

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Leland Sweatman

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Illinois State Museum's *Agriculture in Illinois* Oral History project

Interview # AIS-V-L-2008-018

Leland Sweatman, a retired farmer and farm implement collector, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Oral History of Illinois Agriculture* project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Jan. 28, 2008

Location: Virginia IL

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Michael Maniscalco, IL State Museum Oral Historian

Technical Support: Robert Warren and Doug Carr, camera

Transcription by: Tape Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Michael Maniscalco and Denis Sweatman

Video indexed by: James Oliver

Total Pages: 26 Total Time: 1:14 + 0:33 / 1.23 + .55 = 1.78 hrs

Session 1: Life on a typical Illinois farm, electrification & into the modern age

Session 2: Walking tour of Sweatman's miniature tractor collection.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on 08/04/2009.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Leland Sweatman, *Oral History of IL Agriculture*, AIS-V-L-2008-018

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Leland Sweatman was born on September 16th, 1927 in Virginia, Illinois, and spent his entire life on the farm until his retirement in the town of Virginia. Leland talks about his childhood and going to a school in a one room school house outside of Virginia, Illinois until the 8th grade. His chores consisted of watering the animals, bailing hay, hand shucking corn, saddling horses, and driving a plow. After high school he was drafted into the army in 1945, where he became an x-ray tech while managing to return to the family farm on weekends to work. After the war he returned to the family farm and rented land of his own to farm. When the house on that farm was being wired for electricity, he was hired on as an electrician's helper, which helped supplement his income.

Sweatman farmed corn, wheat, and beans, even though the markets on such crops stayed the same price per bushel. He explained that the only way to get ahead was to produce more product from less land or buy more land. He also discussed drought of the 1950s and infestation of chinch bugs. Sweatman was an Allis Chalmers implements dealer in the 1970's and 80's, and now collects tractors. He explains the mechanical history of tractors including hydraulics, center three-point hitch, and the impact of increasing horse-power in farm equipment.

Topics Covered: Leland Sweatman, Virginia Illinois, one room school house, chores, watering the animal, bailing hay, hand shucking corn, saddling horses, driving a plow, x-ray tech, rented farm, worked as an electrician, Rural Electric Association, supplement income, corn, wheat, and beans, drought of the 1950s, infestation of chinch bugs, Allis Chalmers implements dealer, hydraulics, center three point hitch, horse power equaling more blades on plows

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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