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Changing Consumption Patterns on a Mid-Nineteenth Century Illinois Farmstead: The Manns Site

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*with contributions by
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Situated in northwestern Madison County, Illinois, the Manns site (11MS1846) presents a unique view of a long-term, mid-nineteenth century occupation by a single household. The Garrett family purchased the underlying property in 1831, and they retained possession until 1892. Fieldwork conducted in 2005 and 2006 led to the discovery of 40 subsurface features and the recovery of nearly 7,500 individual artifacts. 70 percent of the artifacts were recovered from just two features, a well (dating 1830–ca. 1850) and a cistern (1845–ca. 1880). Combined, these yielded a wide swathe of material covering nearly the entirety of the Garrett occupation. This data facilitated an unfettered examination of changing consumption patterns and consumer choice, isolated from variables associated with multiple ownerships.

The well revealed a strong preference of printed refined ceramics over the less expensive painted wares prior to ca. 1850; this being significantly out of the norm for most rural farmsteads. The post-1845 cistern reveals a relatively equal representation of printed and painted wares, but with minimal plain paneled and molded wares, again out of the norm for that era. While the cistern presents a typical teaware dominant assemblage, the well yielded approximately 50 percent more tableware than teaware. A proportionally large number of unrefined vessels are present; while regionally atypical, the Manns site's proximity to the Upper Alton pottery industry would have made these readily available. Furthermore, as a number of vessels in the cistern exhibit warping and bubbled glaze, these may represent lower-cost seconds purchased directly from the pottery. Further illustrating the local access to affordable ceramic food storage vessels, no glass food storage or canning jars were recovered. While archival documents show the Garrett ownership persisted until 1892, the archaeology demonstrates the occupation of this site concluded ca. 1880, or at minimum, sustained a drastic change in site use and refuse disposal.

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Table Appendices

To facilitate the production process long appendices tables are available online in their original Excel format and are not included in the paper copy of this report. Copy the URLs below and paste them into a web browser to download the data. Excel or a similar program that can open .xls files is required.

- A** Artifact Count Inventory
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/24/11MS1846_Manns_Appendix_A.xls
- B** Faunal Inventory
http://isas.illinois.edu/publications/data/TARR/24/11MS1846_Manns_Appendix_B.xls

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Back top: Excavation at the Manns Site.

Back bottom (left-to-right): Victoria Sage pattern refined ceramic plate being excavated from Feature 19 and stoneware lid from Feature 28. Photography by ISAS staff.

Front (left-to-right): Unembossed bottle, paneled/molded ironstone saucer decorated with Scalloped Deacon pattern, whiteware "peppermint" finial, unembossed salve jar, stoneware product jar, stoneware lid, and wood auger. Photography by ISAS staff.

