

Inventory of the

**Norris Family**  
Sugar Grove, Illinois

Collection

In the

Regional History Center

**RC 74**

## INTRODUCTION

Donald Norris donated the records of the Norris Family Collection to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on August 1, 1979.

Property rights in the collection are held by the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 1  
Number of containers: 1  
Northern Illinois Regional History Center  
Collection 74

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Norris family collection partially documents life on the Norris family farm in Blackberry Township, Kane County, Illinois, from 1864-1932. The earliest record contained in the collection is a copy of the diary of Hiram Norris' wife and son, Hannah Marcella Norris and Frank Young Norris (1864). The bulk of the remaining manuscript material pertains to the last quarter of the nineteenth century; two printed books were published in the 1920's and 1930's.

In addition to the diary, there are various other farm records, including mill accounts, sales records, household and estate expenses, and rents. Related school district records, school notebooks, an atlas, and printed books complete the collection.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Illinois Department of Agriculture designated the Donald Norris farm in Sugar Grove, Kane County, Illinois, a Centennial farm in the 1970's. Matthew N. Norris, a recent arrival from the East, made the original land purchase in 1844 shortly after the U.S. government had completed a new land survey there. As such, the Norris farm was one of the earliest such settlements in Blackberry Township. The 450 acre site has passed through five successive generations of the Norris family: Matthew Norris (1798-1885); Hiram Norris (1828-1904); Frank Norris (1856-1940); Warren Norris (1884-1963); and Donald Norris (1917-present).

In the 1840's and 1850's Kane County agriculture was basically devoted to small grains. About 1864-1865 many farmers switched to dairy farming to increase profits, and cheese and butter production followed suit. The Norris family became well-known in the area at the time for breeding and dealing in fine livestock; Hiram Norris has been credited with introducing Hereford cattle into Kane County. Respective generations of Norrises have engaged in agricultural and civic organizations, i.e., the Kane County Farm Bureau. Hiram Norris and Warren Norris were active participants in school district affairs.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Blackberry Township  
 Centennial Farms  
 Diaries, 1840-1869  
 Diaries, 1870-1909  
 Family Farms  
 Family Life, History  
 Hereford Cattle  
 Kane County  
 Norris Family  
 Sugar Grove

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Plat, journal of Hiram Norris farm, 1864-66, 1878, 1880, 1882
	2	Household expenses, sales, and rents ledger, 1874-1885
	3	Inventory of effects of M. N. Norris estate, c. 1885

ENVELOPE

1	Account for Mr. George West with H. Norris and Son, March 5, 1903
2	Care of chickens clippings, c. 1928
3	Household expenses, livestock, rents, 1880-1885
4	Reading lists, c. 1927
5	School notes, Matthew Norris, n.d.
1 volume	Ledger, M. N. Norris estate, 1885; rents, expenses, 1885-1891
1 volume	Mill accounts, by name, 1892-1898
1 volume	<u>Aurora Daily News Farm Atlas</u> , c. 1904
1 volume	School District Record, District 1, Township 39, Kane County, 1884-1902
1 volume	Attendance and Classification Record, School District III, Kane County, 1921-1928
1 volume	Shop notes of Warren Norris, c. 1900
1 volume	School notebook, n.d.
1 volume	Osburn, William. <u>Prairie Farmer's Poultry Book</u> , 1925
1 volume	<u>Illinois Farmers' Institute and Department of Household Science Yearbook and Annual Report, 1932</u>