

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with John & Ida Thurman

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Oral History of Illinois Agriculture project

Interview # AIS-V-L-2008-047

John and Ida Thurman, lifelong farmers in Kankakee County, were interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Illinois State Museum's *Oral History of Illinois Agriculture* project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: July 29, 2008 Location: Thurman farm in rural St. Anne, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Elizabeth Simmons, ALPL Volunteer

Technical Support (cameraman, etc): Mark Suszko, IL Information Service

Transcription by: Tape Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteer

Total Pages: 31 Total Time: 42 min + 25 min = 1 hr 7 min / 1.12 hrs

Session 1: Life on a small farm in Kankakee County

Session 2: Walking interview of the Thurman farm

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on 11/21/2008.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in
Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

John & Ida Thurman, *Oral History of IL Agriculture*, AIS-V-L-2008-047

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: John Thurman was born on December 25th, 1959 in Chicago, Illinois. Ida was born on August 24th, 1959 in Simpson County, Mississippi. They married in 1977, and have lived together and raised a family on a small farm near the town of St. Anne in Pembroke Township, Kankakee County, Illinois. They are African-American farmers living among a small community of Black farmers in Kankakee County. They farm a small acreage, using sustainable farm practices, raising foodstuff for themselves and their family in a traditional subsistence farming environment. The couple have a large family and live with others in their extended family. They own most of the land they farm, and either rent or barter for the additional acreage to meet their needs.

Both are active in the community and both are involved in the youth of the township. They participate in an agricultural cooperative and Illinois Cooperative extension agents are valuable assets to them, providing a source of information and advice for their enterprise.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Small acreage farming; subsistence farming; African-American farmers; Pembroke Township, Kankakee County, Illinois; Illinois Cooperative; family life on the farm; land ownership patterns; barter; farming as renters; sustainable farming techniques; farmers markets; Cooperative extension.

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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