

NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: FARMING AND FARM FAMILIES IN DEKALB COUNTY

Oral History Interview
with

BILL CLAUSEN

November 13th, 1986

5408 E. Rt. 38

DeKalb, Illinois

By Ed Gallagher

Deed Available
O# 3.6

NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

FARMING AND FARM FAMILIES IN DEKALB COUNTY

General topic of interview: Farming in Dekalb with a mid size farm supplemented by rental of additional acreage from the post war years to the present.

NARRATOR: BILL CLAUSEN
DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 1986

INTERVIEWER: ED GALLAGHER
PLACE: 5408 E. RT.38 DEKALB

PERSONAL DATA

Bill Clausen grew up on the farm that he lives in today. Born in 1926, he has witnessed significant change in farming. Along with his sister Bill inherited his farm land from his grandfather whom also lived and farmed this land. The Clausen farm is a mid sized farm with principle crops of corn and soy beans. Mr. and Mrs. Clausen raised both their daughter on this farm. Since leaving this farm their daughters have assumed careers in the medical profession. Mr. Clausen continues to farm a reduced acreage.

INTERVIEWER'S COMMENTS

This narrative offers a good overview of changes in Dekalb farming. Bill Clausen is a active member of Dekalb Farm Bureau and co-chairperson of Prime Timers, a social organization for retirement age farmers. Mr. Clausen admittedly is not good with dates but, has excellent recall of trends and events in American agriculture. Both before and after the taping of the interview Bill spoke at length about his career as a farmer and his view of the future of the American farmer. Bill Clausen spends his free time with several farm organizations and paints landscapes.

INDEX

NORTHERN ILLINOIS REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: FARMING AND FARM FAMILIES IN DEKALB COUNTY

NARRATOR: BILL CLAUSEN

INTERVIEWER: Ed Gallagher

DATE: November 13, 1986

PLACE: 5408 E Rt 38, DeKalb

LENGTH OF TAPE: 1.5 hours

TAPE COUNTER NUMBER

SUBJECTS COVERED

Side A

008	Introduction
029	Childhood, education
061	College education, decision to become farmer
078	Childhood education, memorable experience
123	Family background, siblings, work roles
160	Farm size, land acquisition
185	Views on WWII, father's trucking business
206	Patriotism
224	Land use, acreage farmed
226	Farm organizations, (dis)advantages
271	Farm competition/ monopoly, government policy
342	Post-war grain prices, government program criticism, changes in farming
388	Land values and farm economics
418	More on government policy
424	Changes in farm equipment
441	Acreage farmed
457	Stress, health
485	Impact of government programs on prices
497	Crops 40's & 50's, livestock 60's & 80's
515	Changes in crops & livestock, government programs
562	Boom years, early - late 70's
593	Agricultural downturn, debt crisis, land values
611	Neighbors, young tigers: ambitious young farmers
650	Farm economics, crop yields, land use & development
689	Boom years: costs & profits
713	Neighbor relations, land rental

Side B

008	Neighbors (cont)
064	Neighbor attitudes 50's & 60's
076	Neighbor attitudes 60's & 70's
123	Recreation, visiting, social life
153	Church
176	Children
197	Marriage, work roles on & off the farm
255	Land acquisition, family history
301	Family work roles

357	Farm wife employment
390	Women's social organizations
403	Daughters' work role, recreation
425	Parents' background
430	Relatives, visits, family trips
450	Visits to town
467	Vacations
489	Typical work days: planting, harvest, off season
554	Technological developments
572	Farm equipment changes
651	Soil conservation
662	Impact of pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers
732	Bill Clausen's message to humanity