

Interview with Ernest Thorp  
# VR2-A-L-2009-042.1  
Excerpt from Interview # 1: December 17, 2009  
Interviewer: Mark DePue

**COPYRIGHT**

**The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955**

**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.

Thorp: As soon as I was big enough to hold a wheel, I drove a tractor.

DePue: So that was the machinery?

Thorp: Oh, gosh, my dad had about six tractors and three combines, four thrashing machines, two corn shellers, and plows and disks, and he would go out and be plowing for farmers and custom work of that type. So I grew up on a tractor more than I did feeding hogs or milking the cow.

DePue: That's an incredible amount of machinery for that time, I would think.

Thorp: Oh, it was. It was.

DePue: And you say he hired himself out to work on other farms, then?

Thorp: Oh, yeah. He did a lot of custom work for people. We'd have no less than two to three hired men. Normally you had a hired man for 160 acres. Of course, my dad had about 320, but with the machinery, they were on the machinery more than they were on the farm.