

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Irene McGuire

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Illinois  
State Museum's *Oral History of Illinois Agriculture* project  
Interview # AIS-V-L-2008-053

Irene McGuire, a farm wife who discusses the pain of loosing a farm, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and IL State Museum's *Oral History of Illinois Agriculture* project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: May 27, 2008

Location: Cobden Illinois

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Michael Maniscalco, Illinois State Museum

Technical Support: cameraman, Dr. Robert Warren, Illinois State Museum

Transcription by: Tape Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Mike Maniscalco and Rachel Thompson, Illinois State Museum

Video indexed by: James Oliver, Illinois State Museum

Total Pages: 37    Total Time: 2hrs 3min + 15min = 2hrs 18min / 2.30 hrs

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The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in  
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# Abstract

Irene McGuire, *Oral History of IL Agriculture*, AIS-V-L-2008-053

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Irene Hartline was born on August 18, 1932 in Cobden Illinois. Irene's parents were fruit farmers when she was first born but at the age of five, in the midst of the Great Depression, her father lost the farm. Throughout her youth the family always talked fondly of farming. Eventually Irene married Daniel McGuire, the son of an orchard owner. Irene and her husband moved into an old home on the farm, which was founded in 1820. Irene soon began to learn the family business. Fern McGuire, her mother-in-law, and Irene kept the books for the farm. Eventually Irene and her husband found themselves taking over the entire 800 acre fruit and livestock operation.

In the 1980's Irene and her husband found themselves in a difficult situation. The past seven years had yielded no peach crop and everything on the farm had been put up for collateral. In the end the government told the McGuire family that they had to either try to sell the farm or declare bankruptcy. After numerous attempts at trying to sell the farm as a whole, they eventually sold off the farm in sections. Portions of their former land was used for a housing development, while other parcels are still in use as an orchard, run by a large fruit company.

**Topics Covered:** Great Depression; marriage into farm family; Farm finances; history of family farm; Orchard farming; Loss of farm

**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, or for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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