
V. HOW was amalgamation facilitated (Enter holding number as in II above against letter denoting method used. (See note 2)	A B C D
VI. Nature of consideration, (if any) monetary or otherwise, e.g. if he was rehoused at a favourable rent, given by the landlord to the <i>outgoing</i> tenant. (Give brief details against holding, numbered as in III above).	
VII. Nature of consideration, (if any) given by landlord to <i>incoming</i> tenant. (Give brief details against holding, numbered as in III above).	
VIII. Where were the outgoing tenants housed after amalgamation (enter holding number as in III against letter denoting method of housing). (See note 3)	E F G H J K
IX. Have the farm buildings been re-modelled, re-sited or reconstructed in any way <i>at or since</i> amalgamation? If so, given brief details.	

(Other examples on similar sheets)

