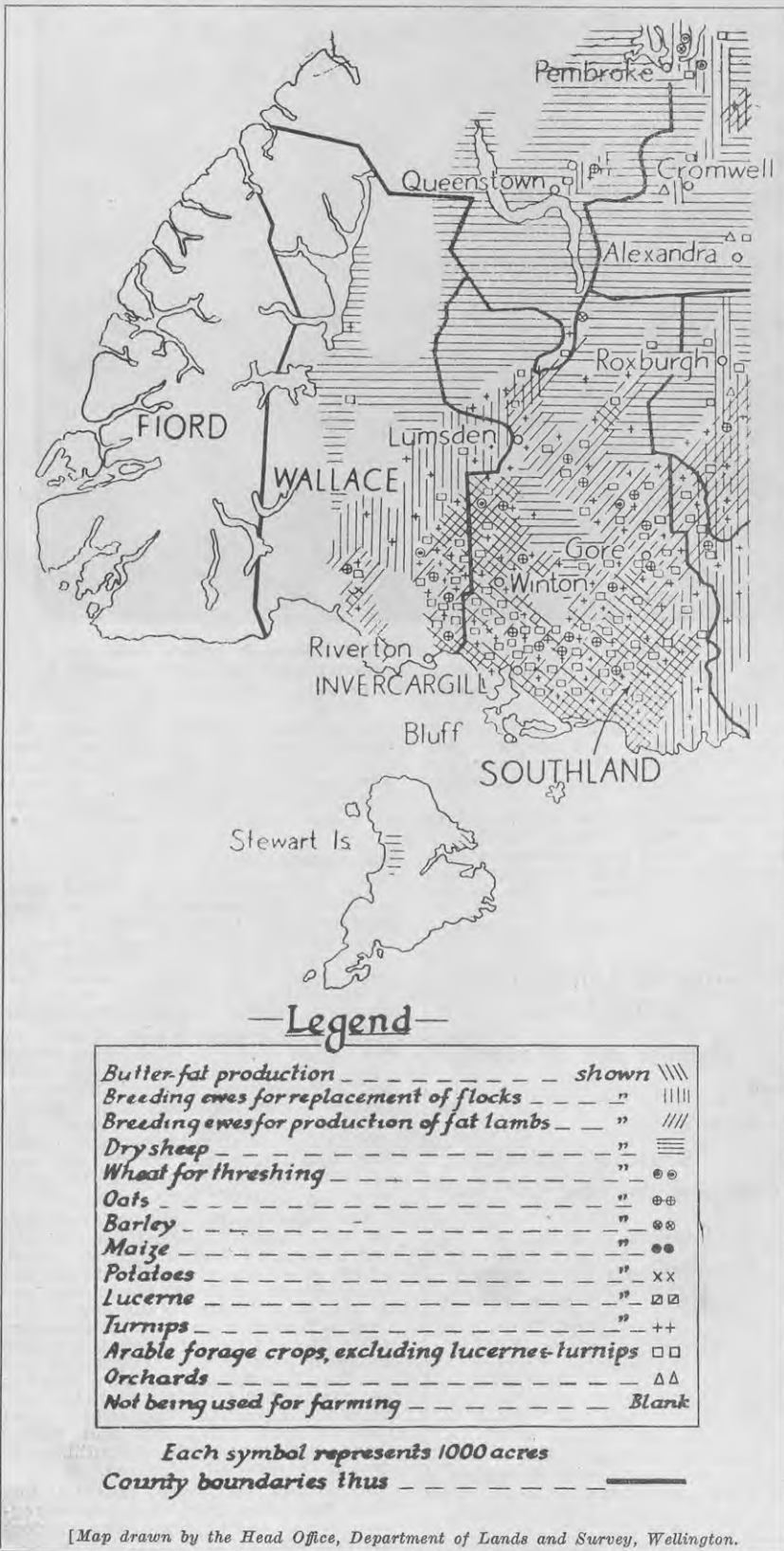


# LAND UTILISATION IN SOUTHLAND



## —Legend—

Butter-fat production	shown	////
Breeding ewes for replacement of flocks	"	
Breeding ewes for production of fat lambs	"	////
Dry sheep	"	
Wheat for threshing	"	●●
Oats	"	⊕⊕
Barley	"	●●
Maize	"	●●
Potatoes	"	xx
Lucerne	"	▣▣
Turnips	"	++
Arable forage crops, excluding lucerne-turnips	"	□□
Orchards	"	△△
Not being used for farming	Blank	

Each symbol represents 1000 acres  
County boundaries thus —————

[Map drawn by the Head Office, Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington.]

## Land Under Occupation

The Southland Land District, consisting of the counties of Southland, Wallace, Fiord, and Stewart Island, covers an area of 7,140,840 acres. Of these 4 counties only Southland and Wallace are of major agricultural importance; Fiord is virtually uninhabited and the occupied area on Stewart Island is less than 20,000 acres.

Of the total area in the land district during 1946-47 only 3,308,147 acres were occupied, comprising 5817 holdings, of an average size of 569 acres. Unimproved land in the occupied area totalled 1,908,157 acres, which was classified as follows:

	Acres.
Native grass and tussock	1,409,592
Fern and scrub	321,428
Flax ( <i>Phormium tenax</i> )	6,717
Native bush	115,791
Barren land	54,629

The remaining 1,399,990 acres of the occupied area is cultivated land, from which the main agricultural products—meat, wool, and dairy produce—are derived.

The Southland Plain, of about 600,000 acres, is the largest single block of cultivated land. The next largest block consists of the Waimea, Whakaea, and Five Rivers Plains, which together have an area of some 500,000 acres. Other fairly-extensive areas of cultivated land are the Edendale Plain, of 200,000 acres, and the West Plains-Wallacetown Plain, of about 100,000 acres.

On the Southland Plain south of a line joining Mataura and Winton, on the Edendale Plain, and on the West Plains-Wallacetown Plain the country is eminently suitable for dairying because of its fertility and the heavier and well-distributed rainfall of 45 to 50 in. yearly. Nevertheless, fat lambs are produced to a very large extent and most dairy farmers also carry a ewe flock for that purpose. The Edendale Plain is the most intensive dairying district in Southland, probably because a large proportion of the area is naturally drained, being of river terrace formation.

The northern portion of the Southland Plain and the Waimea, Whakaea, and Five Rivers Plains are in a much lower-rainfall belt. The rainfall in these districts varies from 25 to 35 in. yearly and is less evenly distributed through the year. Because of this factor and soils which are generally of lower fertility there is less dairy farming except in small favourable pockets. While fat lamb production is the principal industry, carrying capacity is much lower and farming is more mixed, greater reliance being placed on cropping and the production of grass and clover seeds.

Surrounding the plains mentioned is the foothill and in some cases mountainous country carrying native grass and tussock and comprising 1,409,592 acres. This large area for the most part produces wool and store stock and is known as pastoral run country. Most of this area lies inland to the north and north-east. Half-bred or crossbred sheep are used according to the altitude of the country, some of which ranges from 3000 to 5000 ft. above sea level. The carrying capacity on the basis of sheep shorn varies between 3 and 5 acres per sheep, and the yield of wool averages 6 to 7 lb.