

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
Cosgrove Interview, 7 January 2008, Final

1 **Interview conducted by Bill Smith; Recorded on Marantz Digital Recorder;**
2 **Transcribed by Bill Smith**

3
4 **Track 65**

5
6 **Bill:** This is Bill Smith with the Flint Hills Tourism Coalition Ranching Impact Study. I
7 am visiting with, in the home of, John and Linda Cosgrove north of Council Grove; and,
8 John, let's just start with some statistics. What year were you born and where; were you
9 born here?

10
11 **John:** I was born in Morris County, March 25th, 1949... the fifth generation on this
12 ranch. Originally my great-great-great grandfather Doran, Francis Doran, came over from
13 Ireland, in 1857, and traveled out to Kansas on a train. Then he traveled by boat up to St.
14 Joe, Missouri; and traveled to a spot that they thought was very lush, in Morris County,
15 which is now our homestead here. They got here in 1859. [The 1860 Federal Census for
16 Kansas Territory shows Frank Doran, age 25, and Mary Doran, age 21, in Neosho
17 Township.]

18
19 **Bill:** 1859. So you are coming up on one hundred and fifty years, next year; and family
20 has owned and operated and lived on the farm continuously since then.

21
22 **John:** That's correct. Yes.

23
24 **Bill:** Is there state recognition for these? I know we had century farms back in Iowa for
25 years; have they talked about what they are doing for the 150th, as people come up on
26 that?

27
28 **John:** Well, we really haven't advertised it as such, but, we're planning on having a
29 family celebration; and I'm sure there'll be some recognition.

30
31 **Bill:** You mentioned earlier, there were already some homesteads here at that time? Not
32 very many, I'm sure, but... not continuously since them.

33
34 **John:** I presume there were. I'm aware of any that are quite as old as this, in Morris
35 County. The further west you get, you know, the younger the homesteads are.

36
37 **Bill:** Sure. Seth Hays only came in '57; and so, from what I've heard of that, there wasn't
38 much here, at that time. So the Doran's found the lush prairie, and settled down, and
39 made a life of it.

40
41 **John:** Ya. One of things that they...

42
43 **Linda:** This is the log cabin. They had a drawing done, once, of the log cabin that was
44 first build... and then had a painting done of the log cabin.

45

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46 **John:** And, it's in that paper, too, the picture of that log cabin. [John handed Bill
47 photocopies of an article about the homestead from about 1907, written by his great-
48 grandfather, lawyer Thomas Doran.]
49

50 **Bill:** I was going to say, I could take a picture of it, too.
51

52 **John:** But, after being flooded by the Munkers Creek Valley, where they homesteaded,
53 they decided to move to higher ground. So they moved up to the southeast corner of the
54 section and built this rock house. And, it's actually been added onto several times since
55 then.
56

57 **Bill:** But this one we are sitting in is the original house.
58

59 **John:** It was actually built in 1871.
60

61 **Bill:** You said "Munkers" creek?
62

63 **John:** Munkers Creek is the main creek that goes through this area, and has always been
64 a creek that runs, with continuous springs. It joins the Neosho River right at the edge of
65 Council Grove. That's why they built the reservoir, to protect the town. One thing my
66 great-great-grandfather noticed about this area was the tall prairie grass on these bottoms,
67 about as tall as a horse. Of course, at that time, there weren't very many trees. The fires
68 would burn all the trees out. That's one reason Council Grove got its name. It was
69 surrounded by water, and protected from the fires. That's why there were so many old
70 oak trees in Council Grove.
71

72 **Bill:** How far from Council Grove are you out here?
73

74 **John:** We are about 5 miles north. [Bill asked the correct spelling of Munkers] That was
75 an historic family, too.
76

77 **Bill:** That was a name for a family.
78

79 **John:** Right. ...settled along here, also. Lot of names of creeks...
80

81 **Track 66**
82

83 **John:** ...different places were named after...
84

85 **Bill:** So, how many children were in the family that settled? Do you recall?
86

87 **John:** Well, I might have to have my wife...
88

89 **Bill:** Who stayed on?
90

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91 **John:** All the children and parents are buried in Council Grove... in the Calvary Catholic
92 Cemetery. They had at least two children that only live a month... to three months...
93 because of pneumonia and had no way to treat their children. I was thinking that there
94 were four children that survived, but I need to check the records.

95

96 **Bill:** Who stayed on as the principle owner/operator after that?

97

98 **John:** After my great-great grandfather died, then my great-grandfather, Thomas Doran,
99 took over the ranch. He grew up here, of course, as a child. Eventually, he went on to
100 school at KU and established a law firm in Topeka, Kansas, the Doran Law Firm.

101

102 **Bill:** He is the gentleman that wrote this information: the fifty years on the frontier.

103

104 **John:** Yes. His picture is there.

105

106 **Bill:** Thomas F. Doran, right.

107

108 **John:** Yes, my great grandfather. My great-great grandfather's name was Francis Doran.
109 [Pause] They used to tell of when they first settled here, how tough it was. To make ends
110 meet, they would take their team of oxen to Council Grove and help pull the covered
111 wagons across the Neosho River to make extra money to survive on.

112

113 **Bill:** Earn some cash.

114

115 **John:** That's correct. One of the ways they could make extra money.

116

117 **Bill:** That is a good story. The wagons going across had to get across the Neosho...

118

119 **John:** Council Grove was the last major stop, before Santa Fe, New Mexico. There were
120 some smaller stops, but it was the main stop, for supplies... especially hard wood
121 supplies. Because, it was the only place that had any trees, to rebuild the wagons.

122 [Turning to his wife, Linda] Do you know how many there were in the family... Francis
123 Doran? She has the family tree, we need to check.

124

125 **Bill:** This Thomas was one of those.

126

127 **John:** Yes, he was one of those.

128

129 **Bill:** He was born here, after they arrived?

130

131 **John:** Yes. Yes, he was.

132

133 **Bill:** Francis was already married?

134

135 **John:** Yes, he was married.

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136

137 **Bill:** He and his wife both came. That's always interesting to see when the families
138 came... when just the men came, and staked out their claim.

139

140 **John:** Like a lot of Irish immigrants, they were forced out of Ireland by the potato famine.
141 That's how they happened to arrive here.

142

143 **Bill:** My wife's family, one of her branches, was DOLAN that came about the same time.
144 They came to eastern Iowa, instead of to Kansas. [Pause] Did they say, or in that letter,
145 why they picked to come straight to Kansas?

146

147 **John:** I think they were just going west. I think it says in his writing there, that he just
148 happened to find this spot that was inviting.

149

150 **Bill:** It was available. [Phone ringing in the background]

151

152 **John:** That was the reason they stopped. Good running water, bottom land, on the edge,
153 was the Flint Hills. A little bit of everything. And back then, I would say the frontier
154 people, the families that settled in the Flint Hills, had a tough time, because you had to
155 farm the ground, to consider it a homestead. So, they had to tear up some of the native
156 grass, and it was extremely rocky. So, where he lived on the edge of the Flint Hills, he
157 had some good bottom ground to go along with it.

158

159 **Bill:** Being able to farm the bottom...

160

161 **Track 67**

162

163 **Bill:** ...ground, made it able to work at all.

164

165 **John:** That's right. There was just a lot more that you could do with bottom ground than
166 with rocky ground.

167

168 **Bill:** Coming back to the near past now, how much of the...One of the things I've been
169 told in several of the other interviews is that every Flint Hills ranch also has farming.

170

171 **John:** That's correct.

172

173 **Bill:** That it virtually goes together. And, different people handle it differently. Some
174 consider themselves ranchers, who had a little farm land, and maybe they farm it out to
175 somebody. Others consider themselves farmers, and rent out the ranch land. What's your
176 experience been?

177

178 **John:** Well, we're a little of all of that. The size of our ranch is around 7 thousand acres.

179

180 **Bill:** That was another question I was going to ask, how big it is now?

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181

182 **John:** We actually FARM about 2800 acres.

183 **Bill:** 2800!

184

185 **John:** Yes. Now, not all of that is our ground. We lease some ground south, and east, of
186 Council Grove, in the Neosho River valley. That is lease and farm. But, most of the
187 ground we farm is our own.

188

189 **Bill:** But, you do have a substantial farming operation.

190

191 **John:** Yes. Actually, we're kind of divided in three places: 1) the home place where we
192 are right now. 2) Then we have the place south and east of Council Grove, just outside
193 Council Grove, on the Dunlap road, 3) and then we have a north farm, which is
194 approximately 2 miles south and east of Dwight, Kansas. It is an upland farm. So, we're
195 spread out a little bit. One reason we are is because. In the sixties, when the Federal
196 government wanted to take most of our bottom land for an easement for the reservoir, we
197 were forced to buy land elsewhere. So, we ended up buying some up by Dwight and
198 some, also, south of Council Grove. Since then, we've increase the size of our farm south
199 of Council Grove more than anywhere else.

200

201 **Bill:** You picked up adjoining land as it became available?

202

203 **John:** Yes. That's correct. It's pretty well protected by the reservoir because it is right
204 out the Council Grove so we get some backup flood water, but no swift flood water, like
205 they would before the built the dam.

206

207 **Bill:** The dam pretty well controls that.

208

209 **John:** We're a little over 4 thousand acres of the seven thousand, probably closer to five
210 thousand, or fifty-five hundred, are grass... Flint Hills grass.

211

212 **Bill:** And what do you do with that?

213

214 **John:** Ok. We have our own cow/calf operation and then we usually keep our yearlings
215 and put 'em on grass; and either feed 'em out, or sell 'em on the market. Years ago, we
216 used to buy cattle to supplement the rest of our grass we now have. Now, we rent out up
217 to fifteen hundred acres to other farmers in the area that put yearlings on that pasture.

218

219 **Bill:** Most of it you are using for your own operation.

220

221 **John:** Yes. There is mostly cow/calf in those pastures.

222

223 **Bill:** So you are using that year around; which takes up more acres.

224

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225 **John:** Yes, we keep cattle in those pastures year around to utilize the grass so it doesn't
226 get too short.

227

228 **Bill:** Have there been any substantial changes in the way you use the rangeland, during
229 your life-time, say? Or has it pretty much been the same?

230

231 **John:** Well, it's pretty much the same. There have been differences in the way we've
232 change our programs on how we wean calves compared to what they used to when my
233 dad was living. We used to bring the calves off the cows into lots; then wean 'em and
234 feed them in lots. Times went it really gets wet and snowy; we'd have to treat a lot of
235 calves. Now, most of our cows, when we wean the calves,

236

237

Track 68

238

239 **John:** we leave the calves in the pasture where they were more or less raised in the
240 summer. We put the mothers right on the other side of the fence; and it is called fence
241 line weaning.

242

243 **Bill:** Interesting! I had not heard that one. That is good!

244

245 **John:** Oddly enough, we've been doing it for quite a few years. Just recently, I've heard
246 that O-State University has been trying this, most successfully, also.

247

248 **Bill:** Bit of a pioneer yourself.

249

250 **John:** Yes. It is something we've been trying – very little death loss that way. You know,
251 the calves are used to going to water in that pasture and they're used to being fed there.
252 Yes, they'll bawl for their mothers. The fences aren't great, so every once in a while one
253 will get through, but you just move back. They'll get out once, but usually not again.

254

255 **Bill:** What kind of fence do you use in that situation?

256

257 **John:** All our fences are barbed wire and steel posts. Back in the 30s, it's the same
258 subject, but my great-grandfather that was the lawyer in Topeka, (course he had the law
259 firm to supplement his income when times were tough in the 30s) he purchased two box
260 cars full of posts and wire from Rums and White Hardware, in Council Grove, when
261 times were tough. He hired a lot of the local young guys and they build 13 miles of fence
262 around this ranch, back in the 30s. And a lot of that fence is still there today.

263

264 **Bill:** Good work project.

265

266 **John:** Yes. And, a lot of the corner posts are angle iron; with just a single angle iron
267 brace that goes down into the ground, and they were in concrete. So, they didn't use
268 hedge posts, the used steel angle iron, back there in the 30s.

269

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270 **Linda:** Did you tell him how your great-great grandfather used to earn extra money?
271
272 **John:** Yes, going to town...
273
274 **Bill:** With the oxen... Did they have multiple yokes of oxen?
275
276 **John:** I just know that they'd go with two, to town.
277
278 **Bill:** Take two, hook them up, get some cash. Yes, that is a good story.
279
280 **John:** There might be a story in there about my great-great grandfather going to pick up
281 grain, and coming back in a blizzard. They didn't think he would return, but he did, with
282 grain for the cattle.
283
284 **Bill:** They had blizzards back then, too.
285
286 **John:** You can imagine... At least they didn't have to worry about their electricity going
287 out. [chuckles all around – that his been a problem in late 2007 and early 2008]
288
289 **Bill:** If you don't have any, you can't lose it.
290
291 **Linda:** There were much harder things to worry about.
292
293 **John:** It's just hard for me being able to fathom how difficult it was back then.
294
295 **Bill:** Yes, it is mind boggling
296
297 **John:** Once the sun went down, the only light you had was coal-oil lanterns or the
298 fireplace burning. No insulation in your house.
299
300 **Bill:** It was a very different life style.
301
302 **John:** There were also stories of the Indians coming to the log cabin, begging for food; it
303 would scare the family when they would come around. It was always a scary situation.
304 Originally this was part of the reservation. When they made it smaller, this went out of
305 the reservation; but, our farm south of town was still in the diminished reservation. Some
306 of the property we own down there still has a rock house on it, from when they built the
307 rock houses for the Kaw Indians. Some of the others that were torn down, you can see the
308 sites where they are because of the rocks in the fields. I've even walked around, even
309 when I was looking for arrowheads, I've found an 1859 Canadian penny, a lead ball, and
310 a marble; I presume these were owned by the Indians. Back then, they were still around.
311
312 **Bill:** Any family stories of Civil War times?
313

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314 **John:** Oddly enough, we had some relatives that lived in Lawrence. Their name was
315 Woodward.

316

317 **Track 69**

318

319 **John:** They were among the first settlers of Lawrence. Matter of fact, he was a
320 pharmacist. There are stories of them hiding in their house when there were raids, when
321 they burned a lot. They survived that incident. [to Linda] Did you have that family tree?

322

323 **Linda:** Did you want Frank and Mary's children?

324

325 **Bill:** Yes.

326

327 **Linda:** There were seven children. We had in our records six, but someone else
328 researching the family said seven, so... Two died as babies.

329

330 **Bill:** Then there were the four that survived.

331

332 **Linda:** One died as a twelve year old. One died in a hunting accident at age 45; he
333 already had a wife and five or six kids. [Looking to John] I think your mother always said
334 five kids; and this other person came up with seven.

335

336 **John:** Was one of them a Woodward, or married a Woodward?

337

338 **Linda:** Yes.

339

340 **John:** That's the Woodward... where the Lawrence story came from. One thing that is
341 kind of interesting is: we have the original patent, when we bought the place. Of course,
342 you have to live here for five years before you got a patent. Our patent is signed by
343 Abraham Lincoln by a secretary. I took the date off the patent when he signed it, and he
344 was assassinated almost exactly a month after he signed it.

345

346 **Bill:** I was running that calculation in my mind... Spring of 1864, and he died in April.

347

348 **John:** I'll show you that patent. It's kind of fun to have.

349

350 **Bill:** That's neat. How much land was that?

351

352 **John:** That was one hundred sixty acres. This house is actually built in the very southeast
353 corner; they had to get up here far enough so they didn't get flooded from Munkers
354 Creek. After building a log cabin in the flood plain, and getting flooded a couple of
355 times...they learned. All the rock that was put in the house came off of the flint hill
356 south of the house here. That was a common practice, back then, that they used a lot of
357 the local rock to build a lot of the houses.

358

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359 **Bill:** That is what makes them so distinctive and valuable... to look at and preserve
360 today. They were able to do that, and it is still around, and usable. Amazing.

361

362 **John:** We also have the original revolver that they came out with. It is actually a Navy
363 Colt pistol. It is one that you have to pack the ball and stuff. It is in the original holster
364 they had when they came out here.

365

366 **Bill:** WOW. Hang onto that one.

367

368 **John:** I'll show that to you.

369

370 **Linda:** Shall I go get them?

371

372 **John:** Ya. I want to show him that letter, too. I think that is pretty interesting. The letter
373 from my great-great grandfather, that was sent to his son, from Ireland. It is hard to come
374 up with old letters like that.

375

376 **Bill:** Oh, yes! You are so lucky to have them. [Pause] I'm going to get my camera out,
377 here. This will give me a good excuse to get a picture. [Linda approaches with the pistol
378 in the holster] Oh, that's scary – the real thing! [Pause, can here the camera shutter click a
379 couple of times] Oh, isn't that something? Just like you see on Antiques Roadshow!
380 [Pause] Heavy son-of-a-gun.

381

Track 70

382

384 **Bill:** ...and the original holster, too.

385

386 **John:** Yes, that is unusual.

387

388 **Bill:** That's incredible.

389

390 **John:** It's very flimsy.

391

392 **Bill:** I'll be very careful. I'll lay that down, very careful

393

394 **John:** And, here's that patent I was telling you about.

395

396 **Bill:** [reading] Abraham Lincoln by Edward D. Neale. [pause] \$1.75 an acre. [all
397 chuckle]

398

399 **John:** Yes, I'd like to find more like that, today. [pause] But this note says: Navy model
400 Colt, 6 caliber, made around 1843. It said an extra cylinder was carried around for faster
401 reloading during Indian attacks. In other words, you can take the cylinder out.

402

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403 **Bill:** Without having to reload the individual shells. [pause] So, they probably would
404 have bought that in New York? ... or somewhere along the way?

405
406 **John:** I'd say they probably did... I can't believe they would have brought it over from
407 Ireland.

408
409 **Bill:** The Navy Colt would have been made here...

410
411 **John:** And, it had to be used, too. It was just a used gun that they bought. That made it
412 older, because it was used.

413
414 **Bill:** This is the patent. Hold that... I'm going to take another picture. That's the patent,
415 signed by Lincoln's secretary for Kansas Indian Trust Lands, signed October 20, 1864.
416 And then the letter...

417
418 **John:** Now, it is in the glass, so you can see both sides... makes it kind of fun. It's kind
419 of hard to read...

420
421 **Bill:** Patrick Doran.

422
423 **John:** There is a date on there... 1857.

424
425 **Bill:** February 1857. Dear Frances... Why don't you hold that there... and I'll do another
426 one. [more camera clicks] If nothing else, it helps me remember. Ok. Now, this was from
427 Frances... was still in Ireland.

428
429 **John:** No, Frances was in New York.

430
431 **Bill:** That is the return address.

432
433 **John:** His dad was in Ireland.

434
435 **Bill:** Very neat stuff! You can celebrate that... and get out that video and celebrate.

436
437 **John:** Yes, we need to listen to my dad. He was the president of the Morris County
438 Historical Society for a number of years and he got a lot of the projects done, in Council
439 Grove. The Seth Hays home, and the post office... he led the charge to refurbish them.

440
441 **Bill:** And what was his name?

442
443 **John:** Thomas Cosgrove.

444
445 **Bill:** He married a Doran girl then?

446

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447 **John:** My great grandfather Doran, that was the lawyer in Topeka, that built the 13 miles
448 of fence, he married a Cosgrove.

449

450 **Linda:** Your dad's mother was a Doran, before she married the Cosgrove. The Doran
451 name has been passed on; John's middle name is Doran. And, our oldest son, Lucas, is
452 Lucas Doran.

453

454 **Bill:** So, you have one or more of your family continuing on?

455

456 **Linda:** We have four children, two boys and two girls. It is the youngest son that wants
457 to farm.

458

459 **Bill:** The others have other interests.

460

461 **Linda:** Yes. They all have strong interest in art and graphic design. I'm an artist, and that
462 influenced them, it seems.

463

464 **Bill:** That's good. Did we get all the generations, then?

465

466 **John:** Frances Doran was my great-great grandfather. Thomas Doran was my great
467 grandfather. Then...

468

469 **Track 71**

470

471 **John:** ... Michael Frances Cosgrove was my grandfather; then, Thomas F. Cosgrove was
472 my dad.

473

474 **Bill:** That was your dad, the storyteller.

475

476 **John:** Yes.

477

478 **Bill:** So, that brings it down through the five generations.

479

480 **John:** Yes. And, I have a brother, Dave Cosgrove, who is in partnership with me on the
481 ranch, too.

482

483 **Bill:** Good.

484

485 **John:** He has a boy and a girl, and as far as I know, either of them will come back. So,
486 hopefully, we can keep it going. It is very tough to do.

487

488 **Bill:** It is a constant challenge.

489

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490 **John:** I still think the secret to be able to keep it going is to have a mixture of farm
491 ground with our native Flint Hills grass. That keeps a dual income going, and, it give you
492 grain to feed your cattle, and hay. I think that's one reason we've...

493
494 **Bill:** Do you feed out most of the grain you raise?

495
496 **John:** No, we sell a lot of grain.

497
498 **Bill:** But, you're able to use all you need, through the year, to keep the cow-calf
499 operation...

500
501 **John:** Yes. We put up a lot of hay, and we feed a lot of hay to our cows. And, if we do
502 feed out any of our yearlings, we do it right here locally.

503
504 **Bill:** Do you do that mostly on corn?

505
506 **John:** Yes, just corn.

507
508 **Bill:** What kind of numbers of yearlings do you produce each year, and feed out? I
509 suppose it varies year to year.

510
511 **John:** We usually keep around two hundred or two hundred twenty cows, so, usually a
512 hundred seventy yearlings, that we rotate out year around to the feedlot, or sell off grass.

513
514 **Bill:** Is that based mostly on pricing, or time to deal with them or...?

515
516 **John:** Years ago, we used to buy a lot of cattle; a lot of yearlings and put them on our
517 own grass. We went through a stretch, where the cattle market was just terrible, so we
518 decided we'd rather have just the strict income off the grass, and not take a chance off the
519 cattle, at that time. That's when we just started just kind of mostly raising our own.

520 [Pause]
521 Which has made a big difference if we fatten them out and sell them; even off grass our
522 cattle have been bringing a premium. And we don't give them any steroids or any drugs
523 other than just their black-leg shots. That helps bring extra money, you know.

524
525 **Bill:** Yes, if you can command a premium price with running them straight through. Do
526 you have particular breeds that you run?

527
528 **John:** It is a commercial herd. We run strictly Angus bulls. Most of our cows are Angus-
529 Hereford cross. We have pretty much eliminated all of the horns; dehorning.

530
531 **Bill:** Good. I can't understand why people keep the horns; but I guess there is a lot of
532 tradition or something?

533

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534 **John:** It is a lot of work. When my dad first took over the ranch, here, they had a
535 registered Hereford herd; that they used to sell bulls.

536
537 **Bill:** My dad had a bitty registered herd; like twenty! I grew up with Herefords around.

538
539 **John:** And, at one time, we raised a lot of hogs, too, on top of the cattle. My brother and
540 I, we never enjoyed the hogs, so...

541
542 **Bill:** Hogs are a very different business.

543
544 **John:** When my dad passed away, we got rid of the hogs; we haven't had any since.
545 There aren't very many in Morris County, anymore, very few. Most hogs are raised in
546 confinement anymore.

547
548 **Bill:** Almost entirely, isn't it. It has gone that way. And, I suppose there are some
549 positives to that... along with all the negatives. [Pause] Well, very good! I'm really glad
550 to get to talk to someone who sees the farming and the ranching as an integrated
551 operation, and treats them about the same. Because each of the three or four people I've
552 talked to seemed to feel like it had to be one way or the other. And, I just could not
553 believe that needed to be necessarily true.

554
555 **John:** I think if you talk to a cattle rancher that just ...

556
557 **Track 72**

558
559 **John:** ... has cattle, and no farm ground, you'll probably find out that grass is turned over
560 many times. I feel strongly that is the main reason we've been able to survive for all
561 years: the balance. The farm ground with the pasture.

562
563 **Bill:** Like I say, I'm happy to hear that, for my own personal gratification. Not that I
564 make any difference, but... it is interesting to hear.

565
566 **John:** Another thing I might point out, this is just part of the history of our house, here, is
567 my great grandfather Doran, that was the lawyer in Topeka; he picked up this fireplace...
568 he bought this fireplace out of the Post Office in Topeka, Kansas.

569
570 **Bill:** Really?!

571
572 **Linda:** See the US right in the center of it?

573
574 **Bill:** Oh, it sure is. Another good photo opportunity! [Pause]

575
576 **Linda:** He hauled it down here with horses and wagons to get it here.

577

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578 **John:** Another interesting thing about my great grandfather Doran, he hauled a lot of the
579 Flint Hills rocks, the limestone rocks, from this farm to Topeka, Kansas, and he built a
580 Doran Rock Garden. It is right by the Reinisch Rose Garden in Gage Park, right by where
581 the zoo is. There is a rock garden there, and it will say right there on the plaque: “Doran
582 Rock Garden” – and the rocks came right from this farm.

583 [see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reinisch_Rose_Garden_and_Doran_Rock_Garden]
584

585 **Bill:** Right from this farm. Small world. [Pause] Any other particular stories you want to
586 tell me, today... we can always talk more, later? I’ve found going too much beyond
587 forty-five minutes is not too good an idea. The transcript gets too long.
588

589 **John:** One thing you might know... this symphony that they have, and this is the third
590 year, is going to be in Morris County. They are actually going to have the symphony
591 south of Council Grove. It is not going to be on our grass, but just south of our farm, just
592 south of Council Grove. But, they are going to drive through our place to get to it,
593 because it is higher ground. Well, the people riding in the wagons, if they decide to ride
594 instead of walk, will be able to overlook north, a big high hill that overlooks our bottom
595 farm down there. An interesting fact: the person that used to own that ground was the
596 mayor of Council Grove. He was able to get the government into changing the river
597 channel so that the water could get out of Council Grove quicker. It was actually helping
598 him, too, because the Neosho River wound around on his farm and was flooding him
599 quite severely. When they dug this... and it would had to have been a huge undertaking,
600 back then... they dug the new river channel right up against the bluff, that overlooks the
601 valley. And when they dug this out, they dug up a tremendous amount of buffalo bones.
602

603 **Bill:** Oh, a buffalo run.
604

605 **John:** It had to be a place where they ran buffalo over the edge, and mass slaughtered
606 buffalo to make it easier, you know, to get the meat and hides.
607

608 **Bill:** That is a good story.
609

610 **John:** This is one of the things people will be able to see is the high bluff, overlooking
611 the valley when they ride across this hill...
612

613 **Bill:** ...ride across over to the symphony...
614

615 **John:** Yes.
616

617 **Bill:** Every year that is becoming a bigger and bigger event. Glad you’re able to...
618

619 **Linda:** Huge undertaking!
620

621 **Bill:** Yes. An awful lot of work, by an lot of people. But, if you get a lot of people, it isn’t
622 quite as much... But, it is still tremendous.

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623

624 **Linda:** They still depend on the weather.

625

626 **Bill:** The weather is still... It all depends on the weather. [Pause] So far, they haven't had
627 to change it too much. Hopefully, it'll go again another year.

628

629 **Linda:** Did you mention when they built the Federal reservoir?

630

Track 73

631

632 **Linda:** ... and they took some of your land? I was out of the room when you were
633 talking.

634

635 **Bill:** This is Munkers Creek right down here...

636

637 **John:** Actually, when you came in, it is really a pretty drive...

638

639 **Bill:** It sure is. There was a big wild turkey, standing right in the road... I wished I'd had
640 my camera out! Of course, by the time I could've, he'd been gone.

641

642 **Linda:** Sometimes there's a big batch of them in the road, and you have to stop and wait
643 'til they move.

644

645 **Bill:** Ya, I've had the elsewhere... but this one, he... I could see him ahead... he was
646 standing right there. Man, he was tall... and skinny! So many of them are bigger.

647

648 **Linda:** Especially if they are strutting around to impress everyone.

649

650 **Bill:** Ya. But, he was a tall one.

651

652 **John:** One of the hobbies I've had over the years since I was in high school was looking
653 for arrow heads. I've found a lot.

654

655 **Bill:** I assume there are some over there... you looked in that direction.

656

657 **Linda:** In the coffee table, there.

658

659 **Bill:** A collection in the coffee table.

660

661 **John:** My wife built this coffee table for me, a year ago, to display some.

662

663 **Linda:** I didn't build the whole table; I built the shelf under it display... so you can see
664 them.

665

666

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667 **Bill:** That is always interesting to do. My... it is irrelevant, but my daughter and her
668 husband just bought an acreage on the side of a mountain out in Utah. They are going to
669 build a house on Boulder Mountain, and they find arrowheads. He used to look for them
670 back on the farm in Indiana.

671

672 **John:** Odd thing is, all the archaeologists that come down to Council Grove, when I
673 show them my arrowhead collection, they say: "Oh, this is Munker's Creek knife!" So,
674 they even named...

675

676 **Bill:** ... the particular tribe, or the period...

677

678 **John:** Yes, after this creek here, Munkers Creek. Because, you know, a lot of them are
679 found along here. Anyway, I think that is kind of interesting. [Pause]

680

681 **Linda:** John always has such eagle eye-sight, 20-20 or better vision; he'd be on a tractor,
682 and could see one...

683

684 **John:** I'd stop the tractor...

685

686 **Linda:** ... and pick up arrowheads.

687

688 **John:** And, sometimes, you'd jump down and... it's a leaf! [Laughter all around]

689

690 **Bill:** Things aren't always as they first appear to be.

691

692 **John:** I'll never forget, one time I was cultivating, I was real young then, I thought I saw
693 one, I got down. It was actually an arrowhead that was serrated. I think that is the only
694 one I ever found that had serrated edges to it.

695

696 **Bill:** Suppose that would have been a later period?

697

698 **John:** I would think it is, because most of your older arrowheads are cruder. The ones
699 you find that are... I actually think they are prettier. They are thinner...

700

701 **Bill:** More natural?

702

703 **John:** Ya, they're not as old as the newer ones. Yes, a lot of people, they think Indians
704 shot bows, but they didn't, really, until real recently. They had kind of a spear on a stick.

705

706 **Bill:** Lance.

707

708 **John:** They flung an arrow, kind of like this, or a spear. [Pause]

709

710 **Bill:** Very good!

711

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712 **John:** It is getting harder and harder to find them.

713

714 **Bill:** Oh, I suppose.

715

716 **John:** We no-till, now.

717

718 **Bill:** You're not out there digging it up as much.

719

720 **John:** We're preserving the ground more, but it is harder to find arrowheads.

721

722 **Bill:** Over the years, it has been dug up, pretty much.

723

724 **John:** [Looking at Linda] What's that story about?

725

726 **Linda:** This is one that Deanne Miller wrote for your 125th celebration, a copy of it.

727

728 **John:** You copied it off for him.

729

730 **Linda:** Ya, I have extra copies, if he wants it. The article would be twenty-five years old,
731 but... probably some of the things your dad mentioned...

732

733 **Bill:** Good!

734

735 **John:** When we had our 100th year celebration, there was a big article in the Topeka
736 paper. They came out.

737

738 **Bill:** Oh, I bet! That would have been in 1957.

739

740 **John:** '59

741

742 **Bill:** Very good. I'm going to shut this off, and thank you, very much!

743

744