



## ILLINOIS RURAL SURVEY

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

May, 1986

Surveys of historic resources are the basis of any informed preservation. The kinds, location, and conditions of historic resources must be known in order to decide how best to allocate personnel and budget and develop specialized preservation strategies.

The Illinois Rural Survey is designed to augment information retrieved earlier by the Illinois Historic Landmarks Survey and the Illinois Historic Structures Survey. The Landmarks Survey was conducted in 1971-1975 by historians under contract to the Illinois Department of Conservation to identify, photograph, and summarize the importance of places of associative significance and generated a report for each county. The Structures Survey was conducted concurrently by architectural historians also under contract to the Illinois Department to identify and photograph places of architectural significance in towns over 500. It generated a report for each "downstate" county and one for each neighborhood in Chicago and many suburban municipalities.

The Illinois Rural Survey is a photograph, record of location, and classification, according to the survey typology, of every structure in unincorporated areas and is completed by counties. It complies with the survey requirements of the grants management section in order for Illinois to receive federal funds to perform the work of the Illinois State Historic Preservation office. The Survey standards of those of a reconnaissance survey as defined by the National Park Service, Archeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines (in Federal Register, Sept. 29, 1983, Vol. 48, No. 190, p. 44722; hereinafter, Standards and Guidelines).

The survey intent is neither an architectural nor an archaeological documentation of resources. Such would be an intensive survey in the language of the Standards and Guidelines. Instead the Rural Survey is intended as a preliminary identification and evaluation of historic resources in counties experiencing financial redevelopment through the general force of urbanization and specifically the Economic Recovery Tax Act and federal activity requiring "review and compliance" under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Hence, the survey's classification system is based on the latest scholarship; but its primary use is for preservation, although it is hoped scholars will find it helpful in their own work.

The final product has two parts: (1) survey cards and maps and (2) a report. It is the latter which distinguishes the preservation purposes of the survey in compliance with federal standards. Hence, your survey contract requires a report with the following components: a survey summary satisfying the research design; namely, identification of categories of resources especially endangered by urbanization and industrialization (principally surface mining); itemization of specific endangered resources suitable for further investigation ("intensive survey") as National Register places; recommendations of other (besides National Register) general preservation strategies; identification of resource categories little known or unidentified elsewhere in Illinois; and a characterization of current clusterings of resource types within the county, the present condition of those resources, and assessment of preservation opportunities (especially National Register designation) in those resource clusters;

Survey cards, maps, and reports have several preservation uses. First, the data on the cards and maps can be used to facilitate a preliminary appraisal of pending impacts. A site inspection may be necessary to add information for determining what course to take, however. The data on the cards and maps and reports also is used to evaluate resources considered for the National Register. This is especially true for common resources currently little understood in the scholarly literature. Often these are resources difficult to evaluate because they are proposed in a random sequence stemming from citizen initiative. Second, survey records make it easier to identify places deserving National Register designation, although intensive surveys are necessary for documentation sufficient to prepare nomination forms.