A STUDY OF COMPLEX FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS AMONG A SAMPLE OF WHITE FAMILIES IN DURBAN.

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts
University of Natal, Durban
for the Degree of Master of Arts
1978

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe thanks to many people for their help, in particular to my supervisor, Professor John Argyle; and also to other members of the Department of African Studies, especially Eleanor Preston-Whyte and Joan Spinks; and also to Renée Chiffers, Caroline Gould and Robert Preston-Whyte.

I am very grateful to the Human Sciences Research Council for their financial assistance.

My deepest debt is to all my friendly and hospitable informants in 'Hartfield', to whom I dedicate this thesis as a token of my appreciation and thanks.

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PREFACE

It has been widely assumed that in societies of Western European origins, the typical household is that of the nuclear family (Parsons 1943; Parsons and Bales 1955, 10; Goode 1964, 108). There are, it is true, some studies of such societies which provide information on complex family households, though they are not so called, examples are those by Arensberg and Kimball (1940), Williams (1956 and 1963), Young and Willmott (1957), Townsend (1957), Kerr (1958), Litwak (1959, 1960a and 1960b) and Firth, Hubert and Forge (1969). But in all these studies discussion of complex family households is peripheral to the main theme of the work. In this thesis, which presents the findings of research done among White families in Durban, complex family households are examined in detail and because of this I hope to fill a gap in our knowledge of Western family structures. In no anthropological work on European kinship, known to me, are complex family households the central issue, or are they indeed studied in their own right.

My awareness of the significance of complex family households developed during the course of the fieldwork that I did as a part of a wider study of extra-familial kinship being directed by Professor Argyle at the University of Natal, which showed that there were relatively large numbers of these households in the area of Durban, hereafter referred to as Hartfield, selected for study.

This wider study had been directly inspired by the one done among middle class families living in London by Firth, Hubert and Forge,[1] whose research:

> took as a major hypothesis that in industrial society families were not isolated from their kin, and kinship had positive functions. We postulated that extra-familial kinship ties are of great importance, especially in conditioning the interplay of intra-familial roles and in affording to individuals sources of social support outside the family (Firth et al. 1969, 29).

Thus Firth and his colleagues concentrated on relations with extra-familial kin, and I planned to do the same, following several of the procedures developed in the London study (Hubert, Forge and Firth 1968). One outcome of the study, however, was the discovery of the greater prominence of 'intra-familial' kinship ties manifested in the complex family household.

Prolonged and intensive fieldwork, including both participant observation and interviews with a limited number of families, made it increasingly apparent that experience of living in complex family households was widespread, that the informants either were then living in such households, or had had experience of them in the past. This led to further inquiries into the informants' residential histories and the developmental sequences of their families. Similar inquiries were also made, whenever possible, about the informants' kin.

I felt that complex family households in Hartfield were significantly different from the pattern of family structure usually manifested in Western European societies.(2) Therefore, I returned to a closer examination of household family structure reported in other selected studies, to see through systematic comparisons if my impression that Hartfield was different could be confirmed.

My first comparison was, naturally, with the data presented by Firth, Hubert and Forge, whose London kinship study had been the original stimulus for mine. This comparison showed immediately that the distribution in Hartfield of the various household family types defined by Firth and his colleagues was markedly different from the distribution they had found in their material on Highgate in 1851 and on Greenbanks in 1961. The essential difference lay in the fact that the proportion of households in Hartfield which contained complex families was much greater than in either nineteenth century Highgate or twentieth century Greenbanks.

This preliminary finding encouraged me to inspect other studies of family and kin for appropriate details of household family structure, so that I could extend my comparisons. In two such studies from Britain I found material on household family structure with which I could compare my data from Hartfield. The first of these was the study made in Bethnal Green by Young and Willmott (1957), and the second was the study of Swansea by Rosser and Harris (1965). In the latter study, the authors had already compared their Swansea findings with those presented by Young and Willmott, which suggested that I might compare household family structures in all three areas. Though these comparisons are difficult it appears that the relatively high proportion of complex family households found in Hartfield has closer parallels in Bethnal Green and Swansea than it does in Highgate or Greenbanks.

In 1972 a study covering a number of historical societies in Europe was published, which was edited by Laslett. This study enabled me to extend considerably the range of comparative material on household family structure in both time and space. Such comparisons may seem rather remote from Hartfield, but for me the value of Laslett's work was threefold: it was itself a comparative study of household family structure in several societies; it enabled me to compare household family structures in Hartfield with those found in societies outside the British Isles; and Laslett's description and analysis of households was more than usually detailed and exact, thus facilitating systematic comparisons.

The results of all these comparisons are included below, in the third chapter, where I show that Hartfield does have a relatively high incidence of complex family households, and this incidence remains high despite the use of three different schemes for classifying household family structure. Having established this fact, two further major

directions of inquiry suggested themselves for this thesis. One was to find a way of depicting the precise family structure of all the complex family households in order to bring out the main processes by which these households developed. The second was to investigate the factors that might be significantly related to the existence of these households.

In the fourth chapter of this thesis, therefore, the family structure of all those households which I have defined as being 'complex family households', is described both in words and in genealogical diagrams. I present all these households in series which do not depend solely on the observed morphology of the households; the series also take into account explanations given by people living in them for at least some of the stages by which the households had come to assume the forms I observed. Consequently, even this description of household structures, according to a particular sequence, begins to reveal some of the factors relevant to those structures, and, in subsequent chapters, my main topic is the further analysis of such factors.

In pursuing that topic I did not find much to guide me in any of the various sociological studies of contemporary Western European kinship that I have already mentioned. For none of them includes detailed theoretical consideration of factors making for complex family households. On the other hand, there is one recent attempt to reconstruct and explain in largely sociological terms an historical example of Western European household family structure. That is the study by Anderson (1971) of the Lancashire town of Preston in the mid-nineteenth century. Although, as in the case of the studies presented by Laslett (1972), this study may seem remote in time and place from my work in Hartfield, yet Anderson is primarily a sociologist, and does treat his material sociologically. Moreover, he considers a variety of factors, both practical and theoretical, bearing on the study of kin interaction

and household family structure in Preston. At least some of these factors, especially the more theoretical ones, have proved suggestive for my attempt to consider those that may be operating in Hartfield.

Thus, in the fifth chapter, I examine various economic, social and cultural characteristics of the Hartfield population to see if any of them can be correlated with the occurrence of such a large proportion of complex family households there. Since this examination does not suggest that any is especially significant, I turn in Chapter Six from the consideration of such 'external' factors, and instead examine 'internal' factors. They are internal in the sense that they concern links between people within the households, and for them the exchange theories used by Anderson in relation to what he calls 'critical life situations' can be shown to be applicable in Hartfield, as in Preston, despite the fact that Anderson himself tends to belittle their significance in 'modern' societies.

In Chapter Seven I consider the tensions to which living in a complex family household is likely to lead, while in my eighth chapter I conclude my study of family structure and process in Hartfield by examining a popular alternative to living in the same household as kin: that is, living nearby, but separately. These concluding chapters depend on detailed case material which has an additional value in that there is a dearth of ethnographic evidence on Whites in South Africa. Therefore, apart from any contribution this thesis may make to our knowledge of Western kinship structures in general, it also adds to our relatively limited anthropological knowledge of White South Africans.

Notes to Preface

1. Firth had, of course, been interested in the topic of family and kinship in industrial society for some time as two earlier works (Firth 1956; Firth 1964) indicate. Families and their Relatives was the result of collaboration between him and David Schneider in Chicago. The work which Schneider directed has led to the publication of his book American Kinship - A Cultural Account (1968); to a useful paper on fieldwork problems in the study of Western kinship by one of his colleagues, Linda M. Wolf (1964); and to a further book by Schneider and Raymond T. Smith: Class Differences and Sex Roles in American Kinship and Family Structure (1973).

2. The literature in this field is vast. The following references give some idea of the range and wealth of material: Habakkuk (1955); Bott (1957); Glick (1957); Stacey (1960); Greenfield (1961); Piddington (1961); Fletcher (1962); Goode (1963); Rapoport R and Rapoport R (1965); Shanas and Streib (eds) (1965); Adams (1968); Sweetser (1968); Turner (1970). Of particular interest, though not entirely relevant to my study was a book by Reuben Hill and his associates entitled Family Development in Three Generations (1970). Although not concentrating specifically on three generation households, much of the material in this book on intergenerational interaction and exchange, and on patterns of support and dependency between generations, was illuminating and suggestive.

CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

A number of White residential areas in the city of Durban were considered for fieldwork. The area finally chosen, Hartfield, was selected on the basis of its accessibility for study, and also because the findings of an earlier study (Preston-Whyte 1976) suggested that many of the families living in it were quite large, and had extra-familial kin living nearby. A good proportion of the housewives were known to spend much of their time at home and so would be available to interview. The area, therefore, seemed suitable for starting a study of a kind similar to that of Firth, Hubert and Forge.

The fieldwork that I did in Hartfield fell into two main phases, the first of which was a door-to-door survey of nearly 250 households within the chosen area. The second phase was a very detailed, in-depth study of eleven families which provided rich ethnographic material, without which I could not have adequately interpreted the survey data (Lancaster 1961, 318-320).

The survey was carried out by means of fairly brief interviews in each household, using an interview schedule (see Appendix). The occurrence, but not the significance, of complex family households was apparent in the survey. However, because the fieldwork that I did formed part of the wider study of extra-familial kinship, I did not plan to study only complex family households in the second, major phase of the fieldwork. Rather I planned to study a sample of all types of household as revealed in the survey data, which had provided information about the composition of each household. This information enabled me to classify all the households into the categories previously used by Firth and his colleagues.

Each household included in the survey was placed in one of Firth's categories, and then from each category a sample was drawn by means of a table of random numbers. There were thirty-nine households altogether in this original random sample. Of this total I approached four families successfully and completed detailed interviews with them, and wrote up their case histories. Two other families in the sample were approached and interviewed by two other fieldworkers. In two further households I began interviews, but the informant refused to continue after the first or second interview; in five more households that I approached the potential informant refused outright. Three other households were approached only to discover that the original families had moved.

Twenty-two households drawn in the sample were not approached at all. In nine of them I knew from the initial survey that all the adults in the family held full-time jobs, which experience had shown was a major obstacle to successful interviewing: the hours of possible interviewing were much reduced; informants would be less willing to be interviewed in their limited free time; the intervals between interviews became very protracted, and so it was difficult to complete such cases. Another six households in the sample were not approached for detailed interviews because they contained immigrant families from Italy or Portugal. In some of these families the wife spoke no English; in a couple of cases a child of school age or a neighbour had been interviewed in the survey or had acted as interpreter; in the other cases the wife could speak a limited amount of English, but not enough for prolonged and detailed interviewing to be carried out successfully. Two families were Afrikaans-speaking, and I did not approach them because it was initially hoped that we would find a bilingual interviewer (in the South African sense of one who could speak English and Afrikaans) to deal with them.

The remaining five households that were not approached did not present such specific disadvantages as those just described, but in two cases the preliminary interview had taken place on the doorstep, something unusual in friendly Hartfield, where I was nearly always invited into the house, and often given tea or coffee. One of these two doorstep interviews was with a middle-aged man who, in the middle of the afternoon, smelt very strongly of alcohol; and the other was with a woman who remarked, at the end of one of my briefest interviews (five minutes or so), that I was lucky that she had been willing to spare the time, because not everyone would be.

Although it had never been expected that all thirty-nine families in the random sample would be interviewed in detail, I had not anticipated that the obstacles to interviewing a reasonable proportion of them would be so varied and formidable. When I recognised the magnitude of these obstacles, I decided to abandon the random sample, since there were so few households in it that were both suitable and willing. After this decision, the further families approached for intensive interviewing were chosen from all the families surveyed initially. These additional families were selected mainly on the grounds that they were thought most likely to be able and willing to participate in prolonged interviewing; that is, the choice depended largely on a personal assessment of the degree of friendliness and readiness to sit and talk that they had displayed at the time of the preliminary survey interview.

Therefore, the final selection of families that I interviewed in depth was not a random sample of the total population in the study area. This fact, however, would only be a major disadvantage if, in either the wider study or in my section of it, we had intended to claim that the families studied were typical of any given section of the White population of South Africa. But we had never

envisaged making any such claim, since we were obviously dealing from the start with a notoriously elastic subject in an unbounded universe, from which we had rather arbitrarily chosen a segment of households.

The first section of the fieldwork, the door-to-door survey, was completed in about two months; the second section, however, took a long time, as some two years were necessary to cover eleven families successfully. This lengthy period partly resulted from the length and number of interviews with each family: a range of six to twenty interviews per family, each averaging more than two hours in length. Each interview subsequently had to be written up comprehensibly, because my fieldwork formed part of a wider study, and so had to be intelligible to others. The topics covered in these interviews were based on the Aide Memoire developed by Hubert, Forge and Firth (1968) for their London study. To render my material fully comparable with the data that they had collected, my interview notes for each family had to be rearranged and rewritten into a 'Case history'. A wealth of data was collected and transcribed, the shortest case history covered fifty or so typed pages, while the longest was three times that length.

The interviews, both preliminary and intensive, were the chief source of information about the families studied because, although any opportunities for participant observation that occurred were taken, they were rather infrequent, and did not cover many aspects of kin interaction. This dependence on interviews raises questions about the data obtained. Doubtless not all the information that was given in the door-to-door survey was correct; indeed, in some cases the fact that one respondent had given incorrect information was revealed when a respondent in a related household was interviewed. Obviously, the information that I obtained in the

intensive interviews was more reliable because the number of interviews with each family would have made it difficult to maintain persistently something that was incorrect, and also, usually I interviewed more than one member of a family. Sometimes facts were long concealed but did emerge in the end. Many informants readily produced details about themselves, or their close kin, which they could very easily have concealed as being not wholly creditable, or even discreditable, such as instances of 'shotgun' marriages, alcoholism, suicide and manslaughter.

Therefore, most of the information given was probably accurate from the informants' point of view, and it was their viewpoint that was most important and significant. For example, when one informant said, "My mother was very possessive with me, she didn't like me getting married", this statement was recorded as what the informant believed, or claimed to, and so lack of independent evidence to assess the statement did not make it any less interesting or valuable. Indeed, as the reader will notice, much of my thesis depends on my informants' statements, on their view of life and the meaning of kinship ties for them (Firth et al. 1969, 54-7).

CHAPTER TWO

HARTFIELD - THE AREA AND THE PEOPLE

Hartfield forms part of one of the inner suburbs of Durban, and it is located not far from the city centre. It is one of the older suburbs and was originally opened up for occupation at about the turn of the century, but most of the existing houses have been built more recently, and look as though they date from the 1930s or 1940s. There are almost no new houses because the area is one that the city authorities have rezoned: part has been scheduled for the building of flats; and part for commercial and industrial development. Moreover, at the time of research an urban freeway was being considered, which would have cut right through the centre of Hartfield. All these factors mean that the whole area is changing rapidly.

The suburb of Hartfield is regarded with disfavour by many outsiders, who tend to consider it to be an 'undesirable' area of the city in which to live. There are a variety of possible reasons for this attitude. For climatic reasons Hartfield is one of the less agreeable areas of the city in which to live, because it is situated on flat land at the foot of the ridge that runs parallel to the sea, and in summer one feels the full effect of Durban's heat and humidity, unrelieved by the breezes that areas higher up the ridge enjoy. Although Hartfield was probably quite a smart residential area when the first houses were built, judging by the size of the houses and the plots of land, it has lost any such status, and the large houses are often shabby and subdivided. Hartfield became one of the multiracial areas of the city, and at the time of fieldwork some Indian families still lived there, who had not yet been compelled to move, although the area had been zoned for occupation by Whites only. Hartfield's reputation as a racially mixed area

would aggravate the disesteem with which it is viewed by Whites living in other parts of the city (Kuper, Watts and Davies 1958).

Within Hartfield, we selected for detailed study a set of roads forming an oblong, half a mile long and two hundred yards wide. The boundaries were rather arbitrarily chosen, but do reflect certain features of the environment. The two long boundaries are main roads, one of which was almost wholly residential on the side within the study area, whereas the other side had a number of shops, a couple of warehouses and one or two small factories. That side had indeed been rezoned for commercial and industrial purposes, so that it could no longer be regarded as a residential area which it had been previously. The long boundary on the other side of the research area does not mark such a clear distinction between types of area, since residential properties predominated on both sides of the road at the time that the fieldwork was started. Even so, a number of houses across the road from the study area had been pulled down and since that time a large shopping centre and block of flats has been built.

The two short boundaries were chosen for different reasons. That at one end of the area studied lay about one block away from a municipal park, which would have delimited the area because we were looking for a fairly discrete geographical unit. The other extremity of the study area was extended after interviewing had begun, because so many households appeared to have extra-familial kin living in that part of the area which was added on.

The research area generally presented a slightly more respectable and smart facade than did other parts of its immediate neighbourhood, where not only was the paint peeling from the houses, but the houses themselves looked in danger of collapsing. Within our research area some of the houses have had more care and money

lavished on them than others; for instance, the houses belonging to a couple of building contractors both looked comparatively new and grand. Although the area does not present such a green, lush and affluent appearance as do other areas of the city, yet a couple of the roads are lined with trees and most of the houses are set back from the roads with small gardens in front, which in Durban's climate remain colourful throughout the year. The houses also have back yards, mostly grass covered, and many have garages and living quarters for servants, which are usually not attached to the house but are built separately. The research area was not immune from the rapid physical change affecting Hartfield as a whole, and within it there were several sizeable blocks of flats, most of which were built quite recently.

We decided to do a door-to-door survey of all the families occupying houses in the research area, but not to interview any families living in the modern blocks of flats. The main reason for excluding them was the sheer number of people involved, if we had included such flat dwellers then the area surveyed would have had to be considerably reduced. Moreover, we were particularly interested in studying families, especially those with local links, and so it seemed sensible to concentrate in the way we did.

The houses within the research area present quite a varied appearance, but their internal layout is often standard. Some of the oldest houses are built of wood and iron, but most are built of brick, although many have corrugated iron rather than tiled roofs. Most of the houses are detached and single-storey, and it is their internal layout which is so uniform. Many of these houses are very commodious by modern standards, the rooms are large and often numerous; such houses have three, four or even five bedrooms. The

development of the complex family household, which this thesis examines, may well be encouraged by this fact that most houses are reasonably large.

There are occasional double-storeyed, detached houses, and some semi-detached ones, of which a few turned out to be divided into four 'flats' which were retained in the survey. These flats, like the semi-detached single-storey houses of which there were some, generally had only two bedrooms, unlike the larger detached houses.

The research area was fairly well provided with a variety of amenities, since there lay within it such shops as a butchery, a hardware store, a liquor store and a 'tearoom' (i.e. a small general dealer). Across the boundary road on the lower side of the research area more shops were to be found, including a garage, a florist, a hairdresser, a greengrocer, a chemist, a haberdashery, another tearoom and so on. Thus most immediate household needs could be provided for locally. During the research period a multi-storey shopping centre and block of flats was being built just outside the research area.

Within the research area were a Presbyterian church and an Apostolic church, and in the immediate vicinity were Roman Catholic, Methodist and Anglican churches, and within about quarter or half a mile were also Dutch Reformed (N.G.K.) and Christian Science churches. Attached to the Roman Catholic church was a coeducational primary school, which had originally been a Catholic school, but had since become a government school. This was not the only primary school in the neighbourhood for there was another coeducational one, as well as two single sex schools, one for girls and one for boys. All these schools were English medium, but within half a mile there was a coeducational Afrikaans medium primary school.

These primary schools are within walking distance of the families living within the study area, but, as one informant grumbled, there are no high schools in the immediate vicinity. The nearest girls' high school is a commercial high school, to which only a few local girls go, but most go to another girls' school a couple of miles away, usually by bus. The boys of high school age are not so concentrated in one school but are scattered between three or four schools which are all some distance away. These schools are English medium, but there is a coeducational Afrikaans medium high school located at a similar distance. Almost all the local children attend state schools, although one or two do go to private schools or to 'crammers'.

Despite the fact that the area studied presents a fairly homogeneous appearance, its inhabitants are heterogeneous. Not only are they of diverse origins, but they are also socially and economically mixed. Residents seemed agreed that the area was changing rapidly, but they disagreed as to what direction the change was taking. One man said that the area was much improved compared with a few years previously when, he said, episodes such as stabbings on Saturday nights had been common. This view was in direct contradiction to the remark made by a woman who regretted having purchased a house in the area because "the area itself had gone down".

Several of the families in the area are long established, and until quite recently there was probably a degree of community life within Hartfield. Even today half the families interviewed had relatives who lived within a ten minute walk of their own house, and this degree of inter-relatedness must tend to foster community life. On the other hand, it is probable that kin and other ties are diminishing because of the rapid physical changes exemplified by the new blocks of flats and the large shopping centre under construction, and the accompanying changes in the population. At the time of the

household survey nearly half the families had been in the same dwelling for five years or less, which means that the population turnover is fairly rapid. In a later chapter I consider if length of residence in a house has any effect on the development of complex family households.

There have probably always been quite a large number of immigrants in the area. In the past quite a few immigrants came from places such as the Lebanon and Mauritius, and some of these people and their descendants continue to live in the area. Today the immigrant families come mainly from Portugal and Italy, and, as I mentioned in Chapter One, I had trouble in communicating in several immigrant households, because of the housewife's inadequate or indeed non-existent command of English. Some of these women who could not speak English had lived for a number of years in South Africa.

Such women presumably form a part of a closeknit immigrant community since they have not needed to learn English and, as with other emigrants from Europe to various parts of the world, these recent arrivals often operate or depend on a closely knit network; for example, three of the Italian households in the study area were occupied by three brothers and their families. Two of these three married brothers lived next door to each other, and they each were also accommodating an unmarried brother too. Thus five brothers (who had all emigrated as adults) lived within the research area, and another married brother lived about three quarters of a mile distant. This set of brothers was linked occupationally, because they were skilled craftsmen who had set up their own business.

One effect of the recurrent immigration from Southern Europe, or at least of people of such origins, has been to raise the number of Roman Catholics in the area far above the national level of 7 per cent. Indeed, one long established informant, who claimed to know many

people in Hartfield and who was herself a Catholic, stressed the importance of Catholicism in the area, saying that she thought that half the people around were Roman Catholics and that there was a Catholic vote as demonstrated by the fact that they had a Roman Catholic city councillor. Although this informant over-estimated the number of Catholics in the area studied, she was right to stress their significance since the household survey showed that one fifth of all the households were wholly Catholic, and another tenth were partly Catholic and partly Protestant.

Although these immigrants have raised the proportion of Catholic families in the area, and indeed in a later chapter I consider possible correlations between the high proportion of Catholics and the formation of complex family households, they do not necessarily go to church. Although details of church attendance, as opposed to church membership, were not obtained in the preliminary survey, I formed the impression that quite a number of people went to church regularly. During the subsequent period of intensive interviewing it became clear that there were close knit religious networks in the research area which were based on membership of the various local churches.

The Catholic network depended on the long established local families rather than the more recent arrivals. These active Catholics, who had lived in the area for many years, spoke disparagingly of the new immigrants from Southern Europe and said that they did not even go to church. A very devout and active informant once referred to 'Sunday Catholics', meaning those whose only religious activity was to attend church on Sunday, in such a tone that made clear the low opinion she held of such persons.

A second network is centred on the local Presbyterian Church. This network presents a different picture from the Catholic one, even

though its members are equally worthy and respectable, because they do not seem to belong to such long established local families. This difference does not result from the time of the establishment of the two churches in the locality, because both churches were built in the early years of this century. One fact of possible relevance is that, a year or two before I began fieldwork, the minister who had been the incumbent of the Presbyterian church for about forty years died, and was replaced by a young man who may have re-stimulated local activity and interest, at least among the younger members.

Certainly, some of the most active members of the Presbyterian Church have only joined it within the last few years. At least two such recently joined members and their families had previously belonged to the local Methodist Church, and both gave as their reason for leaving that the Methodist Church was moribund: there was "talk of doing away with the church", it had no Sunday school any longer. An interesting point about these two female informants is that these outward similarities in religious behaviour masked a basic contrast in their religious views: the one admitted to having a "hangup with religion", presumably in terms of doctrine and belief, and the other remarked that "without being church or religion mad" she and her family had a lot to do with the church and she referred to the "social side of my church work".

A third religious network within the study area depends upon the 'fundamentalist' Apostolic church there. The character of the membership in this network probably differs more from both the Catholic and Presbyterian networks than they do from each other. There are several possibly significant factors involved, including the contrast between what is a quite recently founded sect and two of the long established churches of Christendom. Furthermore, the membership of the Apostolic church probably consists very largely of

converts, partly because of its recent establishment in Durban and partly because of very active evangelising. Judging by descriptions given of a number of converts it seems that quite a number of them are reformed deviants: a surprising proportion were said to be reformed alcoholics, and others were described as having been ex-convicts, 'ducktails' and drug addicts.

Earlier in this chapter I stressed how heterogeneous the Hartfield population is, and so, having outlined these various church based networks of local people, I must mention another facet of the Hartfield population. In contrast to the sober, respectable church-goers are others who certainly cannot be characterised as respectable: there are wife-beaters, drunkards, prostitutes and so on. During the period of fieldwork, part of one of the houses in the research area itself was exposed as a brothel and more than half a dozen young women, who had been consorting there with sailors, were found guilty of prostitution in Durban Magistrates' Court.

It was said that other brothels had existed in the past, and I was also told that previously there were 'shebeens', places which sold alcoholic drinks illegally and which had flourished in the days when Africans were prohibited from buying European-type drinks, especially spirits. No shebeens were known of at the time of field-work, which may partly result from the decreasing multiracial nature of Hartfield as well as from the lifting of the prohibition against the sale of liquor to Blacks.

The population of Hartfield also shows a wide range of incomes. The poorest households are almost certainly those occupied by pensioners and some of them are indeed poor. Other households are comparatively affluent, especially those households in which more than one adult is working. In Chapter Five below, I examine the range and variety of occupations held by the adult males living in the

study area, to see if any correlations exist between type of occupation and the growth of complex family households, but in brief, the commonest types of occupation are routine non-manual and skilled manual, such as are usually associated with people described as 'lower middle class' and 'working class'.

The variegated character of the people of Hartfield is also shown in their diverse attitudes and ideas. Those people who were actively involved in church affairs appeared to share values that are usually ascribed to the 'middle class'; for instance, many of them were determined to educate their children as well as they could, at least as far as 'matric'. My informant Mrs du Toit, for example, had been left a widow with four young children, and she said that her first husband "went to matric, he matriculated. He said one day to me, 'If I should die, don't take the children out of school' " until they had matriculated. So Mrs du Toit had promised, and after his death she had kept her promise, which must have meant a considerable financial struggle. Mrs du Toit said about her second husband, "he never broadened his education", and he had allowed his elder daughter to leave school with only Junior Certificate, but he was remarried by the time his second daughter was at that stage in her education, and "Minnie (his daughter) wanted to leave in Standard 8, so I said to my husband, 'She's a fairly clever girl, she's got to go to matric' " and Mrs du Toit forced her unwilling stepdaughter to complete her schooling.

Other informants expressed similar views: one woman said about herself and her sisters that "although none of us have a very good education, we want for our children" a good education. Another woman regretted having left school at the end of Standard 9 and said that she had been a "fool – I should have done matric, I was an idiot . . . I wanted to work". Yet another woman, who had herself

matriculated, had clearly been very angry with her husband when he allowed two of their children to leave school before matriculating.

How keen many informants would be about encouraging further education after school is less certain. One man, when asked if he wanted his children to go to university, answered, "I would like them to study as far as they can, but I would never force them because (then you) waste time, money and energy", and he thought that one should advise rather than force a child. However, one family was a remarkable example of determination and achievement in higher education. Neither parent had completed their schooling, but all their five children did, and, furthermore, three children have subsequently graduated from university, only one of whom attended as a fulltime student, both the others studied on a part-time basis.

The generally keen attitude towards education expressed by these informants was, however, in direct contrast with the views of one very young woman who herself had left school before reaching the official leaving age. She said that "I was fourteen just turned fifteen" when she left, and what "actually happened" was that she was physically one of the "three biggest girls in the school, when they left I was the biggest. So I spoke to my mum, she spoke to the headmaster", and it was arranged that she should be allowed to leave. The same young woman said about her younger brother, when asked if nobody had tried to persuade him to remain at school to the end of Standard 8 (he had left part way through the school year: "No, you can't hold a child back" when he wants to leave school. This young woman's attitude resembles that traditionally considered to be 'working class', as opposed to 'middle class'.

In this chapter I have outlined the physical setting of Hartfield and the district I studied, and I have tried to show what variety is to be found among Hartfield's inhabitants. I shall present

more exact socio-economic details with various tables in Chapter Five below; but from the general description in this chapter it should be clear that Hartfield is not intended to be regarded as 'typical' or 'representative' of Durban in general. It should also be clear that the households I studied cannot be put into some single, socio-economic class of which they may be regarded as 'typical'. Consequently, the high proportion of complex family households that I show, in the next chapter, as existing in Hartfield, does not imply that such households are equally common in other parts of the city, nor does it imply that they are characteristic of some particular category of South African Whites.

CHAPTER THREE

HOUSEHOLD FAMILY STRUCTURE FROM THE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

The household survey was a door-to-door survey in which an attempt was made to interview a member of every household within the total survey area. Altogether about 250 households were approached. Of this total, several families were interviewed, but were subsequently excluded because they lived in blocks of flats and, as mentioned in Chapter Two, it was finally decided not to include such flat dwellers. Two families interviewed said they were not White and so were excluded for that reason, because the study was intended to be of Whites only.

In five cases of attempted interviews, the property was either vacant or inhabited by elusive people who were never seen, despite a number of visits being made to the property. In eleven cases the person approached refused to be interviewed, a refusal rate of about 5 per cent. Sometimes the person concerned refused when first visited, but elsewhere the person was offputting on a number of occasions before definitely refusing; one household was visited on twelve separate occasions before the housewife finally said, "I am too busy" and "I am not interested and too busy". Other people who refused to be interviewed described themselves as "not interested", a remark which usually sounded positively hostile rather than indifferent. After all these exclusions from the total of households approached, the number of households included in the final census was 228.

These household survey interviews were based on a schedule which is reproduced in the Appendix. The questions on the schedule were partly designed to obtain exact information about household structure with various biographical details about each member, such as age, marital status and occupation. Such details were also

obtained for any non-resident children as well as for boarders and lodgers. To establish the location of at least some extra-familial kin I asked informants the whereabouts of any kin in Durban in general, and within a ten minute walk in particular, and an estimate of their contact with such kin was obtained.

The family structure of the 228 households that were interviewed has been analysed below in several different ways, so that the data from Hartfield can be compared with data on household family structure among other communities of Western European origins. As mentioned in the Preface, the first comparison is with the study made by Firth, Hubert and Forge (1969) who use seven categories in their analysis of household family structure. These categories are: married couple only; elementary family; denuded family; extended family; composite kin unit; siblings only; and single persons. Firth et al. explain these categories as follows:

> By elementary family is meant parents and their dependent child/children. By denuded family is meant an elementary family from which one person has been lost (by death, divorce, desertion, etc.). By extended family is meant a kinship unit where relations of the family type operate lineally over more than two generations, e.g. with grandparent(s), parents and children. This is distinguished from composite kin unit, consisting of any other set of kin, say, siblings and their children, or aunt and niece, living in this case in one household (1969, 73).

In Table 3.1, the figures for Hartfield families classified into these categories are presented beside those figures that Firth et al. give for Highgate in 1851 and Greenbanks in 1961.

This table shows immediately how Hartfield contains a much greater proportion of households with 'extended families' or 'composite kin units' than either Greenbanks or Highgate, and the combination of these two categories of Firth et al. is what I have termed the 'complex family household' which is considered in detail at the end of this chapter. In general Hartfield does not resemble either Highgate of

Table 3.1 A Comparison of Household Family Structures in Hartfield, Greenbanks and Highgate

Country	South Africa		England		England	
Place	Hartfield		Greenbanks[1]		Highgate[2]	
Date	1972		1961		1851	
Married couple only	46	20.2%	13	21.7%	104	12.5%
Elementary family	88	38.6%	29	48.3%	352	42.5%
Denuded family	18	7.9%	2	3.3%	116	14.0%
Extended family	27	11.8%	3	5.0%	53	6.4%
Composite kin unit	28	12.3%	4	6.7%	86	10.4%
Siblings only	4	1.8%	1	1.7%	17	2.0%
Single persons	17	7.5%	8	13.3%	101	12.2%
TOTALS	228	100	60	100	829	100

1) Figures from Firth et al. 1969, Table 4, 74.
2) Figures from Firth et al. 1969, Table 3, 73.

1851 or Greenbanks of 1961 in the proportions of the various categories of household family structure. The comparison is, of course, between communities remote from each other in space and also, for Highgate, in time. However, the differences appear greater than might be expected merely from such remoteness, and it is therefore relevant to make further comparisons, to see if the differences are merely fortuitous or not.

To do so, I shall follow a second typology of household family structure, which was used by Young and Willmott (1957) in their

study of Bethnal Green. They used a most detailed set of categories, and their typology was also followed by Rosser and Harris (1965) in their study of Swansea, but, as can be seen in Table 3.2, the latter used a simplified set of categories. They combined some of Young and Willmott's categories, thus reducing the total number of different types of household family structure from twelve to seven. Although the number of categories used by Young and Willmott does make their typology rather an awkward one to follow in the analysis of household family structure, yet the simplification used by Rosser and Harris results in the loss of any distinction of households by number of generations.

In the Table, figures for both 'households' and 'dwellings' are included, which terms are distinguished by Rosser and Harris in the following way:

> We must emphasise that the distinction between household composition and dwelling composition is based on the manner of living - a household being defined as a group of persons who normally eat together (that is, are catered for by the same person, usually the housewife); a dwelling is simply a structurally separate building, or separate part of a building such as in the case of a flat, which may contain more than one household in the sense given above (1965, 149).

An extra category for Hartfield has been included in this table: '9a Parent(s), divorced daughter and grandchildren', because it seemed that a total of seven such households warranted its own category. Otherwise these households would have had to be placed in category 12 (other three or four generation households) because they were not eligible for inclusion in households that contained parent(s) and a married daughter, since, by definition, those households included the daughter's husband. The need for such a category in Hartfield reflects the greater frequency of divorce there than in either Bethnal Green or in Swansea. In Bethnal Green only one per cent of their sample had been brought up in homes which had been broken by divorce

Table 3.2 A Comparison of Family Structure by Household and Dwelling in Hartfield, Bethnal Green and Swansea (figures in percentages)

Family Type	Households			Dwellings		
	Hartfield	Bethnal Green[1]	Swansea[2]	Hartfield	Bethnal Green[1]	Swansea[2]
1 Person on own	7.4	10	5	7.5	8	5
2 Married couple only	20.0	23	21	19.0	18	19
3 Siblings alone	1.8	2	2	1.8	2	2
4 Parent(s) and unmarried children	46.5	52	51	46.0	44	49
5 Parent(s), single children & single sibs. of parents	3.5	2		3.5	2	
6 Parent(s) and married son(s)	1.8	1	4	1.8	2	5
7 Parent(s), married son & gdchildren	2.6	2		3.1	4	
8 Parent(s) and married daughter(s)	1.8	2	13	2.2	4	15
9 Parent(s), married D(s) & gdchildren	4.0	3		4.5	8	
9a Parent(s), divorced D & gdchildren	3.0	-	-	3.1	-	-
10 Other one generation	1.0	1	4	1.0	1	5
11 Other two generation	4.4	1		4.5	4	
12 Other 3/4 generation	2.2	1		2.2	3	
Percentage Totals	100	100	100	100	100	100
Sample Totals	228	933	1962	225	933	1962

1) Percentages from Young and Willmott 1957, Table 28, 209.
2) Percentages from Rosser and Harris 1965, Table 4.1, 148.

(Young and Willmott 1957, Table 1, 7). Likewise in Swansea divorce had occurred in only 1.5 per cent of the cases studied (Rosser and Harris 1965, 167). These rates are not very readily comparable, but it is clear that the divorce rate in Hartfield is higher because 3 per cent of households include a divorced daughter with children living with her parent(s),

which figure must imply a higher rate. A more comparable figure from the Hartfield data is that the number of households headed by a divorced person is eleven out of the total of 228, that is, 5 per cent. My figures for divorce, like those quoted for both Bethnal Green and Swansea, include persons who are separated as well as divorced.

Despite the overall resemblance, the inclusion in Table 3.2 of family structures by both household and dwelling does bring out certain significant differences, both between the two British samples and between them and Hartfield. As Rosser and Harris point out:

> There are much wider differences in all the categories of household as compared with dwelling composition in Bethnal Green than in Swansea. This arises because 39 per cent of the dwellings in the Bethnal Green sample were shared by separate households, as compared with only 10 per cent in Swansea . . . The important point to note here is that of these shared dwellings, [their italics] 85 per cent in Bethnal Green, but only 43 per cent in Swansea . . . contained related [their italics] households (1965, 150).

From Table 3.2 one can see that the percentage of dwellings in Hartfield occupied by two separate, but related, households is even lower than in Swansea. Out of a total of 222 dwellings in Hartfield only thirteen contain two separate households and only three of those thirteen contain two related households. In Hartfield it seems that it is more common for members of a complex family to live together as one household, that this is what they prefer to do (as they also prefer to do in Swansea) rather than to live in two separate households in the same dwelling, which is what the people of Bethnal Green often do. The reasons for these preferences have not been established, but in Hartfield the prevalence of single storey dwellings may encourage complex family households because such houses are less easy to subdivide in comparison with the double storey houses found in Bethnal Green.

Therefore, the Hartfield figures for households and dwellings do not vary from one another in the same way as do the Bethnal Green

figures. In Hartfield households there is a rather higher proportion of parents with married sons (4.4 per cent) than in Bethnal Green households (3 per cent). Similarly, the proportion of parents with married daughters is higher (5.8 per cent compared with 5 per cent). These proportions are reversed in comparing dwellings; Hartfield dwellings show a fractional increase in the proportion containing parents and married sons - up to 4.9 per cent - whereas the Bethnal Green proportion doubles to 6 per cent. In the same way the proportion of dwellings containing parents and married daughters in Hartfield increases a little (up to 6.7 per cent), in contrast to the Bethnal Green figures which more than double to 12 per cent. In Swansea the proportions of parents with married sons are more or less the same in households (4 per cent) and dwellings (5 per cent); the proportion of parents with married daughters in households is already high at 13 per cent and rises to 15 per cent in dwellings.

Hartfield and Swansea therefore are alike in the small degree of variation between the proportions of households and dwellings that include parents and married children, and all three samples are alike in showing the significance of daughters in the creation of complex families. The presence of these daughters, married in Bethnal Green and in Swansea, and either married or divorced in Hartfield, accounts for a substantial proportion of all complex families. Both Young and Willmott, and Rosser and Harris stressed the significance of links with daughters. In Hartfield the stress on daughters is only apparent when divorced daughters are included; there is little difference in the proportion of households including married daughters and the proportion including married sons.

By and large, it seems that Hartfield does conform more closely to the patterns found in Bethnal Green and Swansea, than to those of Highgate or Greenbanks. The conformity of these patterns

may be more apparent than real, as there is a problem in that my Hartfield figures are for the proportions of family households in each category, whereas both the Bethnal Green and the Swansea figures are from samples of adult individuals. This means that their figures tend to 'favour larger households' (Rosser and Harris 1965, 154), and the comparative problems raised are discussed by Anderson (1972, 216–7), who recalculates the Swansea figures to show the approximate proportions of family households of different types in the Swansea sample. In this recalculation (Anderson 1972, Table 7.6, 222) the greatest variations in the figures are in the proportions of households in the largest and smallest categories. Thus, first, Anderson doubles the proportion of households containing a person living alone (from 5 to 10 per cent); second, he reduces by almost half the proportion of households containing parent(s) and married children (from 17 to 9 per cent). Therefore, if one uses Rosser and Harris's own figures for Swansea, then Swansea and Hartfield have about the same proportion of complex family households, whereas if one follows Anderson's interpretation of the Swansea data, then Hartfield has a greater proportion of complex family households than Swansea.

All these comparisons of household family structure are also subject to other reservations. One is that the classification of family types is done in different ways in the three original sources. In each case the criteria for the different classification are stated, but not in great detail, especially in the case of Firth et al. Thus, although I am reasonably confident that I have been able to classify the Hartfield material in the same way as in each of the British studies, I am not as certain as I would prefer to be, that my classifications conform precisely to theirs.

A second reservation is that the comparisons are limited to three sources on four communities in Britain, so that the appearance of

any significant difference in the Hartfield material has to be treated as provisional. However, the comparisons do show that the Hartfield figures for complex family households are relatively high, quite high enough to warrant extending the comparison of the Hartfield material yet further.

Therefore, the Hartfield material has been categorised in another manner to widen comparisons both historically and geographically, following the suggestion and example of Professor Argyle (1977). This method of analysis is based upon the classifications of household family types originally defined in 1972 by Peter Laslett, the English social historian whose continued interest in family and household is exhibited in his earlier work (Laslett and Harrison 1963; Laslett 1965) as well as in his later work (Hammel and Laslett 1974; Laslett 1977).

Laslett's general definition of the term 'household' is similar to that of Rosser and Harris in that members of a household sleep beneath one roof as well as sharing a number of activities, although Laslett does not specify eating together, and that they may also, though not necessarily, be a kin group. The categories of household types that Laslett defined are: solitaries; no family households; simple family households; extended family households; and multiple family households. Laslett's definitions of these various types of family household are based on his concept of the 'conjugal family unit', about which he writes 'the concept is of the conjugal link as the structural principle' and that 'it is necessary for at least two individuals connected by that link or arising from that link to be coresident' (1972, 29).

Such a 'conjugal family unit', when it alone forms a household, is called by Laslett a 'simple family household', which 'consists of a married couple, or a married couple with offspring, or of a

widowed person with offspring' (1972, 29). People more remotely related to each other, through more than one conjugal link, do not alone form a simple family household, instead Laslett refers to them as 'no family households'. For example, an aunt and nephew, or a widow and grandchild, or two siblings living in each case with no other kin, are all classified as 'no family households' by Laslett. 'Solitaries' form a separate category but are counted as households 'for they are living with themselves' (1972, 28), and they are still classified as 'solitaries' even when they have servants.

Laslett's category of 'simple family' thus resembles the nuclear or elementary family of anthropology. His 'simple family household' is equivalent to the combination of Firth et al.'s three categories of 'married couple only', 'elementary family', and 'denuded family'. Similarly, his 'simple family household' is equivalent to the combination of the two categories 'married couple on own' and 'parent(s) and unmarried child(ren)' used by Young and Willmott.

Laslett continues his typology with a definition of what he describes as an 'extended family household':

> An extended family household [his italics] in our nomenclature consists in a conjugal family unit with the addition of one or more relatives other than offspring, the whole group living together on its own or with servants. It is thus identical with the simple family household except for the additional item or items (1972, 29).

The 'additional item' may be a parent or sibling or any other kin or affine of one of the spouses of the conjugal family unit, provided that such additional persons do not themselves form a second conjugal family unit within the household.

This definition of 'extended family household' does not correspond to the common anthropological meaning of 'extended family', which ordinarily includes at least two lineally related nuclear families, either living within one household or in neighbouring households, and

often under the authority of a single head. This definition also does not resemble any of those usages of 'extended family' found in the three studies of family and kin in the British Isles already cited in this chapter, none of which prescribe co-residence. For Young and Willmott an extended family consists of those relatives with whom an elementary family either shares a household or lives nearby and sees frequently (1957, 201-2). Rosser and Harris use the term 'extended family' to cover a persistent grouping of kin, wider than an elementary family, which characteristically covers three generations, but they do not specify proximity of residence (1965, 32). Firth, Hubert and Forge use the term 'extended family' in two different ways: first, one of their household types is entitled 'extended family', which they define as 'a kinship unit where relations of the family type operate lineally over more than two generations, e.g. with grandparent(s), parents and their children' (1969, 73); and second, they define a certain dispersed group of kin as an 'extended family', kin whose links are by direct line of descent, though such a group may be of two, not three, generations, for example, when a group of married siblings after the death of their parents continue to form an 'extended family' (1969, 285). None of these definitions resemble that given by Laslett for an 'extended family household'.

Laslett's last category is entitled 'multiple family household'. It comprises 'all forms of domestic group which include two or more conjugal family units connected by kinship or by marriage' (1972, 30). Therefore, a multiple family household may contain two married couples, such as a man and his wife with a married child, or two married siblings. Such a household may also contain a widow with unmarried children living together with a married child. However, a case in which a widow is living with a married child, but without any of her unmarried children, is not classified as a multiple family household,

rather the widow's co-residence makes the simple family household of her married child into an 'extended family household' in Laslett's typology.

The great advantage of this typology of Laslett's over all the others that I have used is that his categories are so precisely defined, both in words and the form of genealogical diagrams which he calls 'ideographs', that one can be more certain that the different series of data on the various communities described in his study have been identically categorised, and so I am more confident that my Hartfield data has also been categorised in exactly the same way. This system of ideographs is described and used by me in Chapter Four. In Table 3.3 I present Laslett's figures for household family structure in several historical communities beside my figures from the Hartfield data which have been similarly tabulated.

Table 3.3 A Comparison of Household Family Structure in Hartfield and in historical communities in France, England and New England

Country	S.Africa		England[1]		France[1]		France[2]		France[2]		America[1]	
Place	Hart-field		Ealing		Longue-nesse		Montplaisant				Bristol	
Date	1972		1599		1778		1644		1836		1689	
Solitary householders	11	5%	10	12%	1	1%	7	11%	7	9%	5	7%
No family households	12	5%	2	2%	4	6%	1	2%	2	2%	0	
Simple family households	152	67%	66	78%	50	76%	32	51%	60	74%	65	90%
Extended family households	27	12%	6	6%	9	14%	10	16%	11	14%	2	3%
Multiple family households	26	11%	1	2%	2	3%	13	21%	1	1%	0	
Totals	228	100	85	100	66	100	63	101	81	100	72	100

1) Figures from Laslett 1972, Table 1.15, 85.
2) Figures from Laslett 1972, 244-54.

Table 3.3 shows that there is great diversity in household family structure to be found within historical communities of Western Europe and its daughter societies, and Hartfield as part of one of the latter tends towards the complex end of the scale, in contrast to the one example from colonial America. Laslett, in his more recent study (1977), gives comparative figures on household family structure in historical communities in ten countries of continental Europe which show even greater variety (1977, Table 1.2, 22-3), but which I have not quoted because of their lower level of reliability.

The use of Laslett's typology is very valuable for comparative purposes. It increases the number of communities with which Hartfield can be reliably compared, and extends such comparisons to countries outside the British Isles. However, these comparisons are all with historical communities, for which the material is not based on fieldwork reports, but on surviving censuses and other enumerations of the populations concerned, and thus it is probable that such material will not reflect as accurately as mine the actual distribution of household family types.

As this thesis is concerned with the existence and development of households containing other kin in addition to the nuclear family of parents and children, it seems both logical and useful to have a separate term that includes all such households. The term that I propose to use is 'complex family household', to which I have already referred. This term has not been used systematically in any works that I know of, and the only mention of it that I have found is in a footnote in Laslett's latest study (Laslett 1977, 253). My use of this term derives in part from the term 'complex household' as used by Professor Argyle (1977), and elsewhere, especially by Laslett (1972, 5-10; 1977, 24), and similarly other authors have referred to 'composite households' (e.g. Vidich and Bensman 1958, 70; Rosser and Harris 1965, 62). The term 'complex family household' is particularly

appropriate to be used in opposition to Laslett's category of 'simple family household', and it is more suitable than 'complex household' because it emphasises that these are households which contain complex families.

My definition of the term 'complex family household' makes it exactly equivalent to the combination of Firth et al.'s two categories 'extended family' and 'composite kin unit'. It is also, therefore, equal to the combination of eight of Young and Willmott's twelve categories, that is, to the combination of Numbers 5 to 12 in Table 3.2.

The complex family household, as so defined in terms of the categories used by Firth et al. and by Young and Willmott, is not identical to any combination of the categories used by Rosser and Harris, because their category of 'parents and unmarried children' also includes Young and Willmott's category of 'parent(s) and unmarried child(ren) and unmarried sibling(s) of a parent'. Therefore, some of the households which are considered by them as 'simple family households' containing a nuclear family of parents and unmarried children, are 'complex family households' in my definition, because they include 'unmarried sibling(s) of a parent'.

I must also note that although the category of 'complex family household' as defined above is virtually identical to a combination of Laslett's two categories 'extended family household' and 'multiple family household', it is not completely so. There are two households in Hartfield which are included in the category of complex family household, as I have defined it, but are 'no family households' in Laslett's definition. In one case a widow is living with a grandson, and in the other an aunt and nephew are co-residing. However, no household defined as either an 'extended family household' or a 'multiple family household' in Laslett's terminology is excluded from the 'complex family household' category.

Therefore, as the term 'complex family household' can be exactly related to combinations of household family types in the typologies presented both by Firth and his colleagues and by Young and Willmott, and only varies in a few minor points from combinations of categories in the other two typologies that I have described and followed, it appears to be a broad, useful category for the comparative study or household family structure. Certainly, the comparisons that I have made in this chapter all indicate a preliminary observation that the proportion of complex family households in Hartfield is relatively high for Western society. This observation suggests in turn that the structure of the family households that have here been grouped as 'complex', should be examined in detail to show the full range of their complexity, and the next chapter is devoted to this examination.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STRUCTURE OF THE COMPLEX FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

In the previous chapter some indication of the varying types of household included in the total category labelled 'complex family household' was given, in comparing the Hartfield data on household family structure with the data found in the four other studies cited. I now present the exact structure of all the fifty-five households in the survey which were included in the category of complex family household. To make the examination of the structure of these fifty-five households, I have adopted the system of 'ideographs' as described by Hammel and Laslett (1974), because these ideographs or genealogical diagrams seem to be the most effective way of showing exact household structure in a clear and simple manner. The symbols used in the ideographs are displayed in Figure 4.1, and are taken from those suggested by Hammel and Laslett (1974). In my ideographs I have also shown the ages of individuals (by figures next to their symbols) and, for the sake of completeness, I have included boarders, lodgers and servants, although my analysis in this chapter is of the 'family household', and not of the wider 'household', nor of the 'houseful'.

I present these households in a 'series' in an attempt to show that, although the household survey itself was like a still photograph, taken at one moment in time, yet the households should more properly be viewed as a moving sequence, changing and developing through time. The concept of 'developmental sequence' is discussed in greater detail at the end of this chapter.

The series in which I present the fifty-five households do not depend only on their morphology, which is what the ideographs depict, and which is the chief basis of the description and discussion of household family structure in historical populations such as those

described by the various contributors to Household and Family in Past Time (Laslett 1972). I have been able to go beyond such a purely morphological presentation, because the people of Hartfield themselves gave me reasons why they were living in complex family households and so, as will be seen below, two households that appear morphologically the same may need to be presented in different series.

I have separated the fifty-five complex family households, which formed part of the total household survey, into three main series. First, those that are made complex sideways or 'laterally'. Second, those made complex up or down one or more generations, that is, 'vertically'. Third, those made complex both laterally and vertically. The first of these series, the lateral, includes such households, for example, as contain an elementary family together with a single sibling of one of the spouses, or such households which contain two married siblings and their children. The second, vertical series may be conveniently subdivided into three: (a) those households containing an elementary family supporting elderly parent(s); (b) those households in which parent(s) are offering accommodation to a married child (with spouse, and with or without offspring) or to a divorced child (with offspring); (c) those households where a person is offering accommodation to a grandchild or other second degree kin without the linking kin being resident. The third series, which includes those households that are made complex both laterally and vertically, therefore consists of those households with the most complex family structures of all, for example, a household which includes parents, a married daughter and a married son.

Since the first series of complex family household to be shown in ideographic form includes all those households that are extended laterally, it is necessary to determine the usual source of this form of extension. It derives from the sibling link and seems to occur at all stages in the developmental sequence of the family.

Consequently, the fourteen households which contain an additional sibling can to some extent be subdivided according to the stage that they have reached in such a sequence. The first four households that are grouped together are at an early stage in their development: in each case the household head is the husband of a young to middle-aged couple with young children, and in each there is also an unmarried sibling in the age range from 28 to 35, who could thus be described as being 'not yet married'. The fourth of these cases is rather different from the other three because it was the single woman who owned the house. In that sense she might seem to qualify as household head, but in fact she had been partially crippled in an accident and her parents had left their house to her, with the proviso that the married daughter had the right to live in it for as long as she offered her disabled sister a home. Therefore, although Case 4 is identical morphologically to the first three cases (save for the sex of the unmarried sibling), it can be seen to represent a different situation when further information given by the respondent is taken into consideration. These four households are shown in ideographic form in Figure 4.2.

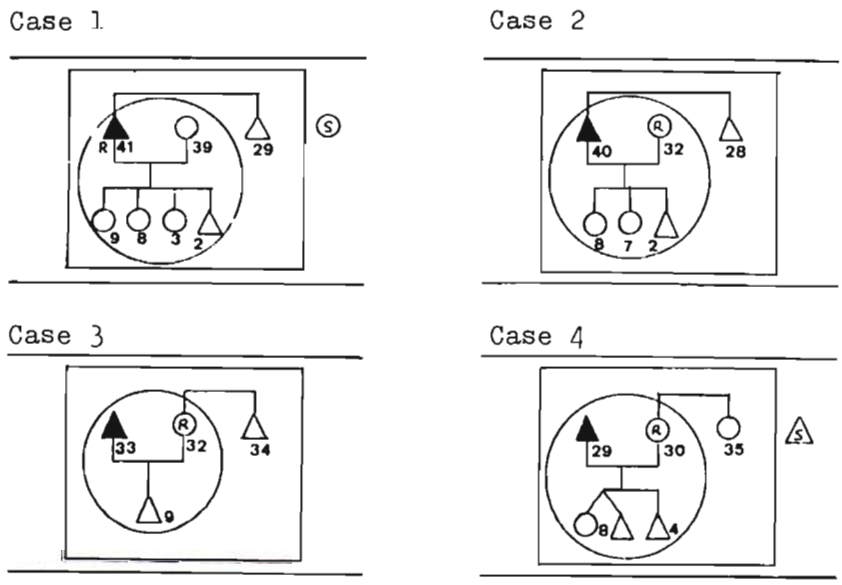


Fig. 4.2

Further on in the developmental sequence, two other different sets of households made complex laterally may be distinguished. The first of these two sets includes the three households which contain two married siblings (and, of course, their spouses), and these three are shown in Figure 4.3. Cases 5 and 6 were both described as temporary situations; in Case 5 the childless couple were only staying in the house until they found a suitable home for themselves; and in Case 6 the respondent said that she and her husband were only living in the house because their car had burnt out on the road three months before, when they were travelling to Durban for the Easter weekend. She added that her husband was doing a six month course, and that when he had finished they would move out. Case 7, however, was described as a permanent arrangement and the house in which the two sisters and their husbands and children lived was jointly owned by the two men, who are thus shown as joint heads of household in the ideograph. Therefore, although Cases 6 and 7 are morphologically similar, the information given by the respondent in each shows again that the actual situations are different.

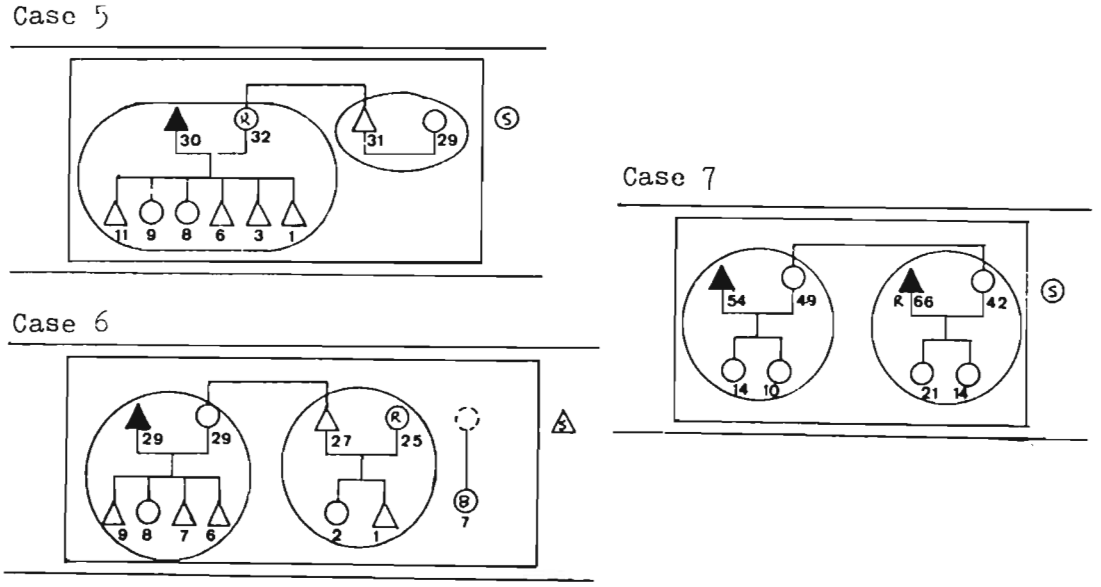


Fig. 4.3

The other households in this 'middle' phase of those households made complex laterally do not contain two complete elementary families, as did Cases 5 to 7, but rather they contain one complete and one incomplete family. They can therefore be seen as a 'later' phase, in that one of the two families has been depleted by the loss of a spouse. Case 8, in Figure 4.4, was described by the respondent as temporary arrangement, because she said that her brother was living in her house, while his wife and five children were living with his mother-in-law half a mile away, until they could find a house for themselves. Case 9, on the other hand, was a permanent situation, resulting from the elder sister's divorce.

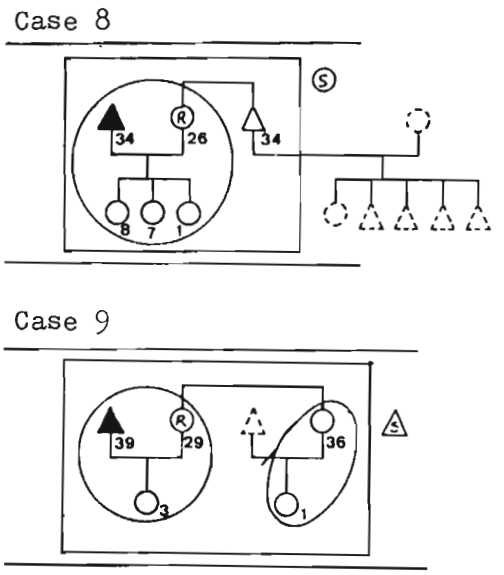


Fig. 4.4

The remaining five cases of households that are laterally complex can be seen as having reached a final stage in this particular developmental sequence. In each case shown in Figure 4.5 the additional sibling has been married, is now either divorced or widowed, and is of such an age as to make remarriage unlikely. In Case 10 the younger sister is marked as 'head', because she owned the house in which they lived, although the elder had lived longer in the house. The elder sister's son had joined the household at a later date, at the time of his divorce. Case 11 appears rather different from the rest in that the

household is accommodating a widowed sibling-in-law, not a sibling. However, the respondent said that her sister and sister's husband had moved in when her sister was very ill and that, after her sister's death, her brother-in-law had continued to live with the family as a boarder. It was therefore the original sibling link which had produced this situation. In Case 12 the age of the widower is not known, because the respondent, when interviewed on her doorstep, said that the household included herself and her husband only, and that neither of them had any kin in Durban. Subsequently, these statements were shown to be false, because the house opposite was occupied by the married daughter of the respondent's husband, and next door lived a married son of her widowed brother-in-law (the household head in Case 8 of Figure 4.4). In Case 13 the two brothers were business partners, and in Case 14 the respondent's widowed sister had moved out of the household a year later, to live with her married daughter in another suburb.

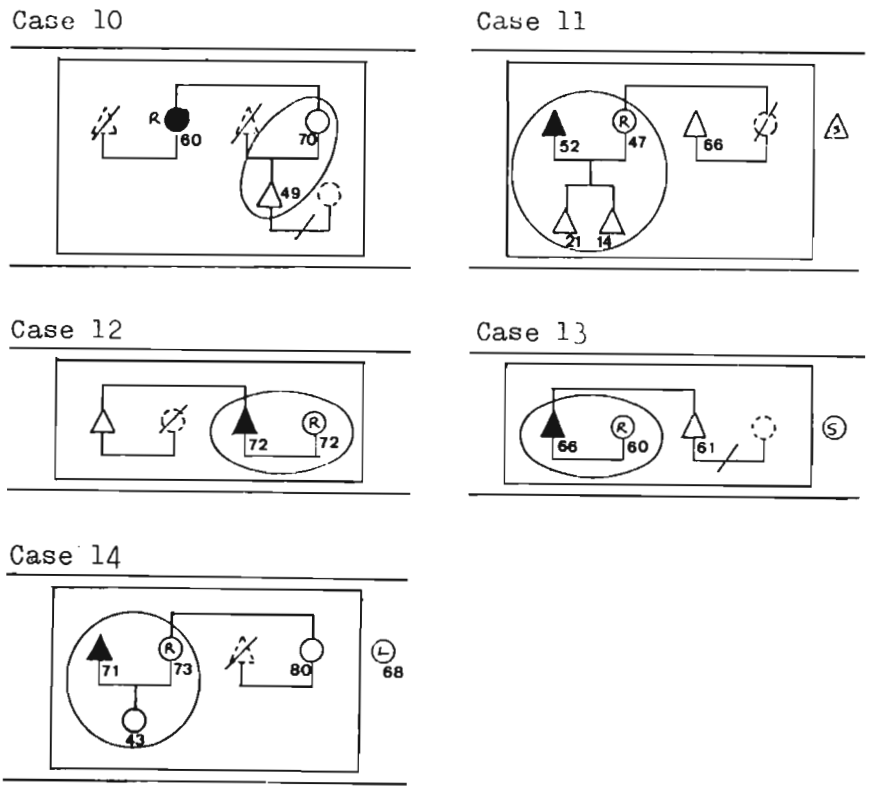


Fig. 4.5

The presentation of these fourteen laterally extended family households as a series that can be seen as a developmental sequence, has shown that this kind of extension, arising from the sibling link, covers quite a wide range of circumstances. An even wider range may be expected from the second series of the vertically extended households. Indeed, this series has been separated into three subdivisions, the first of which includes all those households containing an elementary family that is supporting elderly parent(s). There are twelve such households and the first three to be shown, in Figure 4.6, are at an early stage in the developmental sequence of such households in that the married child is supporting <u>both</u> elderly parents, not <u>one</u> widowed parent. I have included these three households in this subdivision because in each case it was made clear that the married child was supporting the parents, and not the parents the child. In Case 15 the respondent said that her son rented the house in which they lived, and that her husband had cancer, which was why they had moved to Durban. In Case 16 the respondent said that her parents were both sickly. In Case 17 the young couple had been living in the house for fourteen years, whereas the old couple had only been there a year. I have drawn a dotted symbol for the unmarried son because he was temporarily away from the house.

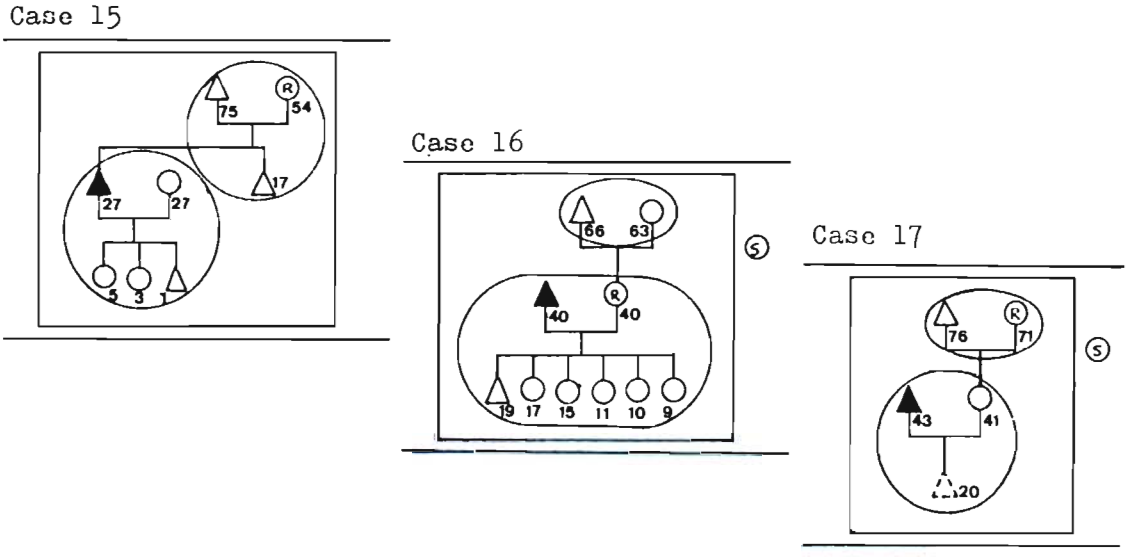
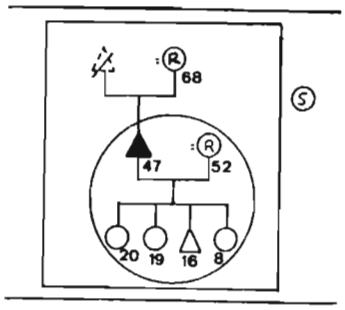


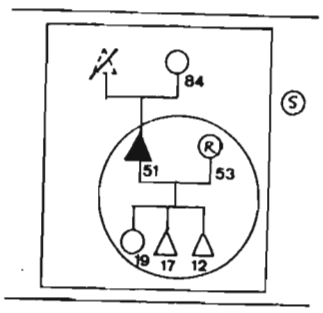
Fig. 4.6

The next three cases to be presented from this sub-series of households in which a married child is supporting elderly parent(s), are in one sense further advanced in this developmental sequence than the first three cases, because, although these households are still of three generations including the married child's dependent children, they are supporting <u>one</u> parent, and not <u>two</u>. That is, one parent has been lost by death. In Cases 18 and 19 of Figure 4.7, it is the husband's widowed mother who is being accommodated, and in Case 20 it is the wife's widowed mother.

Case 18



Case 19



Case 20

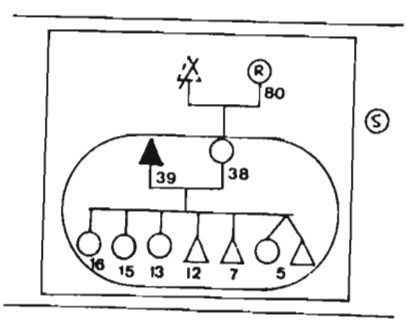


Fig. 4.7

There are three other cases in which an adult child is supporting dependent offspring as well as a dependent parent. These three cases, however, are yet further advanced within this developmental sequence, because both adult generations have been denuded. In Case 21 the household head is a widower, who is supporting his mother-in-law. She herself said that the house belonged to her, but she has been counted as the dependent party because of her age and her physical frailty as observed when she was interviewed. In Case 22 the widowed mother was supported by her divorced daughter, who said that she employed a nursemaid to take care of her mother. In Case 23 the widowed daughter was supporting her elderly mother, who was herself separated from her husband. These three households are depicted in Figure 4.8.

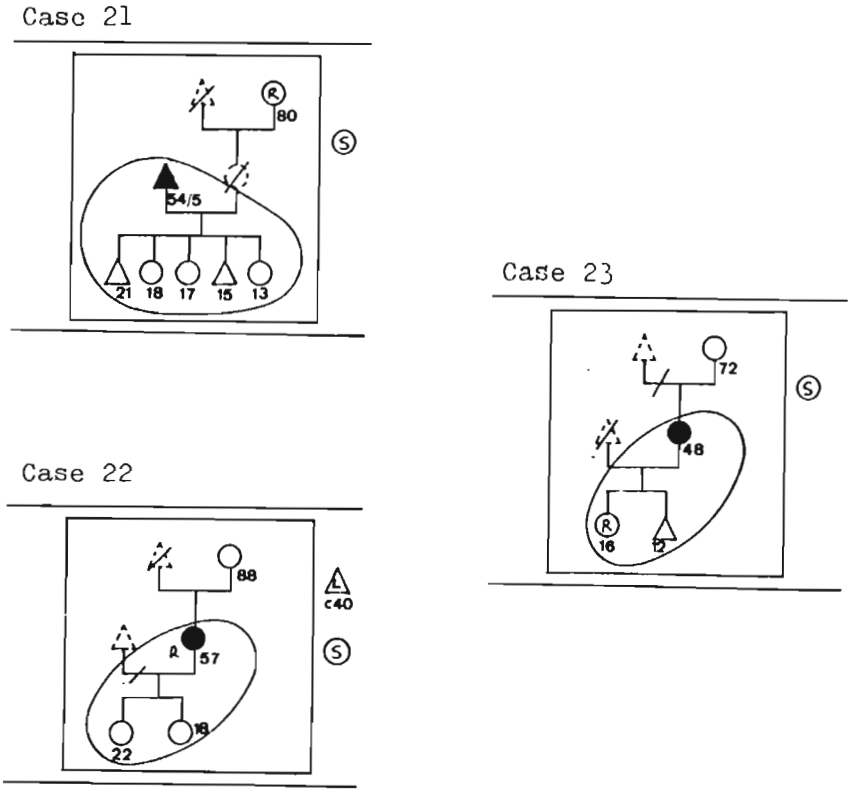


Fig. 4.8

The last three cases from the total of twelve households in which an adult child is supporting elderly parent(s), represent a further stage in the developmental sequence because they contain no dependent children, that is, these households contain two generations, not three. In Cases 25 and 26 of Figure 4.9 the children of the younger couple have married and moved out; in Case 24 the couple are childless and seem likely to remain so because, although the wife is not beyond the age of child bearing, they have been married for many years. At an earlier stage in their development, both Case 25 and Case 26 would have been included within the series of parent(s) offering accommodation to a married child, because in Case 26 the widowed mother used to own the house, she said, until she handed it over to her daughter and her daughter's husband; and in Case 25 the mother still did own the house, though, as in Case 21, it was apparent that her age and health made her now the dependent party.

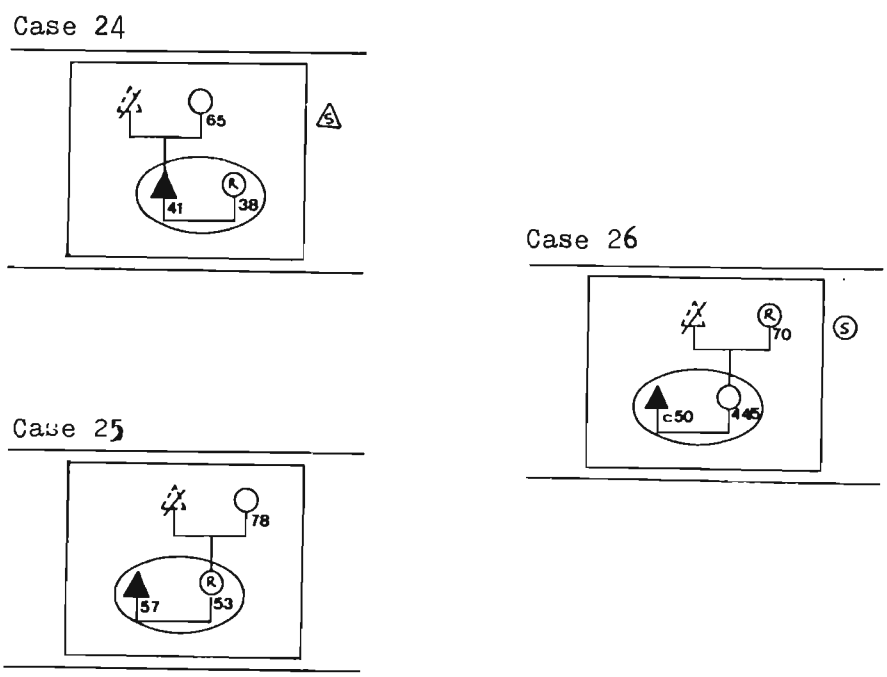


Fig. 4.9

The second subdivision within the series of households made complex vertically includes those households where one or both parents are offering accommodation to a married child (with spouse, and with or without offspring) or to a divorced child (with offspring). There are thirteen households in this subdivision, and the first two to be presented are those at the earliest stage within this particular sequence of development, in that the married child is clearly newly wed. These two cases are shown in Figure 4.10, and in neither case has the married child had any children, although in Case 27 the respondent said that her daughter-in-law was expecting a child.

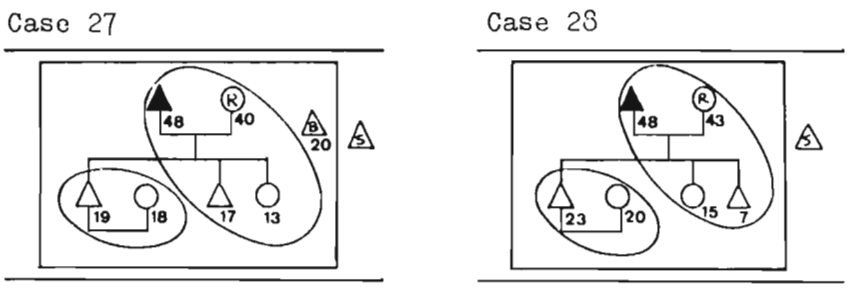


Fig. 4.10

The next stage within this subdivision includes those households in which both parents are still living but which are further advanced in this developmental sequence in that their co-resident married, or indeed divorced, child has offspring. Of the four cases which are at this stage, in Case 29 of Figure 4.11, the parents are accommodating a married daughter and her husband and children, and this was described as a temporary situation (which had existed for eight months) while the daughter and her husband were looking for a house. In Case 30 the parents were accommodating a married couple who were both a son and a daughter. This curious situation was made possible because both parents had been married previously, and so the husband's daughter (from a previous marriage)

was married to the wife's son (from her first marriage). Cases 31 and 32 are rather different from all those preceding them within this sub-division (Cases 27 to 30), because the child who is being given accommodation is divorced, not married. In both these cases it is a divorced daughter with children who is living in her parents' home (or to be more precise, in Case 31 the daughter is not divorced, but is separated from her husband).

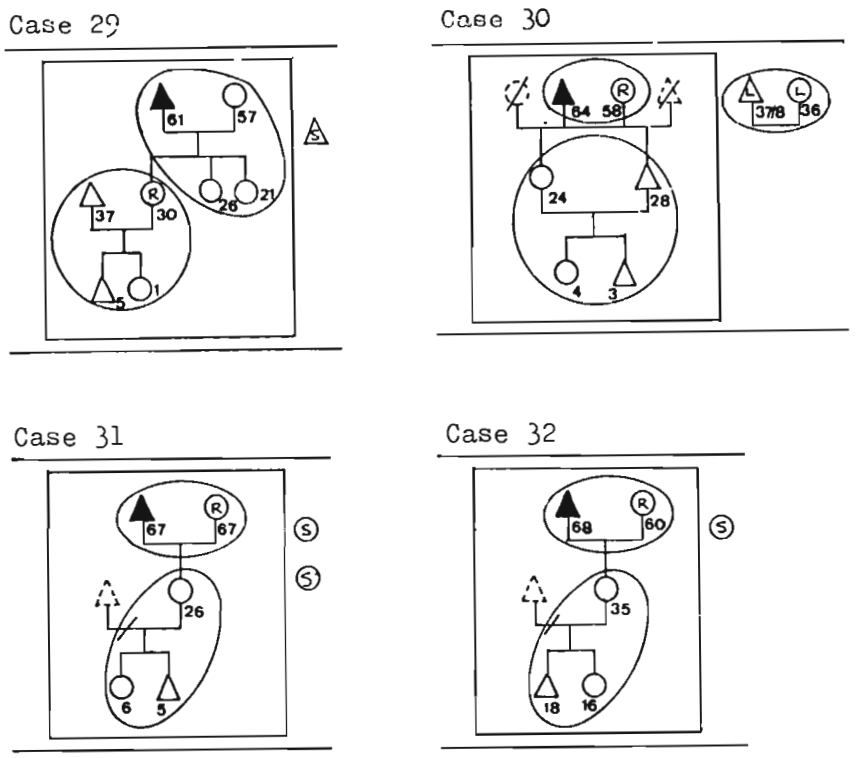
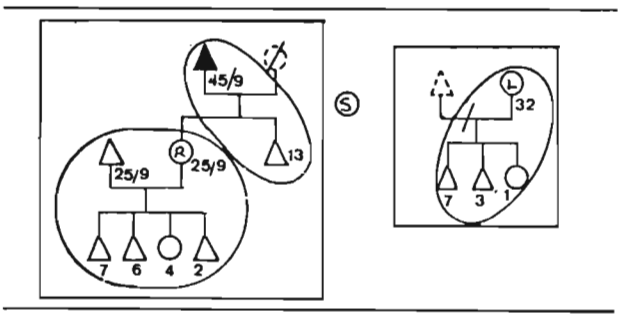


Fig. 4.11

The remaining seven cases of this subdivision are distinguished from those already described because in each case it is <u>one</u> widowed parent who is the household head and who is housing a married or divorced child with offspring. It is, of course, such cases which are morphologically the same as many of the cases in the first sub-division containing households in which an elementary family is accommodating an elderly parent. But the present seven households have been separately classified because, at the time of interviewing, it was made clear that

the parent was the household head and was offering the married child accommodation. Therefore one could say that in these seven cases the dominant flow of support was from parent to child, and not vice versa as in the first subdivision. Four of these seven households are at an 'earlier' stage in their developmental sequence than the other three because in these four cases the head of household is still accommodating unmarried, or not yet married, offspring besides the married or divorced child. Of these four cases two are headed by widowers, as is shown in Figure 4.12. In Case 33 a widower with a schoolboy son has a married daughter with four children living with him (and also manages to squeeze in a lodger with three small children); and in Case 34 a widower with an unmarried son also has a divorced daughter and grandchild living in his household.

Case 33



Case 34

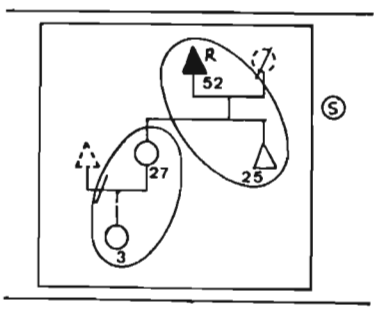
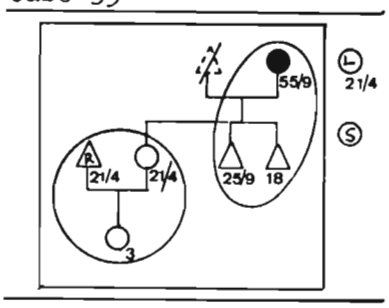


Fig. 4.12

The other two households of the four just mentioned are both headed by widows, these are Cases 35 and 36 of Figure 4.13. In Case 35 a widow with two unmarried sons in the house is also accommodating a married daughter; and in Case 36, also headed by a widow, persons of every variety of marital status are living in the household, except that of being actually married. Besides the widow, it includes her three children, the eldest of whom is a divorced daughter who has her small child with her, the second is a son who is separated from his wife, and the third is an unmarried son. The daughter, who was the respondent in this case, insisted that she was only staying "temporarily" with her mother, although she had no plans for moving out; and she thus made it quite clear that her mother was the head of that household.

Case 35



Case 36

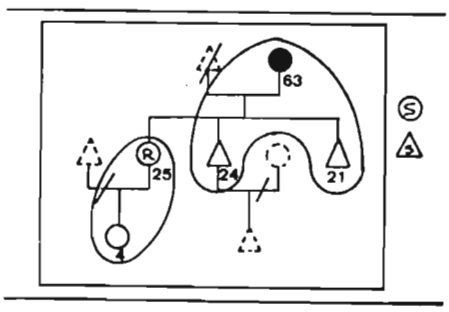


Fig. 4.13

The remaining three cases out of the total of seven in this subdivision that are headed by <u>one</u> widowed parent, are each headed by a widow. These three are regarded as being at a more 'advanced' stage of development than the preceding four cases, because they do not have any <u>unmarried</u> children of the household head in residence. Case 37 of Figure 4.14 includes, besides a married son with children, another older son separated from his wife. Case 38 contained one of the eleven families that were studied in detail, and it is discussed further in Chapter Seven; it is included in this subdivision because the widow was the household head in the sense that she owned the house in which the family lived. Case 39 was one of the rare examples of a household in which a child lived with a divorced father rather than a divorced mother. However, as the ideograph for this case shows, the granddaughter had been adopted, as a six week old baby, by the paternal grandmother, who claimed that she had the legal rights and her son had none. Such cases are rare because in South Africa a divorce court usually awards custody of young children to the mother.

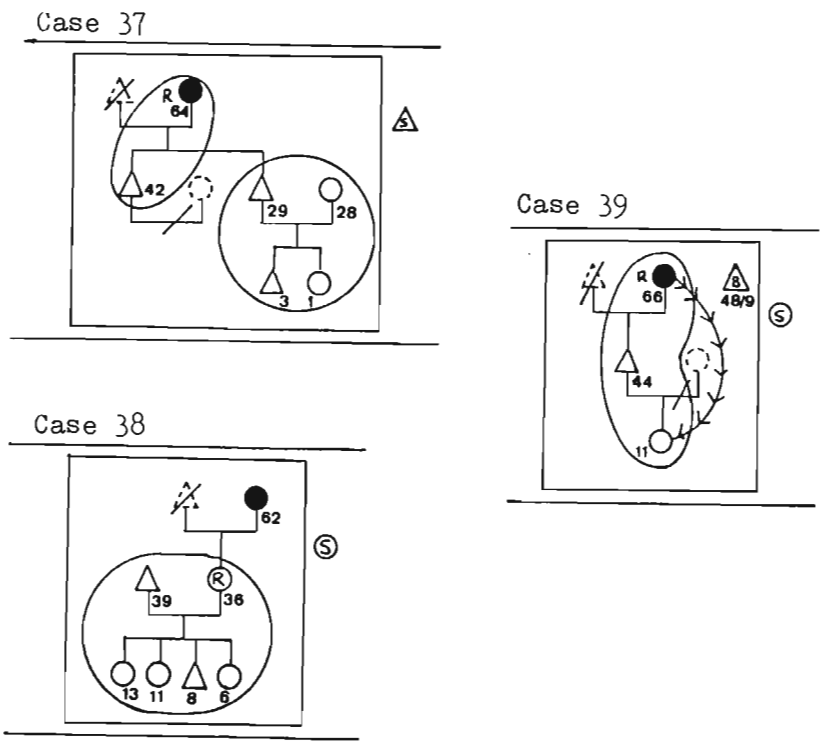


Fig. 4.14

In the third, and final, subdivision of households made complex vertically, there are eight cases in which a person is accommodating a grandchild or other second degree kin, without the connecting kinsman being resident. In terms of a developmental sequence, these households may be separated into two sets: in the first each grandchild is a dependent child, in one case of pre-school age and in the other two of school age; in the second set the kin being accommodated are adult. Figure 4.15 shows the three households of the first set. In Case 40 the grandchild is the child of a divorced son who lives in a flat within a quarter of a mile and is seen daily, and so presumably the grandparents have the child with them as a result of their son's divorce. But in Case 41 no information was obtained as to why the girl lived with her grandparents. In Case 42 detailed interviews were done with the couple's young daughter-in-law, who lived next door. She explained why the grandson lived with his grandparents and not his parents in the following way: she said that he had lived with them "since he was three months old . . . he took to my mother-in-law and that - every time they took him home there used to be a performance and so they left him there."

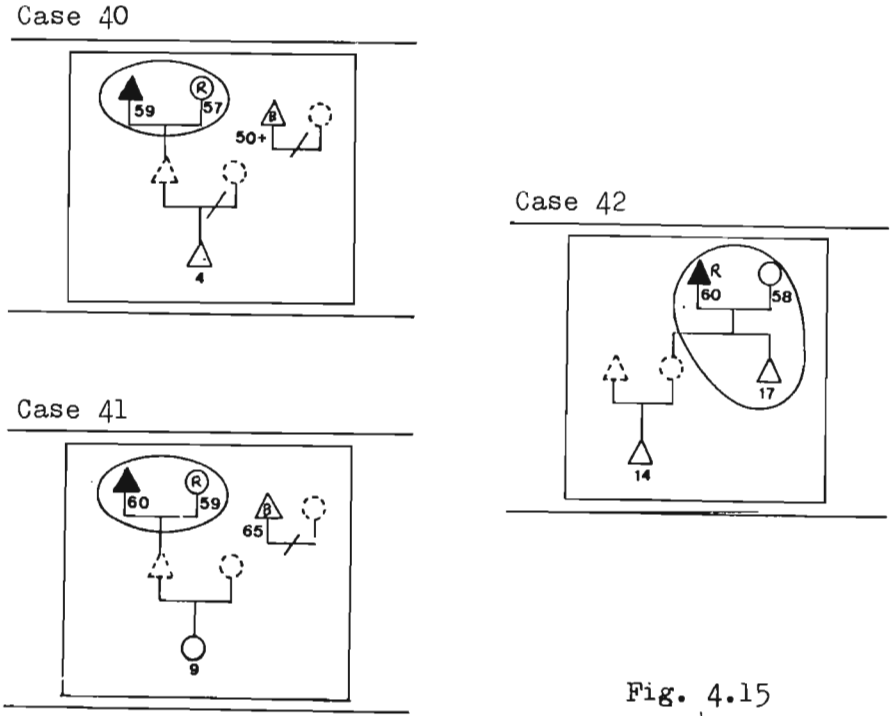


Fig. 4.15

The circumstances of the remaining five cases of this subdivision are rather diverse. In Cases 43 and 44 of Figure 4.16 the households are headed by a married couple, and in Case 43 two second degree kin are in residence, a daughter-in-law and a grandson by a non-resident daughter. In Case 44, the relative in residence is more remotely related, being the wife's MBSS. Case 45 is headed by a widow who has a grandson (and his fiancée) living with her. In Case 46, the house may have belonged to the elderly widow, but at the time that she was interviewed she was frail, and clearly dependent on her stepgranddaughter. Case 47 was one of the eleven families studied in detail, and was not merely a case of a maiden aunt offering her adult nephew a home, but rather the pair were the remnant of an involved sequence of complex family households.

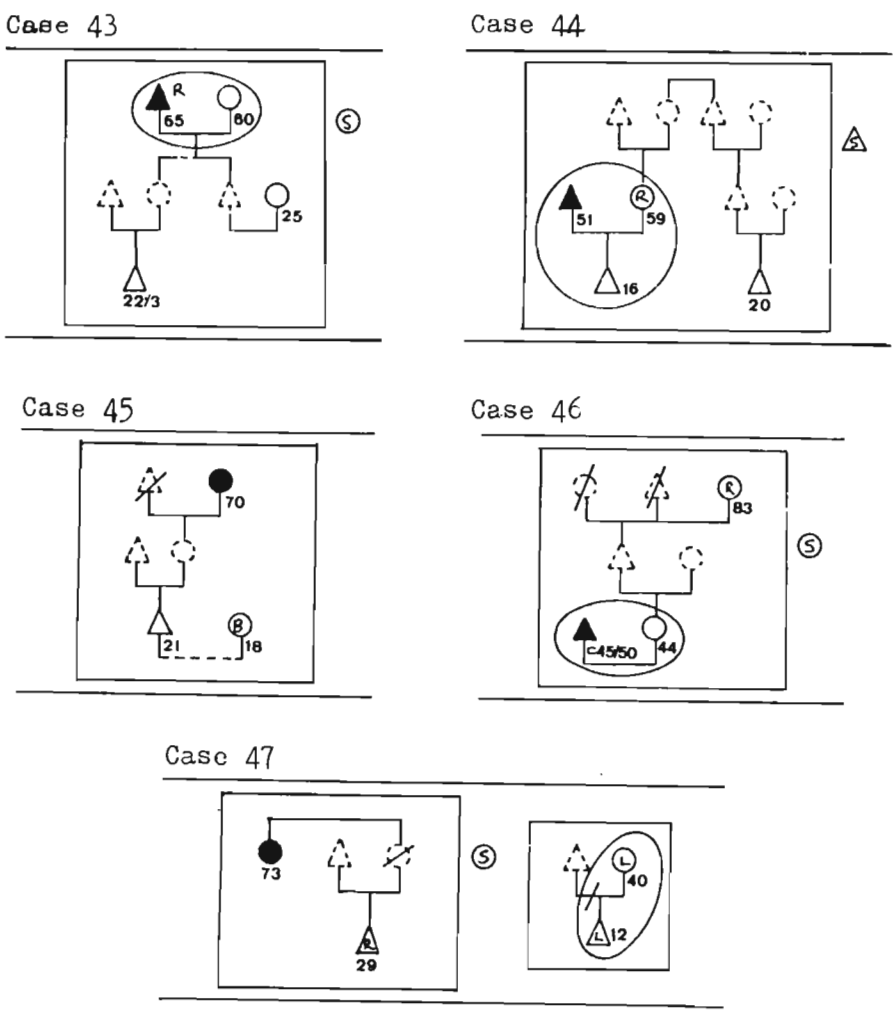


Fig. 4.16

Eight households out of the total of fifty-five remain to be described, and it is these eight that make up the third series of complex family households, the series which are made complex both laterally and vertically. These households, therefore, are the most complex of all, and it is not really possible to classify them in terms of any developmental sequence, but I have subdivided them into two sets. The first set, presented in Figure 4.17, has some unity in that all the four households included contain more than one married or divorced sibling with offspring, living beneath the same roof as their parent(s). In Case 48 it is probable that the extreme complexity was only temporary, because the eldest daughter with her husband and children, had moved into the house a couple of days before the interview, and it seemed likely that they would not remain long. The household in Case 49, which included parents and two of their married sons, was said to have existed in that form for seven years. Moreover, this household was occupying one house, and in the adjoining house, which was divided into two flats, one flat was occupied by a third married son, and the other by the old couple's only daughter, together with her husband and children. This 'grandfamily' was on the point of splitting up through lack of space to accommodate the steadily increasing numbers. In Case 50 both the grandmother and her two granddaughters were present at the interview, and the grandmother said that she had had custody of both girls since they were small babies, because her daughters were not able to look after them (implying that they had mental or emotional problems), although the daughters lived in her household. In Case 51, it was said that the household head and his wife had lived in the house for fifty years and owned it <u>now</u>, and so it is likely that previously it had belonged to the old man, especially as his sister had lived in the adjoining house until her death.

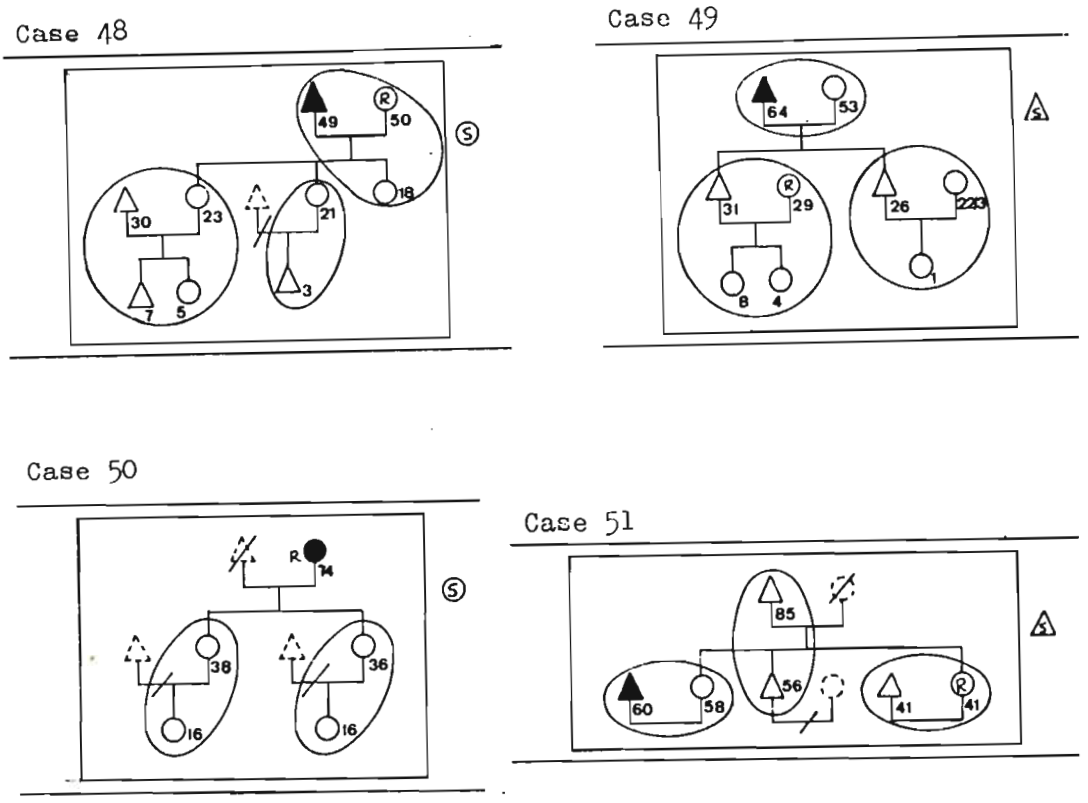
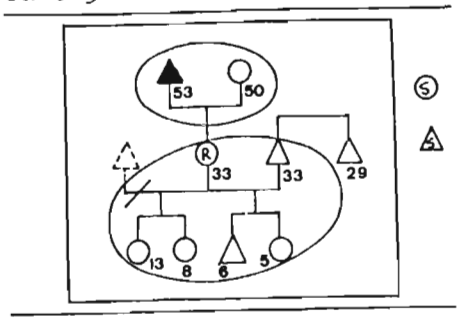


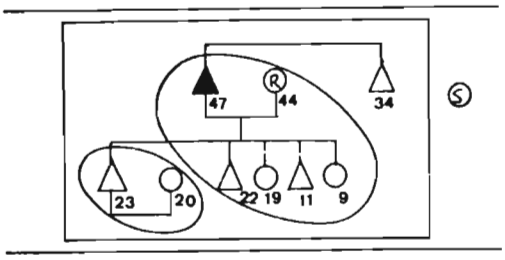
Fig. 4.17

The second set of households in this subdivision are more varied than the first set. Case 52 was one of the households studied in detail, and is discussed further in Chapter Six below; and in Case 53, besides the household head and his wife and unmarried children, there is a married son and an unmarried brother of the household head. Case 54 is the only example of a four generation household in the whole survey, but it was only temporarily complex because the respondent's daughter-in-law and grandchildren were merely staying in the house while the son established himself in another city, and the respondent's mother had only moved in to help with the small children. In Case 55 also the niece (by marriage) of the household head was only staying temporarily in the house in her husband's absence. These four households are shown in Figure 4.18.

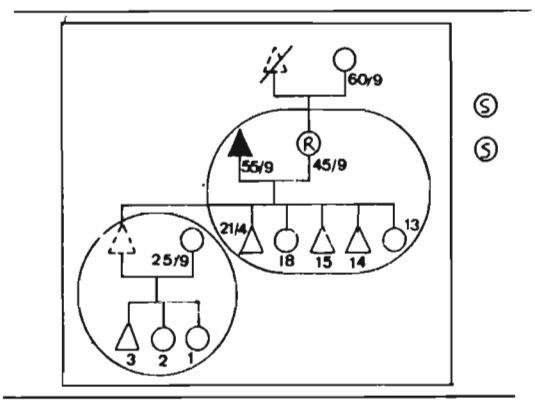
Case 52



Case 53



Case 54



Case 55

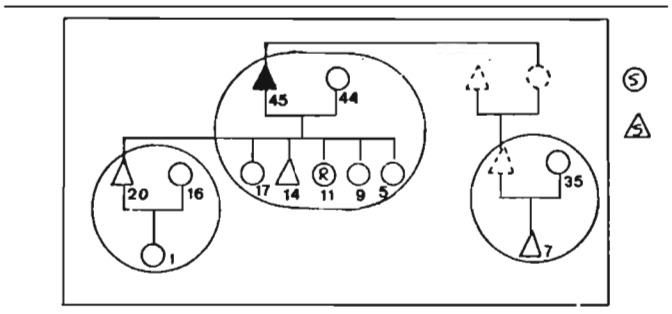


Fig. 4.18

Throughout this presentation of the structure of these complex family households in Hartfield, I have used such terms as 'series' and 'developmental sequences'. That these are adapted from the familiar anthropological concept of 'developmental cycle' (see Fortes 1958) will be obvious. The value of applying this concept of the developmental cycle in European kinship studies is shown very clearly in two illuminating papers by Berkner (1972 and 1976), one on Austrian, and the other on German, peasant household family structure. His earlier study of the stem family and the developmental cycle of peasant households in Austria demonstrates that, although only 25 percent of such households contained extended families at one point in time - the 1763 census - yet the extended family was a normal phase in the developmental cycle of these households (1972, 406). I am not, of course, claiming that there is any such recurrent developmental cycle through which all or many families in Hartfield pass, and thus I have preferred to write of 'developmental sequences'. Indeed, much of the material presented in this chapter has, on the contrary, shown that what we call 'the family' is a very flexible and adjustable unit, which certainly cannot be fitted into a given developmental cycle.

Therefore, the 'developmental sequences' in which I have presented these series of complex family households, are 'logical' or 'chronological', rather than 'actual'. That is, I took some one starting point, such as that of a young married couple, and then treated any extensions as they might have occurred through the progression of time, in relation to the usual demographic processes of birth, ageing and death. This procedure enabled me to subdivide the series partly in terms of possible key 'dyadic' links, for example, the families in the first series were grouped together because of the dyadic link between siblings, and in the later series the link was that between parent and adult child. Adams (1960) advocated the use of such 'dyads' in the

analysis of family types, especially of those which do not fit readily into typologies based on the elementary family, because an analysis based on such dyadic relationships demonstrates the flexibility of the family.

The Hartfield families could not be fitted into a typology that was based on the elementary or simple family, as I discovered earlier when I tried out a system which separated the fifty-five complex families into the following six categories: simple family plus single sibling; simple family plus single parent; simple family plus married child; simple families of married siblings co-residing; plus grandparent(s) and grandchild(ren); and parent(s) with divorced daughter, or married sibling with divorced sister. Most households could be fitted into these categories, but several could not, including Cases 39, 42, 43, 44, 47, 52, 53, 54 and 55.

Besides the fact that such a system of classification did not cater for all the varieties of complex family household in Hartfield, it also depended wholly on household morphology, and took no account of the reasons people gave for co-residence, nor of the directions of support and dependency within the households. Therefore, I thought that such a system of classification was not only too inflexible, in that it did not cover all types of complex family households found in Hartfield, but also too insensitive, in that, for example, the category of simple family plus single parent took no account of headship of the household, nor of flow of support in general. By contrast, the system I have followed in this chapter does indicate the various channels of support, though in a rather simplified way, with the implication that in every case a dominant direction of flow exists. Life cannot be so simplified, however, as will be shown in the last three chapters where I present material from the detailed case histories.

Now that I have delineated the exact structure of all the

fifty-five complex family households in this chapter, the next chapter will be devoted to an examination of those social, economic and cultural characteristics of Hartfield, which may be significant factors relating to the high proportion there of these households.

CHAPTER FIVE

HOUSEHOLD FAMILY STRUCTURE IN RELATION TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

In this chapter I examine some general characteristics of the population in the survey, to see if there are any correlations between these attributes and the existence of so many complex family households in Hartfield. A number of such general features present themselves quite readily from even a casual examination of the earlier literature, particularly the Bethnal Green and Swansea studies, together with the suggestions of Anderson (1971), in his study of nineteenth century Preston. Among these characteristics are: standard of living, occupation and education - all factors often related to 'social class'; length of residence in the area; cultural factors such as religious denomination and home language.

The first of these has quite often been correlated with occurrence of complex family households, on the supposition that economic circumstances may play a large part in the formation of such households. Anderson, for example, lays considerable stress on the poverty of the Preston working class as an important factor encouraging co-residence with kin, in order to reduce living costs.

In Hartfield, however, the population could not be described as poverty stricken. Although no questions were asked about household or individual income in the door-to-door survey, I met many people, and went into many homes, and it was clear that the great majority of the people enjoyed a reasonable standard of living. Certainly, there can be no doubt that the standard was higher than in Preston or Bethnal Green. But poverty is a relative matter and I have several times in previous chapters described the Hartfield population as 'lower middle' or 'working' class. The labels were convenient for my purposes there, but they must obviously be made more precise before any attempt is made

at correlations with complex family households, even though the use of a concept such as 'social class' in the South African context is particularly difficult because of the importance of racial or ethnic factors in determining status. The most usual way of specifying class position is by occupation, and my data allow me to do this for all the adult male members of the families included in the door-to-door survey. The total figure of 254 men includes only those aged twenty-one and over, who were members of the family household, and thus excludes boarders, lodgers and servants, although it does include men who are now retired. Table 5.1 shows the occupations of all these men, using the classification developed by Hall and Jones (1950).

Table 5.1 The Occupations of all the adult male members of the family households, classified according to the Hall/Jones scale

Class	Occupational category	No. of men	Per cent
1	Professional and Higher Administrative	0	-
2	Managerial and Executive	16	6
3	Inspectional, Supervisory and other non-manual higher grade	33	13
4	Inspectional, Supervisory and other non-manual lower grade	33	13
5	Skilled manual and routine non-manual	132	52
6	Semi-skilled manual	34	14
7	Unskilled manual	0	-
	No information, Student, Unemployed	6	2
	TOTAL	254	100

In this table there are two gaps, the one is that none of the men in the household survey came in the first category, 'Professional and Higher Administrative', and this is almost certainly because (as mentioned in Chapter Two) Hartfield is considered to be an 'undesirable'

residential area and so is avoided by men of that status, who normally can afford to live in more 'desirable' suburbs. The other gap is at the opposite end of the scale used: the small proportion of men engaged in semi-skilled, and the lack of any in unskilled, manual occupations. This gap reflects South African society as a whole, rather than resulting from such persons not choosing to live in Hartfield, that is, in South Africa most semi-skilled and unskilled labour is done by Blacks. Therefore, it would be in Black society that persons of low socio-economic status, equivalent to those at the bottom of Anderson's status ladder in Preston, or of Young and Willmott's in Bethnal Green, would be found.

It is, however, possible that the high proportion of complex family households in Hartfield may be connected with the distribution of occupations. Some authors, such as Willmott and Young in their study of Woodford (1960), have found the distinction between manual and non-manual workers useful, but in Hartfield such a distinction has no significance in relation to the high proportion of complex family households, because such households are equally common in the families of manual and non-manual workers. But, since the broad division between manual and non-manual may conceal some significant differences, in Table 5.2 the Hall/Jones scale of occupational classification, already established in Table 5.1, is used to see if there are any connections between type of occupation and the development of complex family households.

From this table, it would seem that there are no clear correlations between category of occupation and the appearance of complex family households. Therefore, if one takes occupation as a rough guide to standard of living that also would seem unrelated to the existence of complex family households. It follows then that Anderson's thesis which relates the high proportion of complex family households

Table 5.2 Household Family Structure and the Occupations of all the adult males.

Hall/Jones category	Adult Males in Complex family households		Adult Males in All households	
1	-	-	-	-
2	7	8%	16	6%
3	11	13%	33	13%
4	10	11%	33	13%
5	42	48%	132	52%
6	13	15%	34	14%
7	-	-	-	-
N.I. etc.	4	5%	6	2%
Total No.of men	87		254	

found in Preston partly to poverty, cannot be extended to Hartfield.

Social status is frequently thought to be correlated with education, as well as with occupation. An appreciation and desire for education are usually held to be 'middle class' attributes, and in the second chapter I quoted a number of informants who were educationally ambitious for their children. Young and Willmott, and also Anderson, stress the lack of interest in education shown by the working class people that they studied. Anderson considers that education is a possible channel for instilling 'middle class' values favouring family cohesion into the working class, and that this did not happen in Preston because of the low standard of schooling.

The standard of schooling in Hartfield was, of course, higher than in Preston. To assess the significance of education in the existence of complex family households, I compare in Table 5.3 the educational achievements of all the household heads and, where applicable,

of their spouses, with those of the heads, and their spouses, of the complex family households. Obviously, the number of instances does not correspond with the number of households, because although many households were headed by a man and his wife, some were headed by a single man or woman.

Table 5.3 Household Family Structure and the Educational Level of the Household Heads.

Highest level reached	Complex family households				All households			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
Standard 6	22	49%	24	45%	93	48%	109	50%
Standard 8	8	18%	16	30%	48	25%	63	28%
Standard 10	1	2%	3	6%	19	10%	18	8%
Higher	-		-		7	4%	5	2%
No information	14	31%	10	19%	26	13%	25	12%
TOTAL	45	100	53	100	193	100	220	100

This table does not reveal any very striking correlations between the education of household heads and the existence of complex family households, though it does suggest a slight tendency for the educational level of the men to be lower, while that of the women is about the same in the complex family households, as in all the households. However, the tendency may be exaggerated by the high proportion of household heads whose level of education was not known to the respondent, especially the male heads of the complex family households. Such lack of knowledge about the educational level of kin was very common in the intensive study as well. In the detailed interviews, a full genealogy of each informant was collected, and, for all kin mentioned the same details were sought: exact relationship to ego; sex; age; name; current occupation and place of residence; and

highest standard of education reached. In case after case, the first detail to be lost or never known was the standard of education. In the door-to-door survey the number of household heads whose standard of education is not known, is still higher because there are a few households in which questions about education were not asked: these were the first households to be interviewed in the survey, before the significance of education had been clearly considered.

Having examined and rejected these 'external' characteristics of occupation, education and social class as being significantly correlated with the high proportion of complex family households to be found in Hartfield, I shall now consider whether length of residence can be linked with the existence of these households. In general in the area surveyed the rate of population turnover appears to be quite high: almost half the families had been living in their dwelling for five years or less. This high turnover may partly result from the area having been zoned for the building of flats, and so people do not expect to remain there permanently. In thirty-eight of all the 228 households surveyed, the respondent expected to move within the year. Besides the zoning for flat development, the inhabitants of one road had been told that they might have to move if a proposed new highway were actually built.

The comments, however, that people made, when I asked if they planned to move within the following twelve months, showed a good deal of variety: "No fear! My next move is Stellawood Cemetery."; "If I had the money I'd move tomorrow."; "Not unless we get bulldozed down because of the freeway."; "I can't say, we're both getting on, and there are so many changes in the neighbourhood, I don't feel very secure . . . new freeway, area probably flat development."

To test the assumption that length of residence might be in some way correlated with the formation of complex family households,

Table 5.4 compares the length of time that such households have occupied a given dwelling with all the households surveyed. The information in this table was obtained from the replies to a question as to how long the 'family' had lived in the house, but the answers sometimes referred to the individual member of the family household who had been in residence longest. The complex family households are subdivided into the two appropriate categories from Firth et al.'s typology.

Table 5.4 Household Family Structure and Length of Residence in the Dwelling (Figures in percentages)

	Composite kin units	Extended families	Complex family households	All households
1 - 5 years	21.4	18.5	20.0	44.3
6 - 10 years	25.0	29.6	27.3	16.2
11 - 15 years	21.4	7.4	14.5	9.6
16 - 20 years	10.7	22.2	16.4	11.4
21 - 25 years	7.1	18.5	12.7	7.5
26 + years	14.3	3.7	9.1	10.5
Percentage Totals	100	100	100	100
No. of households	28	27	55	228

The table does suggest a possible connection between length of residence and complex family households, since the proportion of such households in which no member has lived in the dwelling for more than five years is less than half the proportion found in the total number of households surveyed. However, the fact that complex family households appear to be more stable than the majority of households does not necessarily have any exact connection with their family structure, but may be related to their greater size, making frequent moves more effort and so less common. The mean household size of all

the households was four, whereas that of the complex family households was almost half as large again, being just under six.

The last series of general characteristics of the people included in the survey are what I have referred to as 'cultural' factors, that is, church affiliation and home language. The correlation between religion, or rather religious denomination, and the occurrence of complex family households is examined in Table 5.5, in which the church affiliation of the adult members of the complex family households is compared with that of the adults in all the households.

Table 5.5 Household Family Structure and Church Affiliation of Adult Members

All adults belonging to same church	All households		Complex family households	
Roman Catholic	47	20.5%	11	20.0%
Anglican	31	13.6%	4	7.3%
Presbyterian	18	7.9%	3	5.5%
Methodist/Congregationalist	16	7.0%	4	7.3%
Dutch Reformed	20	8.8%	3	5.5%
Evangelical/Baptist	26	11.4%	5	9.1%
Other	7	3.3%	-	
None/Atheist	7	3.3%	-	
No Information	1	0.4%	-	
Adults belonging to different churches:				
Roman Catholic & Protestant	23	10.1%	8	14.5%
Mixed Protestant	17	7.5%	8	14.5%
Evangelical & R.C. or Prot.	10	4.4%	7	12.7%
Atheist/None & Christian	5	2.2%	2	3.6%
TOTAL	228	100	55	100

Apart from the unremarkable fact that none of the complex family households is wholly atheist, there do not seem to be any very clear correlations between the various denominations and complex family households. Certainly, any prediction that one might have been tempted to make, because of the relatively high proportions of both in the survey area, of an especially significant correlation with Roman Catholicism is not confirmed. A greater proportion of the complex family households do contain adults who belong to more than one church, but this distribution probably follows from the mere presence of more adults in such households, for the more adults there are, presumably the more chance of their belonging to different churches. It does not seem, then, as though co-residence with kin is particularly influenced by religion in Hartfield.

The second 'cultural' factor that might be correlated with complex family households in communities such as Hartfield is language, in the same way as Rosser and Harris had considered variations in bilingual Swansea between the Welsh and the English. Although the inhabitants of Hartfield are predominantly English speaking, they are not wholly so, since there are a number of households in which Afrikaans alone is spoken, and a number which are bilingual in the official South African sense of speaking both English and Afrikaans. There are also immigrant families in Hartfield who speak neither English nor Afrikaans at home. So it is possible that some correlation might be found on the assumption that, for instance, the cultural backgrounds of the Afrikaners and the non-English immigrants, symbolised by their languages, were more conducive to the development of complex family households. Table 5.6, therefore, compares the distribution of the various languages between all 228 households surveyed, with that for the fifty-five complex family households, the latter again being subdivided after Firth et al.'s categories.

Table 5.6 Household Family Structure and Home Language

	Composite kin units		Extended families		Complex family households		All households	
English	20	71.4%	16	59.3%	36	65.4%	151	66.2%
Afrikaans	3	10.7%	4	14.8%	7	12.7%	32	14.0%
Bilingual	1	3.6%	6	22.2%	7	12.7%	28	12.3%
Other language	4	14.3%	1	3.7%	5	9.1%	17	7.5%
TOTAL	28	100	27	100	55	100	228	100

This table shows that the various home languages have almost the same proportional distribution among the complex family households as among all the households, and so language does not appear to be significantly correlated with the existence of complex family households. Greater variation in the proportions is observable within the subdivisions of the two relevant categories of Firth et al., but that variation rests on quite small absolute numbers, which may not reflect true differences.

The households of families who are immigrants to South Africa from non-English speaking countries are those classified under 'other language'. Five out of the total of seventeen such households were bilingual, in the sense that English, as well as the immigrants' native language, was spoken. The commonest language was Italian, which was spoken in ten of the seventeen households, and three of these ten households were occupied by three brothers and their families. Four households spoke Portuguese; two households, who came from Mauritius, spoke French; and one family from Austria spoke German.

Home language is in itself what might be described as a cultural factor, but it may also indicate one type of network described by Anderson for Preston as between people who come from the same place. The most well-known networks of such 'homeboys' in South Africa are, of

course, those found among some Africans for whom they are very important in the lives of the members. Probably networks of immigrants from Europe have some similar importance, especially for those immigrant housewives who have lived several years in South Africa, and still cannot speak much, if any, English. From what I heard it seems likely that in the past such networks were also important among Lebanese and Mauritian families. However, I have no detailed evidence to reconstruct such networks, the existence of which I assume largely from information gathered about a couple of the families that were studied intensively.

In this chapter the social, economic and cultural characteristics of the population studied have been examined as possible factors that might be relevant to the existence of complex family households. It is evident that none of these general factors, with the exception of length of residence in a given house, can be correlated successfully and significantly with such households, and so in the next chapter I will consider 'internal' factors, such as links between the household members arising out of crises and exchange of services, to see if they encourage the existence of complex family households.

CHAPTER SIX

PROBLEMS, CRISES AND EXCHANGE OF SERVICES IN COMPLEX FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

In Hartfield the continued existence and development of complex family households is, I would suggest, closely linked with the problems and crises that face the household members, because such households facilitate the exchange of those services by which these problems are solved. In the first half of this chapter I examine the material from the door-to-door survey which reveals the nature of these problems and the way in which they are resolved through exchange of services. In the second half of this chapter I show from the detailed case history material how flexible the family household is over time, and that it is everchanging as a response to the problems which confront its members.

Theories of crisis and exchange have been stressed in connection with 'extra-familial' kin links in several studies of family and kin in Europe and North America: for example, Sussman (1953); Loudon (1961); Sussman and Burchinal (1962); Stehouwer (1965); Leichter and Mitchell (1967, 114-125); Bell (1968, 88-95). The importance of exchange of services as a key factor relating to 'intra-familial' kin ties and complex family households has been mentioned in the studies done by Young and Willmott, by Rosser and Harris, by Firth and his colleagues, and by Anderson. The last named devotes a chapter to the consideration of 'Critical life situations as a factor in family cohesion' (Anderson 1971, 136: chapter title), and most of the evidence presented by Anderson to demonstrate the importance of 'family cohesion' among the workers of Preston is based on co-residence with kin.

The term 'critical life situations' is defined by Anderson so that it includes:

> Sickness, unemployment, death, or disaster remove the basis of the family's support, leave orphans and widows . . . Old age, marriage, and childbirth, too, all frequently mean that those undergoing them are in need of help. Finally, there are many pressing day-to-day problems; finding someone to care for the baby while the wife works (Anderson 1971, 136).

It is Anderson's view, however, that:

> In mid-twentieth century Western industrial societies, the more serious critical life situations occur only rather rarely for each individual family, and their worst financial and welfare consequences have been somewhat moderated by the impact of the welfare state or other bureaucratic source of provision, or forestalled for most families by insurances of various kinds. Moreover, as the standard of living of the mass of the population has gradually risen, the economic impact of all forms of contingency has become somewhat less pressing.
>
> Under these circumstances, help from non-bureaucratised sources of assistance - neighbours, friends, and kin - of a kind which demands a considerable expense of time or effort, is only absolutely necessary in rare cases, . . . where there are gaps in the bureaucratised provision, or where this becomes temporarily overloaded (Anderson 1971, 137).

This view is rather odd in that Anderson wrote after all the other studies cited above had been published, and they certainly stress the importance of 'non-bureaucratised' aid given and received by the subjects of their studies, who were all living in the British Isles in the mid-twentieth century.

In this chapter I shall examine the fifty-five households which contained complex families in a different manner from that which I adopted in Chapter Four, and which led me to place them in a series of categories which were primarily morphological in character. Here, however, the complex family households will be looked at in dynamic terms in that the types of problem or crisis facing the family members, and the exchanges which occur between them, are examined. These various situations of general or specific difficulty are not, of course, unique to Hartfield and may be dealt with in a variety of ways. In this chapter I seek to show that co-residence with kin in Hartfield is not only frequently connected with such problems, but is also an

efficient method of dealing with them. This is because co-residence facilitates the exchange of services between kin and in this way household members are able to help each other with a minimum of difficulty and disruption to themselves and their immediate family.

This approach necessarily leads to different groupings of households from those used in Chapter Four, and the distinction between households made complex vertically and laterally is not important here. For example, although it is most common for a young divorcee with children to return to her parents' home, thus extending their household vertically in the sense followed in Chapter Four, yet in at least one case such a divorcee went to share her married sister's household, which would be a lateral extension in the sense used in Chapter Four. In this chapter I suggest that emphasising problems common to divorce provides the necessary insight for the understanding of these households.

The various problems and crises used by Anderson may serve as a convenient base in examining complex family households in Hartfield. However, at least two of Anderson's major 'critical life situations' are irrelevant in the Hartfield context: unemployment and orphaned children. At the time of research there was full employment in Hartfield, and there were no orphaned children. All the other types of critical life situation mentioned by Anderson as being significant in Preston, seem to be similarly significant in Hartfield. They are: the wide variety of problems facing recently married young couples; the problems facing those with small children; the problems of old age; and the problems of illhealth and death. In addition, in Hartfield, divorce and separation also regularly create problems, and even unattached individuals may have difficulties of accommodation.

It should be noted that these problems and crises are not mutually exclusive, which means that in one household co-residence with

kin may relate to exchange of services arising out of several problems. For example, when I say below that there are twenty-five households which include a young married couple and the parent or parents of one; and that there are twenty-nine households which contain a widowed or divorced person, then these two categories overlap, since there are nine households in which the parent of the married child is widowed or divorced, and so these nine cases are included in both categories.

The first series of problems that I shall consider are those facing young married couples and those facing their parent(s). These two sets of people and their problems, and the exchange of services between them have attracted considerable attention in other studies. For example, Rosser and Harris, when discussing the linkages that arise between young married couples and their elderly parents, write as follows:

> For the vast majority of old people therefore, the period when they are likely to need (in various degrees) support from their children will overlap with the period when the children will welcome various forms of help from them. There will be a considerable period in fact when reciprocation of services between parents and children will be possible . . . if we examine how it came about that old people come to share dwellings with relatives it is apparent that in a large proportion of the cases this form of living arrangement came about to benefit the relatives they lived with rather than the old people themselves . . . Sharing accommodation makes possible the interchange of services with the least difficulty (1965, 281).

In Hartfield twenty-five (or 45 per cent) of the fifty-five complex family households include a young married couple and the parent(s) of either spouse. This high proportion may reflect several kinds of services being exchanged, some of which are best studied from the relevant detailed case history material, such as emotional support and affection, and this is done in the second half of this chapter. But some of the exchanges between the adult members of such households can be documented numerically from the material obtained in the door-to-door interviews.

If one examines these twenty-five households one significant fact that is immediately apparent, is that twenty-four of them contain two or more women who are either married, or have been previously married. (In the one exceptional case, which is Case 33 of Figure 4.12, the young couple and their children are living in the same household as the wife's widowed father). In these households containing two women it is easy to imagine the type of services which might be exchanged. For example, in a household with dependent children it may mean that one woman is freed from domestic and child care duties, and is enabled to go to work and thus increase the household income. A different example would be in the case of an elderly or infirm parent living with a married child, who is thereby able to provide care and assistance for the parent.

In thirteen households with more than one woman in residence, one woman works, and in eight of those households there are dependent children. In the eleven households with more than one woman, and where none of them is employed outside the home, the exchanges within the households are rather different. In five cases the elder woman is either sickly or very old and is, presumably, more dependent for assistance and help on the younger woman. Of the other six cases, one can infer the reason why in four households none of the women is working, but in two households there is no apparent reason why all the women remain at home. Of the four cases the probable reasons are quite varied: in one household the young daughter-in-law is pregnant; in another the young couple are only just married and indeed away on their honeymoon in Europe; in the third case the younger married woman is a girl aged seventeen with a small baby: and in the fourth case the household is only temporarily complex because the junior couple moved to Durban a few months earlier and are still looking for a house.

As previously mentioned, the categories of 'critical life

situations' are not mutually exclusive and ten of the cases in the previous category contain a widowed person and these cases may also be placed in a category of households which include widowed people. In Hartfield there are also a relatively large number of divorced and separated persons who can be considered along with the widowed as part of a category of 'no longer married persons'. In twenty-nine of the fifty-five households (52 per cent), widowhood, divorce or separation are significant factors in connection with the complex family structure. Sixteen of these twenty-nine households contain a widowed person, five include a divorced or separated person, and in eight households there is both a widowed and a divorced person.

Widowhood and divorce frequently raise financial problems, especially for women. Although in Hartfield such poverty will not be on as dire a scale as, for example, Anderson describes in nineteenth century Preston, yet widows and divorcees may suffer from relative poverty. In such cases a woman may decide not to approach kin for assistance, in Hartfield a higher proportion of widow-headed households include boarders and lodgers, compared with those households headed by a married couple. Such figures may reflect the living space that is available, that in the households of 'denuded families' (as defined by Firth et al.) there is more space for boarders and lodgers, but these figures probably also reflect the need for extra income in widow headed families.

The alternative of residing with kin is clearly taken by some widowed persons since there are nine cases in which a widow is living with a married child, and one in which a widower is living with his married daughter. In one case a widow is living with a married step-granddaughter. In another eight cases parent and child are living in the same household, both of whom are widowed or divorced. In three households a divorced daughter is living with her parents, and in five

cases a widowed or divorced sibling is living with a married sibling. Two cases contain unique combinations of widowed and divorced people: in one of them two widowed sisters and the divorced son of one are all co-residing (Case 10, Figure 4.5); and in the other a widower is living with a divorced son and two married daughters, and therefore, of course, two sons-in-law, (this was Case 51, Figure 4.17).

The value, especially the financial value, of some services exchanged within these households, may again be clarified by referring to working women. Seven of the twenty-nine households containing 'no longer married persons' have only one woman in residence, but the other twenty-two have more than one woman. In thirteen of these cases one woman is employed, five of which overlap with those cases described on p.72 above; and in nine cases neither woman works (four of which also overlap with cases described on p.72 above.) In eight of these nine cases, however, one woman is either elderly or sickly, and thus the exchange of services is perhaps less of an exchange than that the one looks after the other.

Illness and infirmity should perhaps be considered as yet another category of problem situation, which may result in patterns of aid and assistance which can be correlated with complex family households. However, unlike the previous two types of critical life situations that I have discussed, aid given in illness cannot be inferred from household morphology. Therefore, it is likely that ill health is the basis for more complex family households than I have figures for, since I know of only eight households out of the fifty-five in which illhealth is a significant factor, the respondents in them having specifically mentioned illhealth.

A final series of problems are those that face single persons, and in most cases this problem is one of accommodation. There are three households (discussed on p.49 above) in which grandparents are housing a young grandchild, but these cases are rather different from

the others because in each case the grandchild is a dependant, and the relationship therefore resembles that of parent and child. There are ten other cases in which a young, single relative (the ages range from twenty to thirty-five) is being accommodated by kin. In nine of these ten cases the single relative is a man, and in the exceptional case (Case 4 of Figure 4.2) the single sister was crippled (as described on p.36). In five of the nine an unmarried brother is living with a married sibling; in two cases an adult, unmarried grandson is living with grandparents; in one case an unmarried nephew and his maiden aunt are in one household; and in the last case a middle-aged couple have, as well as their own son aged sixteen, a young man aged twenty who is the WMBSS in their household. I think this predominance of young, single men living with kin, rather than young, single women results from several factors: first, I have noticed in White South African society that males are not usually brought up to be efficient domestically, and so they need to live with kin or as boarders with non-kin, in households run by others. Second, it is also possible that parents tend to keep their unmarried daughters in their own households, either because they need their daughters' assistance domestically, or because, like one informant, parents disapprove of their unmarried daughters living away from home.

The various numerical statements that I have made in this chapter concerning all these sets of problems and the related exchange of services, and the co-residence of kin, can perhaps best be illuminated by examining material from the detailed case histories. The case history of Mrs Buys exemplifies how the 'family' manages to cope with a great variety of problems. The family household in which Mrs Buys lived at the time of the door-to-door interviews is one of those included in Chapter Four, as it was complex, indeed it came into the final category of those households made complex both laterally and vertically and it was Case 52 in Figure 4.18.

This household was headed by Mrs Buys's father, Mr Oxford, who had bought the house in Hartfield many years before, when Mrs Buys was a child, "I was only in Standard 3 - a long time ago, we've been here about twenty-five years now", said Mrs Buys. Therefore, Mrs Buys and her three younger sisters had been brought up in that house, and even then the family household had been complex, because "my father's mother stayed with us all her life until she died", which was just before Mrs Buys first got married. After she married her first husband Mrs Buys moved out of her parents' household for two years while living in another town, but then her husband was "transferred to Durban" and they lived "with my mother - here about one year", at which time the household probably included Mr and Mrs Oxford, and their three unmarried daughters, and Mrs Buys and her first husband and her eldest child, Catherine.

Thus Mrs Buys was brought up in a household which included a grandmother, that is, her parents were accommodating a widowed parent. Then Mrs Buys herself, as a young married woman (though not immediately after marriage) was accommodated in her parents' household. That particular complex phase came to an end when Mrs Buys and her first husband and daughter moved to the Transvaal, where they all remained for three or four years. At the end of that time Mrs Buys left her first husband and returned with her daughter, Catherine, to live once more in her parents' house. Mrs Buys was expecting her second child, and Catherine was "turned four", when she separated from her first husband in 1963 and Mrs Buys was still living in her parents' house, never having moved out, ten years later when I interviewed her.

Therefore, it was Mrs Buys's separation and subsequent divorce from her first husband that was the cause of her returning to her parents' house for a second time after she had married. Thus Mrs Buys was then an example of the divorced daughter who has been offered accommodation by her parents, a category which I have shown to

be quite significant numerically in Hartfield. At that time Mrs Oxford probably did a great deal for her divorced daughter, because Mrs Buys said that after she left her husband she "went back to work", although not for very long because she was "expecting Bridget", and presumably at that point Mrs Oxford looked after four year old Catherine. Then when "Bridget was ten days old I went to work" again, and it is likely that Mrs Oxford took care of both children.

No precise information was obtained about what help Mrs Buys had received with her children, except concerning the times of her confinements, when she said that then it was her mother who had looked after her husband and elder children. Mrs Buys must have been very short of money at the time of Bridget's birth, because her first husband "never gave me any money then", and so she had the child in the cheapest hospital, "I only paid R2 for Bridget" which was in contrast to the birth of her eldest daughter "Catherine cost us a fortune", that is, about R100. But Mrs Buys's family helped her at the time of Bridget's birth: "My sisters gave me a Stork Party for Bridget", to which quite a number of people came and all brought presents for the baby, "oh, we had quite a few (people) because I had all Bridget's layette, what we did have to buy my father bought - nappies and that".

This case of Mrs Buys thus shows some of the advantages that accrue to the divorced daughter who moves into her parents' house. Her case also illustrates the different possibilities in a household in which there are two women living, for working outside the home. At the time of the preliminary survey interview Mrs Buys was not working (although her mother was), but when detailed interviews began she had a part-time job as a supervisor for a cleaning firm, and her mother had a full-time job with the same firm. Mrs Buys said about the job that it would "not last long, I don't fancy it. I like a variety",

and she said that she had begun working again because it was "boring at home". She did in fact begin working soon after her youngest child from her second marriage began school. Mrs Buys also said then that she could not take a job where she would be "at work all day because of the children". During the hours that Mrs. Buys worked, four till eight in the evening, her mother was at home, which reveals how the co-residence of two women eventually enabled both to work, but ensured that one of them was at home during the day to see to the running of the house. Mrs Buys told me: "In the mornings I'm here to see to what's to be done", which meant that she usually did the washing, although on a Sunday, she said, her mother quite often did it, but she who began the wash always finished it. Mrs Buys said that her mother was at home to do the cooking in the afternoon.

Despite what she had said about not obtaining a full-time job because of her children, a couple of months later Mrs Buys was working full-time as a traffic warden. However, at that time there was yet another woman living in the Oxfords' household, a woman named Chris who was Mrs Buys's second cousin (that is her FMZSD). Mrs Buys described Chris as being "mentally unbalanced", and said that she had been living in a Hospice for Women nearby, which she had had to leave because one could stay there only until one either got a job or a pension, and then one had to leave. She said that Chris had got a disability pension of R41 per month, and that Chris had a "split personality", that she was not violent but just very forgetful. Chris had not always been like this, she had been normal until one day her husband beat her up and half killed her with the result that she had a nervous breakdown and became as she was then, though it was possible that she might recover.

When I asked why Chris was living with them, Mrs Buys replied that they could not just abandon her on the streets with her pension.

Chris had no parents, and her own sisters would not have her because they did not want the responsibility. Mrs Buys said that Mrs Oxford took R25 per month from Chris for her board, and that Chris was quite helpful around the house and that she fetched Mrs Buys's youngest daughter home from school each day at midday and gave her a sandwich. Thus it is clear that even in such a case there is an exchange of services, and that Chris's presence in the house no doubt made it easier for Mrs Buys to work full-time. Mrs Buys said that she gave Chris R20 per month for her help, which she said gave Chris a bit of pocket money for herself.

However, before the interviews with Mrs Buys were completed, Chris had moved out again, and Mrs Buys explained that "Chris was here about four months" and then "she went back to the Hospice, being unbalanced the way she is" she can't stay anywhere for very long before she starts "having tantrums", and then "she goes for medical treatment and they find" her somewhere else to live. Even after Chris had moved out of the household, Mrs Oxford and Mrs Buys both continued to work full-time, despite the fact that there were four children living in the house. I think they were able to do this partly because all the children were at school, and partly because the family employed a resident Black domestic servant named Susanna. She was a tall, stout and cheerful woman whom the Oxfords had employed for twenty-five years, clearly to their satisfaction, as she was very highly valued by the family and had an assured position in the household. Although she was a domestic servant, employed to do the cleaning, and not a nanny, yet she must have done a great deal for the children of the family over the years, and, of course, her presence in the household would mean that the women of the family, Mrs Oxford and Mrs Buys, could devote more time to the children, and less to domestic matters.

In this complex family household it seems likely that for many years the dominant flow of support had been 'downwards' from parents to child, that is from the Oxfords to Mrs Buys, but at about the time that I knew them this trend was lessening, and possibly even reversing. This change resulted from Mr Oxford's ill health, Mrs. Buys said that he had cancer of the face and had had four operations. At the beginning of the interviews he was leading a normal life and working as usual, but Mrs Buys implied that it was her father's illness that had led to her mother's taking a job, saying: "she never worked until my dad got so sick".

That is, for about eight of the ten years that Mrs Buys had then spent in her parents' household, her mother had not been working, and, as mentioned above, this made it possible for Mrs Buys to go out to work, leaving her small children in Mrs Oxford's care. This service must have had its greatest financial value at the time after Mrs Buys had left her first husband and before she either was obtaining any maintenance from him, or had remarried. However, she continued working even after she married her second husband, who moved into the Oxfords' household at marriage. She did stop for a couple of years at the time that her two children from her second marriage were born, but then went back to work for a while. I believe that some connection exists between Mrs Buys's subsequently giving up that job, and her mother's taking a job when Mr Oxford fell ill.

Mr Oxford's health deteriorated during the time that I knew the family. At one point he was in hospital, and when he came out Mrs Buys said: "He's home, but it's cancer" which had spread and "it's a case of waiting". Mr Oxford had been told by his doctor that "he can't go back to work" for at least two months and "my mother doesn't work in the mornings any more - only from four to eight" in the afternoons. At that time not only was Mr Oxford's health bad, with

the result that no doubt he and his wife were more dependent on their daughter and son-in-law, but also the joint income of the Buyses was greater than that of the Oxfords. Mrs Buys said: "I'm on R187 (per month), my husband gets 110 a week, my dad's on 235 a month and my mother's on 89 a month - next month she'll be back at 156 - going back to an eight hour job."

Mrs Buys said that she paid her mother "board" of R100 per month for herself, her husband and children, and that she bought some groceries and meat, and she paid the telephone bill. She said that her mother paid the electricity bill. But the house was the property of the Oxfords, who bought it many years before when Mr Oxford had been pensioned off by the municipality, because he had high blood pressure and had failed a medical examination. Mrs Buys said that he had "got all his pension - that is how he bought his home". For many months at the time that I visited the house it was in a state of chaos, full of dirt, dust and confusion, because it was being done up - with new doors, new windows, replastered, repainted and so on, at a cost of at least two thousand rands. When I asked how they would pay for this, Mrs Buys explained: "My mother took a bond on the house, the Building Society will give you a bond" to do up a house.

Mr Oxford's health improved, and he was able to go back to work, but before he did I remarked to Mrs Buys that it must be nice for her mother to have them all in the house, and Mrs Buys agreed, especially since her father was not able to work. Mrs Buys considered that, after her husband and children, she was closer to her parents than to anyone else, "we get on very well together", and she was not as close to her mother-in-law because "we don't see so much of her". Mr Buys appears to be a husband who has been absorbed into his wife's family, because Mrs Buys, when asked if she thought that her husband were as close to her parents as to his own mother,

answered: "I think he's very, very fond of my mother and father, I don't think any difference" between his feelings for them and for his own mother. She then added hastily: "Not (that he would) push his mother aside (but because of) his father dying when so young - my father (he has) sort of taken him as his own father". Several months after my last interview with Mrs Buys, her father died quite suddenly. Thereafter, the balance of personalities and flow of support within the household must have changed radically.

Despite the fact that living in her parents' household had, over the years, been of great benefit to Mrs Buys, nonetheless she claimed: "I'd love a home of my own" and that the problem of living in someone else's house is that one always has to be careful with things, one cannot be as relaxed as in one's own house. The reason that she gave why they had not moved out was that "we haven't been able to find anything suitable" because one needs a large house with four children and one cannot get a flat with so many. But she "definitely wants own place", and she said that she is "not very sociable" and likes to be by herself, or with strangers. She said that for the first four months of that year she had been by herself in the house all day which she had liked very much, she had been by herself then because everyone else was working. Then, when I asked her why she had begun working again herself, Mrs Buys made various contradictory remarks about sitting around doing nothing alone and that she had decided that she wanted to go out to meet people, and also she said that she might just as well be out working and earning money.

In this case of Mrs Buys it is hard to believe that she had any real dislike of living in a complex family household, and one almost feels that she only claimed to want "a home of her own" because she thought that was what she ought to want. Certainly, she has lived most of her life in a complex family household, both as a child and as an

adult, and there can be no doubt that there must have been times in the last ten years when it would have been quite possible for Mrs. Buys to move out of her parents' house, into "a home of her own".

Indeed, it would seem as if the Oxfords like complex family households because, although their daughter Mrs Buys and her husband and children are the only kin that they have had living permanently in the house in recent years, they have accommodated a number of other kin on a more temporary basis. Mrs Buys told me: "my mother's sister was here about two years ago, she stayed with us for six to eight months", soon after she had separated from her husband, and after she had had a nervous breakdown. It is hard to say whether this offer of accommodation were an act of charity on the part of Mrs Oxford, or were mutually advantageous to both parties in that, for instance, Mrs Oxford's sister no doubt paid for her board and lodging, which may have been especially valuable at a time when Mr Oxford's health was so uncertain. Moreover, the sister possibly helped Mrs Oxford to find a job, since they both worked as supervisors for the same firm of office cleaners (as did Mrs Buys subsequently), although since no dates of employment were obtained it may have been Mrs Oxford who got her sister the job. Either way, services were rendered and reciprocated.

Another adult relative who lived for a time in the household was Mr Buys's younger, unmarried brother, Hans. If one classified Mrs Oxford's sister as an instance of offering accommodation to a 'no longer married sibling', then Hans would be in the category of a 'not yet married sibling', and his residence seems a straightforward example of an unmarried sibling living in the house of a married sibling, probably as a convenience to both parties. Hans "was here quite a while" said Mrs Buys, "oh, he was here about two years" or longer, and then he "shifted out" and was "staying in town" in a flat; and about a year later Hans got married and he and his wife lived in a flat quite near the Oxfords' house, and visited often.

Moreover, Mrs Buys was not the only one of her parents' daughters to have lived in their house after marriage, and whenever her parents had accommodated one of their younger daughters, they were already housing Mrs Buys herself. The Oxfords' second daughter, Mary, after she married her first husband, "she lived here for a while until her first child was born" in April 1963. Then Mary moved to the Cape, but, before her first husband's death in 1965, they had moved to Durban and "they stayed here with us" for about six months. They were about to move out into a flat when Mary's husband was killed in a car accident, and so Mary "stayed here until she went back to the Cape". A couple of years later Mary came back to Durban (because "my mother said it was ridiculous" for her to live alone with her small sons there) and then Mary "only stayed here about a month" until she found a flat.

It seems likely that Mary might have settled indefinitely in her parents' house, had not her elder sister already done so, with the result that there was not enough room in the Oxfords' three bedroomed house. The Oxfords' third daughter, Joan, also stayed in her parents' household as a married woman, but "only when she had the baby" because at the time Joan and her husband had left their flat and had not yet moved into their house. The Oxfords' youngest daughter, Amy, is the "only one" who has not lived in her parents' home since her marriage (which is the reverse of the trend that Young and Willmott found in Bethnal Green (1957, 18)).

These details that I have cited from Mrs Buys's case history show repeatedly how one family household, over a number of years, can adapt to the changing needs of its members, and how it may expand and contract in size temporarily or more permanently according to these varying needs. A second case history that I shall now consider shows problems and solutions to them that are similar to those already described in Mrs Buys's case history. But it also highlights other

problems some of which I was actually able to observe since, in this particular case, much of the information was obtained by observation rather than by interview.

My informant, Mrs Nelson, was a young woman whose husband did shift work for the municipality, and so he worked two nights out of six on night shift. The Nelsons had one daughter, Janine, aged one-and-a-half years. At the time of interviewing, Mrs Nelson half lived in her parents' household, and it is their household which contained a complex family, which I shall describe here, and thus perhaps the case properly should be called the Nelson-Ferrar Case. This household of Mr and Mrs Ferrar was not in Hartfield, but was located in another suburb, and even if one did not include the Nelsons, the family household was made complex by the addition of the Ferrars' eldest daughter, Emily, who was a divorcée with two small children. The household also included the Ferrars' youngest, unmarried son and daughter.

Before I managed to obtain my first detailed interview with Mrs Nelson I had discovered that she spent very little time in her own house in Hartfield, because I found that she was never at home on the twenty occasions that I telephoned or called at the house, and, in the end, I located her with the aid of her neighbour, who told me that Mrs Nelson spent more time in her mother's house than in her own, and this neighbour then telephoned the Ferrars' house on my behalf and spoke to Mrs Nelson. Mrs Nelson not only spent most of her days in her mother's company, but also she and her daughter, Janine, slept in the Ferrar house whenever Mr Nelson was on night shift, that is two nights out of every six.

Mrs Nelson seemed a little ashamed about the amount of time that she spent in her parents' house, and she said that when she and her husband had first moved to Hartfield she had spent much more time in her own house - she had been working in the bank at the time and they had not

owned a car were the reasons she gave, which almost imply that she had only remained in her own house because she was unable to go to her parents' house, an implication which, although quite possibly true, was certainly not intended by Mrs Nelson. She explained that she had only begun sleeping at her parents' house when her husband was on night shift, at the time that she became pregnant and was terrified of sleeping alone in the house. She said that she had not always spent so much time at the Ferrars', for instance, she said that when her mother had had a job for a few months, then she had been in her own house more (which implies that she went to her mother's house in order to be with her mother), and that more recently she went daily to her parents' house while they were building a swimming pool, at which time her mother was still out at work and so Mrs Nelson went to keep an eye on things.

More than once Mrs Nelson said that, when she got a "place of her own", then she would spend less time in her parents' house. This would seem to reveal a curious attitude towards the house in Hartfield, which her husband shared. It is true that the house in Hartfield was rented, and that throughout the time of interviewing the Nelsons were expecting to have to move, as in the end they did, because the house was up for sale. Furthermore, there was a good deal of uncertainty about the sale and on two or three occasions they thought that the house had been sold, only to find out that it had not. All this no doubt gave the Nelsons a feeling of impermanence, and that it was not "their own place". However, they were not in any hurry to leave it, because, although the property was very shabby, it was also very cheap, and when they did move into a flat their rent doubled.

As I observed, Mrs Nelson and her mother got on well with each other, they bickered occasionally, or one would snap at the other, but usually relations were amicable and frequently I saw them engaged in joint activities. Mrs Ferrar, for instance, was a professional dress

maker and very often she and her daughter would work together on this sewing. When the Black servant employed by the Ferrars was away on holiday, I observed mother and daughter sharing the cleaning of the Ferrars' house, and even when the servant was not away Mrs Nelson would give assistance in her mother's house, for example by doing the family wash.

Mrs Ferrar was a most active and helpful grandmother. Mrs Nelson turned to her for help with her own daughter, Janine; for example, during one of my visits (at the Ferrars' house, of course, in which I, following my informant, spent many more hours than in her Hartfield house) Mrs Ferrar was looking after Janine while Mrs Nelson took her husband to the doctor. But Mrs Ferrar's real work seemed to be the looking after the two children of her divorced daughter, Emily, who all lived in the house. Emily had a full-time job in a building society, and was quite well off financially, since she also received money from her ex-husband for her children's maintenance. The children were aged five and three, Emily having left her husband when the younger child was a baby, since when they had divorced, but neither had remarried.

Mrs Ferrar said that Emily had tried to live with her children in a flat, with the children at nursery school. This had not been successful because she could not cope when the children were ill, the children were unhappy at the nursery school and spent much of their time with the Ferrars, and so, eventually, Emily and her children moved into the Ferrars' house. Not only did Mrs Ferrar look after her daughter's children during the day, but also both Mrs Ferrar and Mrs Nelson said that even when Emily was at home in the evenings, Mrs Ferrar still did more for the children than Emily did. Mrs Ferrar said that at night her granddaughter often woke up and would leave her mother's bedroom and come to sleep on the floor of Mrs Ferrar's room. All the adults

in the household disciplined all the children quite freely, except that it was said that Mr Ferrar did not slap his granddaughters, but only his grandson "because he's a boy and needs a man's hand".

The Ferrars clearly perform very great services for their divorced daughter, especially in looking after her children, for which the sum of money that she gave them for her board was not an adequate recompense. But I think that Mrs Ferrar enjoyed the children, and it was certainly a most relaxed household; not only did I sit there happily for hours on end, but so did a variety of friends and neighbours, adult and children, as well, of course, as Mrs Nelson and her daughter, and indeed her husband when he was not working. Like Emily, the Nelsons did give some money to the Ferrars, but as in her case, as straight financial recompense it was probably inadequate.

But, of course, there were other elements to the relationship. Mr Nelson got on well with his wife's parents, and he and his father-in-law gave each other help with the various private electrical jobs that they both did to supplement their incomes. Mrs Ferrar said about her son-in-law that he spoilt his wife, and that he was "moody", but that Mrs Nelson was good at managing him. All these comments agree with what I myself observed, but although I thought Mr Nelson prickly and short-tempered, he behaved in a most affectionate manner to his daughter and did a great deal to look after her, and, moreover, on the three occasions that I saw him arrive at his parents-in-law's house, he kissed his wife, his daughter and his mother-in-law in greeting.

It is difficult to determine the main reason why Mrs Nelson spent most of her days and a third of her nights (or more) in her parents' household, but it is easy to list many contributory factors: Mrs Nelson's affection for her mother and enjoyment of her company; her loneliness in her own house when her husband was working, (although her loneliness does not explain why her husband spent so many hours in his free time

with his wife in his parents-in-law's house); the great contrast between the Nelson's small, shabby house in Hartfield with a main road in front and a yard at the back, and the Ferrars' detached, comfortable house, well equipped and fairly new, with a garden and a swimming pool, located in a cul-de-sac. Furthermore, both the Nelsons had lived in the Ferrars' house since their marriage, and Mr Nelson had boarded with them prior to his marriage, and then they had both lived there for about six months after they had got married. Mr Nelson's acceptance of the way he had been absorbed into his wife's family may have been enhanced by his own background, which had been very unstable: his father had died when he was three, and then he (and his elder sister) had lived with his father's parents until he was eleven, then they had found themselves in a children's home, from which they were rescued by their mother. He had then lived with his mother for several years (she remarried more than once), and then, after doing his military service, he stayed with one of his mother's brothers, then he lived in lodgings for a couple of years, before ending up in the Ferrars' household.

Although Mrs Nelson cannot be seen as living wholly in a complex family household, yet it seems to me that she regarded her mother's house as 'home', in preference to her own shabby, semi-detached house. I feel, therefore, quite justified in including all this material on the Nelson family's relationships with the complex family household of the Ferrars. This case also provides a wealth of observed data on family interaction and stresses the importance of ties of love and affection.

This importance of affection is one particular feature of these two complex family households, that has emerged and which I now wish to stress. In exchange theory it seems very easy for one's argument to sound mechanical, and for people to become mere pawns, as for example in Anderson's reiterated phrase, that the urban population

of Preston had a 'calculative orientation' towards their kin (1971, 99). Yet, alongside this affection, another point that emerged, certainly in the case of Mrs Buys, was that she, despite all the advantages that she plainly had enjoyed over the years as a part of her parents' complex family household - such as financial aid from her father when she separated from her first husband, assistance in childcare from her mother and so on - still claimed that she would prefer to live in her own house, and that it was difficult to live in someone else's house. In this chapter I have laid more emphasis on the positive aspects of co-residence with kin, than on the disadvantages, but in present day society there are no expectations that one should live in complex family households, indeed, quite the contrary it is not really approved of, and it is expected that a young couple, for example, on marriage will want to set up "a home of their own". Given such an expectation, it is perhaps not surprising that people often find it difficult to adapt to living in complex family households, and are unhappy or apologetic about it. In the next chapter I discuss the tensions and problems of living in complex family households, as they are described by various informants in Hartfield, and most of this information comes from the detailed case history material.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TENSION AND INTERACTION WITHIN COMPLEX FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

This chapter, like the previous one, is concerned with the workings of complex family households. That is, it also discusses interpersonal relations within such households and is based mainly on evidence from the case history material. However, in this chapter I place greater stress on the tensions and problems inherent, in our society, in living together in this type of household. Even so, I shall not ignore the advantages which may be revealed in the evidence from any given case history, in the same way as in the previous chapter my emphasis on the positive links within such households did not result in my ignoring the parallel problems.

The first case that I quote from in this chapter is that of the Scotts, who were one of the most interesting families I studied, and from whom very rich and detailed information on a wide variety of kinship topics was obtained. One of their great assets was that they were both comparatively articulate, and one particular advantage for me was that Mr Scott did shift work, and so was often at home during the day, and liked talking about family and kin and so I obtained more information from him than from most other husbands. This tendency was enhanced because Mrs Scott was less keen on being interviewed and talking about her kin.

Mr and Mrs Scott and their four children were living with Mrs Scott's mother, Mrs Venter, in the house which the Venters had bought more than twenty years before I interviewed the family. Unfortunately I did not meet Mrs Venter who held a wellpaid, fulltime job, and worked long hours, indeed, Mrs Scott once remarked that since her father's death, her mother had been wedded to the post office, where she worked. This household, being one which contained a complex family at the time of the door-to-door survey was included in Chapter Four,

where it was Case 38 of Figure 4.14, and was one of the set of households described as 'those households with parent(s) offering accommodation to a married child (with or without offspring) or to a divorced child (with offspring)'. This implies that the dominant direction of flow of support was 'downwards', from parent to child, but, as will become apparent, such a statement is a gross simplification, and not an accurate representation of what happened within this particular household.

Mrs Scott said that they were living in the house because her mother "had asked us to come", and "anyway, the house is coming to me when something happens to her". However, Mrs Venter owned the house outright only because her two daughters had relinquished their rights to her. Mr Scott explained that his father-in-law had died intestate, saying that they "don't believe in wills - old people. There was money left as well as the house (and) everything was supposed to be divided into three shares . . . but we gave it to her mother". Mr Scott himself was involved in this transfer to his mother-in-law because he and his wife are married in community of property, and thus in many senses Mrs Scott is a legal minor.

Before Mr and Mrs Scott moved in with Mrs Venter in 1966, Mrs Venter's younger daughter Marie and her husband and son had been living in the house. The Scotts moved in "because my sister built a fabulous house at Kloof and this house was empty". Furthermore, when the Scotts moved in, they "inherited (Marie's) mother-in-law because she was not going to live" in a remote suburb while she had a job in Durban. That is, Marie's husband's mother, Mrs Cotterell, had also lived in Mrs Venter's house, and Mrs Scott had not been very happy about having Mrs Cotterell there because she claimed that Mrs Cotterell had made trouble between the Scotts' children in that one weekend she would favour one child and make the others jealous and then the next weekend it would

be the turn of another child. Mrs Scott said that "Ouma Cotterell" had left them when she had retired, and had gone to Marie, intending to stay "a couple of years", but her "sister's husband dies and so she goes to the Cape after being a week (with Marie) . . . I had had her five years, Marie a week", added Mrs Scott feelingly, though inaccurately, because before Marie had moved out of Mrs Venter's household in 1966, she had lived in the same house as her mother-in-law for several years.

The Scotts' dislike of sharing a house with Mrs Cotterell is not perhaps surprising, because she was not related to either of them, and so they might be inclined to feel that they were being imposed on. However, the Scotts were also very uncertain about sharing a house with Mrs Scott's mother. Mr Scott seemed to express more doubts than his wife, which in some ways is what one would expect, but his doubts have to be considered in the light of two opposing factors. The first is that Mr Scott was much more interested and favourably inclined towards family and kin than was his wife; and the second is that Mr Scott's initial period of residence in his parents-in-law's house was his own free choice, in that he lodged with the family before he and Mrs Scott were married.

Mr and Mrs Scott were both of Afrikaans descent, and many of their kin were Afrikaans speaking, though they spoke English at home. Mrs Scott sounded like an English speaking South African, and seemed to be anti-Afrikaans and anti-Afrikaners, whereas Mr Scott spoke with an Afrikaans accent and thought of himself as an Afrikaner, and his own positive attitude to family and kin may have been connected with his counting himself as an Afrikaner, because he thought that family and kin were more important to Afrikaners than to English speaking people. His wife said of him that: "He was family conscious, but I'm not, family only like to use you." Mr Scott agreed with that: "I've always

been family conscious. I don't mean to see them every day, (but now and again) . . . I would like to go on holiday and see some of my relatives, but my wife (wouldn't). She doesn't even know her own relations." Mr Scott thought that this difference between their views might result from the fact that he was farm bred and she town bred: "We grew up on a farm, in town too many other activities to worry about relations."

When I asked Mr and Mrs Scott whether three generation households like their own were common in South Africa, Mrs Scott replied that "a lot of people don't like" such households, though Mr Scott added that it is "not unusual to find them". They then referred again to the differences that they thought existed between English and Afrikaans practice, and it is significant that on this occasion Mr Scott stated his approval of the English method of doing things. Mrs Scott began by saying that "English people pay for them (their parents), but won't take them", and Mr Scott continued that: "Afrikaans speaking people are more inclined to look after parents themselves. English people provide (money for them) to stay in an old age home". He thought that the English way of doing things was right because only in such a home could an old person get the company that suited him. "I would never go and stay with kids . . . I think I'd rather go to a place where (there are) people of (your) own age group". He did not think that one should be too close to one's family, "we've got my mother-in-law, she's working still, but if want to go out somewhere" they cannot always take her and so it is sometimes a nuisance.

Mrs Scott said that having a parent in the house "has its advantages and disadvantages". But Mr Scott said that there are "more disadvantages. I don't think it's a good thing. Kids think not parents only to please, but also grandmother". When I asked why they stay Mrs Scott replied: "What would she do in this big house by herself?".

Mr Scott added that Mrs Venter is "not a person to mix with people", and they do not think that they can leave her. "I've been offered better positions" elsewhere, said Mr Scott, but he did not feel able to take them. The suggestion that his mother-in-law could go and live with her younger daughter was turned down by Mr Scott who said that previously she had done this for five years and had aged ten.

It is not for financial considerations that they live together because both Mr Scott and Mrs Venter had comparatively well paid jobs. Mrs Scott said her mother spends all her money, "she blows it", and is very generous, especially to the children, and so she tries to restrain her mother by asking her what the children will do when she's gone. Mr Scott similarly said that his mother-in-law's earnings go to her grandchildren, for instance, "she takes every year one of the kids on leave with her" with no expense spared.

Mr Scott said "we could live more economically on our own, now we live extravagantly (with) my wife cooking meals for five people", because both the Scotts claimed that Mrs Venter is very fussy about what she eats, and likes expensive things such as asparagus. Not that she herself is a good cook, indeed Mrs Scott claimed that the "kids moan" whenever her mother does the cooking. It is the Scotts who pay the running expenses of the house, though there is no rent to pay since Mrs Venter owns the house, and the Scotts pay the electricity and telephone bills (although during one interview when a very large phone bill was delivered, Mrs Scott said that "granny" could pay half). Mrs Scott said that they live well.

The Scotts find it difficult to live with Mrs Venter, and in explanation Mr Scott asked: "Have you never heard of a parent's jealousy? She feels she's neglected . . . it is the same with my mother . . . I call it parent's jealousy, (and it's) not just one family - Aunty Maggie (WMZ) - if we go to see her daughter in Newcastle and not take her" then

she is terribly put out. Mrs Scott said that if she does not talk to her mother when they are alone together then her mother complains, but Mrs Scott tells her that she has said all she wants to say, she can't talk all the time, and both the Scotts said that when they are alone together during the day they often hardly say a word to each other. However, said Mrs Scott, to keep her mother from feeling neglected, "I make a point to go and chat to her for an hour each evening" and "I wish she'd got married again, she's going to have a very lonely old age".

In his wife's absence I asked Mr Scott if he had ever thought of moving out, and he replied: "To tell you the truth I have had it in mind to move out, but (it is) not up to me, (it is) up to my wife, (and after all her) mother is very good to the kids". But he does not think that it is a good thing to have "three different people telling kids three different ways", which is what happens. Mrs Venter had "never lived alone and is not a person that makes friends". Mr Scott said about his mother-in-law "she's never been a housewife, always been a career woman. My wife even when at school used to see to food". And now "my wife does everything" about the house, "we do it actually . . . my mother-in-law doesn't even worry about her clothes". Mr Scott said that when his mother-in-law retired he would not be surprised if his wife went out to work, not that it would be necessary for financial reasons, and Mrs Scott herself said the same, that the "day she retires I'm going to work", implying that she would not want to spend the whole day in her mother's company. This throws an interesting sidelight on my earlier remarks that when two women are living in one household, then one is freed from domestic duties to go out to work: rather it may be that one <u>chooses</u> to work to avoid the other's constant company.

From all that the Scotts said about themselves and Mrs Venter it is clear that they would have been in no doubt whatsoever about who was supporting whom in that household, and that the dominant direction

or channel of support was from them to Mrs Venter. One wonders if she would have agreed. Living in her house meant that the Scotts had no rent to pay (and presumably the mortgage had been paid off), no need to worry about babysitters for their children, because although "we don't leave them alone", Mrs Venter is there with them, "if we do go out at night time she normally stays", said Mr Scott. And, although the Scotts could have lived on Mr Scott's salary, life would not have been nearly as comfortable without the gilt on the gingerbread that they enjoyed as a result of Mrs Venter's being in a well paid job.

In conclusion, despite the manifest advantages that the Scotts enjoyed as a result of living in Mrs Venter's house, they both stated with no hesitation that they thought that it was a mistake to live in a complex family household. As quoted above Mr Scott said: "I would never go and stay with kids" and "I don't think it's a good thing" to live in a three generation household. Mrs Scott said: "I think (one) shouldn't live close to family, my mum (lives here) with me (and) things irritate" one in those circumstances, but she never says anything because "I believe in a still tongue is a wise head".

In some respects this case resembles the family arrangements that are described by Young and Willmott in Bethnal Green, in that the tendency there is for a married couple to live with the wife's parents rather than the husband's, and for the husband to be drawn within the orbit of the wife's kin, rather than vice versa. The resemblance is apparently enhanced by the fact that Mr Scott's own parents live in Hartfield, within the area included in the door-to-door survey and at a distance of about two blocks from the Scotts. However, these similarities are perhaps more apparent than real, although it is certainly true that Mrs Scott has not been drawn within her husband's family, and that she and her mother-in-law do not get on well with each other (the situation is exacerbated by language and cultural differences in that

Mr Scott's parents are Afrikaans speaking, belong to the Dutch Reformed Church and have a rural background, whereas Mrs Scott has rejected her Afrikaans heritage and is town bred, even though her own mother reads the Bible in Afrikaans and still belongs to the Dutch Reformed Church).

Another view held by the Scotts, which would have been heresy in Bethnal Green, was that they did not agree with the idea, put forward by a friend of theirs, that it was "natural" that a daughter would be closer to her mother than a son. Mr Scott disagreed, saying that his mother was "closer" to her sons than her daughters, and that she was "more fussy" (by which he meant "more interested", he explained when asked exactly what he did mean) about her daughters-in-law than her sons-in-law. Ah, said the Scotts' friend, perhaps this was because one could influence a son's wife, but not a daughter's husband. To which Mrs Scott replied that her mother-in-law had not had any influence over her, and Mr Scott said that he himself got on better with his wife's mother than with his own. None of these sentiments expressed by the Scotts seems to correspond with those said to exist in Bethnal Green.

Indeed, one feature common to all three cases that I have quoted so far, and which is unlike Bethnal Green, is that the link between mother and daughter appears to be companionate and equal, and not hierarchical. The relationship that I observed between Mrs Nelson and her mother, for instance, was one of equality, and in none of these cases has "mum" been put on a pedestal in the way that Young and Willmott describe in Bethnal Green. In this respect the mothers and daughters of Hartfield are more like those of the "middle class" families of Highgate and Greenbanks, as described by Firth, Hubert and Forge. This relative lack of a "mum" culture in Hartfield was also apparent in numerical terms in Chapter Three, in the sense that, unlike Bethnal Green and Swansea, about as many households contained parents and a married son as contained parents and a married daughter.

In the next case the complex family household is rather different, and indeed it developed fully underneath my eyes, that is, during the period that I was interviewing the family. My informant was a pretty and charming young woman named Mrs Marais. At the time of the household survey the household consisted of herself, her second husband Mr Marais, her two children from her first marriage (which had ended with the death of her first husband) and her baby son from her second marriage. In a lodging house four or five blocks away, but within the household survey area, Mrs Marais's maternal grandmother, Mrs Ansell, lived in a single room, that is, she slept there but she spent most of her day with Mrs Marais. A year later when detailed interviews with Mrs Marais began, her grandmother was living in another room in another lodging house, which was only two blocks away. But the house in which Mrs Ansell then lived had been sold and she had been given notice to leave. She said that she did not know where she would move to next, but in the end she moved in with the Marais family. Mrs Marais said that it had been her husband's idea that her grandmother should move in with them, that she herself had not been too keen because she had had her grandmother living with her before (at the time of her first husband's death and before she married Mr Marais).

The relationship between Mrs Marais and Mrs Ansell was very close and affectionate, Mrs Ansell was old and frail and Mrs Marais was fond of her, and felt responsible for her. The closeness of this link between grandmother and granddaughter may easily be explained. Mrs Marais had lived with her mother's parents from when "think I was about three . . . and stayed with granny till I was twelve". The reason Mrs Marais gave for this was that "my mum joined the army and the WAAFs and then she went to England" for a short time. The other probable reason is that Mrs Marais's parents were divorced when she was very young, and she knows nothing about her father because "my mother

doesn't speak about him and they were divorced when I was small and he's dead since then". Indeed, Mrs Marais even referred to him as "my first father", as opposed to her stepfather.

Despite her mother's remarriage "when I was about nine", Mrs Marais continued to live with her grandparents. Mrs Marais's mother had wanted her daughter back, but her grandfather would not agree, and said that since she had been willing to give up the child before, she could not have the child back. "My grandfather was very strict - wouldn't let my mother take me back. You know what the old Germans were like - their word was law", and "he was very fond of me". So Mrs Marais lived with her mother's parents until her grandfather died when she was aged twelve, and then she returned to live with her mother and stepfather.

Thus the link between them is really more that of mother and daughter, than of grandmother and granddaughter. Mrs Marais appears to have taken on the responsibility of looking after her grandmother, at least in a day to day sense, and this is despite the fact that her grandmother has six children. Mrs Marais sometimes spoke quite bitterly about her mother's siblings and their shirking of responsibility towards their mother. Mrs Marais said that she herself had been responsible for her grandmother for the last eight years and that she did not think it fair, these are the best years of her life that she has had to devote and, furthermore, it had not been easy financially.

Part of the reason why the burden of responsibility and care of Mrs Ansell fell mainly on Mrs Marais was owing to Mrs Ansell herself. Mrs Marais said that Mrs Ansell refused to live with any of her six children, though Mrs Ansell loves all her own children, she still insists on coming back to live with Mrs Marais. Her grandmother, said Mrs Marais, claimed that she could not live without Mrs Marais's children, but I think the basic reason was Mrs Marais herself.

After Mrs Ansell had moved in with the Maraises, Mrs Marais said that she would prefer not to have her grandmother living in the house because her grandmother could be difficult, and that she had preferred it when her grandmother had had a rented room elsewhere and had spent every day with Mrs Marais. Mrs Marais said that her husband found things difficult when Mrs Ansell moved in with them, even though it had been his suggestion that she should do so.

The difficulties in this situation were both mental and physical, though Mrs. Marais did not think that having her grandmother in the house made more work, but she said that her grandmother wants to be talked to, that when she is in the kitchen cooking then her grandmother will come in to talk. This would be all right if Mrs Ansell were not so deaf, but because she is very deaf it is not possible for Mrs Marais to cook and talk at the same time. Then at other times when Mrs Marais is free to talk Mrs Ansell goes to have a rest. Mrs Marais said that her grandmother tends to argue, and that Mrs Ansell would try to behave well and perhaps would for a couple of months. Then something would go wrong, she might think that Mrs Marais was neglecting her by not talking to her, for example, or she might be disappointed when her son did not keep a promise that he would take for a weekend drive; then, explained Mrs Marais, after something like that had gone wrong for Mrs Ansell, she would "take it out" on Mrs Marais.

During the period that I knew the family, Mrs Ansell's brother died, and in her distress Mrs Ansell took an overdose of tranquillisers and very nearly died. Mrs Marais was very upset about this. She was told by the doctor, and also by her mother, that she should put Mrs Ansell in a home, because it was "five lives against one", that is, Mrs Marais and her husband and three children versus Mrs Ansell. Mrs Marais did not follow this advice, although she was persuaded into signing admission papers for such a home, she subsequently felt very

guilty and her grandmother did not go into a home. Mrs Marais claimed that her grandmother's presence did not make more work physically - she did not "count taking tablets and cups of tea" as work - but this cannot be wholly true, especially when Mrs Ansell was ill and incontinent.

After this particular crisis it was arranged that Mrs Ansell should stay with one of her married sons for a couple of weeks. She went with extreme reluctance, and I began to understand why she preferred to be with Mrs Marais rather than her daughter-in-law, Lucy, when Mrs Marais told me that Lucy was "funny", in the sense that she behaved in a way that Mrs Marais considered to be strange or odd. Mrs Marais thought it odd that, although Lucy was quite happy to have Mrs Ansell to stay, she would not put herself out for Mrs Ansell. Mrs Marais said, as an example, that if Lucy were cooking and Mrs Ansell wanted to talk to her and she did not want to talk or felt too busy, then she would not talk. Mrs Marais did add that Lucy worked, and so when she got home she had her child to look after, supper to prepare and thus was busy; yet clearly Mrs Marais did not approve of Lucy's behaviour and treatment of Mrs Ansell. While staying with her son Mrs Ansell wrote to Mrs Marais, asking to come home and promising to be good, and as a result she was back with Mrs Marais after an absence of less than a week, in contrast to the two weeks that had been planned.

It was clear that the situation was tense, and Mrs Marais told me that the problem for her was mental, in that she worried. I overheard Mrs Ansell talk in a whisper to Mrs Marais and Mrs Marais explained to me that her grandmother was whispering because otherwise she tended to shout (partly on account of her deafness which meant that she did not know how loudly she spoke), and whenever Mrs Ansell shouted Mrs Marais got a headache, which was not "the sort one takes a tablet for, but was like turning on a tap". She had explained this to her grandmother, and said that she would tell Mrs Ansell whenever she raised

her voice, and the result was that Mrs Ansell whispered. Besides these nervous headaches Mrs Marais also suffered from a skin rash, which almost certainly was caused by mental stress.

When Mrs Ansell was well she performed small services for her granddaughter, such as making tea, and she entertained and amused Mrs Marais's toddler son, though I observed one day when I brought Mrs Marais home after an hour or two's absence, that it was the Black servant who was changing the child's nappy, not Mrs Ansell who was standing and watching, which I suppose means that she did not have the physical dexterity to do it herself. On the few occasions when I saw Mrs Marais in an irritable mood, it was usually her grandmother who drew her fire, and I heard her snap at her grandmother: "Ma, must I get cross?"

Mrs Ansell seemed to have become a permanent member of the Marais household, and she gave about a quarter of her pension to Mrs Marais as a contribution towards the household expenses. When the family moved out of Hartfield to another suburb on the other side of the city, Mrs Ansell moved with them, and it seemed likely that she would remain with them. In our society such an arrangement is not considered desirable: one's expectation is to live in a nuclear family and so one is sacrificing the nuclear unit when one takes in an elderly relative. As a result, elderly and widowed kin constitute a problem which occurs as part of the developmental sequence of many families, and it is a problem not clearly resolved by our cultural expectations. It should not be forgotten that in South Africa, even for Whites, there is relatively little state provision for the elderly in comparison with, for example, Britain.

In both cases in this chapter my informants, against their declared preferences, were sharing a home with an older kinswoman. Such cases show how the ties of love and affection, and the bonds of duty and obligation, can be strong enough to override such preferences for the

nuclear family unit. In both cases my informants mentioned difficulties and stresses - especially in the Marais case where Mrs Ansell's age and infirmity (and probably poverty also) made her a burden in a way that Mrs Venter, younger and active mentally and physically, possessor of a well paid job and owner of the house in which they all lived, was not.

In my next chapter I shall consider the alternative to co-residence with kin which Mrs Marais had found to be preferable: the arrangement whereby one lives nearby rather than in the same household.

CHAPTER EIGHT

COMPLEX FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS WITH KIN IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

In this chapter I highlight the significance of complex family households in Hartfield by discussing the contrast which I found there between having kin within the household and kin as neighbours in general, and next door or 'adjacent' in particular. I have already used the detailed material from various case histories to reveal that complex family households exist because they are advantageous and 'suit' the families within them. As a rule, they are mutually advantageous through exchange of services, although at any one point in time it may seem that all the advantages benefit one party and not the other. For example, in the case of Mrs Buys at the time that she lived in her parents' household as a young divorcée with two small children, then it was she who probably gained most from living in that complex family household, but by the time I knew the household matters were more evenly balanced - Mrs Buys and her husband brought in more money to the household than did her parents, her father's health was poor. Thus over time exchanges will balance better than at one point in time.

However, complex family households often contain their own seeds of discord - even Mrs Buys said that she wanted "a home of her own". In the previous chapter I discussed some of the tensions and difficulties of living in complex family households, as illustrated in two such households in Hartfield, and in this chapter I examine these problems further and will consider an alternative solution to co-residence, which still permits the exchange of day to day services.

This is the alternative of living near to one's kin rather than with one's kin, and it is often rated more highly. For example, my informant Mrs du Toit said: "I'll never live with any of my children (because) I've seen it too much in life - old people (become) so stubborn.

I've had my husband's mother-in-law (HlstWM) and my own mother-in-law (WlstHM)" and so she would not impose herself on any of her children. But she "won't live quite alone (although) when you get older (you) cannot take noise and things of children - unfair to both - unfair to children and unfair to old person" if they have to live together. "I should not like to stay with my children when old (but) if one (of them) would build a little cottage in garden" then that would be quite different and most suitable. "I'll tell you what - Dad (her lstHF) built a little cottage in his yard for my mother-in-law's mother, she stayed there (in the day) but didn't sleep there. She slept in Mum's house" because of her extreme age, and Mrs du Toit thought that this had been an excellent arrangement.

The problem, said Mrs du Toit, is that "old people and young people can't agree wholeheartedly" as to how things should be done. "If a person is very sickly it is a very great burden to put that on someone". I asked Mrs du Toit if she thought that, having brought her children up, she had any right to demand their support in her old age. "I have no right to demand anything from (my children), my husband" is the person who should support her. "If they want to, I will be grateful, but I will put no demands on any child . . . when (one) can afford it I don't think any parent should expect any child to support them". Furthermore, Mrs du Toit thought that "old people's homes are wonderful", but that only a person with no other means should go into them.

Mrs du Toit's stated preference for a 'cottage' in her married child's back garden, and her firm determination not to live in the child's own household exemplifies the preference, common in Hartfield, of living <u>near to</u> rather than <u>with</u> kin. Similar preferences are said to exist elsewhere, for instance in Bethnal Green (Young and Willmott 1957, 20). In the door-to-door survey I asked all respondents some questions about extra-familial kin, and I acquired details of the

addresses and exact relationship of all those kin who were said to live within a ten minute walk. From my analysis of these details I learned that of the total of 228 households surveyed, there are sixty-eight (30 per cent) which have kin living in at least one other household included in the survey. A further forty-six (20 per cent) households have kin who live in households outside the survey area, but within a ten minute walk. Of the remaining 50 per cent of households, eighty-four (37 per cent) have kin in Durban; and thirty (13 per cent) have no kin in Durban. I am aware that spatial proximity may not be significant, but I also have figures on estimated frequency of contact, and of the 114 households who have kin living within about half a mile, over half said that they had daily contact, and another third said that they were in contact between one and four times a week.

Kin would seem to be important in the lives of such people, and even more so in the thirty-eight cases in the household survey of families living in households adjacent to households of their kin. I use the term 'adjacent' to include instances where there are two households beneath one roof - such as upstairs and downstairs flats - as well as where the related households are next door to each other, and also cases where the related households are directly or diagonally opposite each other across a road. Such a definition resembles that given by Anderson (1971, 58, note a to Table 18) for 'contiguous' residences: 'Next door, opposite, or back to back'. Two of these thirty-eight households have kin in adjacent households that are geographically outside the survey area; and one other household was adjacent to a related household that did not form a part of the household survey, because, although the related household was within the survey area, the potential respondent had refused to be interviewed.

These figures show that there are more cases of families with kin living within their households, than of families living in house-

holds adjacent to kin, despite the general preference for living nearby rather than together. One explanation of this is related to availability and cost of housing - it is obviously not always easy to buy or rent an adjacent property. Indeed, since there are six pairs of adjacent households in which the two households are both on the same property, the number of households who have managed to obtain separate properties adjacent to kin is further reduced, and I shall now examine one such case in detail which contains information on living with kin as well as living next door to kin.

This case is that of the Sadlers, whose household family structure, when I interviewed them, was simple. The household included Mr Sadler, who was in his early forties; Mrs Sadler, who was in her late thirties; and their five children, whose ages ranged from seven to fourteen. When interviews began the house next door was occupied by Mr Sadler's parents, who had an elderly, unrelated widow aged over 90 lodging with them. During the course of the interviews great changes occurred in the household next door: Mr Sadler's father died; the elderly lodger had a stroke and moved to an old age home; and, finally, Mrs Sadler's parents and her unmarried brother moved in with Mr Sadler's widowed mother. In the following discussion of this case I refer to my informants as Mr and Mrs Sadler, and to Mr Sadler's parents as Mr and Mrs Sadler Senior, in order to avoid confusion.

Mr Sadler was his mother's only child (though he had a half brother from a previous marriage of his father's) and at the beginning of the interviews, when both Mr Sadler's parents were alive, it was clear that the Sadlers had strong feelings of responsibility towards them. Mrs Sadler said that her father-in-law's health was not good, and her mother-in-law went to see a psychiatrist once a month because she was subject to mental stress and had had a "complete nervous breakdown" about seven years before. This mental stress resulted from her

being the sort of person who "bottles everything up", said Mrs Sadler and she also thought that, before his health had deteriorated, Mr Sadler Senior had been quite difficult or "fiery", and rather over-powering for his wife.

My informants had not always lived in Hartfield since their marriage, but on two separate occasions when Mrs Sadler Senior had mental difficulties they had had to move in with the old people. "The first time the old lady got a bit queer we came and stayed with them" said Mrs Sadler, which was when "I was expecting Judy", her third child, at the "end of '63 and I had Susan (her fourth child) here as well, we moved when she seemed a bit better. We moved out and got a flat" which happened to be next door to Mrs Sadler's parents, who lived in a neighbouring suburb. Out of the fat, into the fire one might think, but Mrs Sadler did not: "my mother is not the type to worry you, even living right next door I didn't see her every day . . . we lived there until '66 . . . I was a bit soft those days with John's mum, we should never have moved back, but (she was) starting to crack up (and so we) moved back into the house with them", at the request of her father-in-law, so that Mrs Sadler could look after him.

Living together created major problems, some of which Mrs Sadler implied were her own fault because she was pregnant at the time, and she said that when one is "pregnant (one) can be very touchy and I was". Mrs Sadler indeed had threatened that she and the children would leave unless her mother-in-law had psychiatric treatment, and looking back at that time, Mrs Sadler commented that that was a "very bad part of our marriage", and that someone who has not had to deal with a mentally ill person can have no idea how difficult it can be. The treatment involved hospitalisation and Mrs Sadler Senior "was in the home for six months", and thereafter she gradually improved.

By mid 1969 it was possible for the Sadlers to move out of

Mr Sadler's parents' home. However, the house they bought was next door, about which purchase Mrs Sadler said: "I wasn't very keen to buy this place, (but) John in those days was very easily persuaded", and so his parents had talked him into buying the house next door to their own. Mrs Sadler wished that they had built themselves a house, because they had owned land in a relatively newly developed suburb, and she also considered that the problem with Hartfield is that the "area itself has gone down". But now, said Mrs Sadler, "if we moved, we can't just leave the old people" next door behind, and so they would have to build a cottage for them so that they could move as well.

During fieldwork Mr Sadler's father died suddenly, after a heart attack, and the situation was radically changed. In several interviews there were lengthy discussions about where Mrs Sadler Senior would live. In the first of these discussions Mrs Sadler said that the house next door was far too big for her mother-in-law to live in alone, and that her own parents had suggested that they should move in because her mother-in-law would be needing a man about the house. This type of solution was not new: a couple of years earlier her father-in-law himself had suggested that her parents should move in with him and his wife. At the time Mrs Sadler had not thought it a good idea, on account of her father-in-law's own personality which, as mentioned above, she found "fiery" and "rather difficult". After his death she was uncertain about the advisability of her own parents moving in because she did not know how it would work out, although she said her parents and her mother-in-law did get on well together. She said that there were several advantages to such a plan: that it would suit her parents to move from their present flat; that "all the old people could look after each other"; and that if they were next door then she could "keep an eye on them".

As Mr Sadler was his mother's only child this meant that the responsibility for caring for her fell on Mr and Mrs Sadler's shoulders.

Mrs Sadler said that they had always realised this, but that they had thought that their own children would be older before they were "called on to act." However, at this point in time she did not think it would be a good idea for her mother-in-law to move in with them, not only because there was not enough room, but also because, although living next door to each other was fine, living in the same house was a different "kettle of fish". The possible alternative that Mrs Sadler Senior should move into an old age home was not seriously considered because she had always stated that she did not want to go into a home, which Mrs Sadler said she could understand, and that her own mother always said the same.

Immediately after Mr Sadler Senior died the Sadlers' two younger daughters slept next door in their grandmother's house, which they enjoyed because "granny" spoiled them, and which was company for her in the evenings and gave her something to do besides looking after her elderly lodger. This arrangement was stopped by Mrs Sadler within a short time, however, because she said that her daughters were becoming a problem as a result: that she had rules about bedtimes and so on, and that when she went next door during the evening she would find the two girls sitting in the lounge talking with "granny", looking like "two little old women", and that she had not approved. From its inception this arrangement had obviously only been a temporary measure and had apparently raised unfavourable comment among certain of Mrs Sadler's friends, who thought she should not allow it because it might result in her children coming to love their grandmother more than her. Mrs Sadler thought that this was nonsense, that it was stupid to be jealous of a child's loving a grandparent, because a child is quite capable of loving more than one person at once. She added that, although relations with her parents-in-law had not always been good, the possibility of her children's affections being alienated was not something that had ever

worried her, and she had never tried to keep her children away from them. Clearly she did not think that jealousy was important in the difficulties she had experienced herself with her mother-in-law, though she did comment that in many cases it is jealousy that creates trouble in the relationship between mother-in-law and child-in-law. The example she quoted concerned a man and his mother-in-law, when she said: "my own brother-in-law, Deborah's husband, is extremely jealous" of his wife's parents.

When Mrs Sadler decided that her two daughters should sleep at home once more, the elderly widow who had lodged with Mrs Sadler Senior was no longer living in the house, because she had had a stroke. So Mrs Sadler Senior then began sleeping in the Sadlers' house sharing a bedroom with these same two daughters because there was no other room available. She spent her days in her own house. Pressure of accommodation made it clear that Mrs Sadler Senior could not continue sleeping in the Sadlers' house indefinitely, and it was at this time that Mrs Sadler told me she wished the question of her parents' possible move next door would be decided soon, because if her mother-in-law were going to live with the Sadlers, then she thought that they should sell both houses and buy a bigger one somewhere else. Therefore, at this point it would seem as though Mrs Sadler had not wholly ruled out the idea of co-residence with her mother-in-law, but she did not want to move into the house next door, which, although it was big enough to hold them all, needed doing up. Her reason, as she explained, was that she had no "real objections" to the area, but she thought it "shabby and oldfashioned . . . the houses so old, and the people so old", and so she would not mind leaving Hartfield.

Finally, about four months after Mr Sadler's father's death, Mrs Sadler's parents and her unmarried brother did move in with her mother-in-law. Mrs Sadler Senior herself told me, just before this move,

that she lived alone and her house was much too big for her, and that "oh, yes", she got on well with her daughter-in-law's mother, "I can get on with the devil himself", and "one must accept people as they are - no one is perfect". At about the same time Mrs Sadler began working again, for financial reasons, and a month or two later she remarked that, oddly enough, she did not see much more of her mother since she had moved in next door, but that she did see more of her father because he came across to see them most evenings.

Mr and Mrs Sadler seem to have found a most satisfactory solution to their problem of looking after Mr Sadler's widowed mother: for, as Mrs Sadler said, not only would the next door household be able to look after each other, but they were conveniently at hand for her to be able to keep an eye on them. Furthermore, services were certainly exchanged between the neighbouring households, such as baby-sitting. Indeed, it should be noted that previously, when asked about baby-sitting, Mrs Sadler had said: "We haven't really had much problem, before John's dad died his parents" were their usual baby-sitters, and they had also used her own parents and sister. So they had never had to employ anyone, even when she herself had worked a few years earlier, because only the youngest child had not been at school and his "granpa" (HF) had looked after him. Thus, even in previous years when the Sadlers had been requested to live in his parents' house as a "prop and a support", at the time that his mother had a nervous breakdown, there had been an exchange of services, that is, help and assistance had been received by the Sadlers, as well as given. Moreover, Mrs Sadler's earlier willingness to allow her father-in-law to look after her youngest child would seem to demonstrate that her statement that she was not jealous of losing her children's love and affection to her mother-in-law was true.

In cases such as the Sadlers, living next door is a feasible method of coping with day to day problems, as well as being a solution to

long term difficulties. But their case shows that this solution is only feasible in certain circumstances. Probably, for example, Mrs Sadler Senior's nervous breakdown had necessitated their co-residence in the same house: that more help had then been needed than could easily be given when living in a separate house. Also, it was clearly not considered suitable for Mrs Sadler Senior to live alone after her husband's death. When she had a lodger she continued to sleep in her own house (with two granddaughters on 'loan' as company), but after the lodger became ill and went into hospital, then Mrs Sadler Senior slept in the Sadlers' house and spent her days in her own house. The final solution to the Sadlers' problems was most ingenious and neat: Mrs Sadler's parents moved in with Mr Sadler's mother in the next door house.

This solution, however, is in direct conflict with Mrs Sadler's stated preferences: "I'm quite an independent sort of person. My son James says that he's not going to get married, he's going to live with me (but I couldn't stand that) . . . as far as old people go you should see to their welfare, but you don't have to live on (each other's) doorsteps", which seemed to be just exactly what Mrs Sadler did have to do. This conflict between ideal and actual practice is, of course, not unique to Mrs Sadler, we met it in the case of the Scotts who both expressed disapproval of three generation households such as their own (see also Kerckhoff 1965, 111).

Living next door is also only possible when both sets of kin have adequate financial resources to maintain their own households, and thus is not a viable alternative in some cases, for instance, those of divorced daughters, who probably tend to live in their parents' households because they could not afford to set up their own households. The case of Mrs Buys illustrates this point: at the time that she separated from her first husband she could not have set up her own household because she had a small child, she was expecting another, and she had no means of

support because her husband did not send her any maintenance.

At this point I shall return to those thirty-eight households, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, which I found in the household survey were living adjacent to kin, in order to describe the nature of these households and the kin links between them. These thirty-eight households were all included in the total of 228 households surveyed, and since, as recorded on p.107 of this chapter, there were three other households linked to them, which were not included in the survey, the number is raised to forty-one. This total includes sixteen 'pairs' of related households that are adjacent to each other, and three 'threesomes' similarly adjacent.

Of the 'threesomes', one set includes parents in one household, and two married sons in two separate, but adjacent, households. A second set includes two complex family households within it - Case 8 of Figure 4.4 and Case 12 of Figure 4.5. The household in Case 12 included two brothers, one married and one widowed, and the two adjacent households were of their children, in the one lived a married son of the widower and in the other a married daughter of the married brother. The third threesome was perhaps the most interesting of all because one household contained a complex family of parents and <u>two</u> married sons (Case 49 of Figure 4.17) and the two adjacent households contained the families of their other two children, their one daughter and another son.

Among the sixteen 'pairs' of related households, there were five pairs in which parents were adjacent to married daughters, and there were three pairs in which parents were living adjacent to married sons. There were two pairs of married sisters, two pairs of married brothers and two pairs of a married sister and a married brother in adjacent households. There was one case in which a widow lived opposite one of her married daughters, and in this instance the widow's household contained a complex family as she was accommodating a grandson, and indeed her grandson's

fiancee (Case 45 of Figure 4.16). The last of these sixteen pairs included Mrs Marais's family in one house (see pp. 99-104 in the previous chapter) and the other was occupied by her stepfather and his mother and his mother's younger sister (to whom both properties belonged) so that household was included in Chapter Four as a complex family household (Case 10 of Figure 4.5).

The composition of these households shows that each of the related households usually contains a married couple. Of the forty-one households described above, there were only two without a married couple. This fact is partly illuminated by the Sadler case history, in which there was a period when it seemed as though the Sadlers' arrangement of living next door to kin might collapse, after Mr Sadler's father had died and his widow did not sleep by herself in the house next door. What revived the arrangement was the importation of a married couple, in the form of Mrs Sadler's parents, with whom Mr Sadler's mother could reside.

The case history material that I have already mentioned reveals various points which help to explain why these households of kin living adjacent to each other tend to include married couples. It is clear that in Hartfield greater social approval is accorded to the practice of living near kin than to living with kin. Such couples would usually be able to support their own household financially - unlike divorcees, for example, as previously mentioned.

Some couples, especially those with children, need the space to be found in a house of their own. Where the adjacent households each include a married couple this precludes the problem that faces the widowed (or divorced) and their kin, as expressed by Mrs Scott about her widowed mother: "What would she do in this big house by herself?"

My interest in this chapter in the study of living in close proximity, but in separate households, to kin has been to use such cases

as a means of enhancing our knowledge of living with kin in Hartfield. Thus I have not considered this topic in depth because it is peripheral in a thesis dealing with household family structure. However, it should be clear from those few details I have given, that the importance of family and kin in the lives of the people of Hartfield can be demonstrated as much (or perhaps even more) by the numbers of family households who have kin in the neighbourhood, and by the frequency of their contact and interaction with each other, as by the proportion of individuals and families in the area who live in complex family households.

Although in this chapter it seems as though living in complex family households is only done through necessity, such being the impression given by informants like Mrs Sadler, I think that this is a biased impression. Moreover, I doubt that necessity compels one third of Hartfield's population (one third, that is, of the population in the area surveyed who lived in houses rather than flats) to live in complex family households. Therefore, in my concluding chapter I shall endeavour to determine the relative importance of factors such as necessity, choice and habit in the existence of complex family households.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

One quarter of all the households in Hartfield that were included in my door-to-door survey contained complex families; and one third of the total population surveyed lived in complex family households. Even as I write this conclusion I am still impressed by the magnitude of these proportions, because it is undoubtedly true that, in late twentieth century Western European society, one does not expect to find many people living in households with a family structure other than simple. However, from this thesis it should have become clear that Hartfield is not unique in this respect. The comparisons that have been made between my Hartfield material, and data from the various English studies that I have cited, have shown that in present day Britain, as well as in nineteenth century Britain, there are certainly places where a relatively large proportion of the population live in complex family households.

This is not to claim that in any of these communities simple family households were not the most common form of household family structure, but it may help refute Laslett's 'null hypothesis' which states that all departures 'from the simple household form of the co-resident domestic group in England must be regarded as the fortuitous outcomes of demographic eventualities and economic conveniences, and of particularly strong personal attachments as well' (1972, 73). My material is, of course, not from England, but Laslett himself in his Preface adds that the null hypothesis 'must be taken to apply to all societies at all periods. In some cases, no doubt, the null hypothesis will be easily rejected'. (1972, footnote on p.x). Not so easily amongst Whites in urban Hartfield as amongst Blacks in rural South Africa, for example, among the Lovedu where households containing elementary families are rare (Krige 1975). But even in Hartfield it

seems rather inappropriate to describe the type of household in which one third of the population lives as a 'fortuitous outcome'.

In Hartfield it seems that complex family households are a common means of enabling the 'family' to adapt to fulfil the changing needs of its members. In this thesis a great variety of factors have been examined closely to see if they can be associated with the growth of complex families. Some of these factors have concerned external pressures or forces, such as type of occupation followed by the adult male members of the complex families compared with all the adult males; or the educational achievements of both men and women who head complex families are compared with those of all the household heads. Other factors were more concerned with such physical aspects as how long a family had been occupying any given dwelling. Yet others were connected with personal aspects, or rather interpersonal links, especially those that bear the brunt of coping with 'critical life situations', some of these latter were short-term problems or difficulties, and some were more permanent.

Out of this great variety of factors quite a number have been rejected as not significant in relation to complex family households - such as type of occupation and educational achievements, variations in cultural background as revealed by religious denomination and language spoken in the home. But the description of these factors and discussion of them in their Hartfield setting has enriched the total portrait of Hartfield itself, its physical setting as well as in human terms. The details show how firmly the complex family households are embedded within the area, that their inhabitants are no different from the rest of the population, and that such households cannot be regarded, therefore, as oddities. Rather when one studies the ongoing sequences and changes in household family structure, in the light of human wants and needs, then one sees how flexible and efficient the family is, and its remarkable abilit y to look after its members.

This ability of the family to look after its own is a valuable asset in White South Africa, because the provision of bureaucratic aid is relatively limited in comparison with countries of Western Europe, such as Britain. The patterns of help and assistance within the family are usually two-way, and it is rare to find all the giving on one side and all the receiving on the other. In all the case histories from which I quoted in the previous three chapters the element of exchange was very strong. Sometimes the exchange was here and now, that is, one could see that the situation was advantageous to both parties; and sometimes where the flow of assistance was predominantly one way, or appeared to be, at the present time, then an examination of the family or individual history usually revealed that at some earlier time the direction of flow had been the other way.

These interpersonal links and ties also depend on love and affection. In none of the complex family households did an informant imply any dislike of their co-resident kin, however much irritation was expressed and however many complaints were aired. This is in contrast with some details quoted by Young and Willmott on the tensions of living with a mother-in-law (1957, 47). In Hartfield there was one instance of a young married couple, Mr and Mrs Goddard, who lived next door to the husband's parents, and for more than a year Mrs Goddard was "not actually on speaking terms" with her parents-in-law. Mrs Goddard said that they fell out because of her friendship with "the woman down the road, Jean, my mother-in-law doesn't like her. I've known her since I was about five . . . my mother-in-law got in a huff because I was so friendly with Jean". But Mr Goddard had not fallen out with his parents, and if he borrowed something from his mother which was delivered into Mrs Goddard's hands, then Mrs Goddard will "thank her - (but) she (will) not say a word" in reply, but just go back inside her own flat. If Mrs. Goddard and her mother-in-law meet at the home of

one of Mr Goddard's sisters, then "if one comes in (the) other goes out". Previously they had got on well together "she (did) say I was (the) best daughter-in-law". Subsequently amicable relations were resumed between Mrs Goddard and her husband's mother, but "I still don't talk to my father-in-law. If they don't speak to me I don't speak to them, (and) she spoke first", said Mrs Goddard, "about two months ago, when my husband was off (sick) with his back, she came and told me what to do for his back". There were other instances of kin living a few doors away from each other, who had cut all contact, and in one case it was the parent/child link that had been severed for several years.

Despite the embarrassments described by Mrs Goddard when she and her mother-in-law encountered each other, yet even living next door it was possible for them not to be "on speaking terms" for a year. It is obvious that it is much easier to fall out with kin who do <u>not</u> share one's meals, one's bath and all the general daily contact that must result from co-residence within one household. Living next door removes these intimacies, and that no doubt is partly what led Mrs Sadler to say, as quoted in the previous chapter, that living next door to her mother-in-law "was fine, but that living in the same household was not", that is, she probably did not like such enforced intimacies, although during interviews with Mrs Sadler her mother-in-law often dropped in from next door, and on one occasion came to use Mrs Sadler's oven to bake cakes in, which she had made for a church fete, and Mrs Sadler did not make any objection to such behaviour.

However, one must remember that such problems are connected with links between kin and affines of different generations, and those complex family households which arise from intergenerational ties seem to attract most disapproval in Hartfield, as evinced, for example, by remarks such as "people like to have their own place after they get married". So spoke an informant, Mr Visser, about his son Adriaan and his future

daughter-in-law, Johanna, who, prior to their marriage, had both been living in the Visser household. Mr Visser explained that "Adriaan's girlfriend from Weenan, she stays with us" because she had no "people" (meaning relatives) in Durban. Thus, Mr Visser's implication was that it was quite suitable to house unmarried kin, but that married kin should set up their own household. It should be noted that Mr and Mrs Visser themselves, who came from farming families, had not set up their own household on marriage, but had lived with Mr Visser's parents. Mr Visser explained that "we lived together with them" because his brothers had all left home and his parents were alone.

In Hartfield there does not seem to be any expectation that unmarried children should leave the parental home when adult. Indeed, in one case, my informant said that her husband had made their eldest daughter, Margaret, return home from Johannesburg where she had been working (and where she had lived with cousins) because he disapproved of girls living away from home. As an extension of this attitude towards unmarried children, it also seems to be considered quite suitable for an unmarried sibling to live in the household of a married sibling. One example of this was mentioned in Chapter Six, in the description of the Oxford/Buys complex family household which, for a couple of years included Mr Buys's younger brother, Hans.

No disapprobation appears to be attached in Hartfield to households which become complex temporarily, as a result of an acute crisis. For example, Mrs Sadler's sister Anne was widowed and after her husband died Anne "lived here, she wasn't turfed out of the flat" where they had been living, but "she stayed here because more convenient" when she began working, since Mrs Sadler could look after the children. This complex family household lasted "about six or eight months and then (Anne went) back to the flat".

Disapprobation was reserved especially for those complex family

households of the varieties, which in Chapter Four were classified as belonging to the series made complex vertically, particularly those cases in which parent(s) were offering a married child accommodation, and those in which a married child was accommodating elderly parent(s). Examples have been given of both these in earlier chapters, and another informant, Mr Johnston, spoke apologetically of his own mother (long since dead), because she had chosen at one period to live in her mother's household. He explained that his father had been "transferred by the railway to the Cape, for promotion", but his mother had not wanted to move to the Cape because it was "only a temporary transfer" and she "did not want to leave Durban, family and friends". Therefore, with her small children, she moved into her widowed mother's house, and there she stayed, even after her husband came back to Durban and rejoined her, and so he moved in too. Mr Johnston said of his mother that she was "very talkative, had a great deal of charm . . . on the negative side - I must be fair - she didn't like to take responsibility too much", which, he added, was one of the reasons why she was very happy to live in her mother's house.

However, the disapproval of these complex family households which was emphasised by so many informants, does not prevent their existence. This, as I have suggested, results from their usefulness, which has emerged from every case history quoted, and, furthermore, these case histories have demonstrated the adaptability of the 'family' and of the 'family household', and their ability to solve many of the problems that confront their members. Some of these complex family households only exist for a comparatively short period of time, but in other cases the situation, which may have begun as a temporary expedient, has become permanent: for example, Mrs Buys's ten years of residence in her parents' household was not the result of her making a decision ten years earlier, that she should move in for good, but rather it had been a gradual

development out of what must have originally been a temporary situation, when she needed a home and assistance after leaving her first husband.

This brings one back to the important factor of habit. Man may not be altogether conservative, but habit and custom must not be underestimated. What one has grown used to is comfortable, and, doubtless many situations drift on unchanged, through inertia, that is, if there is no real need to end a particular complex family household, then it is not ended. Such a view of complex family households sounds a little different from that of Laslett's 'null hypothesis', which I quoted on the first page of this concluding chapter. Habit also has two 'ripple' effects. First, it means that someone who has been brought up within a complex family is less liable to regard them as an undesirable aberation, and more liable to regard them as one means of resolving personal or familial problems. Second, if one lives in an area where complex family households are commonplace, then one will be less likely to recoil against living in such a household oneself.

Crises within the individual life cycle are critically important for the formation of complex family households - birth and death, marriage and divorce, illness and retirement. It is perhaps unfortunate that details about income were not asked in the door-to-door survey, because Hartfield, as an area, has an ambiguous social status; in comparison with (say) Bethnal Green, Hartfield is 'middle class'; yet compared with other White suburbs in Durban, Hartfield is 'lower middle class', at least in terms of the occupations most commonly found among the adult male population, which are either manual or those of the petit bourgeoisie. But, common as complex family households are in Hartfield, this does not, of course, mean that they are equally common in other parts of the city, where life styles and expectations may be very different.

However, there are some suburbs which are probably very like Hartfield. This is an impression gained from two points: not only do

they appear similar to Hartfield physically - with the same kind of housing, of an equivalent age, set at a similar distance from the city centre on flat land with poor climatic conditions, and with a similar series of apartment blocks springing up - but also such an impression comes from informants in Hartfield. That is, many informants had been brought up in such suburbs, or had recently lived in them, or indeed, moved to them from Hartfield, or had close kin living in them. These impressions are not quantifiable, but it is unlikely that Hartfield is unique, although, as stated in Chapter One, this is not meant to imply that Hartfield is typical of any given section of the White population of South Africa.

The importance of family and kin in the lives of the population studied is also revealed, as discussed in Chapter Eight, by the large numbers who lived nearby kin; half of the households included in the door-to-door survey had kin living in at least one other household, that was within a ten minute walk. Some of these households had kin living in more than one nearby household. In most cases there was regular and frequent contact between such related households, and it was rare for all contact to be broken, as described in the case of Mrs Goddard.

In conclusion, and to summarise, this study of complex family households in the area of Durban that I have named Hartfield, has shown that family and kin are vitally important in the lives of the people whom I studied. This study has demonstrated the existence of such households in significant proportions in Hartfield, and has shown how they are a common development within family households, as a means of resolving problems that face an individual and his kin, which cannot be solved so well by any other means. The material I have presented and the conclusions I have drawn possess much interest. First, there is a lack of ethnographic information on Whites in South Africa. Second, the material shows the importance of the 'family' in a context where it

might be thought to be relatively unimportant, both because of Durban's comparatively recent establishment, and its very rapid growth into a large city; and also because White South Africans are one of the world's most affluent groups, and the importance of kin in such wealthy groups is less definitely established than it is among the 'working classes' in industrial nations, such as in Bethnal Green. Indeed, I have found family and kin to be so generally important in Hartfield, that I have included material on extra-familial kin links to show how they complement the intra-familial kin links within the complex family households that this thesis examines.

APPENDIX

THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The interview schedule, having specified the address, date, time and length of the interview, then (in a more schematic form) asked the following questions:

1. What is the respondent's position in the household?

2. Who lives in this house? For each individual specify:
   a) relationship to respondent, if any
   b) sex
   c) age at last birthday
   d) marital status - married, single, widowed, divorced or separated
   e) religion (specify denomination)
   f) whether working full-time or part-time, not working, or being educated
   g) present occupation of working men and women, last occupation of retired or non-working men and women, and widows' deceased husband's occupation as well as own occupation, or (if being educated) name of school, college or university attended and year or standard at present
   h) highest standard or level reached in education.

3. Are there any children of the above adults living elsewhere? For each child specify as in Q.2. above and also specify:
   a) place of residence
   b) frequency of contact.

4. a) Is there anyone else who usually lives here who is at present living or staying temporarily elsewhere?
   b) Have you (or your spouse) any other relatives in Durban? Yes or No.
      (i) Do any of them live within 10 minutes walk of this house?
      If yes - where do they live?
      what is the relationship?
      what contacts exist with them?
      (ii) Do you have other relatives elsewhere in Durban?
      If yes - specify as in (i) above.

5. Have any of the adults living in this house been married more than once? If yes, obtain details.

6. Have you any lodgers or boarders? (Fill in under Q.2. as specified above).

7. What language(s) do you speak in the home? Specify whether English, Afrikaans, both English and Afrikaans, or another language (if another, which?).

8. a) How long has the family (or have the families) lived:
      (i) in this house?
      (ii) in Durban in general and this suburb in particular?
      (iii) in South Africa?
   b) Where was the wife born? Where was the husband born?
   c) How do you come to be living in this house?

9. Have you any plans to move from this house or district in the next 12 months? Yes or No. Why?

10. Do you employ any domestic servants? Female or male? Specify length of employment and race.

11. Check the initials and surname of the principal adults in the household.

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