CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer presents a review of the literature from which the study of Jim Carr's world at Manoa College was developed. The literature search for this study began with a number of important ethnographic works from outside of the field of educational research and then proceeded to identify relevant ethnographic studies centering on life in schools. The search, next, took a more specific direction as the writer explored the available writings on the school principalship itself. First, a review of literature on the principalship written by non-New Zealand based writers was undertaken; next, the researcher turned to the available literature on the New Zealand principalship. In discussing the resource material gathered from the literature, the present writer has endeavoured to portray something of the nature and flavour of each study and its contribution to the preparation of the writer in relation to his own study. Amongst the four groups of writings, of course, some works, more than others, proved to be items of greater significance to the present study.

The present study arose from two initial influences. First, in recent years, the researcher had developed a growing interest in seeking to understand the workings of schools - particularly of the principalship - from the "inside" view of actual participants in school life. A study seemed possible where the researcher might gain entry to a school in order to observe and experience the

interactions, activities and people for whom that school was an important part of their own lives. Second, the researcher had become increasingly familiar with a body of literature in the social sciences which reported studies set in a variety of social situations - ranging from the reports of anthropologists working in a range of small-scale non-Western societies to more recent reports of researchers working among specific social groups in contemporary urban society itself. These fieldworkers, from the disciplines of anthropology and sociology, reported their attempts to learn about group life at first-hand in an effort to record and explain actions, beliefs, values and mores being observed. Such studies hold the appeal of seeking to explain and learn from aspects of daily living. The common thread of these studies was provided by the researcher "living" within the group under study as a means of finding out about life in that group - gaining first-hand experience of life as close as possible to the experience of the participants themselves. Such an approach was well-suited to finding out about life in a school and to the exploration of the world of the school principal.

Having reviewed the relevant literature, the researcher considered that the present study would fill a gap in the literature as a contribution involving a qualitative study of a New Zealand secondary school principalship. The reviewed literature was used, also, to increase the researcher's knowledge from writings on the principalship and as a guide to the utility, in particular, of ethnographic studies undertaken in educational and non-educational settings.

ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF NON-EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

Introduction

A review of this field of literature is beyond the scope of the present study. The field provides major dimensions of the disciplines of anthropology and sociology. Therefore, the writer proposes to discuss in-depth two significant items from this field which provided him with an increased understanding of the potential of ethnography as a means of addressing the research question. Following this discussion, a group of supplementary works will be discussed in brief.

The Innovative Fieldwork of Malinowski

The work of Malinowski provides a valuable starting point for any neophyte ethnographer. Malinowski's thirty months' fieldwork in Melanesia during the period from 1914 to 1918 made him, in the words of his colleague, E.R. Leach, a "celebrity as an innovator in research procedures." (Malinowski 1935: vii) The reports of Malinowski's fieldwork, particularly in New Guinea and the Trobriand Islands, have assumed the importance of classics in anthropological ethnography. Certainly, the reader is likely to find few questions unanswered and very little detail missing from the portrayal of life in these Melanesian settings in Malinowski's major works. (Malinowski 1922, 1935a, 1935b) Indeed, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, first published in 1922 and a number of times in recent years, contains almost 600 pages of detailed discussion and explanation of the "kula," a complex system of exchange which existed

among a number of Melanesian groups. Malinowski's discussion is as diverse as the peoples themselves, yet always maintains a central focus on the kula. The reader is presented with a picture of the place played in the lives of Melanesian peoples by the elaborate kula system. Malinowski presents, for example, the ritual of constructing a canoe, the magic associated with the ceremony, the part played by language, the artifacts which are involved in the exchange system, the technicalities of exchange and the techniques of sailing. His later works, Coral Gardens and Their Magic, first published in 1935, provide similarly detailed and documented accounts of agricultural practices, language and magic in the Trobriand Islands.

What did the work of Malinowski contribute to an understanding of a New Zealand secondary school principalship? The answer to this question lies on two levels. First, Malinowski's work highlights the emphasis of the ethnographer on the concept of culture. "The organization of the tribe, and the anatomy of its culture must be recorded in firm, clear outline," Malinowski wrote, going on to stress the importance of the ethnographer coming to grips with "the imponderabilia of actual life", (Malinowski 1922: 24) a phrase which suggests that the ethnographer must seek to observe in minute detail and in close contact with his subjects in order to delve further than the clearly definable behaviour being observed and in order to identify the subtle tones of expression and mood. The description of the spirit in which actions occur will give life and accuracy to any framework of explanation which is developed by the ethnographer. Malinowski's advice for research at Manoa College, therefore, would

stress the need to seek the nuances of behaviour occurring in the natural setting under observation. The implication of this delving is that the ethnographer goes much further than simply telling a story of what he or she has seen. Malinowski suggested that the development of knowledge and understanding came through careful investigation of one's data: first, by a "surface attack" in which data are carefully gathered; second, through seeking to identify cross-references between items of data; and, third, by careful synthesis of those inter-relationships into one general assessment of the part played by, for example, agriculture in tribal life. (Malinowski 1935a) This approach is very much akin to the grounded theory approach which, as discussed in the previous chapter, was to be utilised in the Manoa College study. However, Malinowski provided the present researcher with a clear statement of direction:

> Ethnography...ought to justify its appearance in several points. It ought to show some advance in method; it ought to push research beyond its previous limits in depth, in width, or in both; it ought to present its results in a manner exact, but not dry.
>
> (Malinowski in Kaberry 1957: 90)

On a second level, that of fieldwork strategies, Malinowski's work contributed to the present study. He warned of his despondency in the early stages of his research, the need for patience as "the ethnographer has not only to spread his nets in the right place but wait for what will fall into them," the need to ensure that one is not pursuing an artificial inquiry in isolation from the total way of life being observed and the need to beware of the lure of the dramatic and sensational events rather than everyday activities. (Malinowski 1922, 1935a)

Malinowski, however, did not provide guidance on all features of ethnographic research. The intent at Manoa College developed into a plan to focus on Jim Carr in the study whereas Malinowski almost always portrayedthe social group - individuals appeared rarely on the scene. The recent publication of Malinowski's diary warned of the psychological demands on the ethnographer in the field with the feelings of alienation, homesickness and loneliness - factors not made public in the original works themselves. (Young 1979: 12) In fact, the publication of the diary portrayed Malinowski as an ethnographer whose "much vaunted powers of empathy are little in evidence in the figure who emerges from the Diary." (Young 1979: 12) Finally, although Malinowski sometimes placed himself in his own accounts by use of the personal pronoun "I", he provided almost no comment on the effect which he might have had on the people being investigated.

Whyte's Focus on the Individual

Whyte, too, began his early reading of the social anthropology literature with Malinowski's works. (Whyte 1955: 286) Turning from training as an economist to a sociologist-social anthropologist, Whyte spent a substantial part of 1936-37 in "Cornerville," an urban slum district in a major American city. Whyte's use of an ethnographic approach enabled him to look, not at general characteristics of people, but at individual informants. Street Corner Society is valuable for several reasons. The book shows clearly that the culture of a group can be penetrated from the outside, that it can be seen from the perspective of the people

themselves and that their culture can be presented in an orderly fashion. However, whereas one gets the feeling of "meeting" very few individual Trobrianders in Malinowski's works, Whyte's informants are vividly placed at the forefront of proceedings in the life of Cornerville. Doc and his corner-boy gang are real people. The reader gets the feeling that real people have been encountered: Doc, Danny, Mike, Angelo, Nutsy and all the other inhabitants of Cornerville.

What did the researcher learn from Whyte's study that might help gain an understanding of the New Zealand secondary school principalship? In short, the thrill and challenge of research in the field - the immediacy of the research task, the undertaking of research in the real world - are features that make a strong impression from Whyte's work. The focus on individuals is of the kind which Wolcott later used in sharing Ed Bell's school world in an ethnographic study of a similar kind. (Wolcott 1973) Whyte, too, moved beyond simply telling a story. Out of the mass of his experiences and data came a series of theoretical ideas. The reader encounters the ideas which the researcher explored on social structure, political activity, leadership and mobility. From observation of a segment of society, Whyte was able to generate ideas from the data he gathered and the experiences he underwent. He compared this process with that of living in a community, in which experience and observation and thinking gradually bring understanding. (Whyte 1955:279) For the present researcher, however, Street Corner Society "came alive" even more clearly when Whyte gave eighty pages to telling his story of undertaking the research. Again, Doc and the other inhabitants move in and out of the pages - people who became not only the subjects

of research but also, as individuals, a source of learning for the researcher. The Cornerville study evolved in what seemed to Whyte like an unscientific way. Cornerville was not chosen on any empirical basis: "I made my choice on very unscientific grounds: Cornerville best fitted my picture of what a slum district should look like." (Whyte 1955:283) The focus and the method were developed as time passed and in relation to Whyte's capabilities as an individual researcher. Whyte outlined his first meeting with Doc, who became the key informant of the study, and his own experiences in the field - from taking a local girl dancing to realising the genuine concern for his care shown by Whyte's landlords. The picture emerges not only of a study of human individuals but also of a study conducted by the ethnographer as a human being with his own shortcomings, sense of inquiry and concerns - features expressed in the following extract in which Whyte reported his first attempts to begin fieldwork:

> I picked on the Regal Hotel, which was on the edge of Cornerville. With some trepidation I climbed the stairs to the bar....There were women present all right, but none of them was alone....I was determined not to admit defeat without a struggle. I looked around me again and noticed a threesome: one man and two women. It occurred to me that here was a maldistribution of females which I might be able to rectify. I approached the group and opened with something like this: "Pardon me. Would you mind if I joined you?" There was a moment of silence while the man stared at me. He then offered to throw me downstairs. I assured him that this would not be necessary and demonstrated as much by walking right out of there without any assistance. I subsequently learned that hardly anyone from Cornerville ever went into the Regal Hotel.
>
> (Whyte 1955: 289-290)

Whyte's study provided an approach for looking at the principalship at Manoa College: the present researcher gained a feeling of security from knowing that his study, too, did not begin in a statistically selected site while it was hoped that Jim Carr, the occupant of a key leadership position at Manoa College, might prove to be a valuable informant and focus of the study in the same way as Doc had proven to be in Whyte's research.

A Selection of Other Relevant Studies

As noted earlier, a review of all literature available for this aspect of the study is beyond the scope of this review. The researcher, however, did read widely in the field of traditional and contemporary ethnography drawn from the disciplines of anthropology and sociology. Goffman (1961) reported on his year-long observational study of life in a mental home and reaffirmed the value of such an approach:

> It was then and still is my prime belief that any group of persons - prisoners, primitives, pilots, or patients - develops a life of their own that becomes meaningful, reasonable, and normal once you get close to it, and that a good way to learn about any of those worlds is to submit oneself to the company of the members to the daily round of petty contingencies to which they are subject.
>
> (Goffman 1961: ix-x)

Careful analysis, at a personal level, of eight migrants in Jos, Nigeria, was a feature of Plotnicov's case study approach to finding about the life of migrant people from the perspective he termed "ego-orientated" (Plotnicov 1967: 13) while Liebow's (1967)

study held much in common with Whyte's (1955) work; again, reporting on life in a street group; this time in Washington D.C. Arensberg and Kimball (1940) studied life in a small community in Ireland while Read (1966) presented a picture of life in a non-Western setting in the high valleys of New Guinea. As case studies in cultural anthropology, Holmes (1974) and Keiser (1969) portrayed, respectively, life in a Samoan village and a Chicago street gang. Homan's work (1975) has assumed the dimensions of a classic in sociology. The work is a gathering of source material ranging from life in Tikopia to life in street corner society but the concrete and theoretical images centre on small group life being synonymous with daily life. A picture emerges of small group interaction being a crucial feature of the human experience. Small groups, Homans suggests, (1975: 453-454) capture our interest, get things done, provide society with cohesion and show society in microcosm.

The selection of studies discussed above held several unifying features of relevance to the researcher's work at Manoa College. In each case, the ethnographer spent a substantial period in the field primarily as an observer of cultural life as it occurred in daily living. The subjective life of people in each group was placed under close scrutiny by the researcher. As was the case with the works of Malinowski and Whyte, the writers about daily life in non-educational settings provided a strong measure of guidance for the present research together with confirmation of the suitability of the ethnographic approach planned for the study of Jim Carr's school world.

Finally, Spradley and McCurdy (1972) collected a

series of ethnographies written by their own undergraduate students as training exercises in ethnographic fieldwork and writing. The series of short ethnographies focussed on such groups as airline stewardesses, kitchen workers, fire fighters, life during second-grade recess in a school, life in an urban jewellery store and life in a third-grade classroom. The book is useful, too, as a practical guide to the fieldworker and contains simple explanations of a number of methodological issues such as choosing a group, working with informants and the processing of data. Spradley and McCurdy distinguished between "cultural scenes" and "recurrent social situations":

> A cultural scene is the information shared by two or more people that defines some aspect of their experience. Cultural scenes are closely linked to recurrent social situations. The latter are settings for action, made up of actions and artifacts that can be observed by the outsider; the former are the definitions of these situations held by the insider.
>
> (Spradley and McCurdy 1972:24)

Spradley and McCurdy's beginning ethnographers were advised to study cultural scenes by looking for the social situations consisting of people, their interactions, and their location - observable situations which provide the fieldworker with a "springboard" from which to explore cultural scenes for the purpose of description and explanation. Of course, too, individuals can function in a variety of cultural scenes.

The writer next reviews a group of studies of life in schools.

ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF LIFE IN SCHOOLS

Introduction

The research question which developed in the Manoa College study pointed the researcher toward a range of literature sources. Although the early reading was directed at neither schools nor the principalship, the next step involved consideration of published works detailing life in schools. The intention in reviewing these items is to share their flavour and to note any relationship to the present study.

The Portrayal of School Culture by Willis

Willis (1977) immediately aroused interest in the present writer's mind with his report of life for boys in a secondary school in "Hammertown" - a small town in central England. Willis's ethnographic data were gathered in his role as a participant observer in the school. His attention was placed on the boys during school hours and during their placements for direct experience in the work force.

The qualitative methods - mainly of participant observation - when combined with an ethnographic presentation format were well-suited to Willis's interest in the "cultural". (Willis 1977:3) He was able, sensitively, to observe and record meanings and values as well as being able to represent and interpret symbolic acts, expressions and other forms of cultural production. Ethnography, for Willis, allowed the humanity and activity of the boys to permeate through the researcher's description and analysis of working class life in Hammertown.

As participant observer, Willis observed boys inside and outside of classrooms, supplementing the data with group interviews, informal discussions and diaries. His particular interest was in the transition from school to work but the outcome was an ethnography of the school in which Willis interpreted the organization of the school through the meanings which he had gathered from the boys (or, the "lads") themselves. The formal or official culture of the school is contrasted clearly with the culture of the lads who seem constantly to seek to counter the norms and beliefs promoted by the school's adult leaders:

> This opposition is expressed mainly as a style. It is lived out in countless small ways which are special to the school institution, instantly recognized by the teachers, and an almost ritualistic part of the daily fabric of life for the kids.
>
> (Willis 1977:12)

The appeal of Willis's study for the present researcher lay in the intimate picture of actual life, in the school, often expressed in the boys' words, which is presented in Learning to Labour as well as the portrayal and interpretation of the lads' own school world. The ethnographic description is not only vivid but also it captures the nuances of human behaviour. The following excerpt illustrates this point:

> In the corridors, there is a foot-dragging walk, an overfriendly "hello" or sudden silence as the deputy passes. Derisive or insane laughter erupts which might or might not be about someone who has just passed... There is a way of standing collectively down the sides of the corridor to form an Indian gauntlet run - though this can never be proved: "We're just waiting for Spanksy, Sir."
>
> (Willis 1977:13)

Other Studies of Life in Schools

Two further British studies, like Willis, (1977) demonstrated the value of observation and exploration and an ability to delve deeply behind the formal structure of the school in penetrating the school world of the boys. Lacey (1970) studied a grammar school from the perspective of a teacher and observer for a period of 18 months in the early-1960's. Questionnaire material was used although Lacey mainly utilized the opportunities afforded for data collection by his own presence as a member of the school. The book does "tell it like it is" at Hightown Grammar but, even more importantly, Lacey developed two theoretical terms: "differentiation" and "polarisation" - the first of which was a product of the official value system of the school and was a normative basis for ranking pupils while the second of which occurred amongst the pupils themselves and was characterised by behaviour which would bring a certain prestige to a boy by his inverting of the school's teacher-promoted values. (Lacey 1970:58) Lacey concluded by stressing the importance and significance of sub-cultural groups in school life. He wrote:

> The general direction is clear. The major objective for those interested in increasing the supply of highly trained personnel from our schools must be the anti-group sub-cultures within secondary schools.
>
> (Lacey 1970:193)

Corrigan (1979) taught in a school at the same time as he gathered his data as part of "my reading of the boys in Sunderland...." (ibid: 3) This reading focussed on the boys both in and out of school. Even Corrigan's chapter questions are framed in the boy's terms: "Why do kids muck about in class?" "Why do boys choose dead-end jobs?" The researcher acknowledged his own learning

during the experience: "I went to start my research with one view of education and left with another." (Corrigan 1979:2) This learning from the boys, the data and the experience, culminates in an expressed need for schooling and all social relationships to be transformed in order that young people might gain power over their own lives. Corrigan's final message summarised his learning and the implications this learning holds for school curricula. However, he highlighted, too, the learnings to be gained from the intimate study of people in the context of their real lives, in order to learn from one's subjects. Corrigan noted:

> Such a solution may seem a long way from truancy. If so, I am sorry, but blame the kids, they led me there....the burden that we all carry is to create history ourselves and to change the world so that history lessons are no longer about Great Men and Great Women, but more the story of you, me and the Smash Street Kids.
>
> (Corrigan 1979:154)

A detailed description and analysis of life in the classrooms and corridors of two urban high schools in U.S.A. was provided by Metz (1978) who gathered her data as a participant observer in classrooms, assemblies, meetings and the general school environment in which she followed individual students and teachers, each for a day. As well, Metz carried out open-ended interviews with faculty members and collected a wide range of documents such as bulletins and handbooks. Metz focussed on the ways in which students and staff members related to the dual tasks of pursuing education and maintaining order, because, as she noted, "We need to know what schools do, why they do it, and with what consequences before we describe what they should do differently". (Metz 1978:ix) By seeking to identify and

examine situations of conflict, tension and crisis, Metz was able to investigate the assumptions and sanctions underlying control mechanisms and relationships in the two schools. The investigator meticulously sought to remain an objective observer of events, to carefully cross-check the data gathered and to confine her conclusions without creating sweeping generalisations.

Bullivant's study (1978) focussed on life in an Orthodox Jewish day-school in Melbourne, Australia. In undertaking the study, Bullivant fulfilled two roles - of secondary school teacher and anthropologist - for 14 months, using participant observation to investigate the feelings and values of people involved in the life of Lubavitcher School. Bullivant, who described his approach as neo-ethnographic, was able to study the functioning of the school through its annual cycles of religious and academic life, by means of teaching and attending school functions and excursions ranging from assemblies and speech nights to ritual ceremonies such as a Bar Mitzvah and worship in the Synagogue. Bullivant's study demonstrated the ways in which the school's historical origins dominated each facet of life in the school: from architecture to curriculum, from timetabling to dress, from teaching activities to ritual life. In attempting to investigate the range of areas, while still being a teacher, Bullivant experienced puzzlement from his students: "...they were unexpected contacts which did not match their expectations of me as a teacher". (Bullivant 1978:240) Bullivant identified three cultures operative in the school: Western, industrial, technological culture expressed by such features as preparation for external examinations; general Jewish culture deriving from ethnic background and group consciousness and loyalty;

and, an "ideational" culture involving values of non-materialism, transcendentalism and the supernatural. The study involved Bullivant as a student of one facet of contemporary Australian society, yet being in the role of the traditional ethnographer conducting a study of another culture.

Three studies by American writers, reported as separate contributions in a series of monographs, "Case Studies in Education and Culture", placed schooling in a cultural context in three different countries. The interest of these studies for the present writer is that, once again, the researchers placed themselves in the mode of participant observer, being in class-rooms, trying to experience and view schooling from the perspective of children, teachers and parents. Wolcott (1967) taught in the small Kwakiutl village school while Singleton (1967) and Spindler (1974) lived in the communities of their studies in Japan and West Germany. The three studies presented vivid pictures of schooling in each community but, in addition, carefully placed this schooling in the cultural context of the local community.

The first year's operation of a new, innovative elementary school in U.S.A. was studied by Smith and Keith.(1971) After a prolonged period of participant observation at Kensington School, the writers were sufficiently intimate with the school and its staff members to be able to carefully describe, analyse and theorise about the range of innovations which occurred throughout that first year. The innovations which received the attention of both staff members and researchers included the themes of open-space building design, democratic administration, team teaching, and

individualized curriculum and instruction - major elements in elementary education of the time. (Smith and Keith 1971:327)

The group of studies reviewed in this section of the present thesis shared common elements of intimacy between researchers and their subjects, participant observation as the research technique used to gather the subjects' perspectives of life at school, an extensive period of fieldwork and a concern with the concept of culture. Although many lessons were presented for the ethnographer about to embark on a fieldwork enterprise, the most significant difference between the studies reviewed and the Manoa College study would lie in the latter's emphasis on an individual person, Jim Carr, in the life of the college. With this focus on the principal in mind, it is appropriate to consider the literature available on the school principalship.

THE PRINCIPALSHIP: LITERATURE FROM OUTSIDE NEW ZEALAND

Introduction

Practitioners and students of the principalship have available to them a wide selection of resource material relating to aspects of the work of school principals. The bulk of this material is normative or advisory in its nature and emphasis. However, since the early 1970's, a movement expressing a different perspective has become clearly discernible in the literature. This movement has begun to place a strong focus on developing an understanding of the principal's work as it actually occurs in the school situation. In reviewing the literature from outside New Zealand, it is intended to indicate briefly the range of normative literature and to consider in greater depth the reports of work in the newly developing field of investigation.

Normative or Advisory Literature Concerning the Principalship

There is no shortage of resource material from the general field of educational administration. Both practitioner and student have available a wide range of textbook material which is typified by its attention to a series of topics which have tended to be seen as providing a conceptual basis for understanding areas of concern to school administrators. The general, introductory text is likely to consist of a collection of chapters on a series of themes which address the task of running a school: leadership,

organizational theory, decision making, climate, change, motivation, for example. Representative writers in this large group of resources include: Hoy and Miskel, (1982) Gorton, (1976) Owens, (1981) Newell, (1978) Tronc, (1977a,b) Hanson, (1979) Morphet, Johns and Reller (1982) and Sergiovanni, Burlinghame, Coombs and Thurston. (1980) The last writers, in fact, have begun to consider the nature and tasks of administrators, having been influenced, in particular, by the work of Mintzberg. (1973) In general, however, such writers have tended to present principals and practitioners with books of substantial proportion in which are presented eclectic collections of concepts, research and strategies which the reader is asked to consider. Similarly, some writers have written in depth about more specialised fields of administration: e.g. Rebore (1982) on personnel administration, Tronc (1977c) on financial management, and Mackie (1977) on philosophical concerns.

A scanning of the bibliography of the present work will indicate a selection of available journals and articles which have endeavoured to address themselves to both the practioner and the student of the principalship. The Australian Administrator and the Canadian Administrator, however, are publications which present an unobtrusive message of the principal's world being perceived as a place which, in fact, may not be quite as neatly or as logically organized as might be the picture developed by a reading of the textbook material. These two journals are presented in the form of a series of single item issues which can quickly and easily be read by a principal without being faced by a production of voluminous dimensions. Collections of papers have tended to bring together

the thinking and research of a range of writers on concerns similar to those contained in the general textbooks. Hughes, (1970) Walker, (1970) Walker, Crane and Thomas (1973) and Bush, Glatter, Goodey and Riches (1980) provide examples of these types of publication.

Colgate (1976) and Watson (1975) illustrate writings of an hortatory kind. Colgate drew on his experience as a secondary school principal and suggested an analytic framework by which a principal might consider performance in the job. His framework is prescriptive and asked four main questions: Where are you? Where are you going? How will you get there? How will you know when you have arrived? Watson described his view of three successful principals - "three who made a difference" - (Watson 1975:1) concluding, on the basis of his own comments only, that their "humaneness" (ibid:4) was a shared factor in their ability to fill the role of principal.

Cockerill (1979) not only stressed the importance of the principal as a coordinator but also indicated the influence of the way in which the principal perceives life in the day-by-day actual world. She urged principals to consider themselves in action: "Is he receptive to new ideas?" "Does he have great tolerance for frustration?" (Cockerill 1979:38) So much of what principals do, Cockerill concluded, depends on the perceptive understanding they have of everyday things.(ibid:41)

A smaller group of books have been addressed directly at principals. Bassett, Crane and Walker, (1967) Walker, (1965) Lipham and Hoeh (1974) and

Tronc (1977b) are examples of this group. The last work, however, differs from the others in that it contains a selection of tasks for simulation by principals as professional development exercises - tasks which were selected as realistically representing the actual work found in a principal's world. Similarly, Lipham had combined with Hoeh, a practising secondary school principal, in an effort to produce a book which would communicate to practitioners.

Survey Literature Concerning the Principalship

The literature appears to contain many more normative or advisory resources on the principalship than survey material. Wolcott (1973: 57-62) compared his subject, Ed Bell, with the results of a major survey conducted among United States elementary school principals in 1968. The survey contained 98 items but concentrated largely on factors which were easily measured (e.g. age, salary, college degree, years in the principalship). Some 2,300 principals responded to the survey and indicated their own views on some aspects of their work, such as, whether or not each person saw him or herself playing a role in curriculum and the role played by each in design, policy development and budget preparation. Hood (1969) administered a questionnaire to 21 elementary school principals and 144 teachers in Michigan as a means of determining the nature of the relationship between the principals' role and the concepts of role effectiveness, role ambiguity and role conflict. The findings tended to be inconclusive although Hood did show that an increase in conflict over needs satisfaction resulted in a decline in role effectiveness.

Vidich and McReynolds,(1971) reporting on 23 individual interviews and four group discussions with 12 high school principals, showed their sample to be "architects of the status quo" (ibid:207) rather than innovators and educators in response to the constraints imposed by the social problems of the city. Wells (1978) applied a questionnaire to 20 elementary school principals in Colorado in an attempt to identify the major responsibilities of this sample. He found that the group showed no agreement over their responsibilities but they did note that they would prefer to spend more time on curriculum matters. The group of studies reviewed in this present section of this thesis can only be seen as having marginal relevance to the present study. Three studies concerned the elementary principalship, two used small samples as a basis of their statistical analyses and two of the works were undertaken almost twenty years ago. The review does show, however, a lack of any large-scale data base gained about the principalship.

This lack of a data base has been addressed in a substantial manner in Australia where Duignan (1984) led a team of researchers in investigating the role and professional development needs of principals in government and non-government schools. The researchers began by reviewing studies on the role of the principal and proceeded to make use of face-to-face interviews of 47 principals, telephone interviews of 49 principals, case studies of 14 schools and questionnaires administered to a random sample of 1590 principals. Data were gathered from primary and secondary principals and schools. Principals and other people tended to view the role of principal differently. Principals tended to consider themselves as not appearing on

"centre stage" while staff, students, and employing authorities tended to perceive the principal as a "leading actor". (Duignan 1984:60) Many elements of the task of principal were identified although such facets as "establishing and maintaining good relationships", "stimulating and motivating staff to maximum performance" and "knowledge of general student needs" were placed statistically at the "most important" end of a scale determining aspects of the role. By comparison, "preparing reports," "maintaining records" and "allocating resources" were seen as only being "moderately important." (ibid:61-62) In the area of professional development needs, specific needs identified included the need for help in: stimulating and motivating staff, school evaluation, the legalities of schools, counselling staff and parents, coping with job stress and the general field of improving competence in organizational and educational matters. (ibid:73-75) Principals reported, too, on the constraints they faced on the job: mainly being concerned with a lack of time for principals' own and staff development and the constraints on professional performance brought about by involvement in the variety of tasks and responsibilities which make up the principalship. The study concluded with profiles of the principalship in a range of Australian schools, including several secondary schools. As a means of providing an overview of the school principalship in Australia, the report presents a comprehensive picture of the principalship in general while the profiles assist in bringing the statistical data "closer to home" in the actual world of a representative group of principals.

An Emerging Field in the Contemporary Literature on the School Principalship

This review of literature has implied a lack of documentation and analysis of the school world of the principal. In the last decade, however, a significant trend has become apparent as researchers have begun to address this void. This trend has largely, although not exclusively, emerged in Australia where a sequence of studies have been reported.

O'Dempsey (1976) reported on his study in which he sought to find out what principals really did in relation to the various statements as to what they should do: "In other words, an attempt was made to examine the gap between theory and practice." (ibid:1) O'Dempsey took as his starting point studies in non-educational organizations - particularly Mintzberg's study (1973) which had a similar focus. The process of structured observation was used by the researcher to gather data to undertake a time analysis of the work activities, work patterns and roles of three Australian high school principals. O'Dempsey noted that twenty days of observation, in depth, compensated for any lack of breadth in the sample. Each principal was observed, first, as a single day's pilot study, and, second, for one week. O'Dempsey developed three instruments: an Activity Record, a Mail Record and an After-Hours Record. The researcher avoided making value judgements on the quality of the administrative behaviour being observed and he asked questions to clarify any observation which might be mis-interpreted. The findings included points such as:

> Principals are scanners not readers, and prefer a verbal contact world. As evidence of this, approximately 68% of average time is spent in

> face-to-face contact...
>
> Principals - it appears - are always available - a point well underlined by the average period of only 19 minutes which they give each week to tea and meal breaks whilst at school.
>
> ...they (the principals) lead a non-stop, physically exhausting existence (to which they have seemingly become conditioned) characterised by extreme brevity, variety and fragmentation of contacts and by interruptions and movement.
>
> (O'Dempsey 1976:2-3)

O'Dempsey concluded that his study partially determined that a gap existed between theory and practice. This gap, O'Dempsey considered, resulted from the existence of "administrative pathologies" which had been noted first by Carlson (1951) in Sweden and which seemed, to O'Dempsey, to be as important as the traditional major areas of administration (planning, coordinating, etc) and closely linked with these areas. "Together," O'Dempsey concluded, "they are the weft and warp of the fabric of administration." (O'Dempsey 1976:4) He wrote:

> The roles that principals adopt fall into two major sub-divisions - those associated directly with the educative processes of learning and teaching, and those arising from their clerical-administrative duties. Each area has a separate authority base.... Tension and conflict are undoubtedly occupational hazards of principals who, perhaps more than any other executives, are "men in the middle"; yet no study seems to have been made of those who, for one reason or another, have become administrative "casualties" to determine the causes, extent and consequences of such attrition.
>
> (O'Dempsey 1976:3-4)

In a subsequent study, Willis (1980a) observed three school principals at work. Willis's work was strongly influenced by two studies published in 1973. Wolcott (1973) reported on his year-long ethnographic study of an elementary school principal. Wolcott's study will be reviewed later in this chapter.

Mintzberg (1973) studied five managers, observing each for a week: a consulting firm's chief executive, a research company president, a hospital director, a manufacturing company's president and a superintendent of schools. Each subject carried major responsibilities and was knowledgeable about management theory and techniques. The research arose from Mintzberg's thinking that most managers seemed to find it difficult to control their daily work. As well as developing a taxonomy of managerial roles, Mintzberg demonstrated that his managers: worked at an unrelenting pace rather than as reflective, systematic thinkers; performed a regular pattern of tasks although seeming to prefer the fragmented and varied activities of their daily work; acted as gatekeepers between the organization and the environment; and made greater use of immediate verbal communication. He suggested that there might genuinely be a gap between theory and the reality of the working world of his sample of managers. Weick (1974:111,118) noted the major importance of Mintzberg's work in describing and analysing the work of practising managers.

Willis observed three secondary school principals at work, each for a period of three weeks. Each principal also noted "after hours" work activities in a diary during this period. From his observations,

Willis was able to record details about each principal's work: duration, medium, purpose, location, the nature of each contact and the type of each work activity. He noted, "...the observation of the three principals provided an intimate experience of school life". (Willis 1980a:33) Willis consciously endeavoured to maintain a minimum amount of interaction between himself and each subject in order to lessen any effect which his presence may have had on the behaviour of each principal.

Willis concluded with the construction of a model of the principalship expressed as a series of twelve propositions representing the conclusions derived from this study. (Willis 1980a:50-51) He was able to substantiate a range of characteristic features of the three principalships which he had observed:

* Principals can work through a range of media but are susceptible to interruption, superficiality and discontinuity.
* The principal's job is people-centred - predominantly in one-to-one situations.
* Planning of a principal's work is limited in effect.
* Much of a principal's work is invisible to other people.
* The variety and uncertainty of the job hinder the filling of descriptive roles for principals.
* A principal's work requires a global overview of the whole school.
* Principals provide a school with its main link to the external environment.
* Principals have some degree of choice in the selection of tasks they will undertake and this provides at least some control over their work.
* The principalship consists of two interwoven orientations: administration and management.
* A principal's work extends outside the school environment.
* The core element of a principal's work is communication.

> * The principal's work is an "intensive technology" which imposes stresses on the incumbent and makes difficult preparation for the job.
>
> (Willis 1980b:50-51)

Of his sample of three Victorian secondary school principals, Willis's portrayal of the principalship is valid and accurate. The unique approach to the study of a principal's work, the depth of analysis of data which Willis achieved and the clear picture he presented of his principals' work made the study a major contribution to the development of the present writer's research at Manoa College. The study highlighted characteristics of the work aspect of the principals in the study. However, the present writer felt a wish to go beyond a principal's work and to seek to gain an understanding of a principal's life in his school world. This "life" would be likely to include more than an examination of the work of a principal.

The study of the three Victorian principals has been reported in several sources. (e.g. Willis 1980b, 1982) In commenting on Willis's study, Batchler (1981:4) summed up the significance of the contribution. Batchler noted that this work has helped:

> ...trace a progression from "what is administrative behaviour?" to "what is it that school administrators do?" - a move from the global to the specific, from our management heritage literature to a narrower focus upon educational administration. So also we might trace a concomitant change in methods of inquiry from armchair theorizing and presciptions based on personal experience through to a sleuthing approach - a tracking of the prey in its own environment.
>
> (Batchler 1981:4)

The emerging trend in the Australian literature on the principalship, next, included research by Thomas, Phillipps and Adamson (1981) who sought to address the question, "What do we really know about the administrative behaviours of school principals?" The researchers used non-participant observation for three consecutive weeks to gather data on the nature and location of activities and the people with whom interactions were made. The researchers sought precision in their recording of activities by timing them to the nearest second. The report summarised "just an ordinary day" and then presented the total figures for the three weeks: the number of activities in which the principal was engaged, the number of interruptions, the number of mail items processed, the time spent in various activities and locations and the time spent on the job. Thomas and his colleagues endeavoured to move beyond the more readily observable and quantifiable items of work with the observed principal by gathering data on decisions made during the three weeks of observation. In addition to noting that 186 decisions were made, these decisions were grouped into nine categories by the researchers with regard to the type of decision. They included several direct comments made by the principal and, in this way, the reader does manage to be taken beyond the bare statistics of the study. The researchers also recorded a description of the principal's office and a list of examples of books consulted during the observation period. They noted:

> Neilson's determination to instil tidy habits into his staff and students must have been reinforced when they visited his study. This room was seen to be less than immaculate on only one occasion....
>
> (Thomas, Phillipps and Adamson 1981:14)

The comment, however, appears to be an interpretation of the researchers rather than an interpretation determined from the respondents. The research did proceed beyond any strict limitation solely to principals' "work" as it endeavoured to explore some aspects of behaviour. In a second report on the study, Phillipps and Thomas (1982) made a further analysis of their principals' decisions and identified, with examples, eighteen different decision types made by the members of the sample.

In a further Australian study, Deece (1983) observed a sample of three central school principals - comparable in the New Zealand situation to principals of area schools which offer education for pupils from five years of age to school leaving. Deece identified nine work characteristics: (ibid: 155-165) brevity, variety, fragmentation, invisibility, emphasis on secondary matters, preference for live action, preference for verbal media, superficiality of tasks and a concern for the specific.
Deece began his work from the premise that the principal is the key person in the school. He undertook a week's continuous structured observation of three central school principals and he focussed on two basic properties of the principal's work - the duration and frequency of the activities involved. Deece noted the need to determine what central school principals actually do on the job. He used, too, a somewhat familiar set of questions to gather data on work activities of his sample of principals, their verbal contacts, work patterns and mail, as well as the variations which existed among the principals and the extent to which these could be attributed to the person, the job, the organization and the environment.

Deece concluded:

> The central school principal's day as revealed through the use of continuous sustained observation has been shown to be hectic in pace, liable to frequent interruption, superficial in task and heavily concerned with personal conversation. If the principal is to be able to survive he must be able to cope with such characteristics. This is both the price and challenge of the job.
>
> (Deece 1983:172)

An ethnographic study of four principals was undertaken by Lanyon (1982) who spent two weeks with each of four principals of schools in New South Wales. Lanyon made a significant step beyond studying only the work of his sample of principals and provided a picture of the broader position of the principalship:

> Free of a tight definition of his duties, spared of any critical measure of achievement, supported by an elaborate bureaucracy above and by a professional staff below (to whom he could delegate virtually everything but his signature), expected to dominate major decisions, to create structures which co-ordinate communications and which control the school's finances and seen by most people to be legally and correctly, singularly responsible for the whole school, the principal has the potential power to considerably shape or alter his school, but an equal opportunity to bring about no changes at all. The presence of a large body of young children contributes to the tendency for a principal to use his power to veto, deflect, defuse, dismantle or deny, any idea that even remotely contains the possibility of danger to the life, limb or emotional stability of his clients.
>
> (Lanyon 1982:381)

Lanyon showed how his group of principals differed in their incumbency of the principalship due to the

varying influences of each school's community and curriculum. He noted the phenomenon of a harmony or congruence between each principal and school. The study is important, overall, for Lanyon's move beyond the work done by each principal. The researcher not only gathered his data but also addressed it with a degree of innovative thought - as illustrated, in what is probably Lanyon's most innovative thinking exercise, when he reported:

> A mind exercise, once carried out by the researcher, was to place Mr Green in the other three schools in an attempt to imagine the consequences, similarly with the other three principals.
>
> (Lanyon 1982:410)

This was not an easy experiment since each principal seemed comfortable in his own school. Each principal appeared to be in harmony with the structures and people who presented themselves to him each morning.

Cook (1983) has taken this move beyond the work of principals with his study which is presently in progress and which is comparable in scope and focus to the Manoa College study. Cook's study is based mainly on observation but "... my study is not of the structured Mintzbergian type." (ibid:4) Cook has undertaken unstructured observations and, by description and interpretation, is attempting to set the principal in the context of his life and work as portrayed from the insider's view. Cook is endeavouring to gain an understanding of what it means to be an Australian Catholic primary school principal in Victoria. During 1982, Cook was present in the school for seven weeks in order to observe the principal, "Tom", for some 200 hours. Other casual visits followed in addition to a further week with Tom following the latter's transfer to a new principalship in another state. Cook is drawing on a wide range of

data in his interpretive study. He has observed Tom closely, interviewed a range of informants and built up an extensive data base:

> The result has been a "rich" and "deep" body of information about Tom that shall enable me to write about him in a burgeoning network of life/work contexts: familial, educational, religious, professional, recreational, historical. As I have approached my task of seeking to find out the meaning and significance of the catholic principalship to Tom, I have made a consistent effort to interpret the significance of data within Tom's own contexts... and expressing what is, in fact, an insider's view of the cultural milieu of this particular principal....
>
> (Cook 1983:3)

This group of Australian studies of the principalship have been reviewed as a sequence as, in the present writer's view, they present an emerging picture of the principalship - a picture based on observation of the principals at work - and demonstrate a move beyond normative or anecdotal commentaries on the principalship to the descriptive and interpretive work of Lanyon and Cook which holds similarities to the present study. There is, too, a further group of studies, largely concerned with the principalship, of relevance to the present work.

Other Qualitative Studies Concerning the Principalship

American literature is discussed in this section and is reviewed as a group of works with relevance to the study at Manoa College.

Kelly (1974) reported her ethnographic study based

on almost three semesters' observation of a secondary school principal in U.S.A. The study concentrated on the work component of the job but considered, too, the principal's out-of-school activities. Allen's (1979) study of a secondary school principal in Jamaica was undertaken, as with the Manoa College study, to fill a gap in the literature by describing and explaining an actual principalship. Apart from Allen's use of a questionnaire, the data gathering methods were similar, too, while the study went beyond the principal's work and presented a picture of the principalship as being a position involving not only responsibility but also considerable power and prestige. Noblit and Johnston (1982) used a collection of ethnographic studies of school principals and their "typical" days in order to demonstrate the influence which a principal can have on a school's climate. Peterson, (1978, 1982) however, further presented a picture of the principalship along work lines after having observed two elementary school principals at work. Petersen's work reinforced the picture of a principal's work as being fragmented and varied.

Hills (1975) reported on a different kind of study - one in which he reflected on his own behaviour and that of his colleagues during a year he spent as an elementary school principal in Canada during a period of sabbatical leave from a university educational administration professorship. The work is not simply anecdotal but records Hills's "observations from the firing line." (ibid: 1) Hills's particular concern was to make some first hand observations related to the preparation of administrators. Hills reported on three areas of observation. He concentrated specifically on the extent to which he found himself

directly applying the content of preparation programmes in educational administration and the areas in which he found his knowledge and information to be deficient. Hills focussed his observations on the cognitive styles, problem solving styles and norms of fellow administrators and on the responses of other people towards himself - particularly of teachers and other school personnel.

Hills's study was of some influence on the present study as it provided an example of a researcher (also functioning as a practitioner in this instance) immersing himself in the world of the principal in order to directly experience that world as a participant. Therefore, at the same time as he functioned as a principal, Hills functioned as an observer and recorder of the behaviour of himself and other participants in this principal's world. Hills was somewhat cautious about his use of the term "observer":

> The term "observation" may not be too appropriate here. It implies a more rigorous systematic approach than was actually used. The procedure followed was a simple matter of keeping a journal in which a daily entry was made. Entries were typically made at the end of the day, and they varied in length from a few lines on a single page to three or four pages in an 8½" x 11" record book. Sometimes the entry was nothing more than a brief and very incomplete record of the highlights of the day's events. At other times it included extensive reflections, speculations and analyses.
>
> (Hills 1975:1)

This practice-research undertaking was used by Hills in an effort to reflect ultimately on the content of training/preparation programmes. Hills did not endeavour to view his world of the principalship through any preselected set of conceptual "spectacles."

Rather, his open minded viewpoint allowed him to record a wide range of observations which seemed important to his overall intention: "to make some first hand observations on these and other questions related to the preparation of administrators." (Hills 1975:1)

The other way in which the experience/report is similar to the present study is that Hills finally developed an explanation of his own behaviour as a school administrator - an explanation developed from his own case study material concerning a single principal in which Hills attempted to link his experiences with his studies. He wrote:

> ...there is no doubt whatever in my mind that my studies have had a far reaching impact on the belief and value systems out of which I operated as a principal. Those studies, doubtless along with many other experiences, have led me to develop what I might term a "humanistic-philosophic" orientation.
>
> (Hills 1975:19)

Hills then listed 18 "inclinations" which he identified in his own administrative behaviour. Examples of these inclinations included:

> An inclination to be mindful of the impact that my behaviour toward another would have on me if I were in his place; an inclination to see members of different classes as having common interests, rather than as adversaries; an inclination to rely on expertise, wherever it may be found; and, an inclination to base action on the best evidence available, however short of perfection that evidence may fall.
>
> (Hills 1975:19-20)

From reading the report, the present writer was

impressed by, first, the feeling of reliability which emerged from the material. Here was an academic reporting on the value of his "tools of trade" when put to the test of utility and applicability to the world of action. Second, the study shows the value of the researcher's immersion in the world of investigation. Hills sought to experience that world, to record his observations of parts of that world and to endeavour to produce a synthesis of his observations. His approach impressed as a valid research technique and of value in gaining an experience of an actual "world." Third, the value of the careful reporting of material is clearly shown. Hills endeavoured to report objectively and to support his observations with careful reflection and explanation. This reader felt that he had gained an accurate understanding of Hills as academic, observer and practitioner and of the school and the people in it.

Similar reports of self-reflections have been presented by Miller,(1978) a tertiary administrator-anthropologist, and Wallace,(1979) chairman of a university department of anthropology. Similarly, Jackson (1976) recorded his feelings of administrative isolation when he not only reflected on his experience as Director of the University of Chicago's Laboratory Schools but also attempted to understand his own observations of his working life. He concluded:

> Here then, as I have experienced them, are some of the forces that threaten to encapsulate the top administrator, surrounding him with a shell that separates him from others in the organization he serves and often from persons outside it, as well. I make no claim for the universality of these conditions, and yet I find it hard to believe that I alone have experienced them.
>
> (Jackson 1976:4)

Jackson particularly developed the theme of being alone in the job. Although he was visible as the schools' director, he felt alone when making important decisions and as the holder of confidential information. He felt criticised and removed from people due to the busy aspect of his work. He wrote:

> ...one of the chief residues of my own administrative experience is the memory of having felt alone, not in the simply physical sense of being by myself, without companions, but in the deeper psychological sense of being apart from others....
> No administrator, I suspect, can satisfy everyone he serves. I certainly did not. But I was unprepared for the psychological consequences of that truism. Being criticised and even actively disliked by some members of the staff and student body was never easy to take, even when I felt perfectly justified in performing in a way that aroused the ill feelings.
>
> (Jackson 1976:2-3)

Wolcott's Study of an Individual Elementary School Principal

Having noted (Wolcott 1970:1) that the literature in educational administration was disappointing as a source for learning about the real world of the principal, Wolcott reported his study of an elementary school principal. Wolcott's study revealed much more than a picture of the principal's work. Gronn (1982) has subsequently expressed a somewhat similar disappointment with a number of the studies of principals' work and has taken a critical stance towards a number of observational studies which arose with the influence of Mintzberg's study of managerial work. Gronn criticised

a "time and motion" element in the group of studies which he reviewed but he placed an emphasis on the need to endeavour to understand the world of the school administrator - not simply the easily observable activities of what a principal does, when, where and with whom. Gronn has suggested that there is much more involved in understanding the school administrator's world. Wolcott's study (1973) was one of the few pieces of research which had earlier addressed the concern expressed by Gronn. Boyd (1983:1) has commented similarly on studies of the principalship having been influenced by Mintzberg's methodology. Wolcott's study of Ed Bell became an important basis for the study of Jim Carr in his school world at Manoa College.

Wolcott's work offered a different direction to the Mintzberg-type studies of work activities in the principalship. As part of a two year study, Wolcott - a Professor of Education and Anthropology in the University of Oregon - "shadowed" Ed Bell, an Oregon elementary school principal, for one year. Bell was selected as the subject of the study because he and his school were considered to be reasonably typical. Bell was of average age, qualifications and ability, and his school was a normal, middle-class, American suburban elementary school. However, although some effort was made to select a reasonably typical subject, Wolcott would not claim that his findings are generalizable to other principals.

Wolcott spent extended periods of time following Bell around throughout his days' activities. He would be present in the principal's office as parents and teachers were being interviewed; he would follow Bell

into the staffroom during the breaks; go with him to Head Office to meet with the Superintendent; and even attend professional meetings with him in the evening. Participant observation was used; informal interviews determined perceptions of Bell and his work; and the enumeration of data ranged from frequency counts of messages and interactions to a two-week time and motion study. Wolcott's account of a day in the life of Ed Bell provides a description of just one day of many that Wolcott observed. No two days were ever the same, but this particular day was selected for full description because it seemed to illustrate the every-day nature of Bell's work.

In one day Bell dealt with such events as a dog at school, an inappropriately dressed girl, a stolen lunch, illicit cigarette smoking and lunchtime procedures. To each event, the principal gave his immediate attention - providing an impression of a lack of pattern to the jobs, which might have arisen from an unclear perception of what a principal should be doing. Bell spent a large proportion of his time on matters of minor discipline. Many activities were initiated by someone else. The reader begins to feel that, if no one were to write, phone or call, Bell would be at a loss as to how to fill the day. An important question for any principal is, "What should I be doing now?" Wolcott suggested that Ed Bell's answer resulted more from the immediate demands of the job:

> Ed seemed to be moved about through most of his day by little problems brought to him, or created for him by others, rather than by any grand design of his own of what he wished to accomplish.
>
> (Wolcott 1973:34)

The anthropologist is primarily interested in exploring the concept of culture and ethnography is the key approach to exploration of a social domain. Wolcott takes the reader into the world of Ed Bell. The monograph included a chapter on a day in the life of Ed Bell and then moved to the formal and informal encounters of this principal, the annual cycle of the principalship, the way in which Bell is socialised into his role, the way in which he socialises others into their roles in the school and the perceptions held of Bell by a range of other people (the school secretary, the superintendent, pupils, parents and teachers). Wolcott concluded with an examination of the "search for role" and "how to survive in the principalship." (Wolcott 1973:296-316) In an epilogue, Wolcott noted Bell's reaction to the principalship:

> Ed administered Taft School by attending to literally any problem brought to his attention unless he was already engaged with a problem of higher priority. As we have seen he coped sympathetically with an immediate variety of problems from the moment he arrived at school... until the moment he left it. He often returned for another meeting in the evening and in the interim he confronted impatient problems on the telephone at home. But when the last of the day's problems was "finished," so was he. Like an on-duty fireman, he responded to one emergency after another. He had remarkable resources he could mobilize whenever a problem looked like it might get out of hand, whether a new and needy family in the community was unable to send money for the children's lunches, the saltwater aquarium needed more sea-water, or he felt he had to "see what's wrong with the university" when a supervisor's evaluation left a classroom teacher infuriated and a student teacher in tears.
>
> In fireman-like fashion, once the urgent problems were contained, the principal

> returned to his "station" to relax, to anticipate the next emergency, and, perhaps, at times of low anticipated danger, to engage in a bit of emergency-prevention.
>
> (Wolcott, 1973:314-315)

From his use of the ethnographic techniques of participant observation, informant interviews and the analysis of enumerative data, and his subsequent thorough analysis of his subject's behaviour in the principalship, Wolcott portrayed the reality of one principal's actual experience in the job, producing a vivid word-picture of the principal as a human being - his interactions with students, allied professionals and family, the way in which his time was spent, with whom, and to what purpose, and the principal's aspirations for his school. Wolcott's aim was to present a detailed description of the principal's world - from a cultural perspective and which might be taken further by others who might subsequently use the material.

The case of Ed Bell can provide a basis for some comparison for other administrators while the case raises a number of issues relating to the principalship - their preparation; relationships with staff, parents and community; the principal's part in school discipline; and the principal's function as a manager or a leader. Wolcott's The Man in the Principal's Office has been a most significant attempt to portray the real world of a school administrator and the monograph presents a most intensive and comprehensive study of the work of an elementary school principal. Wolcott sought to understand the actual world of

an individual principal. Generalisations across all principals were not sought. Wolcott noted:

> This study was not designed to provide an evaluation of the role of principal but to provide a description of what a principal does....
>
> (Wolcott 1973:319)

Wolcott's use of ethnographic techniques and his subsequent description and analysis produced a depth of understanding quite distinct from empirically-based studies of larger samples of principals. The monograph shows clearly and vividly the world of one principal. The reader gains a clear picture of the way of life which Ed Bell experiences in his world in the same way, as for example, a picture was presented by Whyte (1955) of life in Doc's street corner world of Cornerville. Wolcott, then, provided the prototype for the present study. He moved beyond a concern with easily quantifiable work activities and sought to present a perspective of life for a principal in his working world. Wolcott's study of Ed Bell provided a major impetus and model for the study of Jim Carr's world as principal of a New Zealand secondary school. At this juncture, therefore, the literature relating to the principalship in New Zealand will be considered.

THE PRINCIPALSHIP: LITERATURE FROM NEW ZEALAND

Introduction

Principals and researchers into the principalship in New Zealand do not have a large volume of literature written by New Zealand writers on which to draw for understanding the work and function of the New Zealand school principal. This is especially true of the New Zealand secondary school principalship.

Normative or Advisory Literature Concerning the Principalship

A mixed and somewhat sparse range of resource material of this type exists in the New Zealand literature. A number of commentaries on the New Zealand educational scene make little or no reference to the principalship. (McLaren 1974, Educational Development Conference 1974, Department of Education 1982, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development 1983) The clearest statement on the principalship made during the last decade was contained in the Johnson Report, (Department of Education 1977) a much discussed report to the Minister of Education presented by the Committee on Health and Social Education. The report concerned schools of all levels, called for training for principals and recognised their significance :

> We have given our enthusiasm to the creation of an "open" and "warm" climate and we affirm that the key person in the creation of this climate is the principal.... In selecting a principal, therefore, the important quality to seek is not merely competence in the professional field, but rather a charisma, and an ability to lead

> and inspire people of all ages. We believe that principals need special training.
> (Department of Education 1977:23)

This was the Johnson Report's only message or recommendation concerning the principalship but it was a clear statement on the significance of the position. In fact, a period of government emphasis on in-service training in educational administration was followed for the next four years. An earlier statement stressing the need for training of principals was made by Watson (1965) in an address to a principals' conference in Auckland. Watson's comments highlighted the need for the further professional development of principals by means of university courses, secondment to other positions in the system and research into the career patterns and administrative behaviour of practising principals. The address was forward-looking although the thrust which it suggested seemed more in evidence in countries other than New Zealand during the next decade.

The New Zealand literature contains a group of writings by principals about their schools although without making direct reference to the principalship itself. Johnson,(1974, 1977) principal of a large secondary school, has recorded the development of his school and commented, in part, on some aspects of his work as principal: e.g. he found the New Zealand education system not to be one of the imposition of authority on his work but one which facilitated the making of change in individual schools in order to best meetthe needs of a changing society. (Johnson 1977:123) Several primary school principals reported on their schools in the same volume as Johnson had done. (Bray and Hill 1974)

More recent items appearing in the literature have included a short account of life as principal in a remote off-shore primary school (Scadden 1982) and a series of guide-lines for administrators in multi-cultural schools. (Walford 1983) On the latter theme, Royal, (1984) a secondary school principal, underscored the importance of principals being accountable for the education provided in their schools. Gillespie (1985) reported his interview with a secondary school principal regarding the principal's role with his Board of Governors.

A number of New Zealand principals have written about the principalship from the basis of their own experience and reminiscences. Kelly (1975) provides an example of this writing in an article which sought to discuss the "ideal" principal. Kelly's comments, on one hand, were exhortative:

> ...the Principal should seek to acquire in himself the sympathy of a Mother Superior, the selfless devotion of a New Guinea missionary, the psychological insight of a clinical analyst, the inscrutability of a practised poker player, the financial sure-footedness of a confidence trickster, the appetite for detail of a Woolworth's Branch Manager, while attempting to retain the sense of justice of an average teacher.
>
> (Kelly 1975:25)

On the other hand, Kelly noted the realism of the position:

> As Principals of course, we know we are all those things, or at least would be, if time, circumstance and the department would allow us. The real principal on the other hand, is likely to be an expert on drains, a connoisseur of toilet

> graffiti, an adviser on furniture repairs, an appraiser of cleaning materials, an experienced judge of the price and durability of textbooks; a teacher of all trades who can fill a gap in any subject at a moment's notice; a compulsive statistician who can see a departmental return as a matter of vital educational immediacy.
>
> (Kelly 1975:23)

Kelly's address, although being idiosyncratic, provided the present writer with an increased element of interest in studying a principal in his or her actual school world. Apart from a survey of secondary school principals which will be reviewed in the next section of this thesis, Kelly provided the only extensive "telling of his story" by a New Zealand secondary school principal.

A selection of items depicting the principalship have appeared subsequently in a range of sources. Hogue (1981) an intermediate school principal, suggested ways in which a newly-appointed principal might approach the task. Nat Ed Newsletter (1982) carried a detailed portrayal of a primary school principal's day in which every moment was crowded. The article was subjective in nature with an air of propaganda but did present a vivid picture of the variety, brevity and fragmentation of tasks; documented overseas in studies such as those by Willis (1980a) and Wolcott.(1973)

In a brief article, Hatherly (1982) summed up the main features of the work of the kindergarten head teacher and more recently, Tait (1985) reported on her first two years in the secondary school principalship, providing an impression of the rapidly changing nature of her work, a desire for professional self-improvement and a sense of the responsibility carried by a principal. These features were embodied in Tait's words:

> If you are going to tell me that my problem is that I haven't worked on X or Y (which you know are essential to Good Management) its because I haven't had enough terms as a principal yet, to work on those things. For example, I know about LOOK AFTER THE CARETAKER and am planning that for term three this year. And for term one, 1986, I am considering SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT or SCHOOL MORALE. With luck, in 1987 or 1988, I plan to have a term on PLANNING. Meantime, I'm busy with term two, 1985....
>
> (Tait 1985:3)

Several published works of value to New Zealand principals have appeared in the last decade. Archibald (1975) wrote about leadership in schools. His book, although written for a wide audience of educational leaders, contains examples and cases for consideration - often related directly to the principalship. Prebble and Stewart (1982) did not propose a comprehensive theory of school administration but did present a number of effective working theories in areas where principals tend to face difficulties - such as supervision, evaluation, conflict, and communication. The writers noted that managerial work is high-pressured, chaotic and messy and that the principal's style might too often be described as "frantic pragmatism" or "administrative firefighting." (Prebble and Stewart 1982:11-13) Earlier, Prebble (1981) stressed that school management should ensure - as its central task - the education of children. This feature made the work of a principal, Prebble pointed out, quite distinctly different from managers in other fields of employment. Stewart (1980) also produced a handbook for principals in which he detailed procedures for managing and bringing change in the behaviour of pupils. An emphasis was placed on the use of behaviour modification techniques.

Survey Literature Concerning the Principalship

The literature available on the New Zealand principalship is a scattered mixture of the normative and a small number of research-based writings which will be considered at this point. Watson (1964) undertook a comprehensive survey of 90 intermediate schools in New Zealand. He used questionnaires as his main form of data gathering but also visited the schools to interview staff and pupils. His published report of the study stressed the need for formal training of principals:

> A good school invariably has strong, well-informed leadership from its headmaster and in an excellent school it is usually his skill in the art of administration which makes the difference....a great improvement would take place in the quality of schooling if opportunities were provided for prospective headmasters to take a well-designed course in school administration.
>
> (Watson 1964:426)

Coleman (1976) surveyed the 42 primary schools with non-teaching principals in the Wellington urban area. This study sought to discover three elements of the principal's role: their leadership on professional matters, their personal attributes and their role as interpreter of the school to the community. Questionnaires were sent to pupils, parents, principals and teachers in each school.

The data from parents showed that the principalship was held in high regard by parents while teachers reported a change in the role of principal toward becoming a professional facilitator with responsibility for providing an organizational system which would

ensure the provision of resources and information. A selection of data gathered from principals indicated some of the other areas of interest in Coleman's study: 90 per cent of the principals spent more than 40 hours per week on school related work; 64 per cent of the principals spent more than six hours per week in classrooms; 87 per cent of the principals spent more than six hours per week on non-professional administrative functions; 80 per cent of the principals considered that their employing authority allowed sufficient freedom for principals to determine policy in their schools; and, there was general dissatisfaction expressed at the lack of administrative training for principals.

Coleman's study, although concerned with primary schools, was significant to the present study for several reasons. First, Coleman moved beyond the perceptions of the principal to other members of his school world and noted their views on the principalship. Second, Coleman noted that his group of principals could not be compared usefully with the principalship in other types of schools. Therefore, third, he noted the scope for further New Zealand research into the principalship. Until Coleman's study, the position of principal had received no systematic or comprehensive attention from researchers. There was, he wrote:

> ...an obvious lack in New Zealand of critical study and comment on the principal's role... principals have little school-based research to assist them to carry out the administrative functions in a competent manner.
>
> (Coleman 1976:1)

As part of a larger scale study of stress in

teaching in New Zealand, Panckhurst, Boswell and Galloway (1982) reported on the stress experienced by a small sample of primary school principals. The researchers used questionnaires and interviews to gather data about the principals, their schools and communities and the principals' experiences of stress. The sample consisted of 40 state primary school principals in the North Island portion of the Wellington Education Board district. The research addressed two main questions: How widespread are feelings of stress among principals? What do they feel are the main sources of stress? (Panckhurst, Galloway and Boswell 1982:131)

Panckhurst and her colleagues noted that the small size of the sample meant that their results had to be treated with great caution. However, they identified four clusters of sources of stress among their sample of principals: staff, workload/administration, role conflict and meetings. (Panckhurst et al 1982:132-134)

The study revealed that stress among principals differed from that among teachers. Principals were found to be most bothered by internal influences - e.g. the daily pressures of running a school and the attitudes and practices of teachers in the school. Principals felt increasing pressure from parents or groups with a watching brief and being "caught in the bind of low public esteem for schools combined with a high demand for achievement." (Panckhurst et al 1982:139)

The study, although focussing on the primary school principalship, identified some of the contextual factors impinging on the working lives of the principals in the study and, so, highlighted the potential value to the study of Jim Carr in an attempt to look deeper than the surface features of his school world.

The Survey of New Zealand Secondary School Principals

At the time of beginning the study at Manoa College, the writer had no background of professional experience or knowledge of New Zealand secondary schools. However, a series of articles was found to have reported the findings of a survey conducted in 1975 during which every state and independent secondary school principal in New Zealand was mailed a questionnaire. These articles provided the present researcher with a valuable orientation toward the position of principal in the New Zealand secondary school system and assisted in developing some background knowledge of the position of a secondary school principal.

The 280 responses to the survey represented 70% of the possible sample. The eight-page questionnaire sought information from the principals on a series of topics: certain demographic information which, it was hoped, might help to identify significant relationships among variables; information on the principals' views of their task priorities both in real and ideal terms; information on working conditions and delegation practices; and, information on the principals' knowledge of recent developments in education and their opinions on the appointment and training of principals.

The first report (Johnson, Adams et al 1977) contained a section relevant to the present study. The researchers attempted to explore the job priorities of their sample by asking respondents to twice rank-order a list of 24 tasks undertaken by principals. The first list sought to determine how the principals

thought they ought to be spending their time (their "ideal" order) while the second listing sought to determine how the principals thought they actually spent their time (their "actuality" order). Examples of the difference between "ought" and "actual" included:

> An examination of the lists would reveal for example, that although principals regard "working with others devising, assessing and implementing teaching programmes" as the highest priority, they are in fact, only able to accord it ninth priority.
>
> (Johnson, Adams et al 1977:17)

The relationship between the "ought" and the "actual" of the principalship was an area which lay behind the Manoa College study. The report contained, too, descriptive statements portraying the "average" principal and school:

> In the most general terms, the typical principal is a male, and in his late forties. He has been a principal for about seven and a half years and at his present school for six years. During his career he has taught at five schools and has a masters degree. Our average principal reports that he finds his job satisfying to very satisfying but qualifies his enthusiasm in two ways. Were not too much loss of salary involved he would change to another job in the education service and but for the superannuation conditions he would give serious thought to leaving his principalship. After retirement, however, he would want to continue to take some active part in education.
>
> The "average" school has a roll of between 500 and 1000, an urban location, a predominantly pakeha population and in comparison with other schools, an average teacher drop-out rate. The socio-economic status of the school can best be described as lower-middle class i.e. "with mixed medium cost and state housing and semi-professional and skilled occupations."
>
> (Johnson, Adams et al 1977:15)

Johnson and his associates recognised that the blandness of the descriptions concealed the diversity of practices, priorities and beliefs and that the central tendency effect submerged individual or group differences between principals or schools. The report, however, is of value as it presented the results of a nationwide survey of secondary school principals - a neatly packaged set of quantifiable information indicating the range of features existing in the sample population of principals and schools.

The report differs from the present study in that Johnson's data takes the form of statistical tables of percentages, rankings and means for respondents across a wide range of items: e.g. age, sex, years as principal, qualifications, job satisfaction, anticipated retirement, job priorities, knowledge of contemporary education, location and roll number of school, pupil composition and drop-out rates, teacher turnover rates and opinions on appointment, training and working conditions. The average descriptions of principals and schools had some minor value to the present writer as a very general guide to comparison with Manoa College as the location and Jim Carr as the subject of the current study.

Adams, Boswell and Johnson (1977) in the second report of the survey, endeavoured to note possible explanations of some aspects of the principalship by seeking to determine relationships between different clusters of responses. This report described the series of statistical calculations used by the researchers in order to seek links between a series of factors or variables: e.g. age, sex, experience and a series of indices constructed by combining items from the questionnaire. Adams and his colleagues endeavoured

to move beyond the descriptions of typical principal and school. They determined a number of indices for each respondent as measures of such features as: number of principalships held ("regency"), the principal's assessment of the quality of the school ("euphoria"), the principal's knowledge of educational practices ("withitness") and the extent to which tasks were delegated. Some weak relationships between variables were determined but the authors wrote:

> The one substantive finding that ought to be given prominence is that no theory scoops the pool. Nothing, whether size of school, level of qualifications, rural location or even socio-economic status points unequivocally and authoritatively in any particular direction.
>
> (Adams, Boswell and Johnson 1977:30)

The study concluded with comments which were germane to the present work. The writers said:

> What these findings should convey is the frailty of single casuality arguments in explaining the principal's lot. Whatever confronts principals or is a consequence of their role, cannot be explained in simplistic terms. Such a conclusion... has two important implications. The first is that policy affecting principals needs to be based on something more than the simple linear relationship propositions we examined. The second is that if linear reasoning will not work, is there an alternative?
>
> (Adams, Boswell and Johnson 1977:32)

The present study attempted to go some way towards answering this second question by endeavouring to present an extensive, in-depth description and explanation of the school world of one secondary school principal.

In the third report, Johnson, Adams and Boswell (1978) provided data in two main areas. From the process of factor analysis of their data, they suggested eight factors which the writers, cautiously, considered gave some indication of general tendencies in the New Zealand secondary school principalship.

These factors included: age and experience ("venerableness"), the enjoyment of the challenge of the principalship ("congenial adversity") and an amalgam of factors concerned with such features as school size and job satisfaction ("elysium"). However, firm conclusions were not discernible from the relationships apart from a clear understanding that "principals merit recognition for their uniqueness" (Johnson et al 1978:26) but there did appear to be a measure of discontent with the principalship caused by the inter-personal difficulties of the job, the numerous associated tasks required of principals and the external constraints from outside the school.

Johnson concluded the report with a series of direct quotes of statements written by respondents in the study. The replies, the researchers noted, (ibid: 25) formed a continuum from optimistic enthusiasm to despondency with the principalship, although most replies fell about midway on this continuum. Principals emphasized the absorbing nature of the work but gave strong indications of stress, tension and general overwork:

> Being a principal demands all my time and strength and energy. I neglect family and friends and have little rest or recreation. But it is never boring and there are great satisfactions.

> I see the principal as an ideas man, a catalyst, an encourager, a public relations expert, a person who sets an example or tone, a person who aims to get the best from others - all ideally. I also see him as bogged down in office routine, buildings, development, etc - all actually.
>
> (Johnson, Adams and Boswell 1978:25)

Qualitative Studies Concerning the Principalship

A small number of research studies of the principalship in New Zealand are recorded in the literature. Each of the studies concerns the primary school principalship.

Prebble (1980) reported on an ethnographic study of a newly appointed intermediate school principal about whose first months in the job a series of videotapes were made. Thirty hours of tape were finally edited to seven training tapes depicting the principal's first encounter with the school, his first working day, his efforts to function as an instructional leader, the process of decision making in the school, office organization and a portrait of the school committee. The researchers were careful to follow the correct protocols of ethnography. Principal and staff were free to veto the use of any taped sequence and the principal was regularly interviewed to ensure that his perspective was presented. The series of tapes formed a case study of one principal's approach to common school issues and did not present any pre-selected theoretical position. As training aids, the tapes captured "live" action for analysis and discussion. In common with the Manoa College study, the researchers allowed their work to progress as they

observed events occurring in the principal's school world.

Schimpf (1979) reported a study with a number of features in common with the present work. Schimpf's study involved an intensive interaction analysis of two intermediate school principals. The purpose was to learn more about the role and behaviour of the New Zealand intermediate school principal. Non-participant observation and follow-up interviews were used to gather data concerning the two school principals - how and with whom each spent his school related time. Schimpf explained his approach:

> As the problem/thesis dictated that this investigation was interested in the real problems of real principals in New Zealand intermediate schools and their orientations in coping with them, it seemed that the only general method possible was some type of field observation. By using a field method, hopefully, experimental artificiality was minimised, and by using an observation method, a complete and detailed record was able to be kept equal to that obtainable under laboratory conditions.
>
> (Schimpf 1979:41)

Schimpf's study used a functionalist paradigm as its basis and, so, differed from the present study. Methodologically, the study was similar to the present work in its use of non-participant observation techniques and informant interviewing. Schimpf undertook a programme of data collection where interactions and interviews were tape-recorded, entered on a log sheet and analysed in order to determine the link between "demonstrated pattern variables" and "relevant functional problems." (Schimpf 1979:46) First, he used numbers of interactions of the principal with other people during the week's observation and time lengths of

interactions (indicated by tape counter revolutions) and then converted his figures to percentages in order to make his comparisons and deductions. His "survey data" for each principal were summarised as, for example:

> Town intermediate's principal was seen to be heavily committed to his staff and pupils leaving little time for community groups or student teachers.
>
> (Schimpf 1979:56)

Schimpf then used his data to consider the principal's types of problems in relation to Parson's functional scheme. Again, he used the number and length of interactions. The data, based on the functional problem scheme, were summarised as:

> The principal at Town intermediate seemed to spread his interactions more evenly over all but the integration problems, which here too received little attention. Pattern maintenance and goal attainment problems edged out adaptation problems for his attention.
>
> (Schimpf 1979:62-63)

The study sought to proceed further and Schimpf compared the principals' interactions with aspects of Parson's theory of social action in order to reach some tentative conclusions concerning the two principalships in relation to people and problems with whom interactions occurred. A battery of tentative conclusions was presented. Something of their flavour is conveyed in the following examples:

> The level of interaction of the principal with senior staff reflects the principal's interest in the goal attainment function of the school.
>
> Integration problems occur infrequently in the principal's interactions and decrease as the year proceeds and settling in problems have been resolved.
>
> (Schimpf 1979:87)

Schimpf realised that the limited sample of two schools did not allow his conclusions to be used to generalise about the principalship in general. The main significance of Schimpf's work is that, at the time of the Manoa College fieldwork, his was one of two qualitative studies of any level of the New Zealand principalship while Schimpf had employed the data gathering techniques of participant observation and informant interviewing in an attempt to learn about principals in their actual school worlds.

In 1984, three studies were reported, each of which showed the value of the careful examination of a single case or a small sample. Anderson (1984) reported his study of his own work as principal of a two-teacher rural school in New Zealand. Anderson assumed the role of principal-as-researcher and kept a diary for two school weeks. He acknowledged that his study arose from the work of Willis (1980b) and the diary entries included the duration, purpose and location of each activity as well as the people involved, the means of performing the work, the scheduled or unscheduled nature of the work and whether or not the work was internal or external to the school. The subsequent analysis of the diary entries was comprehensive.

Anderson recognised the limitation of the study of a single person but suggested a series of 13 conclusions which embraced his work as a country school principal. Several examples of these conclusions included:

> The country school principal's job is made up of one-to-one encounters calling for an "intensive level of interpersonal contact."

> Because of the "focality" of the organizational position, the country school principal must keep both an holistic perspective of the school and a "feel" for detail.
>
> Informational and interpersonal communication is the "core element of the principal's work."
>
> Such is the nature of the country school principal's job, that preparation for it is problematical, and doing it can be stressful for the incumbent.
>
> (Anderson 1984:64-66)

Anderson's study, although limited to two weeks of his own perception of events in his work as a principal, demonstrates the richly detailed world of the principalship. Again, Anderson sought to investigate that world by means other than survey, questionnaire or a large sample of informants.

Principals of small rural schools were the focus of a study by Payne (1984) who endeavoured to investigate the perceptions of instructional leadership held by his sample of ten informants. The study highlighted the difficulty of functioning as an instructional leader of other members of the staff when a principal is employed as a full-time teacher in addition to carrying the duties of principal. Payne's interview data were carefully searched in order to identify relevant first-hand examples to support the findings which developed in the study.

Walford's study (1984) was an attempt by its writer to move away from any quantitative examination of her experience as principal of a small rural school in New Zealand. After departing from the school, Walford endeavoured to describe some of her experiences in the principalship and to reflect upon them in

relation to the ideas expressed by several writers on the principalship - notably Wolcott, (1973) Downey (1961) and Hills.(1975) Walford was aware that, "...a personal narrative inevitably involves subjectivity..." (Walford 1984:ii) The reflection upon her own principalship shows that there is much to be learned from a review of events in hindsight - even of a single principalship - especially when that review is related to the ideas put forward by writers of repute in the area. Walford's report contains a vivid, human dimension which would not have been possible in a purely statistical study. Like Hills, (1975) Walford played the role of a perceptive evaluator and writer in reviewing her principalship. She wrote:

> Every leadership act should reflect respect for the worth of an individual. Looking back, moving Mrs X from the Junior room to the middle classroom was an act that did not show respect for her as an individual. Events described in the narrative show the subsequent repercussions that reverberated around the school and the community that were a direct result of that move. I concede in the narrative that it is just possible that I would take the same action again. Weighing up more carefully the consequences of such actions in the future is one thing I can be certain about.
>
> (Walford 1984:57)

An Exploratory Study of the Primary School Principalship in New Zealand

In 1979, the present researcher undertook a small-scale study in which he was able to employ a modified version of Wolcott's (1973) approach, in a New Zealand setting. By using the techniques of the ethnographer, an exploratory study was made of the

principalship in five suburban primary schools in a New Zealand city, (Edwards 1979a) endeavouring to identify some of the major organizational and administrative problems and needs which were reflected in the cases of these principals. With Schimpf's work, (1979) this was one of the first observational studies which have been undertaken in an attempt to find out what primary principals in New Zealand actually do on the job and how they and their work are seen by some of their staff members and pupils.

Means of gathering data included direct observation of each principal at work during a morning, from his or her arrival at school through to lunchbreak, with careful recording of the location, time, length and nature of each activity and the people with whom interactions were made. Interviews with the principals and questionnaire completion by each staff member were also undertaken as a means of determining perceptions of the job of principal and the way it was perceived as being filled by the incumbent in each school, problems encountered and skills demonstrated by the principals, and the nature of relationships between principals and their staff members. Other data gathered in the five schools included policy statements, written memoranda and childrens' written perspectives of the principal and his work. Children in senior classes in each school were asked to provide written responses in three areas:

Mr _____ is principal of your school.
This means his job is to.....
One time I won't forget with Mr _____was....
What kind of principal is Mr _____. Why?...

From the data which were gathered it was possible

to describe and analyse actual observed behaviour and activities. The aim was to provide a "slice of what principals actually do" and to demonstrate the ways in which they and their work were seen by themselves and some members of their staffs and pupils. From the perspective of an ethnographer, a picture emerged of each principal being heavily involved in the day-to-day management of the school by responding to factors "of the moment." Activities tended to be of short duration, of a routine nature, carried out in a disjointed fashion, frequently not being conducive to careful pre-planning of the principal's time, with little time for relaxation from the daily stresses of office or for personal conversation, with, too, some lack of clarity of role relationships and responsibilities among people within the schools.

The study attempted to employ an ethnographic approach to recording and analysing some features of what the principals actually did in their schools and how they and their work were seen by themselves, members of their staff and pupil populations. It provided a focus on a small group of real people in actual school situations and - the writer considers - showed the utility of the ethnographic approach for studying and understanding the behaviour of these administrators in their schools.

The study of the five principals produced three other important learnings for the researcher. First, the period of time with each principal was too short. Ethnography should be conducted over an extensive period of time. The researcher had used role theory as the underpinning for the study. This basis, although useful in organising the data to demonstrate the range

of influences on a principal's incumbency of the position, meant that the emphasis was less on discovering new knowledge and more on using the data to illustrate the theoretical position. Second, the study did portray something of the principals' school worlds but tended to rely on work characteristics to support the study. Macpherson, while acknowledging the rich details of the ethnographic pictures, has commented similarly about the study:

> ...although the "culture" metaphor served well to highlight the social aspects of those organizations, the principalship was seen as occurring in a defined "school" context.... Principalship, as cultural activity, was thus reduced to a form of adaptive activity, and therefore in that study, the "culture" metaphor was ontologically located in a functionalist (rather than interpretive) paradigm.
>
> (Macpherson 1983:9)

However, the study provided a thorough training ground in ethnography for the researcher as it involved him in reading and thinking about the approach, in establishing and undertaking the study and in searching for patterns in the data. In its modest way, the study laid the groundwork for the researcher's later work at Manoa College.

CONCLUSION

This third chapter has included a review of the literature from which the present study was developed. Ethnographic studies in non-educational and school settings were shown to have provided an important background to the study. Literature on the principalship, from New Zealand and overseas, was reviewed and particular attention was given to the emergence of qualitative studies involving direct observation of principals in their own schools. In New Zealand, in particular, only one major survey of the secondary school principalship was located while a gap was noted in the literature describing and interpreting the New Zealand secondary school principalship. A number of studies were shown to have been related to the present study with Wolcott's (1973) ethnographic study of Ed Bell, an American elementary school principal, having been the most influential of these works.

The concept of ethnography was introduced in Chapter Two and the ethnographic approach has featured in a number of studies in the literature review. In the next chapter, the writer will examine the technical features of the ethnographic approach to research.