

NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

HISTORY 497 PROJECT: FARMING AND FARM FAMILIES IN DEKALB COUNTY

Oral History Interview  
with  
Martha and Bill Gommel  
November 24, 1986  
Gommel Farm  
Twombly Rd. Malta, Ill.  
By Mindy Newman

*But permission given  
on Tape*

*NO Deed Available*

*OH. 3.7*

NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

FARMING AND FARM FAMILIES IN DEKALB

General topic of interview: Farming and farm life in Malta Illinois, during the fourties, fifties, sixties, seventies, and the eighties .

NARRATOR: BILL AND MARTHA GOMMEL  
DATE: November 24, 1986

INTERVIEWER: MINDY NEWMAN  
PLACE: Gommel Farm  
Malta, Illinois

PERSONAL DATA

Mr and Mrs. Gommel were married in 1940 and have lived in their home in Malta ever since then. their farm started out with 150 acres and has increased to 320 acres . The crops that are grown are corn and soy beans. The Gommels have three children that have all graduated from college and have moved on to non-manual labor jobs.

INTERVIEWERS COMMENTS

After I finished taping, Mr. Gommel told me about his father who moved to Malta from Germany in 1908. He then talked about his father's farm and how it had so many farm animals living on it. The interview is very usefull in understanding the life-style of a farm family, economic changes, technological changes, and the role of the farm bureau.

I would like to add that Mr. Gommel is hard of hearing and that Mrs. Gommel is almost completely deaf; consequently ~~there~~ there are many questions repeated durring the interview, or sometimes even mis#understood.

Northern Illinois University Department of History

Northern Illinois Regional History Center Archives: Changing  
Nature of Farms and Farming  
in Dekalb County 1945-1986.

Narrator: Bill and Martha Gommel  
Date: November 24, 1986  
Length of Tape: 1 hour and 20 min.

Interviewer: Windy Newman  
Place: Gommel Farm Twombly Rd.  
Malta, Illinois.

Tape Counter Number

Subjects Covered

Side A

003	Introduction
020	Birth Date and Place
035	Pre WW Two
042	First Year Farming
048	Production Increase
051	Government Intervention
070	Shortages
082	Animals
090	Outside Hired Help
094	Birth of Children
104	Neighbors Help on Farm
111	Amount of Acres
120	Equipment
128	Child Care
138	Family
147	Neighbors
157	Equipment
165	The Draft
182	Farm Decisions
188	Bookkeeping
205	Recreation
222	Church
224	School
229	Church
247	Family
275	Date Married
279	Economics

Tape Counter Number	Subjects Covered
Side A cont.	
290	After the War
307	Neighbors
335	Family
342	Future Expectations for Child
373	Returning Vets
391	Crops
402	Children
448	Schooling
461	Future Expectations for Child
464	Travel
473	New Machinery
500	Hired Help
505	Land Purchases
526	Chores
537	Crop
547	Government Subsidies
584	Erosion
597	Gov. Contracts/Subsidies
614	Farm Bureau
722	Farm Bureau-Retirement Fund
744	Farm Bureau-Social Activities

Tape Counter Number Side B	Subjects Covered
004	Farm Bureau-Literature
029	Automobiles
049	Farm Work
068	Acquire-Heat/Water
124	Savings
155	Travel
221	Rented Land
228	Off Farm Employment
233	Martha-Typical Day/Child Rearing
286	Social Activities
297	Farm Work
315	Crop Prices
343	Government Subsidies
356	Debt
364	Fertilizers
372	Pesticides
378	Machinery Choices
404	Hybrids
416	Crop Failure
435	Crop Use
442	Bill-Typical Day
474	Machinery Repair
484	Bookkeeping
505	Off Farm Employment
525	Family
540	Farm Size
552	Off Farm Employment
581	Family
619	Church
630	Movies
633	Travel Logs
637	Television
650	Home Life
667	Radio