

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Rick Collins

Part of the Illinois State Museum's and Abraham Lincoln Presidential
Library's *Oral History of Agriculture in Illinois*
Interview # AIS-V-L-2008-099

Rick Collins, restorer of old barns, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Agriculture in Illinois* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: April 10, 2009 Location: Mercer County, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Mike Maniscalco, Illinois State Museum

Technical Support: Robert Warren, recording engineer, Illinois State Museum

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Abstract

Rick Collins, *Agriculture in Illinois*, Oral History project

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Rick Collins was born on July 16, 1972 in Highland, Illinois. Despite not growing up on a farm, he did a lot of farm work as a child and young adult, including milking cows, scrapping manure, detasseling corn and cutting hay. Although he lived in a rural area, Rick commuted to a public school in Peoria and later graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in Forestry. He did not go into farming right away, but now has a small farm with a few acres set aside for organic produce. His main source of income is in the restoration of old buildings and constructing new timber framed houses. His hobby and passion is for restoring old barns. Rick explained the long history of the different types of barns found in Illinois and how many of them had roots to the types of barns found in Europe. He explained the differences in the roofs and why there aren't thatched roofs in the state. He also explained the hardware and build methods used by the settlers to build these structures. He dislikes how urban sprawl and bureaucracy has hurt the effort to preserve these old buildings and how many people do not seem to care about the agriculture heritage of the state.

Subject Headings/Keywords: Highland, IL; Milking Cows; Detasseling Corn; Cutting Hay; Peoria, IL; University of Illinois; Forestry; Organic Produce; Restoration; Timber Frame Houses; Barns; Hardware; Urban Sprawl; Bureaucracy; Heritage

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