

Inventory of
ORAL HISTORY SERIES 3

**FARMING AND FARM FAMILIES
IN DEKALB COUNTY**

Northern Illinois University Library
DeKalb, Illinois

INTRODUCTION

Farming and Farm Families in DeKalb County was an oral history project undertaken by a class in oral history anthropology at Northern Illinois University. Interviewing took place during November and October of 1986. The instructor, seven graduate students in history, and two undergraduates interviewed twenty people engaged in farming in DeKalb County at some period in their lives since World War II. Narrators were drawn chiefly from volunteers who belonged to a retired farmers' association called "Prime Timers." First names are used on the tapes unless narrators chose to be identified by use of the last name as well. Each narrator received a copy of the tape to keep.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center. No tapes are restricted in part or in whole.

Number of interviews: 34 interviews

Number of tapes: 22 cassettes

Northern Illinois University Regional History Center

Oral History Series 3

Processed by: Valerie Quinney, Leah Weisse, Cindy Baxter,

January 1987

Updated by: Mary Lee Torrence, November 1990

SERIES DESCRIPTION

Topics discussed in this collection are: changes in farming technology and practices; chores assigned on the basis of age and sex; roles and status of women in farm work; perceptions of farming as a way of life, perceptions of personal independence and economic security; kind and degree of participation in community activities; amount and use of leisure time; and availability of adult education.

The sample of farmers is biased in favor of the successful farmer. The majority of narrators are farmers who retired in some comfort as opposed to those forced out of farming. In fact, there are no representatives of the latter category. There is an age bias as well, with the majority well past retirement age. In spite of the limitations listed above, the collection can be informative. Both large and small farming operations are discussed. The hardships of farming are pointed out, and small farmers talk about the pressures they endured and the reasons they quit farming. Especially interesting is the testimony of both women and men of the changes in relationships with neighbors in the rural areas, in cohesiveness within the family, and in social support networks. Subsequent additions to the collection have focused on the experiences and role of women in farming.

Researchers should note that the first nineteen oral histories are on tape alone, with the exception of OH 3.18, which has been transcribed. Only transcripts are available for oral histories 3.20 through 3.34.

Farming and Farm Families TITLE LIST

OH 3.0	"Farming and Farm Families in DeKalb County" Research Paper	
OH 3.1	Ann Anderson	2 Tapes
OH 3.2	Don (Anonymous)	1 Tape
OH 3.3	Joanne (Anonymous)	1 Tape
OH 3.4	Karl Boekenhauer	1 Tape
OH 3.5	Luke Bridger	1 Tape
OH 3.6	Bill Clausen	1 Tape
OH 3.7	Martha & Bill Gommel	1 Tape
OH 3.8	Bev Kuhn	1 Tape
OH 3.9	Jack Kuhn	1 Tape
OH 3.10	Evelyn Lanan	1 Tape
Oh 3.11	Howard Lanan	1 Tape
OH 3.12	Milton Lambert	1 Tape
OH 3.13	Barb Male	1 Tape
OH 3.14	Clarence Neujahr	1 Tape
OH 3.15	Orrin Pauling	2 Tapes
OH 3.16	Ruth Pauling	2 Tapes
OH 3.17	Warren Scholl	1 Tape
OH 3.18	Judy Stark	1 Tape & Transcript
OH 3.19	Mary Stark	1 Tape
OH 3.20	Lillian Smith	Transcript
OH 3.21	Warren Willey	Transcript
OH 3.22	Edith Willey	Transcript
OH 3.23	Rupert Jordan	Transcript
OH 3.24	Virginia Wenmoth	Transcript
OH 3.25	Ralph Schaeffer	Transcript
OH 3.26	Blanche Schaeffer	Transcript
OH 3.27	Eunice Hartman	Transcript
OH 3.28	Ella Shrader	Transcript
OH 3.29	Leona Quilhot	Transcript
OH 3.30	Hazel Clapsaddle	Transcript
OH 3.31	Audrey Soli	Transcript
OH 3.32	Edith Challand	Transcript
OH 3.33	Lester Todd	Transcript
OH 3.34	Miles & Fern Lane	Transcript

INVENTORY

<u>TAPE NO.</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
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OH 3.1	ANN ANDERSON interviewed by Terry Kuhn 11/4/1986 - Tape
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Interview details all aspects of farming life, past and present. Other topics include: Ann as a farm wife and parent, school experiences, and the importance of church, friends and modernization.

OH 3.2	DON interviewed by Rosemarie Ostberg 11/3/1986 - Tape
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Don's interview details his childhood years growing up on a farm. He explains how he later resurrected a defunct farm.

OH 3.3	JOANNE interviewed by Rosemarie Ostberg 11/10/1986 - Tape
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Joanne discusses her farming background in LaSalle County as a child during the 1950's and 1960's, as well as her present position as a farm wife employed outside her home.

OH 3.4	KARL BOEKENHAUER interviewed by Greg Vosefski 11/12/1986 - Tape
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Boekenhauer farmed in DeKalb County from the 1930's until 1952. After leaving the farm, he continued to be involved in local agriculture.

OH 3.5	LUKE BRIDGER interviewed by Terrence Zeller 10/22/1986 - Tape
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Born in South Grove, Illinois in 1910, Bridger lived in the DeKalb area all his life. He began farming in 1931, moved to his present location in 1943, and retired from farming twelve years ago. He eventually farmed over one thousand acres, with livestock forming the basis of his marketing operations. This is the view of a successful farmer and community leader.

OH 3.6	BILL CLAUSEN interviewed by Ed Gallagher 11/13/1986 - Tape
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Clausen grew up on the farm that he lives on today. This narrative offers a good overview of changes in DeKalb farming. Clausen recalls trends and events in American agriculture.

OH 3.7	MARTHA and BILL GOMMEL interviewed by Mindy Newman 11/24/1986 - Tape
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The interview covers farming and farm life in Malta, Illinois from the 1940's through the 1980's. The Gommel's have lived in their home in Malta since their marriage. They discuss economic and technological changes and the role of the farm bureau.

TAPE NO. DESCRIPTION

OH 3.8 BEV KUHN interviewed by Terry Kuhn

11/7/1986 - Tape

Although Bev Kuhn grew up in a small city in Australia, her parents had farming backgrounds. She has lived in the DeKalb area since 1974. Her husband and their three sons are all involved in farming.

OH 3.9 JACK KUHN interviewed by Kelly Keister

11/17/1986 - Tape

Jack Kuhn helped his family maintain a dairy farm outside of Warrenville, Illinois. Jack went into plumbing to augment his farm income and spent several years in the service. After his marriage and the sale of the Warrenville property, Jack and his family moved to Clare, Illinois and settled on their present farm.

OH 3.10 EVELYN LANAN interviewed by Sharon Bartholomew

11/10/1986 - Tape

Evelyn Lanan grew up on a farm in Esmond, Illinois. She is a graduate of NIU, receiving a two year teaching degree. Evelyn spent more time with household chores and Home Extension than with actual farming procedures.

OH 3.11 HOWARD LANAN interviewed by Valerie Quinney

11/10/1986 - Tape

General topics of this interview: early settlers in DeKalb County, Lanan's family history, childhood on the farm, social life, education in the 1920's and 1930's, and changes in farm technology.

OH 3.12 MILTON LAMBERT interviewed by Ed Gallagher

11/17/1986 - Tape

The general topic of this interview is farming in DeKalb on a mid-size farm supplemented by rental of additional acreage.

OH 3.13 BARB MALE interviewed by Kelly Keister

11/25/1986 - Tape

Barb Male discusses growing up during the 1950's, early marriage, life on a DeKalb County farm, and raising a family.

OH 3.14 CLARENCE NEUJAHN interviewed by Terrence Zeller

11/11/1986 - Tape

After high school, Neujahr moved from Nebraska to Hampshire, Illinois, where he worked picking corn and on a dairy farm. He bought his farm in 1965, renting the land to others for four years and farming it himself for another four years. He discusses problems faced by

today's farm community.

TAPE NO. DESCRIPTION

OH 3.15 ORRIN PAULING interviewed by Valerie Quinney
11/3/1986 - Tape

Pauling was born and raised on his parents' Dupage County farm near what is now Stratford Square. After his marriage in 1939, he traveled to DeKalb County several times a week to work the farm that his father had purchased and eventually left to him. Other topics include: farming methods in the 1930's and 1940's, implementation of the government farm program, and life on the farm during the depression.

OH 3.16 RUTH PAULING interviewed by Sharon Bartholomew
11/3/1986 - Tape

In addition to her experiences as a farmer's wife, Ruth Pauling discusses education, social life and recreation and the benefits of farming organizations.

OH 3.17 WARREN SCHOLL interviewed by Greg Vosefski
11/13/1986 - Tape

Scholl farmed in DeKalb County from the 1930's until 1986. He talks about several subjects, including government policies and economic and ecological issues as they relate to farming.

OH 3.18 JUDY STARK interviewed by Terry Kuhn
11/11/1986 - Tape and Transcript

In this interview, Judy Stark expresses her ideas and feelings about farming and the tradition of farming in the Stark family.

OH 3.19 MARY STARK interviewed by Kelly Keister
11/24/1986 - Tape

Topics included in this interview are: descriptions of butchering time and holidays, selling eggs, moving from the family farm in DuPage County to the farm in DeKalb County.

OH 3.20 LILLIAN SMITH interviewed by Valerie Quinney
2/17/1990 - Transcript

OH 3.21 WARREN WILLEY interviewed by Valerie Quinney
2/3/1990 - Transcript

OH 3.22 EDITH WILLEY interviewed by Valerie Quinney
2/3/1990 - Transcript

OH 3.23 RUPERT JORDAN interviewed by Valerie Quinney

1/11/1990 - Transcript

OH 3.24 VIRGINIA WENMOTH interviewed by Valerie Quinney 10/01/1989 - Transcript

<u>TAPE NO.</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
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OH 3.25	RALPH SCHAEFFER interviewed by Valerie Quinney 2/18/1990 - Transcript
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OH 3.26	BLANCHE SCHAEFFER interviewed by Valerie Quinney 2/18/1990 - Transcript
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OH 3.27	EUNICE HARTMAN interviewed by Terry Kuhn 12/18/1989 - Transcript
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OH 3.28	ELLA SHRADER interviewed by Terry Kuhn 10/08/1989 - Transcript
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OH 3.29	LEONA QUILHOT interviewed by Terry Kuhn 11/11/1989 - Transcript
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OH 3.30	HAZEL CLAPSADDLE interviewed by Terry Kuhn 9/23/1989 - Transcript
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OH 3.31	AUDREY SOLI interviewed by Terry Kuhn 12/19/1989 - Transcript
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OH 3.32	EDITH CHALLAND interviewed by Terry Kuhn 11/11/1989 - Transcript
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OH 3.33	LESTER TODD interviewed by Terry Kuhn 11/18/1989 - Transcript
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OH 3.34	MILES and FERN LANE interviewed by Terry Kuhn 11/18/1989 - Transcript
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