

## How Did Farm Produce Get to Market in Early Illinois?

This activity involves studying historical maps and making inferences. The historical maps used in this activity are early (1820-1850) road, river, and rail maps and an 1850 map of Illinois agricultural production.

Your task is to study the maps and decide how given farm families sent their crops or stock to market, and where those markets were, in the early years of Illinois settlement.

There are four families' farms marked on our **main map**. This map also shows, in general, what kind of farming was done in each section of the state. **Choose one family** at a time and trace their ability to market their crops over the time span marked on the map label.

Remember, depending on the era and transport systems available, some farms had to market nearby, while others might be able to send produce farther. Your job is to figure out how. If the farm was in business a long time, you may need to write about how he marketed produce early on and how he did it later in the 1800s.

You may print out the maps provided below. Line them up and compare and contrast them in relation to your chosen farm. Write a short essay on how your farmer marketed his produce and how he transported them.

## Crops to Market, 1800s

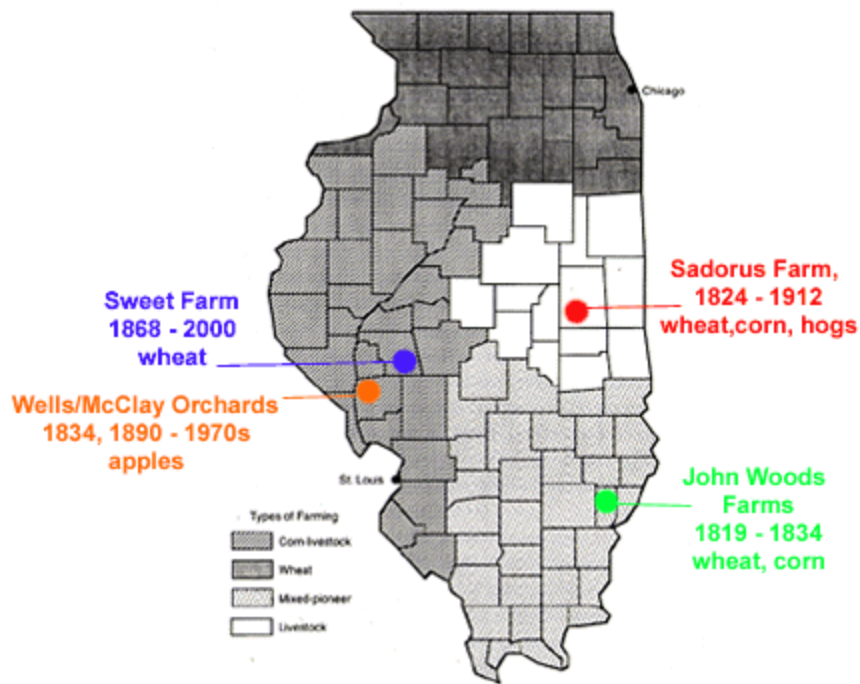


FIG. 4.2. Frontier Agriculture in Illinois, 1849 (Nelson 1930)

Choose one of the farms to study.

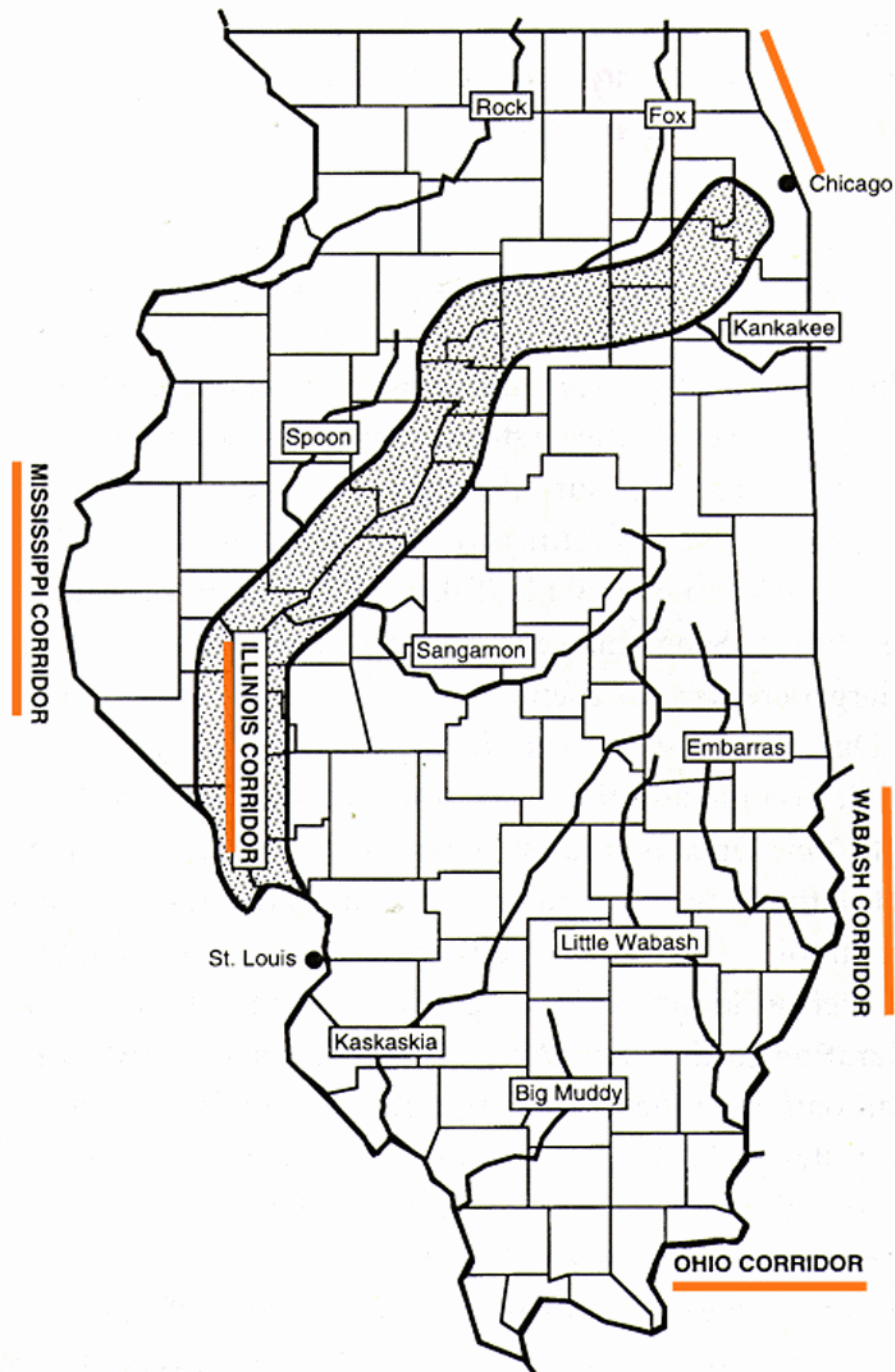
The **Sadorus Farm**, in Sadorus, Champaign County, Illinois, was settled in the 1820s, and the land was registered in 1834. If you wish, find out more about the farm and how it looked in 1910 in the Sadorus Collection, <http://www.museum.state.il.us/ismdepts/art/sadorus>.

The **Sweet Farm**, in Franklin, Morgan County, Illinois, was settled in the 1860s and continued on until the death of the last Sweet farmer in 2000. You can find 1890s images from this farm in this Web module.

**Wells/McClay Orchards**, in Hillview, Greene County, Illinois, were first settled in 1834 by W.D. Wells, who immigrated from North Carolina. He did not succeed, but his land was resettled in 1890 by the McClays, who replanted the apple orchards.

The **Woods Farms**, near Albion, Edwards County, Illinois, was settled by John Woods and his family in 1819, when he arrived from England and bought land from several farmers already settled in the area.

# Waterways of Illinois



Waterway Channels of Illinois  
from Douglas Meyer, p. 82

## Illinois Roads, 1822

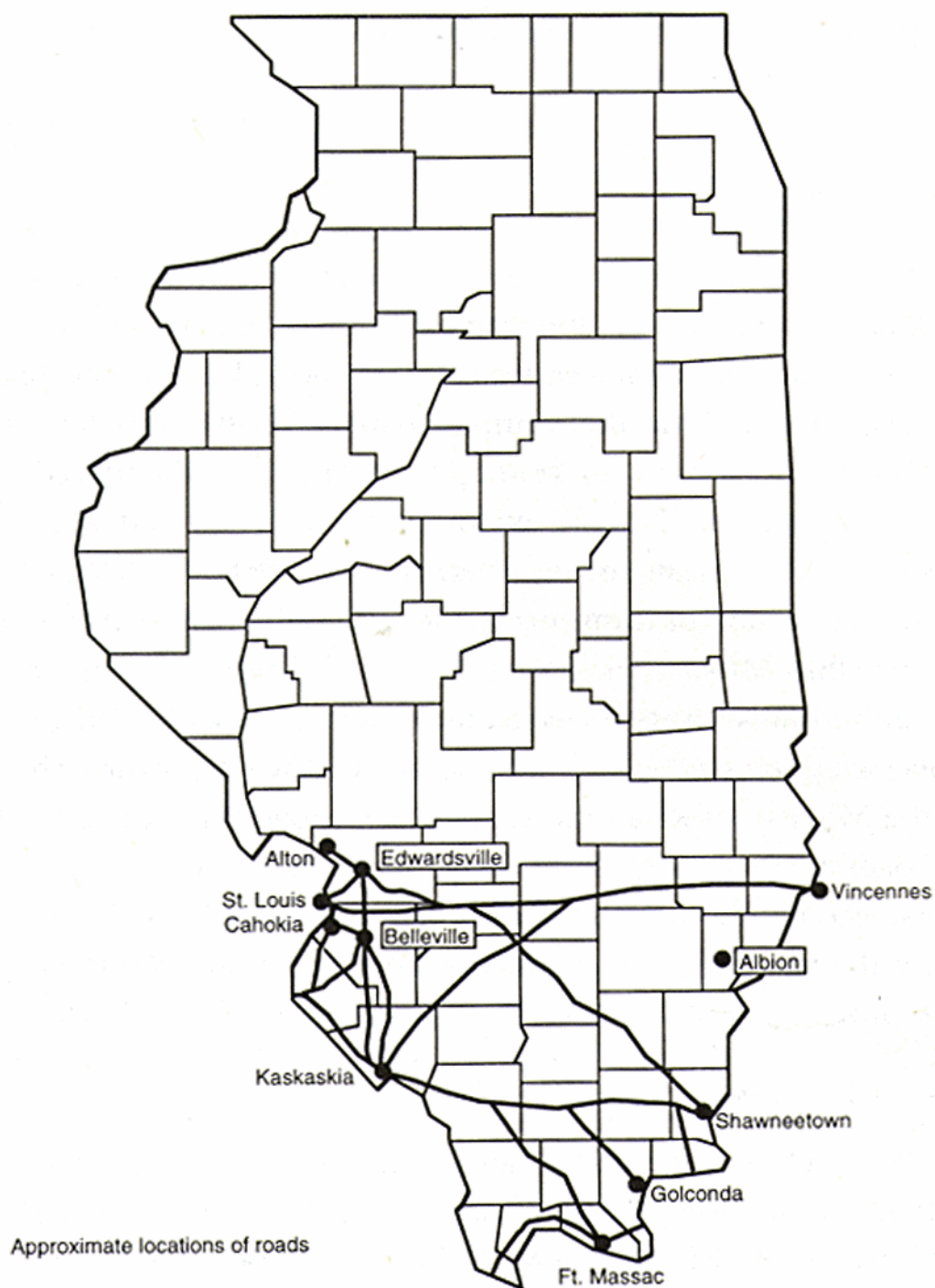


FIG. 3.3. Road Networks in Illinois, 1822 (Carey and Lea 1822; Boylan 1933)  
Douglas Meyer, p. 54

# Illinois Roads, 1850

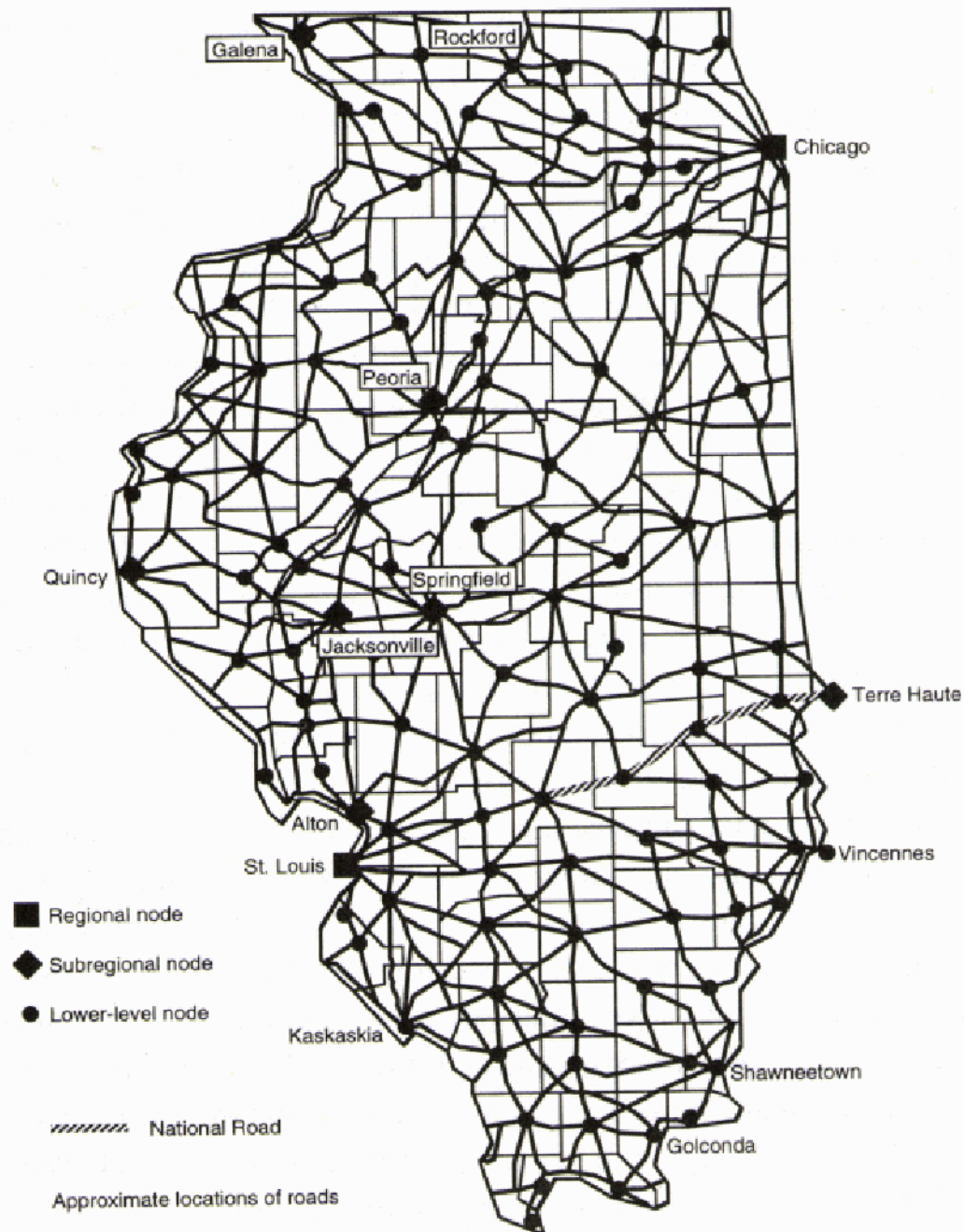
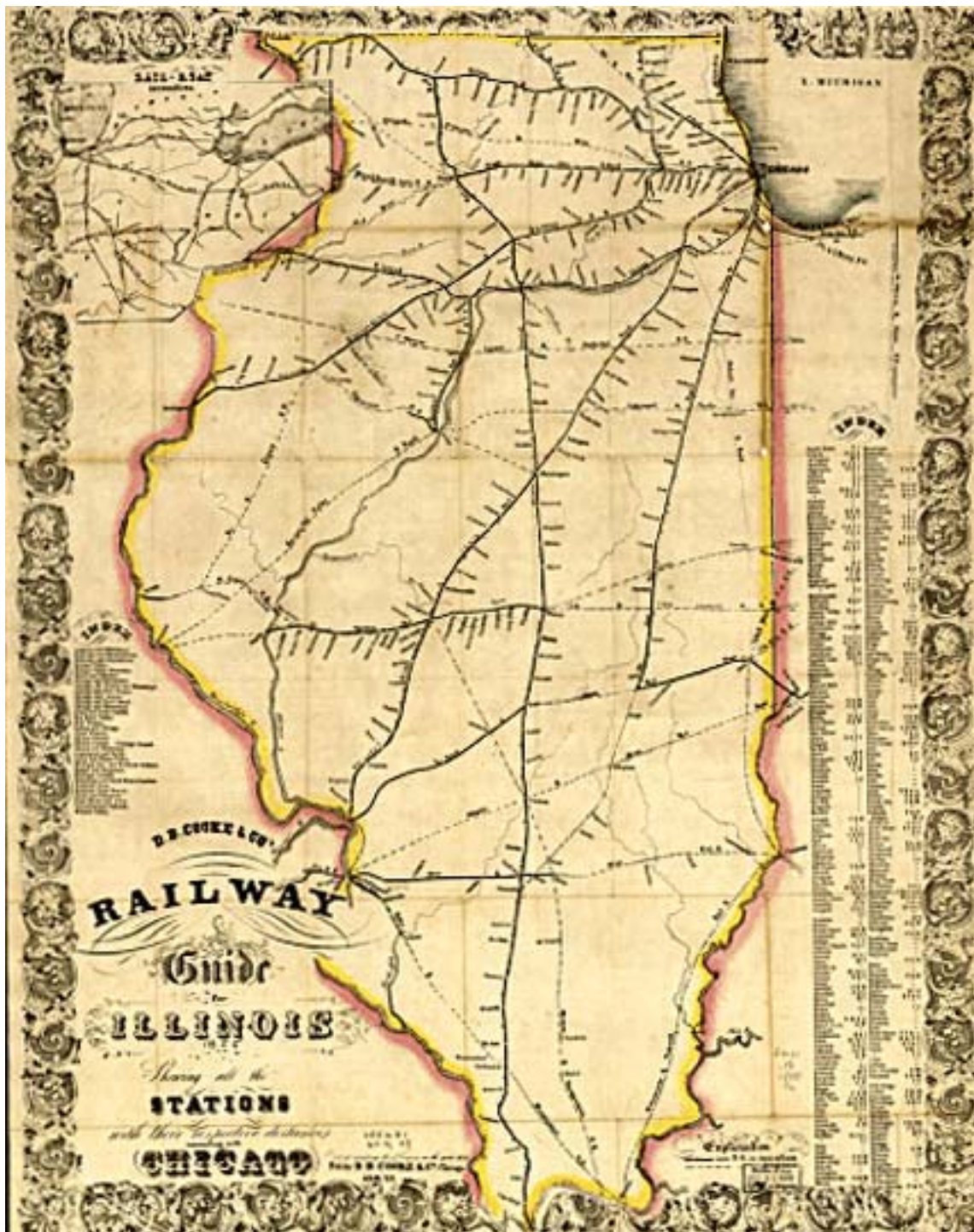


FIG. 3.7. Road Networks in Illinois, 1850 (Boylan 1933; Cowperthwait 1850)  
Douglas Meyer, p. 75

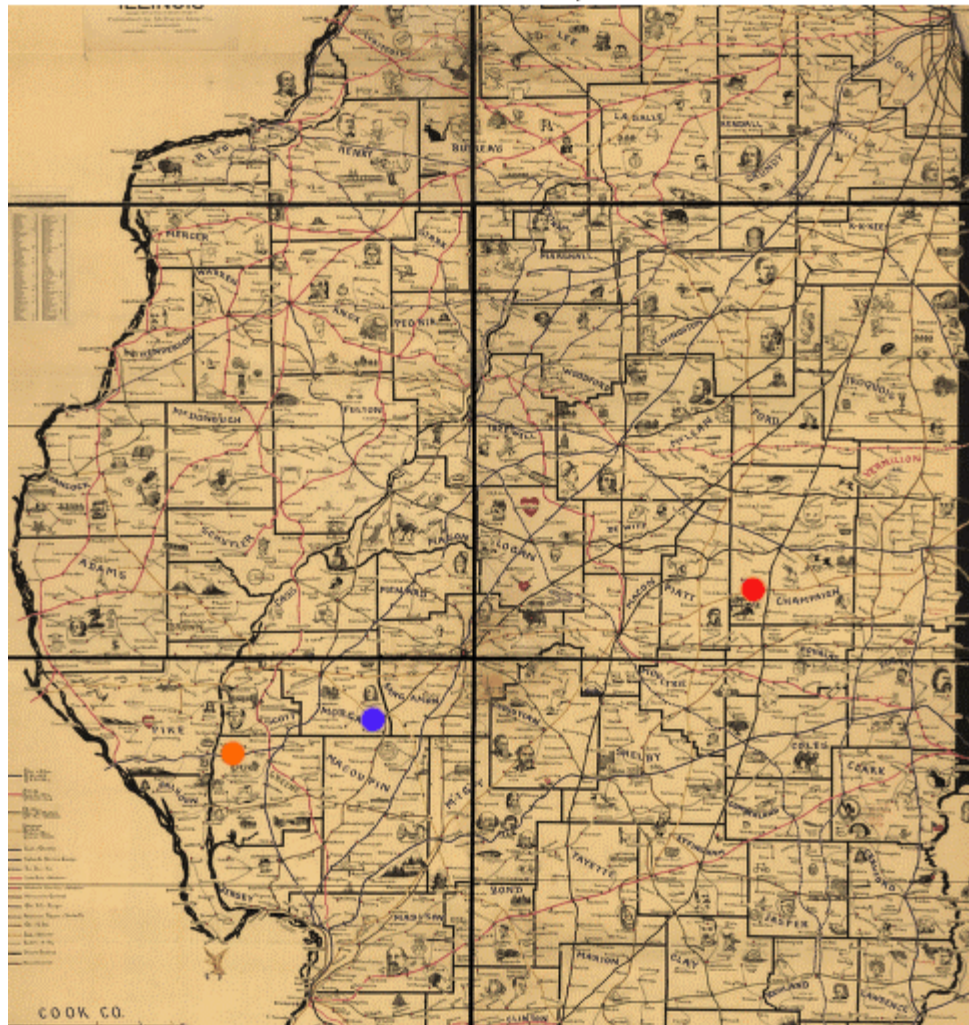




Map from the Library of Congress:  
D.B. Cooke's Railway Guide to Illinois, 1855



### Illinois Railroads, 1897



Library of Congress American Memory Project

This map is difficult to read.

To help, the three farms still in existence in 1897 are marked in color with their approximate location.

You may be able to see if the farm you are studying is located near a major line or a smaller spur line in 1897. (Throughout the 1800s, some rail lines grew and others were abandoned.)

## Teacher's Lesson Plan

**Objective:** Students will be able to determine, by reading given maps and making inferences, an historical concept, in this case, how transportation systems are important in the survival of farms.

### Illinois State Board of Education Standards and Goals:

#### Middle School:

##### Geography:

**17.A.3b** Explain how to make and use geographic representations to provide and enhance spatial information including maps, graphs, charts, models, aerial photographs, satellite images.

**17.C.3a** Explain how human activity is affected by geographic factors.

**17.D.3a** Explain how and why spatial patterns of settlement change over time.

##### History:

**16.A.3b** Make inferences about historical events and eras using historical maps and other historical sources.

### Materials:

Printout and copies of maps (one per group perhaps) in this lesson

Pencils, pens, and writing paper.

Optional: web access to more information about the farms in the *History of Illinois Agriculture* Web Exhibit.

### Motivation:

We can learn a lot by reading historical maps and comparing them. They tell us how places and relationships of places changed for the people living there through time. Illinois was covered by prairie and forests in 1800. Soon after, hundreds, then thousands of immigrants from abroad and from other eastern and southern areas of the United States migrated to Illinois. Most of them started farms. These farmers first needed to grow enough crops and livestock to feed their families. But soon they also wanted to sell their produce for cash to buy things to improve their life.

To grow cash crops and sell them, farmers need economical transport for those crops to get to the market where they are sold. Sometimes this meant the nearest town. But later, it may have meant sending them to towns farther away or to big cities.

How does a farmer get his crops to market? What types of transportation are there? What types existed in Illinois in 1820? In 1850? In 1900?

If a farmer lived near one of these routes, it may have been easy to market his crops. What does a farmer do if he does not live near a route? What if the railroads decide not to build near his town, or the roads are muddy, or his river dried up?



Let's study some of the historical maps of the 1800s and try to figure out what type of transportation these farmers had at various times to get their wheat, corn, pigs, or apples to a market. For a more detailed study of the farmers, you can read about them in other sections of the Web site.

**Procedures:**

Printout and/or color copy the maps of this lesson (enough for one copy of each per group of students)

Draw students' attention to the title and date of each map – some are of roads, one is of rivers, and others are of railroads.

Each group should choose one farmer to study.

Students should look at each map relevant to their farm and discuss what kinds of transportation was available at each time period (beginning of the farm, middle years, later years.) They will decide how each farmer could have gotten their crops or stock to a market (list the markets available, from the next town to Chicago, St. Louis, or New York, for example. Remind them that Illinois was settled from south to north, so Chicago started later than the southern settlements.

They will write up one or more scenarios of how the farmer got his produce to the markets – or not, if no transport system was available (as in one of the cases given).

**Assessment:**

The student's scenarios should reflect the fact that they read the maps correctly, they used several maps, and that the transport (or lack thereof) for their farmer was logical and feasible.

**Possible Rubric:**

Task	5 points - excellent	4 point - good	3 points - adequate	2 points - inadequate
Shows use of several maps				
Facts show accurate reading of maps				
Appropriate transport system(s) chosen				
Logical conclusions made				

Language writing skills may be graded according to the teacher's requirements.