John Huges

Rancher and Cattleman

Chapter 01 –
Introduction

Announcer: The Hughes Osage County Ranch started as a land purchase in 1938 by John Hughes' father, an oil industry pioneer with Phillips Petroleum Company. John Hughes was a junior in high school when he purchased his first cattle at $100 a head for strays he had gathered for Boots Adams of Phillips Petroleum. After graduating from high school in 1951, Hughes attended Oklahoma A&M College, now Oklahoma State University, earning a bachelor's degree in animal science. He left college in 1955 and took over the day-to-day management of the Hughes' cattle operation. John maintained the ranch as a cow-calf operation for more than 30 years before converting it to a stocker business in the late 1980s. Since 1989, the Hughes Ranch has also been the home to thousands of adopted wild mustangs. Under his direction, the Hughes Ranch grew from 1800 acres when it was started until it covered more than 12,000 acres. The ranch extends from just southwest of Bartlesville to the northern border of Woolaroc. Listen to John talk about Frank Phillips and the cattle business, but also basketball coach, Henry Iba, and the Price Tower on the oral history website VoicesofOklahoma.com.

Chapter 02 – 7:04
Osage Mineral Trust

John Erling: Alright, why don't you just kind of state your name, age, birthdate as we start this out.

John Hughes: John Hughes. I was born in Bartlesville, Oklahoma on May 16, 1933.

JE: And today's date is March 25, 2009. What building are we in right now?

JH: We are in the old Union National Bank Building that is now the site for the Bartlesville branch of Arvest. Arvest bought what used to be West Star Bank in Bartlesville that was previously before that the First National Bank.

Where this building came in was when the Union Bank failed in the late ‘80s and was taken over by West Star Bank. Now Arvest uses it. They gave their old original bank building to a nonprofit that houses the Phillips Petroleum Company Museum now, which is a very nice facility.

JE: And we’re in your office which is the office of Hughes Ranch.

JH: Our ranch starts about 3 miles southwest of Bartlesville. On the south end of the ranch, we border the Osage/Washington county line for several miles. The ranch is approximately 7 miles long and 3-1/2 to 4 miles wide.

JE: Your parents’ names?

JH: My father was Arthur Middleton Hughes and my mother was Elsie Tyson Hughes.

JE: OK, so the land that you and I just were on originally piecing some of that together…I guess start with your father…

JH: My father was transferred to Bartlesville in 1932 with Phillips Petroleum Company. I was born a year later in 1933. My father came from a rural background and always had aspired to own a ranch. In 1938, the opportunity presented itself and he was able to buy ironically from the Union National Bank 1440 acres that also had a number of Osage Indian leases that went along with it, which gave him a ranch of about 4000 acres. He was able to do that in 1938. Then over the next few years, he was able to buy several of those in-hold lease places. So then over the years, I was able to buy a number of those Indian leases and also made other additions to the ranch. So today there are 12,000 deeded acres in the ranch.

JE: When you talk about the Osage leases, that had nothing to do with mineral rights?

JH: No, these were surface grazing leases. Back in 1906 when the Osage was allotted to the individual Osage Indians, the minerals were kept in common trust. Each share of that common trust was called a head right. At that time, there were 2229 eligible Indians and they each got approximately 650 acres of land and one head right or one share in that mineral trust. That’s the way the mineral trust is still that way today. But the people that were able to buy that land—fee title land—from those individual Osages, they did not get any minerals, nor did that Osage have those minerals individually. But they did share in that common mineral trust.

JE: Before we go further in talking about ranching and all, Frank Phillips was a neighbor of yours. Is that true?

JH: Yes. At the time my father was putting his ranch together, Frank Phillips, who had originally bought what is now in the Frank Phillips Foundation called Woolaroc…in addition to Woolaroc, the 3600 acres in the high game fence, he also put together what he called his cow ranch. It was adjacent to the ranch that my father was putting together. Obviously, when they bumped up against each other, dad always deferred to Mr. Phillips if Mr. Phillips wanted the land because after all, that's who he worked for. So Mr. Phillips was kind enough to leave it so that my father had first opportunity to buy the entire cow ranch, as he called it, upon his death. They came to dad…Paul Endacott, who was president of Phillips Petroleum Company at the time, was also the executor of Frank Phillips' estate. He came to my father and offered it to him. Dad was very wise in many respects. Of course, I didn't agree with this at the time but he just simply would not borrow money to buy land, so he only bought what he had the cash money to pay for which was the two pastures that were adjacent to our already-put-together ranch that laid north of Highway 23, which it was called at the time—now 123. The rest of it was sold to a man named Jim Todd from Nowata, Oklahoma. Jim Todd kept the land for 10 years and then he sold it to an Arizona man named Keith Waldon. Keith Waldon owned the land then the next 13 years and I was able to buy it from Keith in 1975, which pretty much doubled the size of the ranch at the time.

Chapter 03 – 4:50
Uncle Frank Phillips

John Erling: Frank Phillips, of course the founder of Phillips Petroleum—he founded that along with his brother, I believe…isn't that true?

John Hughes: Yes that's exactly right.

JE: You remembered…you were younger than him by many years…but you remember him, do you?

JH: Oh absolutely. Before we moved to the ranch in 1945, we just lived a block from where the Phillips lived on Cherokee. On pretty days, Mr. Phillips walked to work. So all the neighborhood kids knew Mr. Frank and then Mr. L.E. Of course, many people, particularly kids, referred to Mr. Frank Phillips as Uncle Frank because if you grew up in Bartlesville during that time period, you really did kind of consider Frank Phillips as your favorite uncle.

JE: Did he enjoy children and talk to them?

JH: No question. I can remember playing catch in front of the old YMCA one time and Mr. Phillips walked by and he said, “You’re Art Hughes’ boy, aren’t you?” and I said, “Yes sir, I am”, and he said, “Well you’ve sure grown since I saw you last”. Well this was after we had moved to the ranch and he had kind of lost track of me for a short time. I might tell you an interesting story. When I went to the first grade at a private Catholic school…this was like 1938 and there were a good many kidnappings and so forth and so the sisters that taught at the Catholic school were aware that there were those kind of bad things going on. One day as school let out, a limousine stopped just down the street from the Catholic school in eyesight and I hopped in the limousine. Well, the nuns, not knowing any better and did not know who Frank Phillips was—believe it or not, I guess, or at least didn’t know his car—they called the police. So when the car pulled up at our house at 825 Cherokee, there was a police car right behind us and they got a big kick out of the fact that Mr. Phillips had given me a ridge home. (laughs)

JE: (laughs) Any other recollection of Frank Phillips?

JH: Well everybody that was in school about that time always remembers the big Christmas party that Mr. Phillips gave every year at the civic center in Bartlesville. He would bring in professional entertainment and put on a big show for the kids. Then when you left, you were handed a paper sack that had candy and an apple and an orange and, best of all, a silver dollar. So every school kid in Bartlesville got that every Christmas. I can tell you that back in those days, that was quite a gift. Mr. Phillips was a very fond memory for lots of us. Then, of course, one of the biggest celebrations that Bartlesville ever had was Mr. Phillips’ 66th birthday in 1939. I was only 6 at the time but I can remember it very, very well. They even struck some commemorative coins that were the same size as a silver dollar but had Mr. Phillips’ imprint on one side and the story about his birthday on the other side. I still have several of those coins that I’ve very carefully saved. But there was a huge parade that day. My parents had an open house that day. The governor of Oklahoma at the time was named Phillips, even though he was no relation to Frank Phillips. During that day, Mr. Frank Phillips and his brother, L.E. Phillips, and Governor Phillips all stopped by our house for the folks’ open house. So it was certainly a big day in my life.

Chapter 04 – 9:33
Woolaroc

John Erling: Frank had a brother, Waite Phillips.
John Hughes: Yes he did. Waite Phillips originally also came from Creston, Iowa and settled in Bartlesville. The house that he built for his bride is still in great shape and it's on down the street on Cherokee from where I used to live about a block the other direction. Some good family friends of ours lived there while I was growing up. But Waite and Frank sometimes…even though they were in business together for several years…it was before the founding of Phillips Petroleum Company…they kind of parted ways and Waite moved to Tulsa and formed his own oil company, Waite Phillips Company, and also a company called Independent that Phillips Petroleum Company later bought. But, of course, Waite Phillips was extremely successful as an oilman and later as a big time real estate developer in Los Angeles, California, after they left Tulsa and moved to the west coast.
JE: But he left behind a rather nice house in Tulsa, didn't he?
JH: He really, really did. Philbrook is a real treasure. In fact, Philmont in New Mexico and Philbrook in Tulsa, and, of course, Woolaroc that his brother Frank did here in Bartlesville—they are all truly treasures that many generations have enjoyed and many generations in the future will continue to enjoy. Edward Buehler Delk, the architect that did Philbrook, also did Philmont, the home on the ranch in New Mexico. He also did a number of homes in Bartlesville. Our original Hillcrest Country Club was also…as a matter of fact, I think our original country club was the first building in Oklahoma that was designed by Edward Buehler Delk. Mr. Frank Phillips spent…after the foundation of Phillips Petroleum Company, he spent a great deal of time in New York raising money to finance the oil drilling business. In other words, he needed to have the Wall Street folks invest in the oil patch. Woolaroc was really built—the lodge and so forth—was built to entertain those Wall Street bankers and financiers because during those many months/year that he spent in New York City, he would be invited out on their yachts and to their estates on Long Island and so forth and he needed a place to entertain them when they came to Oklahoma to visit their oil properties. So they expected to see cowboys and Indians and Mr. Phillips didn't disappoint them. He put together a wildlife refuge and a ranch that he could entertain them in style and show them,

sure enough, cowboys and Indians and, just for good measure, he threw in an outlaw or two.

JE: Well, for several years, he threw these picnics for the outlaws and…

JH: Cow Thief and Outlaws was an annual event. He invited the local cowboys, the neighbors. He also invited some of the folks like Henry Wells that had robbed a bank or two. There was kind of an unwritten rule that there weren't any arrests to be made that day. The eastern visitors got a big kick out of it and the locals certainly enjoyed it. Mr. Phillips was a tremendous host. One of my fond memories growing up was each department at the company would have an annual picnic at Woolaroc. Back then, a bottle of pop was a real treat for a kid. Well, if you can imagine, 18 flavors—and I know there were 18 flavors because I had to drink every one of them. I'll admit that I would be a little woozy before the day was over, but I had to try one of every kind and there were 18 different varieties of soda pop—all free. And I thought man, what a deal! Another highlight for kids of that era in 1939…the Ringling Brothers circus was in dire straits because of the depression, and Frank Phillips had become a good friend of John Ringling North, who was the main man in the circus as far as ownership goes back in those days. Of course, we didn't realize it at the time but one of the reasons that he paid to have the entire greatest show on earth come to Bartlesville was they really needed the business. But I'll never forget going down to the train station and rail yard and watching them unload all of the circus wagons and the parade of animals, elephants and so forth. From there out to where Conoco Phillips Research is today, that's where the circus set up. It was free to all the kids, matinee performance. Gargantua was one of the main attractions and Frank Buck…Bring 'Em Back Alive/Frank Buck was one of the performers. It was a day I'll never forget.

JE: Do you remember the names of any other celebrities that would have come around that were friends of Frank Phillips that were nationwide?

JH: Ironically, Mrs. Phillips' bedroom at the ranch home, which they called The Lodge…there's photographs that she would request and have autographed from many of the early day visitors. It's really a lot of fun if you ever have an opportunity to visit that. There's a book that gives you a key to who all of these people were. But there's everyone…kings and presidents and movie stars. Wallace Berry comes to mind--he's hanging on the wall; Rudy Vallee, a singer; Harry Truman…on and on. There's just any number of celebrities from the '30s…actually late '20s through the '30s and '40s. It's a lot of fun to

look at all of those pictures. The walls in that bedroom are completely covered with those photographs.

JE: Will Rogers would have been a friend of Frank Phillips.

JH: Will Rogers' picture is very prominent. He visited…Woolaroc was one of his favorite places. He shared an interest in aviation that Frank Phillips also had. Frank Phillips, really from a business standpoint, he could see the potential of selling a whole lot of fuel so he was a big promoter of early aviation. Phillips Petroleum Company was one of the first companies to have a fleet of airplanes for business use. He also was a big backer of Tom Braniff in forming one of the early airlines—Braniff Airways. But Will Rogers shared Mr. Phillips' enthusiasm for aviation and the future of aviation. They also shared a good friend in Wiley Post. Unfortunately, Wiley met his demise, of course, with Will Rogers in that ill-fated flight. Ironically, my father and a number of other Phillips executives had had dinner at Woolaroc with Will Rogers and Wiley Post not long before they went on that trip that ended up in tragedy in Alaska.

Chapter 05 – 11:38
Cattle Business

John Erling: Let's talk about the cattle business and the ranch and your memories. Of course, you were born there so at a very early age, you had an interest in being the cattle business.

John Hughes: Yes, my first ownership of cattle came between my junior and senior year in high school. Mr. K.S. Adams, commonly referred to as Boots, was very instrumental in the rapid growth. Mr. Phillips passed on in 1950 and Boots was already the chief executive officer of Phillips Petroleum Company. But Boots really made a major company out of a good small oil company. He also was a very ambitious, outgoing person that had a lot of other interests besides developing Phillips Petroleum Company. In the early '40s, he had decided that he wanted to put a cow herd together. My father pastured several hundred cows on our ranch for Mr. Adams. Then he moved those cattle up to a place that he bought north of Bartlesville in the Caney River bottom. About the time World War II was over, a neighbor there, **{___1:46___}**, began to encourage Mr. Adams to go in the dairy business. He thought that the future of the dairy business looked real

good. They had some farmland up in the river bottom and he thought that he'd get rid of his beef cows and go into the dairy business. So he let the beef herd kind of dwindle and by 1949, he didn't really have that many of those original beef cows left. He told dad that if I was interested in buying what he had left, if I could gather them, he'd sell them to me at a very reasonable price. And I thought man that's too good to be true but I'll take that up. So Bright Drake, who was a cowboy who worked at the ranch for dad, and I loaded our horses on an old homemade trailer. Trailers weren't really in the picture much back in those days. When you went to help a neighbor or whatever, you usually just had to ride. But anyway, we hauled our horses up to the river bottom and had to leave them up there in the coral for quite a while because the cattle...back in those days, the Caney River got out of its banks pretty often because the dikes hadn't been put in place yet and it flooded pretty often. The horse weeds were as high as my head on horseback. The cattle that were stragglers that hadn't been gathered were pretty wild. But we finally managed to gather 19 cattle. Mr. Adams had gone to one of Roy Turner's bull sales and bought a purebred Hereford bull. He gave me that bull to go with my 19 cows. So that was my start in the beef cattle business. Gosh, what does that make it, 60 years I guess that I've been in the business. Of course, it has changed dramatically. To give you a little history of the cattle industry in our area...historically the Osage was used from the days before the land was allotted to the individual Indians to the BIA or the government that oversaw the Indian affairs, the Bureau of Indian Affairs. They would simply negotiate large blocks of the Osage to ranchers to summer graze cattle that would come from south Texas. First those cattle were driven up here and then when the railroads came through, they were shipped up here by rail. So historically, the Osage was a place where cattle were brought up as yearlings or two year olds and then grazed for a season and then shipped on by rail—first from Elgin, Kansas, which was just over the line into Kansas—and then the railroads, both the Midland Valley and the Santa Fe, built railroads down into the Osage. There were a number of railroad shipping points, the largest being the Blackland pens up on the Chapman Barnard Ranch. There were a number of years that it was the largest country shipping point...and by country shipping point, I mean that's excluding the stockyards type area like the river markets—Chicago, Kansas City, St. Louis, etc. But for a country shipping point, Blackland, Oklahoma was the number one cattle shipping point in the nation for several years. It

pretty much…that pattern pretty much held true until World War II. The railroads were taken over by the government to move war material and troops and so forth. After the war, the railroads never really got serious about getting back into the livestock hauling business, and the interstate highway system wasn't in existence yet. So in order to have cattle to stock our country, we were pretty much forced into a cow-calf operation—in other words, raise your own—and we became a calf producing area. Back in those days, most of those calves then were sold to corn belt farmer feeders—small farm feeders that would feed a truckload…4 or 500 was really a pretty good sized farmer feeder. Iowa, Illinois, southern Michigan—there were Osage County raised calves fed in a number of locations in the corn belt and they developed a really good reputation for the quality and so forth of the cattle that were produced. Ironically, with the development of the interstate highway system and so forth…a lot of change in the industry and the advent of the commercial feeding industry in the high plains area that is located approximately 300 miles west of us. We're kind of a pass-through area for calves now that are produced in the gulf coast and south Texas and then grazed across our area and then shipped on by truck. They're shipped from as far away as Florida. As a matter of fact, one of the major operations now…ranching operations in Osage County…is Sooner Land and Livestock. They also have a very large operation—Deseret is the name of it—in central Florida. They have a very large cow herd, so they actually bring those calves that they produce in Florida up here and add an additional approximately 300 pounds on our good bluestem grass and then they're shipped on to the high plains area and fed to finish. Of course, that's where the packing industry is also located today. They relocated the packers from the river markets and so forth to the high plains area when the feeding industry, which actually followed the irrigation of the high plains…when they started raising large amounts of grain, they kind of…you could feed cattle more efficiently in the high plains area because of weather than you could up in the corn belt. So there's been really a lot of major, major changes in the industry. Of course, today we're probably going through the most revolutionary change in our industry maybe that's ever taken place that's predicated because of the advent of ethanol. It has not only changed the cattle industry but all of animal agriculture. Whether it's pork or poultry or beef, there are major changes going on because of the major ingredient which is corn; the demand for that being so great because of the mandates from congress to

produce more and more ethanol. So right now, the nation's cow herd is shrinking dramatically because of economics of cattle feeding. We're back now—total cattle numbers—to what cattle numbers were in 1959. Our beef cow herd is actually back to what it was when I graduated from high school in 1951. So we have a tremendous over-capacity of feed lots and of packing plants at the present time. We're certainly undergoing a great deal of change at the present time.

Chapter 06 – 5:00
Bluestem Grass

John Erling: You describe the cattle industry early on—probably till about 1973 in there—the cattle industry of the old west probably died about that time?

John Hughes: Well, it's hard to say actually when something dies because, you know, it's always fairly gradual that these things happen. And even though there's been a lot of changes, a lot of things pretty much stay the same. One thing is the successful people in the production end of the cattle industry in our part of the country are the people that really learn to take care of the resource, and our resource is grass. We try very hard to keep in mind that our bottom line is that it's the grass that we produce that we make our living from. We certainly have to preserve and take care of the resource, which we are very, very fortunate to have this beautiful cover of bluestem grass that renews itself every spring. If it's managed right, it is truly a renewable resource that comes back every year, renews itself every spring. We know that with proper management, we can produce a minimum of 100 to 120-30 pounds of beef per acre per year off of that native grass with very low inputs. It doesn't require the fertilizer and so forth that cropland does. So as long as we do a good job of managing that basic resource—bluestem grass—we can make a good living.

JE: So you're better at feeding cattle today than way back when?

JH: Oh no question. For instance, when I graduated from Oklahoma A&M College, now Oklahoma State, in 1955, as a cow-calf producer, they talked about a two-way calf. In other words, a calf that you could sell directly off the cow. At that time, there were at least 400 beef packers that only killed calves located in the southeastern United States alone. Today, except for

veal calves, there's virtually no calf slaughter whatsoever. All of them are fed, and that's one reason we don't require near the size cow herd we had back then because...for instance, in 1955, one of those fat slaughter calves, they called them, it would weigh 6-650 pounds when it went to the packer to be harvested. Well today, you know, the average slaughter weight is probably 1250. So it virtually is 2:1. It only takes one to replace two. So you don't really need near as many cows as you did back then, and the efficiency all the way through the chain is much, much better. It used to be that in the feedlot phase, it took at least 8 pounds of feed to produce a pound of beef...and it's 5.4, I'm not sure exactly what it is today because it keeps getting lower. But we have been pressed really hard on that because the poultry and pork industry have done really a better job with feed conversion than the beef industry does. However, we have one big advantage over them and that's the fact that at least half of the carcass weight of a beef animal is produced on roughage that can't be used for anything else and the grain part of it only comes in on the other 50% of that product; whereas, both with poultry and pork, it's 100%. They're raised from conception to harvest on a concentrated ration. So beef does have that advantage. Of course, we like to think that it just tastes better anyway.

JE: (laughs)

Chapter 07 – 5:06
Pigs and Cattle

John Erling: Is there real competition between poultry and the cattle business?

John Hughes: Oh no question. The amount of poultry that's consumed today per person has had a dramatic increase during my career. My goodness, if you had chicken for Sunday dinner, that was a big thing when I was growing up. It was kind of special. But they really have figured out how to make chicken pretty darned affordable. So yes, it's been tough competition. We're just very fortunate that beef does taste awfully good. The same way with pork. Now pork consumption has not increased dramatically but they've gotten very, very efficient in how much feed it takes to produce a pound of pork, and they also have totally redesigned the animal. If you look at a '40s or '50s model hog and compare to today's

hog, you just can't hardly believe it. Today's hog is two slabs of bacon and two hams and that's about it. Genetically they have totally redesigned the hog and they've made a lean, very efficient critter out of the old lard-type hogs. You know, back during World War II, they actually wanted that big, thick layer of fat because that was very, very needed for the war effort because explosives, among other things, used a tremendous amount of that fat.

JE: Well the cattle today are better than they used to be as well.

JH: Oh absolutely. My gosh, if we had to make a living with '50s model cattle, we'd starve to death. You know, we don't think anything about cattle in the feedlot gaining 3-1/2 to 4-1/2 pounds a day. Back when the commercial feeding industry was just getting underway in the late '50s and '60s, if you got 2-1/2 pounds a day, you were doing a good job. So yeah, the genetics are...crossbreeding, artificial insemination...you know, we've had some wonderful tools come along and I don't want to forget some of the scientific things that have aided also. You know, I think today, we put way too much emphasis on some of the buzzwords like organic and natural and that sort of thing. Let me tell you something. A lot of those aids and additives like ionophores that have made cattle feeding much more efficient—thank God we have them. Because not only is it great for the consumer because it makes the price a lot better, but there's no question about it—it's a heck of a lot better product. So I hope people today will dig a little deeper and realize that; you know, some of the things are not what they seem. I was raised, you know, on a diversified operation and, yeah, we milked our own cows, we raised our own chickens and so forth. Let me tell you something. I used to gather the eggs myself. I know exactly how farm eggs are produced and so-called free-range chicken and I'll tell you what—I want those eggs that were cage raised for lots of reasons. The same way goes for our pork and our beef—I want the latest technology. Our standard of living in the United States is what it is today. We owe an awful lot of that to the companies that develop the products that help us furnish the tools that we use in agriculture today to produce the superior product that we're able to produce.

Chapter 08 – 6:28
Herbicides

John Erling: Speaking of tools, when it comes to the care and keeping of this great grass, pesticides are a wonder drug for you.

John Hughes: Absolutely, absolutely. Herbicide alone has had a dramatic difference in the productivity and carrying capacity of our range land. Personally, herbicide has made it possible for me to be successful in the ranching business and raise a family and so forth and be able to make a living in ranching, which I love, versus if I hadn't had that tool, I would have been a part-time rancher and had to go to town and get a job. I'm so thankful that I didn't have to do that.

JE: Because what would have taken over the grass if you hadn't used the herbicide?

JH: Well, in my situation, our ranch was about 70% covered with post oak and blackjack. The bluestem grass was still there underneath but as that brush got thicker over the years, it suppressed the growth of the grass to the point that it just simply wouldn't produce enough grass to have the carrying capacity that I needed to run enough cattle to make a living off of it. So if it hadn't been for Dow and other companies coming up with the herbicides to control that brush and also weeds—for instance, lanceleaf ragweed which is one of the big invaders in our part of the country—I just simply wouldn't have been able to run enough cattle to make a living.

JE: Did I misspeak when I called it pesticide? I should have said herbicide?

JH: Well they all come under the…you've got insecticide which is a pesticide…and that's another huge advance. I can remember…horn flies—that's the fly that you see by the multiplied thousands on cattle's backs in the summertime. I can remember before the insecticides were available, you'd just see huge clouds of horn flies raise and lower on the backs of cattle. It blocked the sun really above a herd of cattle as you were driving them. And you had to keep your mouth closed because they'd get in your mouth. So I'll never forget the first DDT that we sprayed on our cattle, which was 1946, and I thought oh my Lord, this is the greatest miracle that's ever come along. And it truly was. The bad news was that, you know, the flies developed an immunity to it and we had to change to others. But today, we have a wonderful thing. It's like a flea and tick collar only it's in the form of an ear tag. At the start of the grazing season, the start of warm weather, we simply put one of those in approximately the first of April in each animal and it gives you excellent fly control for several months. Then as the tag begins to wear out, we start feeding the cattle a

small amount of supplement so that they're gathered up and we can just drive by and put a very small amount of insecticide across in just one pass and control what flies are coming back. So it's been a wonderful thing. Cattle don't gain weight very well when they're fighting flies so it's helped a lot.

JE: There was another tool I thought you said. It was herbicide and another tool that you gave credit for the success of the ranch.

JH: Well, of course, the advent of commercial fertilizer for our tame grass and, of course, for the crop land that grows the milo and corn and so forth that cattle are finished on. Without the advent of the commercial fertilizer industry, you know, agriculture would have not made anything like the progress that it has. The genetic work, both with animals and with crop…gosh, just even before the wonderful things they're doing genetically with the crop sites today…but the hybridization of corn, it's amazing what that did for corn production. You know, a lot of people don't realize but in addition to ethanol, corn sweetener—if you read on the label of most any bottle of soda pop today, the sweetener in there is not pure cane sugar from Hawaii, it's corn syrup from Iowa or some of the other corn producing places in the United States. So corn has so many, many uses. That's the reason from us and agriculture—at least in animal agriculture—we're a little chagrined that the ethanol industry, in our opinion, is taking a little too big a share of the corn crop.

Chapter 09 – 4:30
Farm Technology

John Erling: Here we sit in 2009, but back in the '50s, '60s and 70's, it's different in the acres that are managed because we have fewer cattlemen today managing more and more acres than ever before. Is that true?

John Hughes: That's very true. That's not only in the cattle industry but in agriculture in general. The equipment/the technology that we have enables us to get so much more accomplished than we did back when I started my career and certainly way, way more than 50 years before that. For instance, around the turn of the 20th century, it was very labor intensive. All of agriculture was very, very labor intensive. It's not nearly as labor intensive today. One of the things that came about early in my career

was the eradication of the screwworm fly from the United States. There are still screwworm flies but they're pushed down below the Panama Canal. That was a very innovative program that the cattle industry cooperated with the Department of Agriculture in the research and the application of that research to eliminate the screwworm fly. It used to require a lot of labor in the summertime to look after cattle very closely because if a cow or a yearling got a screwworm infestation that wasn't doctored, it would lead to the demise. It's also...the eradication of the screwworm fly has had a great deal to do with the large increase in, for instance, the deer population. But it also had a lot to do with most wildlife because the screwworm fly...any newborn, they would lay their eggs in the navel of any newborn wildlife species or newborn calf. And if it was during fly time when they were born, a large percentage of them got a screwworm infestation and died. That's one reason why the whitetail deer population in our part of the country has thrived like it has since the '50s when the screwworm fly was eradicated. It was a unique deal. Scientists discovered that the screwworm fly, unlike any other insect that I know about, only mates once. So if they turn loose sterilized male flies and they mated with a sterile fly, that was it. They tried this out because Florida was the peninsula. They first tried it moving north releasing from an airplane sterilized screwworm flies that they irradiated, and it worked. So they proved the theory on the Florida peninsula and then they started in Mexico and moved north. Excuse me, they started in the United States and slowly moved south. Every year they would release the flies further south and they now have them pushed down to the Panama Canal. It is very inexpensive to maintain because it's so narrow right there—the land area is so narrow that it doesn't cost much to release the number of flies they need to to take care of the situation.

Chapter 10 – 7:35
Henry Iba

John Erling: Let me go back to when it was Oklahoma A&M; it's Oklahoma State University now. The basketball coach—Henry Iba. Was he there then?

John Hughes: Oh absolutely. Mr. Iba was held in much, much reverence just as he is today (laughs). I remember seeing him many, many times on the

campus. Mr. Iba loved to fish. He had a number of rancher friends here in Osage County. He would come up and fish, for instance, on **{___00:40___}** ranches, in particular. He really, really enjoyed coming up and getting out in the Osage and fishing the ponds and the creeks and so forth. He had a tremendous personality and lots and lots of friends. He's fondly remembered in, I think, every place in Oklahoma. He touched a lot of lives. Of course, being from Bartlesville, many of his players ended up—or a least a number of his players ended up—playing basketball in the old AAU league for Phillips Petroleum Company, Bob Kurland being one of the most famous; Cab Renick was another one…but a number of Oklahoma A&M players. Don Johnson, who was playing for Oklahoma A&M when I was there, was one of the great aggie stars that played for the Phillips 66ers after their college career was over. Of course, several of those 66er teams went to the Olympics. I think Kurland went to two different Olympics while he was with the 66ers. So Mr. Iba had a tremendous positive influence on our area.

JE: Is the reason that Phillips became so interested as a company in basketball? Even today they sponsor.

JH: Well I think that was part of it. But back to K.S. "Boots" Adams, he was a sports enthusiast. I think Boots and the guys that he worked with early on back in the '20s in Phillips forming a basketball team…I've seen many picture of that very first Phillips basketball team. Frank Phillips had a great interest in sports and never missed a home basketball game. Mr. Phillips…I can remember so well him sitting on the front row in the old college gymnasium watching the 66ers play basketball. He truly loved the sport. You know, as an advertising tool, it did a lot for Phillips. I think their sponsorship to this day of the Big 12 Tournament is one of the best things they do.

JE: So maybe then basketball really originates with Frank Phillips and his interest and Boots carried it on. Is that true?

JH: Yeah, I think…you know, the two kind of came up together because even though Mr. Adams was young and not in a position to call the shots back when he was playing basketball, it was obvious that Mr. Phillips saw the impact and the morale and so forth. They would go to Tulsa and play the Diamond Oilers and so forth. It just created a lot of goodwill. Denver was one of Phillips big marketing areas and Denver was a basketball hotbed. Denver always had a good AAU team. It might be the Denver Chevrolets one year and the Denver something else the next, but they always

managed to have a competitive AAU entry. Basketball has been a big thing in Bartlesville for a long, long time.

JE: Do you recall watching Henry Iba as he coached games and any particular memory of a game or anything that might have come to mind as you were watching as a fan?

JH: I always wanted to sit across from the team so that I could watch Mr. Iba's antics because he was very animated. I used to really feel sorry for a player that screwed up and had to endure the wrath of Mr. Iba. As you know, he played a different style of basketball. There was no shot clot and ball control was his big thing. Oh woe be the poor guy that took an inadvertent shot because he was going to get jerked. You know, it didn't make any difference whether you were the star or what, you were coming out of there if you took a shot that you shouldn't have. So it was lots of fun watching Mr. Iba. I was there for the last game that Mr. Iba coached and it was long after I had left school. But Scott Martin from Bartlesville was playing for OU at the time and that last game was against OU. OU was certainly favored and Scott was a tremendous basketball player, like his father before him. Bill Martin, Scott's dad, came to work for Phillips playing basketball out of OU and ended up being the CEO of the company. But he was a great player also. But anyway, Scott was an outstanding basketball player and OSU won the game. I was very, very pleased that I was fortunate enough to be there for that last game and see them win. Yeah, that's some of my fondest memories of going to school at Oklahoma A&M was the basketball. It was great.

Chapter 11 – 12:15
Wild Horses

John Erling: On the Hughes Ranch, we have wild horses and this comes through, I guess, the land management office. Is that true?

John Hughes: Yes, we have pastured and adopted wild horses for the Bureau of Land Management. This is the 20th year that we've had that program. You know, to us, it's another way to market our product, which is grass. Back in 1972, Congress passed the Wild Horse and Burro Act. Before that, over-population really hadn't been a problem with wild horses because they were kind of, you know, open to hunting by—they called them

"mustangers"—and they would capture wild horses. In fact, one of Clark Gable's last movies, I think, he was a mustanger. I can't remember...I know Marilyn Monroe was in it and I think maybe Montgomery Clift. But anyway, it was about capturing wild horses. Ranchers, adventurers and so forth—they captured wild horses and sold them. A lot of them did end up being made into dog food. An activist named Velma Johnston—they called her Wild Horse Annie...I never could figure out how they got the Annie out of Velma...nevertheless, she became concerned when they started using helicopters and fixed wing airplanes to aid in the gathering of the wild horses that they might eradicate them. So she circulated petitions in schools all over the country, and she presented Congress with hundreds of thousands of school children's signatures and a proposed bill called the Wild Horse and Burro Act that protected the wild horse. Congress passed it without a dissenting vote, which is extremely unusual for Congress to pass anything unanimously. So from that day forward, a problem population-wise developed on the western lands that are managed by the BLM or Bureau of Land Management. For instance, in Nevada that's almost 90% federally owned, there are private lands checker boarded in among the public lands. So the government/the bureau does have a responsibility because that land is not fenced separately. They need to keep the resource, which is grass. Even though it's a lot sparcer than it is where we are, it's the same type situation. You have to take care of your grass. So anyway, they came up with the adopt a horse program and they are able to adopt a number of young horses that are easy to train and so forth. But for the older, what they consider unadoptable horses, they really don't have any place to go with them so that's where we came in. They advertised for bids for a long-term holding facility and we were successful in getting a long-term contract. We bid it in 1988; they sent us our first horses in 1989. So for the past 20 years, we have been...in addition to our cattle operation—which we never comingle in the same pastures, cattle and horses...but in addition to our livestock/cattle operation, we also have pastured wild horses. We originally had one contract. Then they needed more capacity and they let another contract. Now in addition to our two contracts, there are a number of others. Oh gosh, there's 10 or 12. Most of them are located within 100 miles of right here. However, this past year, they let one new contract in South Dakota. So there's at least one that isn't in our area.

JE: How many wild horses do you have now on the Hughes Ranch?

JH: On our home ranch, we have approximately 1500 horses. That's what our capacity is. Totally we pasture about 4350 horses.

JE: What's the difference between the wild horse and a domesticated horse?

JH: Well, the wild horse, of course, evolved over centuries of horses being in the wild. Genetically, there truly are some remarkable differences between a wild horse and a domestic horse. Two of the most outstanding differences are the thickness of the hoof wall. If you look at the feet of a wild horse, the hoof wall is about four times on average as thick as a domestic horse. The reason for that is that if a horse in the wild...if the hoof broke back into the quick, they simply couldn't go from where the resource—the grass—was and get to water. So the mare, if she had a colt, she probably didn't re-breed because she wasn't doing well enough or she actually starved to death or the stud that broke back into the quick, he wasn't able to keep up with the herd and he perished. So over the many, many, many years, any horse that was prone to have hoof problems simply vanished out of the genetic pool. The other dramatic difference is the thickness of the hide. Our old friend, the screwworm fly, comes back into play because any horse that was wounded in any way and a screwworm fly laid its eggs, they were going to eventually perish because there was nobody there to doctor the screwworms and kill them, so the horse ended up dying. So the hide thickness on a wild horse is so thick that, for instance, a horsefly can't even bite. The way a horsefly gets blood out of the animal, they actually have a little built-in knife and they slice the hide and the blood comes up by capillary action and it's soaked up by a little sponge that they have and then ingested. Well, they can't cut through the hide so they just don't even try. So unlike our domestic horses that are plagued with horsefly problems in the summertime, the wild horses don't have that. Then in addition, they are just virtually immune to all types of disease and ailments and so forth. For instance, colic is a big killer in domestic horses and it's just unheard of in a wild horse. So just through the survival of the fittest type genetic selection, they are an extremely hardy breed.

JE: Can you compare them intellectually?

JH: Well, their mindset is so different. For instance, if you leave a gate open to your horse trap, every rancher knows that their saddle horses/their ranch horses are going to be out. As a matter of fact, even if you don't leave it open, they may figure out a way if the latch isn't foolproof to open the gate and get out. Well after wild horses are located in a pasture, if you leave the gate open, it's going to be quite a long time before they'll venture out.

Once they get located in an area…and, of course, our pastures are pretty big/pretty good size…but they don't want to leave there. Another interesting thing—if you're trying to gather cattle, for instance, or even domestic horses, they may go to the brush and hide from you if there's some cover in the pasture. Wild horses will go to the highest place in the pasture where they can see in every direction. That's where they'll go to. So their mindset and their habits are very, very different than a domestic horse.

JE: Then as you care for them, the government says we don't want you doing much with them—you feed them, water them, and if they become sick, nature takes its course?

JH: Right. We're to have a free roaming environment for the horse. We do supplement them with feed for approximately 160 days, which is our dormant native grass season. We use alfalfa hay for a protein supplement. We normally feed the horses on a three day a week basis. In other words, we'll feed alfalfa hay to the horses either Monday, Wednesday and Friday or Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday—some on one schedule and some on another so that we can utilize the same manpower and equipment for more horses.

JE: You have to teach them and train them, the wild horses, when they come in to a feeding area?

JH: Yeah, when we first what we call "fence break" the horses when they first come in from mostly Nevada, we keep them up in a six-foot high coral for several weeks until we get them acclimated and used to the feed truck. We will feed alfalfa to them in that large pen from the back of a feed truck and get them to associate the siren that we use to call them into feed with getting fed and alfalfa hay. Then we'll turn them out in a 10-acre transition area that is smooth-wire fenced and we'll flag that fence with strips of white plastic that blow in the wind. It lets them know where the fence is and gets them used to being enclosed in a wire fence. We'll keep them in that transition area for several weeks and then move them on to one of the large pastures where they'll basically stay, some for the rest of their life for years.

Chapter 12 – 4:42
Grazing Season

John Erling: Is is true that the grazing season here in Oklahoma is the most predictable in the country?

John Hughes: It truly is. We are so fortunate. I've had the opportunity to graze cattle in a number of states and have traveled most of the large cattle producing areas in the country. We are just so fortunate to have a very predictable grazing season. In my 60-year career, there's really only been two bona fide drought times. My goodness, large parts of the United States experience a year or two of drought out of every decade. So we are truly blessed to...if you're going to be in ranching business, in my opinion, this is the greatest area in the world that I know about to be in the ranching business.

JE: But as we drove through much of the acreage, or at least a portion of it, of the Hughes Ranch, it was wide open space that we saw. But you had to do a lot of clearing of the land of trees, of cross timbers?

JH: Yes. On the east side of Osage County is basically in the cross timber/what is classed as the cross timber area. The west side of Osage County and then to the east of us in Washington and Nowata and Craig county, you again have a mix of open prairie and cross timbers. My particular home ranch, that area was about 70/30; it was about 70% covered with post oak, blackjack and 2-3% hickory thrown in and the rest open prairie. The prairie grass or bluestem made up of big blue, little blue, Indian grass and switch grass, was also very prevalent under the under story but it had been suppressed by that post oak and blackjack brush. So we used herbicide and I did my first aerial spraying in 1958. When I saw the dramatic result, I knew that my future was going to be closely tied with the use of herbicide and aerial application because it was really the answer, so to speak, of dramatically increasing the carrying capacity of the land resource. So I was able to...actually I went into the business myself for the number of years that it took to get the cart before the horse. In other words, the horse in front of the cart instead of behind, I should say, because my problem was having enough cash flow to be able to afford to do the amount of herbicide spraying that I needed to do to increase the carrying capacity of the ranch so that I could run enough cattle to make a living. Otherwise, I was going to have to go to town and get a job and ranch on the side. I very much wanted to devote my entire career to ranching. So I only stayed in the business until I got the brush pretty well under control. However, I still have a program at the ranch...my son and I still have a spraying program.

We very religiously and adamantly stick with that program and our ranch just gets better and better from a carrying capacity. We owe an awful lot of that to the companies like Dow that have developed those products for our use. It's truly a miracle from our standpoint.

Chapter 13 – 6:30
Role Models

John Erling: Here we are in Osage County. The Osage own mineral rights in this land but they settled here many, many years ago. But any artifacts in arrowheads and that kind of thing would go back…that are found, say, on the Hughes Ranch…go back way, way before the Osage.

John Hughes: True. Yes, just like over most of Oklahoma and the whole southwest as far as I know, there are Indian artifacts. But gosh, they are at least thousands, maybe even millions of years old; I'm not sure. But they go way…they precede the Osage…all of the tribes that were removed to Indian territory. You know, in the 1800s, all of those artifacts pre-date the removal of those tribes to Oklahoma.

JE: Who would you say—beyond your father, of course, your family—role models? Obviously, Frank Phillips would be one of them. But are there other names that would be role models that you looked up to?

JH: The generation of ranchers that preceded me and my counterparts in this country. Many of them had a tremendous influence. A cowboy that worked for my father named Bright Drake, he certainly had a huge influence. I learned so much about how to handle cattle and really how to handle myself as far as relationship with other cattlemen, other cowboys, etc. I really owe an awful lot to Bright. But I was very fortunate, through my aerial spring venture, to meet and associate with many ranchers that were really a generation ahead of me. Several come to mind. **{___2:09___}** were very special friends of mine. J.B. and Whalen Smith, another couple of brothers that were so helpful to me. Ben Culver…Bill Joe Culver was one of my counterparts and a great friend and great rancher. His father, Ben Culver, went out of his way to advise me and help me. Jack Walker from Pawhuska, who was not only a very good rancher but a banker; he was very, very helpful. There were just any number of area ranchers. Monsieur and Clark Moore—they couldn't have been nicer and they were so giving

with their experience and their advice and so forth. I'll always be so grateful to those people for taking the time. Sometimes I wonder how they put up with all the questions that I used to ask them, but thank goodness they took the time and the patience to answer. They were a great, great help to me. You know, it's one thing to have a college education in animal science and that's great; that's a great background. But there's absolutely no substitute for hands-on experience and being able to observe the operations of successful ranchers. You may have a number of successful ranch operations but they may be successful for completely different reasons. One rancher may be an outstanding trader. In other words, he is successful because he knows how to buy and sell and get the very best job done buying and selling. Another one…his expertise…you know, he's damn sure got a green thumb and he can grow anything. He can get the best stand of tame grass when you're trying to replace and recover some old farmland, for instance. So I had the opportunity to observe a lot of ranchers and a lot of different operations. I'll never forget observing my old friend, John **{___4:24___}**. John used to love to put on his golf clothes when he went to Pawhuska. A lot of the other ranchers that were of his generation, they used to kind of snicker about John that he was sure enough a green horn. Well, I knew a lot better because I sprayed brush on his ranch and had the opportunity to see his operation up close and, hey, there wasn't a more astute rancher ever lived than John **{___5:03___}**. He was some kind of operator. But he used to delight in putting on his golf clothes and sitting over in the Manhattan Café and asking dumb questions just to get a rise out of some of his buddies. (laughs) So, you know, I really admire guys of that generation. A lot of them were guys whose career was interrupted, some of them even by World War I, but also a number of them World War II. Fred Craddock is another one…he was one of our best customers when we built the feed yard out in western Kansas in Liberal. I learned a heck of a lot from Fred and his father, Carl, who I never really knew except by reputation. People like that had a real positive impact on the industry and they were so great for the younger guys like me when I was coming up in the industry and shared their knowledge and expertise. It meant a lot to me.

Chapter 14 – 6:36
Future of Ranching

John Erling: Well you've shared yourself and with your own son...we should point out, you've referred to him...Robert is very much a partner with you these days in the Hughes Ranch.

John Hughes: Absolutely. Robert kind of education-wise did a little better than I did. When he finished at Oklahoma State, he went on to TCU and went through their ranch management program. That was probably the best money I ever spent because that's a tremendous program. John Merrill was the kind of founding father of that program and was still there when Robert went. It's still a great program today. I particularly thought an awful lot of John Merrill. I am so pleased that Robert had the opportunity to learn the things that he did from John and from that TCU program. That class has visited our ranch on an annual spring field trip for many, many years. In fact, they are going to be here the 16th of next month this year. We always look forward to that. We've met literally hundreds of young people that have been successful. Every cattlemen's convention, anyplace I go, people come up to me and remind me that they visited the ranch such-and-such year. It's a real good feeling to see how successful a lot of those people have been.

JE: 2009—we are here. You venture a comment on the future of ranching—25 years from now, 50 years from now? What do you think it will look like?

JH: Boy that's a tough one. Of course, we've seen tremendous change over my career, but I'm afraid that we're going to see even more dramatic change. It goes back to that tremendous increase in the demand for corn. If we're really going to try to use kind of our major crop for fuel, it is going to have a very, very dramatic impact on animal agriculture and certainly on the cattle segment as well as pork and poultry. So right now, we're certainly seeing a shrinking of the industry. Our long-term future from the demand side for our product really lies overseas because...particularly the Asian emerging market...because of the tremendous population of China and Indonesia. Japan has historically been for the last 20 years a good beef customer. But China, the potential is just virtually unlimited. As that country emerges economically, the future can be tremendous for us. On the other hand, there's going to be a lot of bumps in the road. Right now with some of the financial crisis and so forth, you just don't know how that's going to evolve and how that's going to shake out. But the beef industry is pretty mature as far as consumption goes in the United States.

But our overseas market, for the kind of high quality beef that we produce, we're really the only place in the world that produces the really high quality grain fed product that we have. So I can't help but think some way or another we have a bright future, but it's going to take a lot of negotiating trade-wise and so forth. We kind of overlook the fact that right now our #1 beef customer is right to the south—it's Mexico. Yet we're doing some things; for instance, we're throwing up some trade barriers for the importation of Mexican stocker and feeder cattle that we've historically brought up here and added value to and then sold back to them. Yet we're throwing up some real barriers; for instance, country of origin labeling which is shooting ourself in the foot if there ever was such a thing. Because Mexico is our #1 export customer. So, you know, we really need to pay close attention to the trade rules and regulations. If we become isolationist, we're going to suffer dramatically in our business because it is a world market and we need to participate in that world market.

Chapter 15 – 6:00
Corn

John Erling: You referred earlier to the use of corn for ethanol and you were relating that to the ranching business. You said it would have an impact. How?

John Hughes: The cost…what we produce here…we buy basically a calf that is bred and raised to weaning age in the gulf coast area. We bring it to Oklahoma and we add 3-500 pounds to that animal on our grass. Then it's shipped on to the high plains. Guymon, Oklahoma would kind of be…the high plains area is kind of a football shaped area with Guymon, Oklahoma kind of being the middle of the laces on the football. The upper end/kind of high end is Nebraska; the bottom end Lubbock, Texas. And it pretty much covers the area that is underlain by the Ogallala Aquifer of water. The reason that the cattle feeding industry is there is because of that water that produces the grain that feeds the cattle. So when that 8-900 pound feeder animal is shipped to that feedlot from here, then it is fed on basically corn or milo, which is a corn substitute, from then until it reaches 1250-1300 pound harvest weight. Then it goes to the packing house. Well, our direct customers are those feed yards and they are really in a bind

because the price of corn went up so dramatically with the mandates dictated by Congress for ethanol. Right now, when they buy our feeder animal...and they have to have that animal because they have a factory out there which is the feedlot and without our feeder animal, they're out of business. But to put that added value versus that corn on, it's costing so much that they are losing money on every single one they feed. So there's no way that the industry can endure right now unless either the price of the finished product—the beef—goes up dramatically or the price of corn comes down dramatically. With the economy like it is, it's going to be very hard to get more money. Beef historically is high. It's high because of the numbers. We don't have the total beef supply but it's the demand problem. What can you get for it? Right now, some of the high-end steakhouses even—the Morton's and the Ruth Chris and those—they're running far, far below their capacity. Now on the manufacturing beef or hamburger end—like McDonald's—they're doing very well. That is a sign obviously of the state of the economy. I love McDonald's, I love what they do for our industry, but it's that high end—it's that loin cut—that we've always depended on for the profit end. Right now, it's a hard sell. So the price of corn has dramatically changed. It's also changed our competition for pork and poultry. For instance, one of the largest poultry companies, Pilgrim's Pride, they're in bankruptcy right now. All of the packing people—for instance, Tyson—they're in dire straits. You know, it's just...it's a margin business and the margin simply isn't there with the price of corn reaching the levels that it has. So there's really some things on the horizon that don't look very good. But hopefully we have always survived one way or another and I guess we'll figure out a way to do it. But right now, it looks pretty tough.

JE: Does the Hughes family ever eat chicken?

JH: (laughs) Yeah. You know, I guess after Jordy did, somebody's gotta eat it, don't they (laughs). But we do eat a lot of beef and we love beef. I'll tell you, though, I grew up eating grass fed beef and I'll tell you what—I like the one we haul back from the feed yard the best. I want corn fed. The grass certainly plays a big role. It puts on that cheapest part of the gain and that's great and we're proud of that part in the industry that we have. But to have a superior product, we really believe that it needs to go to the feed yard for that last 110 days and that's really what it takes. You need 110 days on 90% corn ration. Then you've got a product that is not only tender but very, very flavorful.

Chapter 16 – 7:06
Price Tower

John Erling: The icon in Bartlesville beyond Conoco Phillips and all, of course, is the Price Tower—Frank Lloyd Wright's development. How did the Price family…and you know the Price names and all…so just talk to me about that and how it came about.

John Hughes: Well how Price came to Bartlesville working for the smelter…he was a mining engineer that had graduated from the Colorado School of Mines. He met and married Mary Lou, his wife. She was a school teacher from Purcell that had graduated from OU. He became very interested in electric arc welding. He, while he was working for the smelter, saw what was going on in the oil patch and the need for pipelines. Back in those days, the pipelines were very, very labor intensive to build because they were actually…they had flange and collar type pipelines that were bolted together. One of the major pipelines that comes across one of the ranches that we operate, they replaced it several years ago and I couldn't believe it but there were jillions of bolts, you know, that put it together. I understand that they brought a polish crew in from Europe to do that work on that early day pipeline. But anyway, apparently that's how all the pipelines were put together and it was very expensive and very slow. So he thought if he could weld those joints together, it would save a lot of time, money and so forth. So he didn't develop arc welding but he developed the portable arc welding. Those first ones were actually horse drawn. They would put a portable welder and engine in a wagon and pull it with horses. I've seen pictures of those early day pipeline welding rigs. So that's really what started his career in the pipeline business. But he was obviously a very brilliant engineer. There are many things that are still—line up clamps, etc. that Hal Price developed—that are still used today in the pipeline industry. I was fortunate enough to grow up with Harold and Joe, Mr. and Mrs. Price's two sons, and spent a lot of hours at their house. Mr. Price was kind enough to take my brother and I…he was a big sports fan and one of the first college football games I ever saw was back in the Bob Fenimore/Glenn Dobbs days at TU/Oklahoma A&M game at Skelly Stadium. I would have probably never gotten to see any of the hockey games that I went to in

Tulsa and so forth if it hadn't been through the kindness of the Prices. We were just privy growing up to a lot of things that we wouldn't have been had it not been for their generosity and so forth. It's in a way kind of sad to see the development of Starview Farms into homes, even though the developer that is doing it is doing a wonderful job. I think the Prices would be very proud. But where their beautiful home that they built right after World War II was is now being developed. But I remember so well when they first bought that property and were building the lake and cleaning it up and so forth, and they were so proud of it and built a Cliff May designed ranch-style house which has now been torn down on the Starview Farm. Mrs. Price was a five-gaited horse enthusiast and I guess had one of the best breeding operations for gaited horses anywhere in the country and used to show horses all over the United States. She was a very, very great lady and a very generous person. We were just very fortunate here in Bartlesville to have had the Prices happen to settle here and start their company. Of course, when Mr. Price decided to build an office building, he chose Frank Lloyd Wright who had designed that building to be built down on the bowery in New York back in the '20s. The people that were going to build it, the deal fell through and it had just been languishing on the drawing board for many, many years. I believe it was 1955 when Mr. Price made the deal to go ahead and build it. He didn't need as large a building so they simply took the predesigned building that Mr. Wright had designed all those years before and simply down-scaled it, just shrunk it. So from a practical standpoint, it had a lot of problems. The elevators are extremely small and the hallways are very small and so forth. But it is a beautiful building and it is something that everybody in Bartlesville is very proud of. Fortunately a nonprofit that Pete Silas has done a marvelous job of putting together has restored it and is operating it. Many people can enjoy it today and we're very proud to have it here in Bartlesville.

JE: Hal Price and Frank Lloyd Wright—were they friends before this project or they became friends, he reached out to Frank Lloyd Wright?

JH: Yes he did. I think his son Joe was a close friend of the head of the architectural department at OU, Bruce Goff. Bruce Goff made the connection with Frank Lloyd Wright for the Price family.

JE: Well I want to thank you. You have been very giving to this interview. You were very giving to me in driving us out on the ranch and I really thank you. These words will live on for many, many years to come thanks to the

technology of today. Youngsters who are going to school for land management and all will learn a lot from what you've had to say.

JH: It's been a great day, been fun being with you.

JE: Thank you very much.

JH: You bet.

JE: Bye.

Chapter 17 – 0:33
Conclusion

Announcer: This oral history presentation is made possible through the support of our generous foundation-funders. We encourage you to join them by making your donation, which will allow us to record future stories. Students, teachers, and librarians are using this website for research and the general public is listening every day to these great Oklahomans share their life experience.

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