

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43

Interview conducted by Belle Grimsley; Recorded on Marantz 660 Digital Recorder; Transcribed by Bill Smith

Track 3

Belle: My name is Belle Grimsley. I am doing the interviewing for the Flint Hills program today. I am interviewing Ken and Shirley McClintock, from Council Grove. This is Sunday, April 15, 2007. It is three o'clock and we are in the Terwilliger House, which is Council Grove, at the western edge. This is part of the Flint Hills Ranching Oral History Project. The first person is ... will you tell me your name?

Shirley: My name is Shirley McClintock.

Belle: What year were you born, Shirley?

Shirley: I was born February 28, 1942.

Belle: Where were you born?

Shirley: I was born in Bedford, Iowa.

Belle: And our other subject is...

Ken: I am Ken McClintock, Kenneth McClintock, and I was born in 1943, here in Council Grove, Kansas.

Belle: So you have lived here your entire life.

Ken: Yes.

Belle: OK, where do live now, Shirley?

Shirley: I live in Council Grove, and have since 1973.

Belle: Since 1973... Ok, and how about you, Ken?

Ken: I've lived here my whole life-time. In fact, all eight of my great-grandparents lived in this county before 1900. They came in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s. So we have been here ever since.

Belle: Alright. [Pause] Shirley, what occupation have you pursued throughout the years?

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

44 **Shirley:** I was a schoolteacher, in Dodge City, Kansas, a special reading teacher, and
45 then moved here in 1973. I was a special reading teacher here, in the outlying schools,
46 which were rural students. Then, I quit teaching to raise our two sons. Then, I went back
47 to substitute teaching for a few years. And then I worked at the Hays House for a brief
48 time, and the Cottage House, for about four years. Then, I helped my husband in his law
49 office, and then, since 1994, I have been working on the project here at Maple Camp. So,
50 this has occupied my whole being since 1994, this project right here.

51

52 **Belle:** What is the project? Can you expand a little bit on the Maple Camp project?

53

54 **Shirley:** Yes. First of all, it was in danger, in 1994, of being demolished. The stone
55 house that we are in, the Terwilliger home, was in danger of being bull-dozed down.
56 Then, there were going to be more trailer houses moved in here and it was going to be
57 another kind of business that would not have been historic. So, without any backing or
58 support from anybody, except the good Lord, I took on to save this property. It was in
59 terrible condition, very dilapidated, trash all over, weeds growing everywhere. A pretty
60 sorry sight, and everybody thought I was crazy to do this, but I just stepped out in faith. I
61 had tried to get someone else to do the project, but no one would. So, it was either do it or
62 watch it go down. I couldn't in my heart watch it go down, so I tried to gather together
63 enough money to satisfy the owners for a down payment. There were the two trailer
64 houses on the property that had a little bit of rent coming in. I got a couple of
65 commitments each month - maybe three commitments - that we could barely scratch by.
66 The owners were willing to go the loan for a ten percent interest so I managed to prevent
67 it from being destroyed. Then I did shows at the theater that included people in the whole
68 area, surrounding towns, for talent in the shows. We did multi-media shows where we did
69 slides of stars of different decades. We did, first of all, the 1950s, we did a Christmas
70 show,

71

72 **Track 4**

73

74 **Shirley:** the 20s, the teens, the 1970s, different decades; I did eight shows total, two a
75 year, for four years. The last one I did was 1998. These shows were done to raise funds
76 for this project. And then, we received some estates for a few donations, and crippled by,
77 and then, finally, a lady by the name of Hazel Torgeson left us her estate and that helped
78 us get this project on its feet. And because she was a school teacher all her life, and had
79 taught school all her life, in her honor we moved in a country school. We had started this
80 search for a country school just one week after a gentleman from White City... I'm trying
81 to think of his name... he had just finished research on country schools in Morris County.
82 And his project had been donated to the Historical Society just one week before I started
83 this search. So here was all the information on the country schools in our county and one
84 by one we searched them out. And, they were either out in the country in such bad
85 condition and there wasn't much we could do with them, or, if they were in good
86 condition, people that had them didn't want to part with them. So, we were kind of down
87 to the end of things, and there was this one near the Chase County - Morris County line,

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

88 just barely into Morris County, that looked pretty bad in the picture, but we went to look
89 at it. It didn't look very good, but inside it was full of junk and storage. It was on
90 Mashed-O Ranch. They had stored things in it, everything from fertilizer to old doors and
91 windows. It was just full of stuff. Rat fill stuff was about four inches thick on every
92 window sill. There were overstuffed chairs in there that they were having lots of fun with.
93 Coons had been in there having lots of fun. So, it was in pretty bad shape, it looked like.
94 But when we stomped our feet on the floor, it was pretty solid. And, we were kind of
95 amazed that it was in the solid condition it was because, the doors of that school closed in
96 1945-1946. That was the last school year, and that was quite a while. And, one of the
97 teachers, former teachers... let's see... remember her name?

98
99 **Ken:** Minnie Wilkerson?

100
101 **Shirley:** No, no... anyway, she had a farm not far from this, lived on a farm, her husband
102 was a farmer. She was the teacher in this school, Field School...

103
104 **Ken:** Fern Greer.

105
106 **Shirley:** ... ya, Mrs. Greer, Fern Greer. We interviewed her. She had kept Mashed-O
107 Ranch from moving the school off, or destroying it, anyway she would get after them to
108 take care of the school. That is kind of what saved it all these years. Who ever owned it,
109 she kind of looked after it! She was in the rest home, and no longer able to look after it. It
110 was starting to go downhill fast. So, we caught it just in time. So, the rain had just started
111 coming into it pretty badly in one corner – a lot of damage in one corner. But anyway, we
112 were able to move the school to Council Grove on the Maple Camp site, where we are
113 now, where the Terwilliger House is. The school... we made a foundation, so we were
114 able to preserve the school. Due to that, we have gone on a search for the history of the
115 school. It was actually built in the late 70s, early 80s, the original Field School. Then, in
116 about 1901, they had decided they needed a new school, so by 1902 they thought the old
117 school was too small, too drafty or something, and wasn't suitable anymore. So they built
118 this one in 1902. They built it just west of the original school. You can see the original
119 site, when you go down the road west from highway 177, there's a turn there. There's a
120 huge bend, this road goes west just where that bend is. There's kind of a hay shelter on
121 the east side of 177 and this road on the west side. You'll come to the site, and there is a
122 few trees...

123
124 **Track 5**
125

126 **Shirley:** ...you can see where the original school was, and then you go down the road,
127 and there's a corner, and right on that corner is where this school was built. And, it could
128 be the fencing is still there and you could still possibly see where the foundation was,
129 unless they plowed it over. Anyway, we saved that school building, and hopefully its
130 history. We interviewed some of the teachers and students. They are now deceased. So,
131 we caught them just in time. They had some kind of vivid memories. It's interesting that

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

132 they had such vivid memories during World War II of Herington Air Base personnel
133 flying their practice missions over the top of it. And they remember those bombers flying
134 over the top of that school all throughout the war. They said it was an exact time, every
135 day that it happened. And then it closed at the end of the war. Interestingly enough, we
136 placed it right between the 40s cabin that we have, which was built for Herington Air
137 Base personnel here on Maple Camp. We have a 1940s ...'43 cabin that was built for
138 Herington Air Base personnel – because they couldn't house all of them on the air
139 base...so they... found housing for them in other places, and this was one of the places.
140 There'd been three or four cabins but only one survives. And then, on the other side,
141 interestingly enough is the Atkinson log house, which we saved. The Atkinson family
142 were farmers, near Latimer. And, they had come here, the original Atkinsons had come
143 here, in 1857 and 8, and built the house in '58, the log house. It is a two story house,
144 and... the family donated it to Historic Preservation Corporation, which is the owner of
145 Maple Camp and everything here – Terwilliger Home and all those structures. We have
146 six structures here, this log house being one of them. We enclosed it in a barn because
147 there were barns around this Terwilliger Home. The log house has no windows or doors
148 or roof, but ... or chinking in the logs. The logs were a mixture of lumber. It would be a
149 typical log house for a farmer in the Flint Hills. There were thirteen in the family, but
150 they housed many other people as they came out west. The Atkinsons allowed many
151 other people who were coming out to settle in that area, on Clark's Creek, near Latimer,
152 to live with them until they could build their log house. So log houses were a lot of the
153 original structures. They were crude. Some of them especially that were built during the
154 time of the 1856 era, east of here, were built very fast because the South was moving in,
155 the North was moving in and they were building these cabins very fast in order to
156 establish Kansas as either a North or a South state. And then, because there was not a lot
157 of law and order here at that time, the Southerners would burn the Northerner's cabins,
158 and kill all the men and boys that were old enough to fight; and then the other side would
159 turn around and do it to them. They were doing it, North and South both, doing this. So it
160 was pretty hard to do any farming or anything during that period of time, until Governor
161 Robinson and some men went together, Sam Wood being one of them, and they formed a
162 militia. And this allowed people to do a little bit of farming at that point because that
163 provided some law and order. And then I researched Lucy Goddard Hill. This gets into
164 her period of time. She came here in 1856, along with her two brothers... who I believe to
165 be her two brothers. One was Elisha Goddard, married to Mary Goddard; and George
166 Thatcher, a brother, and he farmed what would be right where Dunlap is right now. And,
167 her brother, Elisha, farmed where Rock Creek enters into the Neosho River. That's not
168 where it enters now, because the river, through floods and things, has changed... but it...
169 I believe it is on the Moxley Ranch.

170

171 **Track 6**

172

173 **Shirley:** Moxley owns that section, we think, where they lived. There is a windmill, as
174 you go down the Dunlap road, the windmill is still there. Tom Moxley has plowed and
175 dug up stones and things from that field which he believes probably there was a stone

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

176 foundation or a stone barn in that area. Later, the Linns built a house which would be
177 south of there. We've seen a picture of the Linn's home that was on that area. It was, I
178 believe, was it a stone home? Or a wood frame?

179

180 **Ken:** I don't remember.

181

182 **Shirley:** There were stone homes.. the farmers of the Flint Hills built stone homes...
183 wood frame homes... some of them with ginger bread porches, and fancy looking homes.
184 Some were built very simple, just log structures, like the Atkinson log house we have
185 here on Maple Camp. So there was a whole variety of things. Now this was right on the
186 Kaw Reserve and they were criticized. I've read articles in the Kansas Press... the
187 newspaper put out by Emporia... that they were criticized, the Goddards, for settling on
188 the Kaw Reserve. They were right among the Indians. The Goddard homestead was used
189 as a Post Office. That was not that uncommon. There were Post Offices all over, when
190 you read the records, there were many homes that were used as post offices. And the
191 Goddard home was used as one. And that was the site of the unfortunate happenings for
192 Americus, where they lost their county seat simply due to the illness of the gentleman
193 that was to carry the petition for it to Topeka. He became ill, and he stopped at the
194 Goddard's home. Along came, unknown to them, the gentleman that was coming to
195 present the Emporia petition to Topeka. Not knowing who he was, they let him carry the
196 Americus petition to Topeka for them, since the other guy was ill. Well, as it turns out, of
197 course, it never got carried to Topeka, only the Emporia one did. And, that all took place
198 at the Goddard home. The Indian huts are described as being such and such distance from
199 the Goddard fields, for fences. So, they were right among the Kansa Indians, living right
200 with them. I don't know what the relationship was, but I do know they named the Post
201 Office "Decora" which is a name in Iowa with the Sac and Fox Reserve, that was the
202 Indian Agency in Iowa - called Decora. So, whether they were involved with the Sac and
203 Fox... I know that just up the road from them eight miles, was A.I. Baker, who was
204 involved with the Sac and Fox. He was a blacksmith with them, in the 1850s..., '40s and
205 '50s...and they were close friends. He had built a home on Rock Creek. And, just east of
206 him, was the Andersons. This is the famous "Bloody Bill" Anderson and Jim Anderson.
207 They were both doing trade on the trail. Now as to the farming at that time, or the
208 ranching, I'm not sure. I've seen a map of 1860, and where the fields, plowed fields
209 were... and it does not show any with the Goddard, at least Elisha Goddard; now there
210 may be with George Thatcher who was closer to Dunlap, because there was a plowed
211 field close to Dunlap, what is now the town of Dunlap. I do know he had prairie hay.
212 Elisha Goddard was the first sheriff of the area. He had to cover a three county area as
213 sheriff. And I believe, as far as I have researched, he was, probably other these militia
214 that Governor Robinson established in 1856-7, after all the 1855 and 56 happenings of
215 burning cabins and killings that were taking place, and they started the militia. Then I
216 believe

217

218 **Track 7**

219

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

220 **Shirley:** that Goddard would have been the first actual Sheriff elected and Judge Baker
221 was the first Judge. It is said in the paper that there was a flood in 1858, and George
222 Thatcher unfortunately died of consumption, which we believe is probably tuberculosis.
223 That was the flood year, and, in fact, it said that it washed furniture right out of Judge
224 Baker's home. Of course, he was on Rock Creek, and it washed the furniture right out of
225 his house. But then there was a big prairie fire that came through in 1858 after Elisha was
226 elected Sheriff, and was ranching, or at least you would assume so since it describes that
227 20 tons of his hay was burned up in this prairie fire. He then resigned his position as
228 Sheriff due to the overwhelming circumstances... having lost his hay, and was in dire
229 condition. So, he resigned as Sheriff. So, such were the difficulties of the early settlers,
230 who were trying to ranch or farm or whatever they were faced with. The Neosho River,
231 which runs right through the Flint Hills here, and Rock Creek which enters into it, were
232 either flooding or drought. Then you had your prairie fires coming through... the grasses
233 were tall... and those fires were huge. I'm sure they were terrifying. I'm sure the
234 skies...it was just a horrific thing to see them coming. It would be pretty difficult... I
235 think what they did, actually, was set backfires to keep their home safe, at least, from
236 these prairie fires. They wet things down, if they were near a river. But it was difficult.
237 During my research, I did interview Ruby Thomas who lived in this area as a young girl;
238 this would be a later period of time. But, she described the flood times when she was
239 going to town with her mother. She was riding in a wagon. She remembered... they were
240 riding along the river. She remembered how scary it was. They were so close to the
241 water. It was flooded, the river was, and she described how terrifying it was, riding along
242 in the buggy, bouncing around, going to Dunlap town. So this flood problem carries even
243 into today, in that area, where Rock Creek and the Neosho River have "King of the Land"
244 you might say. They have the power to affect the farming and ranching that takes place in
245 that area. Lucy Goddard, her life was horribly affected, as all people in this area, by the
246 Civil War. When it broke out, most of the men, actually two-thirds of the men in the State
247 of Kansas, volunteered in service to the Civil War. It also affected the Indians - the Kanza
248 and the Osage - were scouts. Some of the Osage were scouts for the southerners, but most
249 of them were scouts for the northern side. The 9th Kansas Cavalry, the men in this house,
250 the Terwilliger Home here, one of them was the son-in-law of the Rawlinsons, who built
251 the original part of the house here. Their son-in-law was in the 9th Kansas and their son,
252 James, who was twenty, fought in the 8th Kansas Infantry along with George Alexander
253 who was living with the Rawlinsons. He was 45 years old, and we do not know what the
254 relationship was, but he was a gardener, interestingly enough. This was his occupation in
255 England, where he came from, he was a gardener. We think that he did something to save
256 the lives of the Kanza during the drought.

257

258 **Track 8**

259

260 **Shirley:** of 1860. That was a horrible time here, for all of the people trying to work the
261 land, or raise cattle, or whatever they were trying to do. Because, in that day and time,
262 there were not stores to buy goods from; you had to grow it yourself. That year, there
263 were none grown, there was no food at all. If the Sunday School classes or the relief

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

264 groups from back east had not sent food out here, many of them would have starved to
265 death. The Kanza were already starving... the Kanza Indians. So, they would come to
266 the back doors of the settlers and beg for food. They had none to give them. So, they
267 were in very horrible condition, at that time. So, we are thinking that this George
268 Alexander did something to help them. This is our educated guess. Then, he died during
269 the Civil War, of disease. We think the Kanza Indians came here, to this house. It would
270 have been the Rawlinson's house at that time. The back door had a two inch thick solid
271 walnut lining [casing], which would have been on the outside part of the door. There,
272 they cut into it a memorial to George Alexander. We think that his had to do with
273 agriculture in that... we think he saved their lives, some how, through his agricultural
274 skills. This is an educated guess. This is not based on any information we have as far as
275 eye witnesses or written accounts. It's our educated guess from information we've
276 collected and pieced it together like a puzzle as to what might have happened. [Chime in
277 background] We think that George, when he died, and they came and made this memorial
278 to him, cut into the wood on the back door [casing] of this house.
279

280 **Belle:** OK, Shirley, that is an excellent explanation of history for quite some time here.
281 We'll give you a break. Let's talk to Ken for a little bit.

282

283 **Ken:** OK.

284

285 **Belle:** Ken, what can you tell us about your occupation, former occupation. I think you
286 retired.

287

288 **Ken:** I retired. I'm an attorney, here in Council Grove. I was in the Army Judge
289 Advocate General Corps, from '68 to '72. Then I owned a private practice here, in '72,
290 when I got out of the army. I was County Attorney for a while. I retired from the attorney
291 business in 2006. Now I assist full-time out here at the Trail Days Bakery Café, located in
292 the 1861 Terwilliger Home. I grew up here in Council Grove. My father had a gas
293 station, a farm implement dealership, a car dealership, sold some other things as well,
294 during my childhood years. So, I had some association with the farming business,
295 although I did not live on a farm. I'm the first generation of my family that did not grow
296 up on a farm. My ancestors were all farmers, and, as I mentioned before, all eight of my
297 grandparents and their children moved to this county in the 1870s, '80s, and '90s. My
298 parents both grew up here. My grandparents lived here. One set of grandparents moved to
299 Salina. We're pretty well rooted here in Council Grove. After my father and uncle left the
300 farm in 1939 to go into business for themselves they happened to have a Texaco station
301 here in the Terwilliger Home – it was a gas station at that time. And then they had a
302 Skelly station which continued through the war. After World War II, they took on the
303 Massey-Harris farm implement franchise, Dodge-Plymouth agency, and their business
304 was located in several different locations, the last of which would be a block west of
305 where we are sitting right now. In 1947, they built a new building to house the dealership.
306 I spent many years out there, helping in the parts department, the service department,
307 selling combine parts on July 4th, when they're harvesting the wheat, and so forth. My

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

308 dad, and uncle and grandfather were partners in the McClintock Motor Company. They
309 had the Massey-Harris franchise until about 1966 or so when they gave it up. The name
310 had changed to Massey-Ferguson, by that time.

311

312 **Track 9**

313

314 **Ken:** Farm implement dealerships have been in decline for many years. When I was a
315 kid, there were five different farm implement dealerships here in Council Grove and now
316 there have been none for several years. So, I remember spending a lot of time assembling
317 farm machinery which would come in partially unassembled to be sold, going out on
318 service calls, helping my father with that; also, with new cars, and so forth. I became very
319 familiar with farm machinery, but operated very little of it. During the drought years in
320 middle '50s the farm implement dealership, as well as the car dealership, was really
321 struggling with the bad economy due to the drought years, which started in '52 and lasted
322 for several years. I know my dad told me that if that drought had lasted another year, he
323 wasn't sure that the business could have lasted that last year. He had to borrow a lot of
324 money to keep going during those years. In the late '50s we undertook some custom hay
325 baling. During the summer months, when I was probably in the eighth grade or a
326 freshman in high school, I went out and ran the hay baler, on custom baling. So, I got the
327 experience of dust and dirt, grime and heat, and sweat and so forth, of baling hay. So that
328 is my farming experience, except for one year about that same time, my dad made
329 arrangements with Dr. Bowers, who had a small acreage just northwest of town here. It
330 might have been five, or six, or ten acres, or something, which we leased on a share crop
331 basis. We planted milo and harvested it. I kept all the books. Kept track of how much the
332 expenses were for seed and so forth. We harvested it, and split it up. We used the
333 machinery we had at the farm implement dealership. I can remember when we were
334 combining the milo, we ripped a canvas. I forget the terminology of it, but we ripped the
335 canvas on it. The cost of replacing that canvas probably exceeded the profit, the net
336 revenues, from the milo project. That was the only year I was involved farming, myself,
337 personally. Another experience I had, directly related to ranching around here, was
338 fighting prairie fires. My dad became a Council Grove volunteer fireman about 1946 and
339 was on the fire department for probably about 45 or 50 years... when age finally catches
340 up with you. Particularly during my upper grade school and high school years, I would go
341 out with him on a lot of fire calls. We didn't have a rural fire truck until about 1956. Up
342 until that time, we just had one fire truck in town. There were no rural fire trucks
343 anywhere in the county. A house just west of Council Grove burned, and they had to let it
344 burn to the ground, because they couldn't take the only fire truck outside the city limits.
345 The city would have been liable had there had been a fire in town at the same time. So,
346 that was the impetus for obtaining a rural fire truck. My dad, being the car dealer, truck
347 dealer, and on the fire department staff, they sent him to find a used truck. As I recall, it
348 was about a 1952 Dodge ton and a half or two ton truck that he found down in Wichita
349 and brought it back. The city had an old trailer, a water tank trailer that they had used
350 after the 1951 flood to wash down the streets. It had a thousand gallon tank on it. So we
351 salvaged the thousand gallon tank off of that trailer and mounted it on the back of that

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

352 Dodge truck. I can remember spending a number of hours inside it, scrapping the rust off
353 of the inside walls; tarring it so it wouldn't rust, and so forth. So, it was a nitty, gritty type
354 of job. My father manufactured all the sheet metal to make all the framework and the
355 sheeting on the sides of the truck. That was truck number two of the Council Grove Fire
356 Department and it served for many years after that. They now have a half a dozen fire
357 trucks. Once that truck was built, they started forming fire districts around the county.
358 Some fire

359

360 **Track 10**

361

362 **Ken:** districts contracted with Council Grove to furnish fire protection. Other fire
363 districts got their own trucks. Today, we have a whole bunch of fire trucks. But, before
364 the fire trucks, people had to depend on wet gunny sacks, and other means of fighting
365 prairie fires. It was an uphill struggle. But, I can always recall a number of different
366 instances where I went out with dad on the rural fire truck, sometimes fighting a house
367 fire. When you have a house on fire in the middle of the county, you're doing good to
368 save anything. You can probably save the out-buildings that are close to it, if anything.
369 You just can't get there in time to save the structure. Nowadays, with fire trucks placed
370 around the county, you have got a better chance at saving a house. But most of it would
371 be prairie fires. Burning the Flint Hills is an important aspect of ranching but you need to
372 burn it at the right time. When it is burning at the wrong time, you have got to get the fire
373 put out. The rural fire truck that we had, dad had built a platform on the front of it with a
374 hand rail, and put a fire hose on the front of the truck; had a platform and a fire hose on
375 the back of the truck. So, there would be two of us, on each end of the truck, with a hose
376 with a spray nozzle. We would drive along roughly parallel to the line of the fire,
377 spraying it from both ends of the truck. You had to stay on the windward side of the fire
378 so the fire wouldn't come over the top of you. And I had one specific incident that I
379 particularly remember, somewhere southeast of Council Grove. I was on the front hose,
380 on the front of the truck, and we were driving along behind the fire putting it out. Then,
381 the wind changed on us, and we were in the grassy portion, and so, the fire started
382 popping up in front of us. The only chance we had was to go through the fire. Dad was
383 driving the truck. As it went through the line of the fire, the engine faltered. I don't know
384 if it was the smoke, or whatever caused trouble; the engine wasn't running, so it coughed,
385 it hesitated and hesitated. I remember the fire coming over the top of us. It got so hot I
386 turned my back to the fire and covered my face with my arms and so forth. Then the
387 engine caught up, and we drove on through, and got on to the other side of it. But, as a
388 result, I had my eyebrows singed, my hair on the front of my head was singed – and so I
389 didn't have much in the way of eyebrows for a while until they grew back out. So, that
390 was one scary moment that I remember fighting fires. Other times, if I wasn't on the
391 truck, there was some of us would be out there with gunny sacks that you'd soak up with
392 water and go around and moppin' up little pockets that got missed or something. So, I
393 spent quite a few hours fighting fires in high school and college.

394

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

395 **Belle:** OK. Were these prairie fires accidental or were these purposely set? Because I
396 know that a lot of range burning, pasture burning goes on now.

397

398 **Ken:** Yes, you have several different causes. Sometimes people were legitimately
399 burning their pastures but it got away from them, or it jumped the road, or the wind came
400 up and they didn't expect it, and it got going places they didn't expect to go, so you'd get
401 called out on that. You have some people that are fire bugs and just like going around and
402 setting fires. So, you always have some of those. And, once in a while, the railroad would
403 set one. You'd have a hot box, going down the tracks, and some sparks would fly off to
404 the roadside. So you'd have fires set sometimes; like I say, you'd have a hotbox. I
405 haven't heard of hotboxes for years, but once in a long while, you'd see a train going
406 down the track, and this ball of fire would be going round and round. Some bearing had
407 burned out and set a whole bunch of fires along the railroad right-of-way. So there you
408 had a lot of problems catchin' up with all the little pockets of fire. And then, some of
409 them are just accidental, you know, that people were burning trash and sparks got away;
410 carelessly throwing cigarettes out of the car. So, some of those are accidental. The ones
411 that really bother you is when people go out there and set them deliberately. There were
412 quite a few fires over the years, still are, for that matter.

413

414 **Belle:** Well, were you called out at any time by the ranchers?

415

416 **Ken:** The fire calls would come in to the city, and then

417

418 **Track 11**

419

420 **Ken:** they would call my dad, or, whoever was on the fire department, and they'd decide
421 who was going to take the truck out. If dad was taking it, and I was there, I'd tend to go
422 along with him for the fun... such as it was... (laughter) So, I went to a number of fires
423 here in town over the years, as well. I remember one fire on the edge of town. I was
424 working out at the garage, and another gentleman who was working for my dad at that
425 time in the body shop. He was on the fire department, as well, and there was a building
426 just east of Council Grove, east of the city limits, there, that was on fire. We got the call.
427 So he and I went down to get the rural truck to take it out, and he told me to go ahead and
428 drive it. Nowadays, you wouldn't think of doing something like that. Here I was, a high
429 school student, not technically on the fire department. He said, "Oh, go ahead and drive
430 it." So, that was the only time I ever got to drive a fire truck with the siren sounding.
431 And, we went out there and came up to the building, and the grass was on fire. We
432 thought we had a grass fire to start with. We started putting out the grass fire. Then, we
433 realized there was smoke coming out of the building. What happened was, the building
434 was on fire which caught the grass on fire. There was no chance of saving the building
435 anyway. It was on fire, from one end to the other; because it was deliberately set, as it
436 turned out to be. The owner finally went to prison, served some time for that – for the
437 insurance fraud. But, that was the time I got to drive the fire truck in a real setting. That
438 had its own particular memory.

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

439

440 **Belle:** Well, you have done a lot of historical research on various characters from the
441 Council Grove area, like Seth Hays from the famous Hays House.

442

443 **Ken:** Yes

444

445 **Belle:** Would you like to elaborate on that a little?

446

447 **Ken:** OK. I've kind of become the town historian. I might mention the house we are
448 sitting in, the Terwilliger Home, originally was built by the Rawlinson family in 1861
449 and in 1870 Riley Terwilliger bought it and added on to it. We know it as the Terwilliger
450 Home. He started with a ranch out in the southwest part of the county that he bought in
451 1859. It is now part of the Six Mile Ranch out there. He came to town shortly after that
452 and he owned some other ranches down on Four Mile Creek. He had a ranch, at least
453 farm land, northwest of Council Grove at one time, so he was in the farming and ranching
454 business himself. While he was in Council Grove in the 1860s he had a livery stable. He
455 also had a grain buying business at one time. He was on the Board of Directors of the
456 first bank in town, in 1870, the Council Grove Savings Bank. So... and he dealt in cattle
457 and so forth... so he had combination of farming, ranching, and Council Grove business
458 interests. He was in Council Grove until about 1891 when he moved to Thomas Station,
459 Utah. And so, the house we are sitting in was owned by a man who did a lot of farming
460 and ranching, and farm-related businesses. [external buzzing sound comes on]

461

462 **Shirley:** The tradition is that the basement of this house was called his club room where
463 he did all the business with the ranching, the trading, whether it be with the Indians, the
464 other ranchers, or whoever. And he did gambling down there too. That's what they say.

465

466 **Ken:** OK.

467

468 **Shirley:** So, he was kind of notorious, apparently, for that.

469

470 **Ken:** Right. You mentioned Seth Hays. I've done a good deal of research on him. I've
471 portrayed him as a living history character. In very brief summary, Seth Hays was the
472 great grandson of Daniel Boone, the Kentucky frontiersman. He came here in 1847 to
473 establish a trading post... a log structure just west of the Neosho River crossing of the
474 Santa Fe Trail. He was not in business for himself at that time he was an employee of
475 Boone and Hamilton, a cousin and his partner, who had been trading with the Indians for
476 years. Seth Hays was an Indian trader all of his life. Before coming to Council Grove, he
477 had worked for the Chouteau Brothers on the Chouteau Trading Post on the Kanza, or
478 Kaw, Reservation just west of Topeka. And they closed that in 1846, when they were
479 going to relocate the Kaws to a new reservation. At that time, the location had not been
480 determined, and Seth Hays was out of a job, so that is when his cousin and partner sent
481 him down here to Council Grove to open a trading post on the Santa Fe Trail because it
482 was

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

483

484 **Track 12**

485

486 **Ken:** such a prominent stop on the way. There wasn't anybody here at that time, so he
487 was the first settler and opened the tradin' post here. So, he would have had a lot of
488 business with the people who initially settled in this county. Of course, there wasn't
489 supposed to be anybody here until 1854, unless you were licensed to trade with the
490 Indians or an employee of a licensee. So, it wasn't until after 1854 that you started having
491 legitimate settlement in the Council Grove area. And most of the early settlement in
492 Morris County was around Council Grove, mostly in the Neosho River valley. Much of it
493 was on the Kaw reservation, because there was some misunderstanding, deliberate or
494 otherwise, as to where the boundaries of the Kaw reservation were. So, many of the
495 people settling in the Neosho River valley, which was the most fertile part of the county,
496 were settling on Indian land, and that created no end of problems there. By hindsight, it
497 didn't make a whole lot of sense locating the Kaw Reservation right smack dab on top of
498 an international trade route. From Santa Fe to Independence, or Westport, the Santa Fe
499 Trail cuts right through the middle of Morris County. So, you just had a built-in conflict
500 between the settlers and travelers, and the Kaw Indians who were supposed to occupy the
501 reservation here.

502

503 **Shirley:** We imagine it was pretty tough ranching and farming in those days because of
504 all the interruptions of the war, the Indians, all the natural disasters that were occurring at
505 that time. It was probably pretty tough.

506

507 **Ken:** Seth Hays would have been the first supplier of merchandise to the people who
508 were settling in this area. The Chouteau Brothers followed up with their own store in
509 1848. It was a log structure, south and west of the Seth Hays trading post - Boone and
510 Hamilton, I should say. They were here until about 1853 when they sold out. Later on,
511 there were other traders here, Charles Withington, the firm of Northrup and Chick of
512 Westport, Missouri built the Last Chance Store in 1857. It is normally credited to Tom
513 Hill, who built the Last Chance Store. He later married Lucy, so Lucy Goddard Hill was
514 his wife. Tom Hill is credited with building it. I've never found the proof, but I suspect
515 that Tom Hill was the employee of Northrup and Chick. And, they had had a business in
516 Council Grove for several years, built the stone building in 1857, which still stands and is
517 known as the Last Chance Store because from here on to Santa Fe that was the last
518 chance to buy supplies, except maybe for some small ranching operations along the way.

519

520 **Shirley:** At the time Lucy and Tom were there, it wasn't called the Last Chance Store. It
521 was later years that it was called the Last Chance Store.

522

523 **Ken:** Ya, I think that was just a nickname, it would have been Northrup and Chick

524

525 **Shirley:** Actually, he would have been there only a few months in 1857. In '58, he built
526 the big trading store downtown on the corner, just across from Seth Hays and actually

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

527 probably was probably the inspiration, or ... out of competition, that Seth Hays then built
528 the larger store. And, it says '57 on the Hays House, but that's not accurate, it's actually
529 '58, because the other one was built first. The one where Hill, Munkres and Conn went
530 together to build the big stone store on the corner which is now the Redbud Design, and
531 Butler County [Community College] is in that building. And there was a big well in the
532 middle of the street, going south, what would be now between the store I described and
533 Farmers and Drivers Bank. Right in the middle of that street was a big well where the
534 animals and the dogs and horses and the goats and the mules and the people and
535 everybody got water out of that well. It was right on the Santa Fe Trail, so it was real
536 vital to the whole area, that well was. There is one post card with a picture of that well
537 and that is the only evidence we have of that besides some written accounts.

538

539 **Ken:** So, in 1858, James Munkres, Malcolm Conn and Tom Hill went together as
540 partners and built the stone store – sometimes called the Pioneer Store – mostly known as
541 the Conn store because it changed hands a whole number of times in the 1850s, '60s, and
542 '70s. But, Malcolm Conn was the one most prominently noted. It kept coming back and
543 either by himself or in partnership with somebody else operatin' the store again, so

544

545 **Track 13**

546

547 **Ken:** most people know it as the Conn store. And, Tom Hill, about 1859, moved to
548 Americus. He was one of the incorporators of the town of Americus in 1857, and he
549 moved down there.

550

551 **Shirley:** And one the interesting things about that is that when they first formed the town
552 of Americus, they built this big hotel. It was called the Americus House, and it was of
553 solid walnut, and they held a big ball there when it was built. That was one of the first
554 structures in Americus. And I suspect that Lucy and Tom went to that ball. And many of
555 the farmers and ranchers of the area were at that ball in that whole area; those who were
556 living here at that time in '58... 1857-'58, in that period of time. Another interesting
557 thing, I think, is... what happened in the families of the ranchers. In Lucy's life,...when
558 they first... well, first of all, when Tom Hill was in his store, that Ken just described, the
559 Conn store, only he had it, at that time, it was Hill store at that time. When the Indian
560 incident occurred, [in 1859] Tom Hill took the side of the Indians and wrote a very vivid
561 account in the paper, that he thought the Council Grove citizens were the blood-thirsty
562 ones and not the Indians. So that was not popular with the citizens of Council Grove. So
563 the next thing you knew, in '59, by August of '59, that incident happened in June of '59,
564 the Indian incident, that is so well known in Council Grove. The Indians came in and
565 stopped in front of Seth Hays establishment. A couple men were shot and there was a
566 whole big deal, [but] I won't go into that story. But, anyway, because of that, Tom and
567 Lucy Hill ended up in Americus and actually took on that hotel. Sam Wood made some
568 comment about her culinary skills at the Americus Hotel. It became known then as the
569 Goddard House and there are pictures of it in Americus that show it as the Goddard
570 House. And that would have been Elisha Goddard, her brother, who was the Sheriff that I

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

571 described earlier. And they apparently ran that hotel for some time. But, of course, that
572 was about the time that the Civil War had broken out, so that disrupted a lot of things.
573 And, Tom and Lucy also were running the newspaper in Americus at that time, as well,
574 and then... here's three things they took on: the Americus Hotel, the newspaper, and the
575 grist mill... also the saw mill. Those are usually combined, the grist mills and the saw
576 mills... those would have been very vital to the ranchers, farmers in the area... the grist
577 mills, saw mills. That was where they would have brought all their crops to be ground to
578 flour for food purposes for themselves. And, there were at least two mills in Americus.
579 And, I'm sure that was the case in many of the little rural towns where they had grist
580 mills and they did both the saw mill and the grist mill work, at those mills. And, ... one
581 of the interesting things that I started to say about the family is that when they moved
582 down there to Americus in 1859 Lucy gave birth to a child they couldn't even name. The
583 child died just as soon as it was born. And then, about a year later, she gave birth again,
584 to a little girl, and then... no, no, it was a little boy, Edward - they named him Edward.
585 And that was in 1860. And he didn't even live a year. He was not even a year old when
586 he died. And then she gave birth to Martha, another little girl... because the first child
587 that they didn't name was a girl. And then Edward, a boy, and then this girl... and she did
588 live to be a year old, but just barely... and it was about December, so you can imagine
589 Christmas... They had lost three children in that short period of time. So out of three
590 children, to have none... And, it wasn't until after the war, that she did give birth to three
591 children that did live. Then in 1870s, in the early 1870s, she gave birth to a little girl she
592 named Mary, and she died, the following August, and Tom died that April, just after the
593 child was born

594

595 **Track 14**

596

597 **Shirley:** This gives you a sample of what happened in some of the families. Out of seven
598 children, three lived. That wasn't always the case, but it was not unusual. So, the farmers
599 and ranchers were struggling with those issues as well; the diseases, and influences of
600 death and so forth.

601

602 **Belle:** Shirley, this is one of characters that you've portrayed, Lucy Goddard Hill, right?

603

604 **Shirley:** Yes, yes.

605

606 **Belle:** And you've portrayed Seth Hays?

607

608 **Ken:** And I've portrayed Seth Hays. I've portrayed a number of different people, one of
609 whom is Samuel N. Wood. He came to Kansas in 1854, just as soon as the Kansas-
610 Nebraska Act was passed. Within a week, he and his family were on their way to
611 Lawrence from Mount Gilead, Ohio. And, he was a very prominent abolitionist and very
612 prominent in the early history of Kansas. He was in Lawrence before the New England
613 Emigrant Aid Society people got there. He went down to see them as soon as they came.
614 Eventually [he] settled and helped found Cottonwood Falls. [He] came to Council Grove

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

615 in 1859, had the first newspaper in town, was the first county attorney. He served in the
616 last Kansas Territorial legislature as a House of Representative member, and [four chimes
617 in the background] in the first Kansas State legislature was a State Senator. So, he was
618 prominent in the very beginnings of Kansas. He did have some ranching properties, as I
619 recall, but his primary business was newspaper man and outspoken abolitionist, and [he
620 was] very prominent in the early history of Kansas.

621

622 **Shirley:** Well, many of the ranchers and many of the citizens were involved in politics at
623 that time because politics were just starting off, the population wasn't that great, so a lot
624 of them were involved in politics and forming the governments in the early times. So,
625 besides their ranching and farming, they were also highly involved in law and order and
626 politics.

627

628 **Ken:** Until the railroads started coming into this area, Council Grove was the only town
629 in Morris County. It wasn't until the KATY railroad came through they started having
630 towns and when what became the Missouri Pacific... [There were] two branches - one
631 was the Topeka, Salina and Western Railroad, which started in Council Grove and went
632 to Colorado; then the Council Grove, Osage City and Ottawa Railroad came in the 1880s
633 from the east to join up with the Topeka, Salina and Western in Council Grove, and
634 eventually all became the Missouri Pacific. So, each time these railroads came through,
635 little towns sprung up beside 'em, so Council Grove was the source for merchandise, and
636 repairs, and blacksmiths, and stuff like that until 1869 or so, and others sprung up
637 afterwards.

638

639 **Belle:** Alright, I think we will stop right here and you have given so very historical
640 information concerning the Flint Hills and how the people got here. Would you like to
641 make a closing statement or anything?

642

643 **Shirley:** Well, I would like to tell about a gentleman... I don't know that this has to do
644 with farming or ranching but it certainly has to do with the Flint Hills. Here at the café,
645 we have a gentleman from Iowa that comes back here every year. He can not stay away
646 from the Flint Hills. He was here... stationed here during the war in the 1940s, during
647 World War II. And then he ended up living in Iowa. But, he comes back, and he comes to
648 our café, once a year. He has to come back, he says, to these Flint Hills, 'cause he said
649 there is something about the Flint Hills that he cannot stay away from. And he says, some
650 Indian told him one time that it was "freedom" – and that is what he came back to the
651 Flint Hills for. So, I thought that was interesting and something important to share with
652 the rest of the world.

653

654 **Belle:** Thank you. Ken?

655

656 **Ken:** I've always lived all my life in Council Grove, Kansas, except for the time I was in
657 college and off in military service, so this has always been home to me. And I've never
658 ever given any consideration to living anywhere else. I just feel at home here in the Flint

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

659 Hills, the green carpet in the spring and beauty of the place. There is such a wealth of
660 history here in Morris County, particularly in Council Grove, and being a local historian,
661 I'm kind of oriented in that way, anyway. But... there is such a rich history here in
662 Council Grove and the Flint Hills. It is unusual. Most people don't know about us.
663 Although with the current issue of National Geographic magazine having a multiple page
664 spread, of photographs and narrative, about the Flint Hills...why maybe more

665

666 **Track 15**

667

668 **Ken:** ... people will find out we are here; though we don't want too many people to find
669 out the secret, you know, because we kind of like keeping it small.

670

671 **Belle:** Well, thank you for being interviewed today.

672

673 **Ken:** You're welcome.

674

675

676

676 **Ken:** As I said, over the weekend, it might be interesting talking with dad. My uncle
677 Wayne now has Alzheimer's and he couldn't tell you a thing. But my dad could tell you
678 what it was like setting up a farm implement business after World War II. The heyday...
679 and then the decline... and finally... when you just have to call it quits.

680

681 **Belle:** Would he be willing to talk?

682

683 **Ken:** I'm sure he would. He's getting a little hard of hearing, so you'd have to speak up.
684 But, he is still extremely alert. He comes in here for lunch every day.

685

686 **Shirley:** He's lived here all of...

687

688 **Ken:** Well, he had the Americus Gas Company with Wayne... for a number of years.

689 **Belle:** Well, I remember him very well. He used to remember me, all the time, when he
690 would see me.

691

692 **Ken:** Right. He is now 93.

693

694 **Shirley:** So he goes way back...personally...

695

696 **Ken:** He grew up on a farm north of town. My Granddad came to town in '43, when I
697 had just been born, I was a small thing. I don't remember them living with us for a few
698 months, until they got their own house over on 4th Street. But I'm told, when they came
699 to town, they stayed with us, in the house on Mission Street.

700

701 Shirley: That happened a lot. Just like... one thing we didn't share you. See, we've
702 researched and retained the history of some the folk here, and one is the... we've got the

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
McClintock Interview, April 2007, Final

703 Secretary of the Loomis family, and so we have their family history. And then we've
704 got... [End of recording]
705