Interview conducted by Louise Carlin at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve; Originally videotaped by Park Service personnel with a CD copy provided to this project for transcription; An initial transcription was made by an ESU Student, Stephanie Kuhlman; Audio recorded on Marantz Digital Recorder that inserted the tracks, for ease of reference; Initial transcription edited from the digital audio by Bill Smith; Final Edit by Bill Smith.

Track 54

Louise: This might help as we go on to help the thought process. [She hands them a list of the questions she intends to use during the interview] [There is a roar in the background of the audio tape – they are getting ready to start] Your names...

Don: Don Jenkins.

Louise: Ok.

Peg: Peg Jenkins.

Louise: Ok. And where were you born? I think you told me over by LeClede?

Don: I was born north of St. Clere…

Louise: St. Clere, that’s it.

Don: …over south of Havensville, the address was Havensville, 7 miles south.

Louise: On a ranch?

Don: On a small Flint Hills ranch. All three of us children were born at home in the ranch house. The doctor came from Havensville. Dr. McManus. I can still smell the smell of his office. It was his residence. It’s really unique. It’s kind of back to the frontier type of doctoring.

Louise: And your parents’ names were?

Don: William and Fannie Jenkins.

Louise: And your mother’s maiden name was?

Don: Lewelling… [Some confusion over pronunciation; corrected in final edit]

Louise: Ok.
Don: See, my grandfathers both came from Wales in 1893 and they went to work on what was called the Mack Ranch in Southwest Jackson County.

Louise: So when they came from Wales did they come directly to Kansas?

Don: Yes.

Louise: To the Flint hills? [Don nods his head]

Don: Then my grandmother must have been my grandfather Jenkins’ sweetheart in Wales. So I think it was in ’95 when she came and they married. At that time both grandfathers acquired quarter sections of land in that vicinity and settled in.

Louise: What about you, Peg? Where were you born?

Peg: Oh, I was born in Holton, KS; in Jackson County.

Louise: On a ranch?

Peg: A farm. Farming and cattle operations by my dad.

Louise: Your maiden name was?

Peg: Slocum. [Spelling corrected in final edit]

Louise: Slocum.

Peg: Truman Slocum. And my mother was Virginia Cunningham.

Louise: Ok. Ok. And you two met and married…

Peg: In Jackson County.

Louise: In Jackson County. And where did you start your life together?

Don: South of Soldier, Kansas.

Louise: Ok. That’s on the fringes of the Flint Hills in Pottawatomie/Jackson area.

Don: On the west edge of Jackson County. I’d been farming in the Holton/Soldier area for twenty years. After we married, why I sold the farming operation out.

Louise: You do like the row crops and you had livestock.

Don: Like row crops and backgrounding of cattle
Louise: After twenty years you sold everything?

Don: Yeah. In ’82 I went to look for a ranching job in the Flint Hills. Eventually…

Louise: What took you to, well you said in the Flint Hills, you were on the fringes. What drew you to that area? You wanted to get into ranching? …or more?

Don: Yeah.

Peg: The dream of living in the Flint Hills.

Don: The thing was that my earliest memories of the Tallgrass; one of them was mounted across the Flint Hills rocks in the wagon to go dig out the den of coyote pups. My dad dug ‘em out and cleaned up the two litters of coyote …

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Don: …pups that were in that same den. And we have a photo of my sister and I in the barnyard with all these coyote pups around us. And I don’t know, there must have been at least a dozen. And of course the fate for all the coyote pups wasn’t all that good cause they were worth a dollar a piece in the county. I can remember that. What happened after that, I remember the pups all died. There were probably four or five.

Louise: So you went to look for work in the Flint Hills? Where did you end up at?

Don: This was the location

Louise: Here at the Z-Bar Ranch at that time.

Don: What had happened was we were looking and things; we didn’t come up with anything. So we took a job at a feed yard… a farmers’ feed yard out in Ingalls, Kansas. We was there for just a couple three months. The word is Junior [Orville Burtis, Jr.] called, he had a résumé. He said when you get it fill in a resume for a job in the Flint Hills. I said, “yeah.” He said, “Well you wait awhile, I got a foreman job at this ranch that’s going to become available. [Garold Slabaugh] wanted to semi-retire. So we waited for an interview; and then, in the first part of January in 1983, we came here as foreman of the ranch.

Louise: And it was Z-Bar at that time, it wasn’t Murrill-Davis-Knowle? [Spelling may be incorrect]

Don: No, it was Z-Bar Cattle Company. Davis had established the operating company. After his death, in trust - that’s the way the ranch continued.
Louise: So what were some of the duties you did here at the ranch as foreman? What were your responsibilities?

Don: To keep a work schedule for the ranch hands.

Louise: How many ranch hands were there?

Don: At that time, we had three, and then Gerold [Slabaugh] was part-time. He and Gladys would go on winter mornings and feed the cake to the cows…

Louise: Gladys was his wife? [Peg nods her head.]

Don: And then another ranch-hand, and Peg and I, would feed the hay to the cows.

Louise: And what was the size of the Z-Bar Ranch at that time?

Don: Fourteen thousand acres including some land that was leased. And all of that was to be east, over here [holding some papers]. So of that eleven thousand about three thousand was leased.

Louise: How many head of cattle did you run?

Don: Oh, as I recall about fifteen-hundred head of yearling cattle – of which part of them were raised and part of them were purchased.

Louise: Where would you purchase the yearlings from?

Don: Normally we would line those up and some of them would come from the Southeast. I remember one group that came all the way from Mexico.

Louise: Would he ever buy any from stockyards?

Don: No, it’s mainly private treaties off of ranches.

Louise: What type of cattle were they?

Don: Well, they’re primarily mixed breeds.

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Don: The cows that we had at the time were primarily Herefords. Hereford angus crosses.
Louise: So how long did you stock, what were your stocking practices?

Don: Well, we’d run the cows year round on native pastures; they’d stay on that particular pasture year round. And then, the yearling cattle would run in the bottom land fields, and feedlots along Fox Creek. We’d feed them silage and hay, and some grain. They were primarily back grounded for grazing.

Louise: In the bottom land pasture, when was it made into a brome field verses prairie? Do you recall? Was it brome, when you were here?

Peg: Yeah.

Don: Parts of it were brome. We had fields that were put into corn and some alfalfa that was harvested for silage and feed. Some of the growing fields have been crop land prior to our coming here. I suspect probably a third of it was in brome at that time. And, after we left, they seeded the rest of it to brome grass.

Louise: So the northern part, was that your crops? Or was it kind of mixed?

Don: Well, it extended all the way down to the Strong City fields. And I recall probably, maybe a dozen separate fields… along Fox Creek.

Peg: Now this brome just right across the highway… was brome at that time. Now was there row crop between this brome and the creek?

Don: Yes.

Peg: That brome was there.

Louise: Okay, okay. Pastures. Pastures burning. Prescribed burning. Did you burn every year or was it rotational?

Don: I tried burn everything every year. I didn’t always accomplish the whole thing. We burned everything, even hay meadows.

Louise: Okay.

Don: Anything we could burn.

Louise: So, you said you didn’t always accomplish it… for what reasons?

Don: Well, weather conditions would sometimes affect…

Louise: Like this year with the snow. [Laughter]
Don: Yeah, well, yeah. And maybe dry weather would make us hold off, also.

Louise: Do you see the burning practices changing from when you were ranching to today? Or in the future do you see changes?

Peg: I see changes coming because of people building homes in the Flint Hills. They don’t want that smoke. For their safety they don’t want you burning next to their house even though these hills have been burnt for many, many years. There’s becoming a problem because of… I’ll call it urban sprawl. But now down here it’s not a problem. But it some places it is.

Louise: But in the Northern part where… right.

Peg: In this area I don’t think it is…

Louise: Not so much in Chase County but in Wabaunsee County and where there is the building on the fringes.

Peg: That’s going to be a problem. It is.

Louise: Where did you ranch after you were here at the Z-Bar?

Don: I went to manage a ranch; the headquarters were southeast Butler County near a town called Latham.

Louise: The headquarters of…

Don and Peg: Smith Stock Company.

Don: It was owned by Dick Smith who had a small independent oil operation.

Peg: In Wichita.

Don: He was out of Wichita.

Louise: How large was that ranch?

Don: Well, when we went down there, it was about

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Don: six or seven thousand acres through purchases and some leasing. We were up to twenty-two thousand acres at one point.
Lloyd: And what year did you go to that ranch?

Don: It was eighty-seven.

Lloyd: Eighty-seven, huh-huh. What was the reason for you leaving the Z-Bar Ranch?

Don: Because they liquidated the Z-Bar Cattle Company which operated the entity of the ranching operation. And then the bank... at that time... which is, there have been several changes. They took ownership... the trust department took ownership of the land. And under that scenario they couldn't operate, they had to lease it out to someone. And so, that is the reason, we went a different direction.

Lloyd: Ok, so the ranch in, you said that was in Latham?

Don, Peg: Latham.

Lloyd: Latham. And the county... what counties?

Peg: Butler.

Lloyd: In Butler? It was all in Butler?

Don: No, it was in Cowley, and Elk County.

Peg: And Butler County.

Lloyd: Ok, and how was that operation different from this operation?

Don: Not too much when we first went there. It was cow herd and we backgrounded the calves from the cow herd, and also purchased calves from ...
Don: They would… generally we would wean them; we would bring them in close and feed them hay. To winter them, we would take them out into native grass and brome grass in the pastures in the wintertime.

Louise: And then when they’re a year old, is when you sell them? Or that’s…

Don: Well, we would graze them…, sometimes we’d sell them. One time we sent them to the feed yards in western Kansas; they’d feed them out, and sell them from there.

Louise: The same type of cattle?

Don: Yeah, yeah.

Peg: Hereford, Angus, Black Baldings.

Don: With cross to Gelbvieh, terminal-cross.

Louise: And how long were you on that ranch?

Don: A little over nine years. We retired to a ranch that we bought in Morris County. It was purchased just for that particular eventuality.

Louise: So how many acres to have now?

Don: Three-hundred and twenty is what we own. And then we lease another nine-hundred acres.

Louise: Huh-huh. And all ranching or do you do some farming?

Don: It’s all ranching.

Louise: All ranching. And the same type of ranching you’ve done in other areas the Flint Hills?

Don: Yeah. Cattle, primarily. And then we sublease some of this leased land to other cattle operations. And take care of… look after those cattle when they’re on the grass.

Louise: Ok. Um, [pause] What are some memories, that you have very fond memories, both, Peg, you and Don. As children, …or together, …of ranching.

Peg: Being here.

Louise: Or raising your… being here?
Peg: Being on Z-Bar 352

Louise: Being here is a fond memory? Now your children weren’t raised here, they were
raised in uhh…

Peg: Our son Shane was.

Louise: Your son was?

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Peg: He was nine when he came to this ranch.

Louise: Did he have specific chores to do at the ranch?

Peg: Wellll…, no, not really. He was in 4-H so he had a 4-H steer… his first 4-H steer. So that was his responsibility to take care of that.

Louise: Did he ever participate in burning the pastures?

Peg: [laughs] Yeah, he’s a pyromaniac. [Laughter] When we were burning he would, when he would get home from school, I would have to come, stop what I was doing, come get him, and then go back so he could help, ‘cause he wanted to be a part of that. And he just loved it.

Louise: So how have the practices changed in the pasture burning?

Don: Well, I think that essentially pasture burning pretty much remained the same. Seems that there’s more earlier burning now than we did at that time.

Louise: When did you burn?

Peg: When the blue-eyed Prairie grass was in bloom that was the time to burn. That’s what Gerold Slabaugh told me.

Louise: When the blue-eyed grass was in bloom?

Peg: [Nodding her head] When the blue-eyed Prairie grass was blooming that was the perfect time because that meant the soil temperature was warm enough that you burn the dry grass off and within just a few days it turns green. And I’ve watched over the years and its right.

Don: Is there some blue-eyed Prairie grass blooming right now? There was before this cold weather hit.
Peg: Is that right? I haven’t seen it yet.

Don: Was a little earlier this year.

Louise: Sonny Howard had mentioned that he recalled burning as a young child they would sit on the back of the truck and his mother would give him boxes, big boxes of kitchen matches and they would strike and throw them out. Today that practice is not used.

Peg: [Pointing at Don] He’s done that horseback.

Don: Yeah, one vivid memory is that when our oldest grandson, or my oldest grandson [speaking to Peg] was three or four years old, maybe?

Peg: [Nodding her head] Three or four.

Don: His parents were making a move so he stayed with us for a couple weeks and I put him on horse back with me and we went out in the pastures to the west and spent all day throwing matches, and...

Peg: Spot burning.

Don: We were spot burning. It was after most of the grass had burned. And there were spots that didn’t get covered so we had to go back and throw matches at those spots that didn’t burn. I don’t know whether he remembers it yet or not. Just recently he’s old enough to father a child

Louise: Huh-huh. Wow. Do you remember any bad incidences with burning or with your neighbors, or not necessarily here at the Z-Bar but other ranches you were on?

Don: We had fires get away, we had...

Louise: The weather would change.

Peg: Oh yeah.

Don: One very vivid memory was for some reason we thought we had to burn some brush piles to get something done down in, it was in Cowley County. And we had a fire sprayer and everything there and made sure everything was put out and so I sent the ranch-hand over to another pile with the tractor with loader that we’d been using to pile some dry brush and while I kind of watched the embers go down in this brush pile, we had a pretty good wind, he went across a rough place with this tractor; there happened to be some live embers in that bucket, that started a fire. That’s the worst that we had. It didn’t go very far but we had to call the Atlanta
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**Don:** fire department to put it out. That’s the most vivid, saddest wild fire.

**Louise:** Well, in your burning practices, did you collaborate with your neighbors, when you burned?

**Don:** Well, especially here we burn with Fox Creek and sometimes Division. I remember one burning season that Mashed O was involved in it too. When we went south, wasn’t that much neighborly collaboration.

**Louise:** Right, because of the highway and so forth. [Pause] Where did you take the cattle to market? Where were they shipped out of, or to?

**Don:** Here on the Z-Bar?

**Louise:** Right.

**Don:** Oh, sometimes, they would go to feed yards.

**Louise:** In western Kansas or…?

**Don:** Yeah. Oh, sometimes Orville would market them direct. He had a lot of contacts in Kansas City. That was kind of his expertise, marketing and procurement.

**Louise:** On the ranch in Butler County where were those cattle shipped to?

**Don:** Well, a lot of them were shipped to feedlots early on in the operation down there. Later on, an order buyer would come out and purchase the cattle off the grass. And that’s the way it was when we left down there.

**Louise:** An order buyer, can you elaborate on that?

**Don:** That’s a buyer that goes out in the country and he’ll have orders for a certain type of cattle and if you’re cattle meet what his order specifies well then you can deal with him.

**Louise:** Would he represent several ranches or his own?

**Don:** Well he would represent maybe a feed yard or so. Farmers that want to feed the cattle. He would line up a like group of cattle that meet the specifications that this particular buyer would want.
Louise: And they would be shipped by truck? [Peg nodding her head]

Don: Yeah, yes, all of it. I don’t have any memory of rail shipping.

Louise: Are there any different challenges that you are experiencing now in ranching verses twenty years ago, or forty years ago?

Don: Oh, for us I don’t think it’s a whole lot different than it has been since... my memory I guess is stuck in a rut. [Laughter] Cow herd, back grounding, and grazing, all is pretty much the same. Different operations, but all pretty much the same type of operation.

Louise: Can you elaborate a little bit on when you say different types of operation? What are some of the different types? You have the cow-calf operation...

Don: Now you get a lot of, well, there’s always been a lot of custom grazing in the Flint Hills but now so much of it is cattle shipped directly to the pasture and maybe they intensively graze and then gone.

Louise: Intensively grazed, like, double stocking?

Don: Yeah.

Peg: And sometimes triple.

Louise: Triple stocking?

Peg: We’ve known people who’ve tripled. And these are steers and heifers, yearlings.

Louise: Ok, when you triple stock, can you elaborate on

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Louise: that?

Don: Well, what I’ve done in the past is basically what I’ve done in Butler County; on that ranch is allow an acre and seven-tens and put them on as soon as the grass is adequate in late April. And then religiously take them off the first of July.

Louise: Ok.

Don: And next year we didn’t go back with that heavy a stocking rate on the same pasture. Might full season that pasture. Now it’s mainly double stocking which is basically two acres for a five hundred pound steer. The problem has been that they should
come off the middle of July, but so often they carry them over into August sometimes, and that's not been good for the grass.

Louise: Ok, you say it's not been good for the grass, what do you mean by not being good?

Don: Well, it's overgrazing it, basically what it is. It changes the composition of the prairie.

Peg: It gets weedy.

Louise: Ok. So if the next year the stocking were less, would the prairie... .

Don & Peg: It would start to recover.

Don: If that hadn’t been the case, then they... We noticed the pastures as coming down [highway] one seventy-seven over the last, oh fifteen years. The amount of weeds and ability to see rocks in the late summer, ...

Peg: We've seen the white grass...

Don: ...and early fall is more prevalent than it was when we were on the ranch.

Louise: And you can see that from the...

Don: Just driving down the highway.

Louise: Ok. Ok. So you can see some changes in the last fifteen years.

Peg: Right.

Don: Yeah.

Louise: Ok.

Don: But the prairie has an amazing ability to recover. The stocking rates were modified. And when we were operating down there and up here too, we didn’t heavily stock the pasture year after year.

Louise: So some of the stocking were modified every two or three years, you think that pastures may come back to as they were fifteen years ago? That they're not being modified? They’re....

Don: Well, that's my... I'm not a range expert as far as...
Louise: No, but you can see that with…
Don: I’ve been on it long enough to know.
Peg: And of course…
Don: That’s the results.
Peg: And of course, women have a lot to do with it too.
Louise: Do we have a change in the weather pattern?
Peg: We sure seemed to have this year. [Laughter]
Don: Well, I think it’s the same cycle of drought and moisture so nothing changes a whole lot, maybe global warming is that.
Peg: Who knows…
Don: Not sure. Didn’t feel like that the last few days. [We had a couple of inches of snow!]
Louise: No, it hasn’t. But forty years ago, can you tell a difference in say global warming, the weather patterns, can you tell any difference there?
Peg: Well, there was one year [looking at Don] what’d we decide it was, nineteen sixty, sixty-one that in Jackson County, I lived about six miles from Circleville, we had snow storm that came in and my sister and I were snowed in on our farm for a week by ourselves, and when snow plows finally came through and school started up again, the drifts on the road were as deep as the school bus was tall.
Louise: Really?
Peg: And that’s the biggest snow I can ever remember.
Louise: And that was in sixty-one?
Peg: Sixty, sixty-one maybe.
Louise: Wow.
Peg: So I don’t think the winters are near as severe as they
Peg: were at that time.

Don: I think it was sixty-one, sixty-two.

Peg: Yeah, yeah. We haven’t seen anything like that, don’t want to.

Louise: So, why are you still ranching in the Flint Hills? [Laughter]

Don: Because I don’t know anything else, I guess.

Peg: Don’t know what else to do. [Laughter]

Don: That’s just in the blood I guess.

Peg: Love for the cattle, and the grass, the lifestyle. Don’t want to do anything else.

Don: What else would I do? …other than maybe go south for the winter. [Laughter]

Don: I can’t even imagine that scenario. I can’t think. Yeah, it’d be nice, it’d be warm, but what do you do?

Louise: They don’t have the seasons like we have, we have the four seasons.

Don & Peg: Yeah.

Louise: They have two. Although some people say we only have two also. [Laughter]

Don: Hot and cold.

Louise: Right. Right. Are there any memories from your childhood, with your siblings? You had a brother, and a sister? There were three?

Don: Oh, all I remember, when we were on the place south of Havensville, the three of us going down to the creek and just playing around. Coming up with this huge snapping turtle, it looked huge at that time, I’m sure. Called her Myrtle the turtle. [Laughter] And the older brother, he had her by the tail and my sister and I had to make sure we had this stick in the snapping turtle’s mouth to keep from having any bad incidence with grabbing somebody. So we carried the thing to the house and put it in the stock tank for some reason, I’m not sure of. That was after my father died so we wasn’t anybody to take card of dressing the turtle and cooking it. So, eventually, I think we turned it loose.

Louise: How old were you when your father died?
Don: I would have been six.

Louise: Six. So you and your brother, were you, did you have responsibilities?

Don: I’ve always had responsibilities as far as chores.

Louise: Ranching and chores?

Don: We neither were old enough to really take it over. My uncle had helped us with farming at that time. My mother had livestock, hogs, sheep, and cattle. It kind of helped sustain us.

Louise: And everyone had their chores as far as feeding and…

Don: Yeah. At that time we were heating with wood. And we’d make sure to keep wood stocked up. There were always things to do. And the other thing was country school. We went to a particular location. We had…

Louise: There was a school you’d walk to, in the Havensville area?

Don: We would, if we cut across the native grass pastures, it’d take a mile and a half. If we rode the horse around, it was two and a quarter. And so, very often, the three of us would get on Old Maud.

Louise: That was your horse?

Don: [Nodding] Two and a half miles and then she’d have to… they’d have a barn, or an open front shed, at the school, to tie your horse in during the day. Riding home, she always went home faster than she went to school. [Laughter]

Peg: Kind of like the kids.

Louise: Sure.

Don: I rented a pasture that was on my cross country route years later and this creek that went through it and

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Don: for the life of me I can’t remember how we crossed that creek, whether we had stepping stones, or how we got across that creek. I’m going to have to ask my brother and sister if they remember. [Laughter] But that’s bothered me at the present time. [Laughter] And another different memory of the Flint Hills is a road trip that the family
made to Rocky Ford, which was the power dam just below Tuttle Creek, where Tuttle Creek is now. That was a good memory, driving through the hills and that dam. I probably would have been four or five at that time. That kind of whet my Flint Hills love at the earliest stages.

Louise: And that was before Tuttle Creek was…

Don: Oh, way before Tuttle Creek. And it was producing electricity with water, hydro power. Pretty primitive, we didn’t need as much electricity as we do now.

Louise: Definitely.

Don: That’s some childhood memories. I do have vague memories of burning pastures at that time, before we moved out of the Flint Hills. We moved when I was about six to a farm south of Soldier in Jackson County where there was not a particular practice in that part of the country.

Louise: Yeah. What about you Peg? Do you have some fond memories of the Flint Hills as a child?

Peg: Well, actually, where I grew up as a child, there really wasn’t the Flint Hills. There may be a native grass pasture here and there but it was not like this.

Louise: Did you notice the difference of living in, you lived in Jackson County, correct? [Peg nodding] And to the west did you notice any difference in the land?

Peg: Oh yeah, oh yeah, as you went west towards Onaga, there was more, bigger Flint Hills pastures.

Louise: Open Space.

Peg: Yeah. And I always wanted to ride a horse to the top of every hill and see what it looked like on the other side. And that’s what I’ve always… they’ve always drawn me.

Louise: Were there more cattle than where you lived in Jackson County?

Peg: To the west? Oh yeah, oh yeah. Bigger pastures.

Louise: Ranching operations, did we discuss that? How they’ve changed?

Don: We’ve talked a little bit about it. Where there is more double stock grazing.
Louise: One thing we didn’t touch on was social activities. Social activities changed? Do you recall any activities forty years ago? Any dances, or parties, or church events, or that may have been different than they are today, or do you recall any changes?

Don: Oh, I think one big change is with the country school, a more closely knit neighborhood activities through the country school. Oh, it’s the last day of school event, is a pretty big thing, bring a potluck, and all the families get together.

Louise: So what months did you go to school?

Don: Well there were eight months schools at that time; from September through April.

Louise: September to April. Ok. What time, how long were you in school? Like eight to three?

Don: Oh, as I remember it was nine to four.

Louise: Nine to four. And you didn’t have sports activities, did you?

Don: Well, we, of course,

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Don: impromptu soft ball games.

Peg: Nothing organized.

Don: No organized.

Louise: Nothing organized.

Peg: Let kids be kids.

Louise: Sure.

Don: We would maybe have a ball game with a neighboring country school. Maybe some farmer in the school district would have a truck and all load in the back of the truck and go seven or eight miles to the another country school and have a ball game. It wasn’t anything but other than just fun.

Louise: How many children were in your school?

Don: Probably anywhere from a dozen to twenty.
Louise: Grades one through eight?

Don: Yeah, one through eight.

Louise: What was the name of the school?

Don: Oh, Grandview was the school that was in Pottawattamie County and Rosebud was the one in western Jackson County. At that particular time, why the country schools, was on the wane. For seventh and eighth grade I went to town school in Soldier. Two classes per teacher, so those seventh and eighth grades were under one teacher. And the lower grades were under separate teachers.

Louise: So what town did you travel to purchase supplies or if you did banking?

Don: For me, Soldier was the closest town. Saturday night was the big shopping and social event of the week. Everybody would go to town to pick up supplies and take the cream and eggs into the cream station to get a little money and go into the grocery store and buy some groceries. That died with the… schools were pulled out of those towns.

Louise: Is Soldier still in existence today?

Don & Peg: Barely.

Louise: Barely.

Don: Surviving buildings are being torn down.

Louise: Any retail businesses left?

Peg: There’s a restaurant. Is there a feed store?

Don: There is a feed store.

Don & Peg: And plumbing.

Don: No filling station now, still has a post office, …

Peg: A couple churches.

Don: Still pretty active as far as their community, they help keep a community center, still pretty active.

Louise: Are your brother and sister still living?

Don: Yes. Got a brother in Houston, and a sister in Topeka.
Louise: And they left the ranching to you?

Don: Yeah, my brother couldn’t wait to get off the ranch.

Louise: Really?

Don: Yeah, he got a naval reserve scholarship to KU. And then a Master’s degree in Berkley, I think. And he wasn’t gay, but I think that’s where he got it. But he, but he. [Laughter]

Peg: What did he say?!

Don: He went to work for, he spent most of his work career at NASA in Houston. He was the intelligent one in the group. [Laughter]

Louise: Well his interests just lied elsewhere. I think you’re extremely intelligent.

Peg: Yes.

Louise: Indeed. Um, are there any other questions that you would like to answer?

Peg: I think your number five is an interesting one that should be hit upon.

Louise: Number five, okay.

Track 64

Louise: Tell me about the annual cycle of activity, when did you do these activities with the cattle? Is that the number five you want?

Peg: Yeah. That’s it. [Looking over at Don]

Don: You brought it up.

Peg: Well, you know in the winter, you fed in the pastures all winter, burn them in the spring. As soon as you get that done you start processing the yearlings.

Louise: Where, did you have difficulty in the winter, the harsh winters did you have to break the ice to get water to the cattle?

Don: No, most winters there was ice, not every winter was as severe as some of them; a few memorable severe winters. Oh, we was always glad to see the grass come. Another thing is always the anticipation of the first calf in the spring. And the anguish and waiting
for the last one to come finally. Then we always set over one hundred first calf heifers both over to Z-Bar Ranch and down in Latham. The first calf heifers took more care.  

**Peg:** And those first calf heifers were in the brome field just across the road here, so they were close and we could drive it at night to check them. And then if we had to get one of them in; one of us would take the horse and the other one would take the truck with the lights and bring them through the underpass and up to the barn where we have a calving thing set up.  

**Louise:** Why would you need to bring them in?  

**Peg:** If she was having difficulty delivering the calf either position wise of the calf or if it was just too big.  

[End of video on the CD – so no more audio, either]