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Oral history interview with John Davis Hatch, 1964 June 8

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Transcript

Interview

JH: John Davis Hatch
WW: H. Wade White

WW: Mr. Hatch, I understand that you were appointed director of the first district, the New England states, for the Federal Art Project from its beginning, and we hope very much that you can give us your reminiscences of the project and how it developed under your directorship.

JH: Thank you, Mr. White. I'll do what I can. First of all, I think we have to go back and say that it was Region I, which is the New England states of the Public Works of Art Project. My connection with it, and all the government art projects, except for later work in connection with murals in post offices in competitions of that kind, and stopping in at the headquarters in Washington under both Mr. Bruce and Mr. Cahill, was entirely with the Public Works of Art Project. This was only of short duration and then we later broke it up into states and under states it became the Federal Art Projects - WPA, I think, actually was the title of it.

WW: What did that stand for?

JH: Works Progress Administration. Thus - it became a part of a bureaucratic set-up. Earlier under PWAP it was completely artist inspired. The beginning of this project, as you probably know, was that Edward Bruce, who had been a banker in the Philippines and had made plenty of wherewithal, had retired. He went to Italy and in Italy worked with Maurice Sterne, who (that is Sterne) later told me he never worked so hard in his life as he did when he had Ned Bruce with him.

WW: He worked as a painter?

JH: As a painter. Ned Bruce would get up at four o'clock in the morning and work all day long painting and Sterne, who worked with him, felt he had to stay along with him during that period.

WW: Had Mr. Bruce painted as a young man?

JH: I don't think so. He just decided as an older man that he wanted to paint. So we have this kind of background on Bruce. He, as you know, later became a prize winner at the Carnegie International for pear tree painting which he did. He, however, reached the point where he was without money or getting short on cash, so he got himself a job lobbying in Washington for the sugar interests, that is for the Spreckles, I think, of California. With this position he made a good deal and one day said to me, " I have been lobbying for the Philippines government, with the government, long enough for money. Now I'm going to lobby for the artist for nothing." So he went through Mrs. Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt, who had as her helper at that time Mrs. Morgenthau, whose husband was head of the Treasury. And it was due to his influence through those two ladies and through one of the Justices -- let's see, who was that? -- it'll come to me later.

WW: You don't remember?

JH: It'll come to me later. They started this idea of a project for the artists. This was the beginning of all the government relief project days and Bruce thought they ought to have artists included in the great give-away, if you may say it, or great help which the government was then providing for people everywhere out of work. So, finally they set up this Public Works of Art Project. Bruce called to Washington, a lot of people from all over the country -- Francis Taylor as director of the museum in Worcester was invited from New England, Juliana Force from New York, and so on, and these people all came to Washington and the idea of having the government art project was set out. They then went home and organized regional committees in their various areas, and here in New England Francis Taylor brought together to Worcester Museum a group of the leading museum people. They included Edward Forbes and Edgell, Paul Sachs of Howard University, Theodore Sizer from Yale, Chick Austin from Hartford. Test's right, Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford, and this group of people after meeting agreed to the idea on and they all thought that Boston should be its headquarters. Then the project to find the headquarters and Morris Carter, director of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, who was there, had just build a wing on the building, an administrative wing for the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. And so far the program for the classroom had not been developed and so he offered tentatively the Gardner Museum as headquarters to help this project. This was readily accepted by everybody Carter came back to the Gardner Museum where I was then newly appointed as assistant director, as I had only been there, let's see, six months I guess by that time, and told me of this idea and asked me if I would be willing to head it. Francis Taylor's idea had been that I would take over because of being in the museum as assistant director, and I guess Carter thought that as a young fellow I had a lot of energy and I would be good at this job and it might keep me out of mischief a little bit, as the museum itself was apparently not holding me down enough. So it was that I became Director of the project and

Taylor was Chairman of the larger New England Committee. Somewhere there's a photograph of the whole committee. I believe it was taken of us all at the Gardner Museum. If this turns up I'll see that the Archives gets it because I think it's a good document. Well, next phase would probably be that all of the national regional directors, or the chairman of each area, was asked how many artists they would have in their area. Francis Taylor was asked how many artists there were in New England. I remember this particularly because he said that there were only about two hundred that he considered as artists in New England. I don't know whether this had to do with his ideas of whether that was all the good artist in New England, or whether that was actually all the artists there were in New England, but it gives some idea of the thinking of the time. And Bruce told Francis Taylor that that was too low so they gave New England a quota of three hundred artist, so it was that we had only a quota of three hundred artists we could put on the payroll.

WW: Did this mean necessarily artists who needed financial assistance?

JH: Well, at that time there was probably no one, as we'll discover as we go through this, who was not in need of help, and only - oh, there were very few artist in that day who had, let's just say, sufficient money to make ends meet in one way or another.

WW: As always!

JH: Well, no. There have always been times when there have been great mural painters like Blashfield and Alexander, and so on, who made money and there have been other oil painters, like Winslow Homer and Inness and Wyeth, who made plenty of money and so on, but at this time people weren't buying art. It was the first thing you gave up when you were economically strapped, and this is the period when the government and the banks were closed, and so on. Everybody was without, and so artists were the first ones put our without income. So we began. The first day - I think, if my memory is right, this was in February, late February or March for some reason (the organization began January 1934, right). With announcements our offices were set up with branches "Tubby" Sizer, Theodore Sizer, professor at Yale and had the Art Museum there, was Connecticut chairman. Alexander Bower, who was head of the Sweat Museum in Portland, was head of the Maine Group. I've forgotten who in Vermont and New Hampshire. I don't think we had anybody then in Vermont and New Hampshire. I'm sure we didn't, but the offices were set up. There was an office set up in Manchester, I think at the Currier Gallery for registration of artists.

WW: Manchester, New Hampshire?

JH: Manchester, New Hampshire, right. No headquarters were set up in Vermont. Early Rowe had the headquarters at the Rhode Island School of Design. And to all these headquarters lined up artists to register. We were astonished to find that, with our quote of three hundred, we had over a thousand artists register on our first day in New England. It staggered everybody. And as time went on we found that that was only a small part of the artists in New England.

WW: Could I ask, how did these artists know about applying for it?

JH: This was a matter of national publicity. It was done all over the country simultaneously and we, of course, had publicity in the New England papers, in the newspapers. They were very avid to get it. At this time radio didn't count as a media. There was some radio but nobody had radio sets, or very few did. Our first project was to set up regional headquarters. We had volunteers. Paul Sachs suggested that his assistants at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum might, I mean at the Fogg Museum, might help and so they sent over two people. these two were intended to be sort of office boys at the time but later turned out to be much more useful than that. They were, I think, both taking his museum course, famous museum course. One was James Clout, the other was Henry McIllhenny. Jim was later, as you know, because the director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Boston. Wasn't that the title of it?

WW: I don't remember. It's now of course the Institute of Contemporary Art.

JH: Right; and Clout has retired.

WW: It was originally the Boston chapter of the Museum of Modern Art of New York.

JH: Something of this kind. Henry McIllhenny later became Curator of the Decorative Arts at the Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia Art Museum, actually. So we also had several women whose identity I've forgotten who volunteered all the time. They were Junior Leaguers, possibly, to guide artists in. And we were staggered at the number of artists who were there to sign up. It turned out after we got our lists that there were certain surprise areas included, like the wood carvers. McKesson-Robbins used to be furniture makers of Boston which had a great number of wood carvers, and wood carving on furniture had gone out of style so that the whole union of wood carvers in boston were without work. Everyone of them came in ; I think there were thirty-eight of them at the time.

WW: I beg your pardon, Mr. Hatch, did you say ?

JH: McKesson-Robbins. Irving and McKesson-Robbins of course being the drug firm. I'm apologetic. If we have many more slips like that, don't be surprised. Now to go on with our project. After we had all the registrations during the first week, the next problem was to put the artists to work. I was given considerable latitude as the director and I took the position that we would put no artist to work until we got a project for him. This seemed to me important because there were no funds available for materials and artists were originally supposed to pay for their own materials. This struck me as wrong. So we planned to have communities to ask us for the projects. Libraries, if they wanted a project, we would say, " Have you got the money to pay for the canvas and for the paints for these artists?" and so on. And so throughout New England we carried on this policy of not having the artists pay for their materials, but having whoever received the project request an artist and then pay for the artists materials. I think they was almost unique to New England. And I with the uniqueness in New England, unique in the whole project. It made a lot of difference later, in New York, for example, they put an enormous number of painter of easel pictures, landscapes and so on . . .

WW: Easel painters?

JH: Easel painters, right, to work, ending eventually with a great quantity of pictures for which they had to find homes for and we in New England knew exactly where everything was going at the time when it was painted during this first government art project, the PWAP. This policy I might add, did not carry on to the later time when materials were finally provided for under the federal Works Progress Administration. Works Progress being an attempt to show that they were tapering it off, which probably may not have been so, but that was the idea behind it. We were fortunate in Massachusetts to have a man named Brannon. He was a younger man who had vision as to what might be done and he gave full support to the project. Mr. Carter was distressed but he inroads made on the Gardner the peace and quiet of the Gardner Museum, and wanted to get it out as fast as he could. We finally got headquarters for the project down in the center part of Boston. Brannon I should note when I said head of the project, he was a government appointee, a younger man, a deserving Democrat maybe, who was in charge of the administration of government relief projects.. His part with PWAP, of course, was small , but with the latter WPA art project in Massachusetts undoubtedly had some knowledge, which if he could be found today would probably be a useful contribution there, too. The place to which we moved was called Young's Hotel. One of the reasons that we wanted to move out from the Gardner Museum, aside from the loss of peace and quiet, was that the government appointed for each of these regions through the country, a political hanger-on, I guess that's the best terminology, who would do the paper work. And we had a cigar chewing, chomping man who was our red tape man. He had nothing to say about the artists, but he certainly did get in our way as far as the red tape was concerned, and we were certainly pleased to have him out of the museum building because of his cigar chomping and stogie smoking propensities. he was a typical ward heeler, I guess, of that era. I don't remember his name. This had a point, however, because I remember later going down and seeing my helper at that time, a person named Molly Parker, was volunteer secretary in the office, and eventually able to run the office when we had it at Young's Hotel. Which made it possible for me to spend a little more time as assistant director of the Gardner Museum. Once I used to go down and check the office at regional to see how it was getting along. Once I found her using a disinfectant on the telephone, or a spray of some kind, because of this cigar chomping man and every morning she used to clean the telephone to get it back to normal again. This background gives some idea of the organizational set-up of our project. Now some comment on the individual workers might be of interest, also of my later times going around throughout the New England area to check up on what different artists were doing. As I've indicated, we didn't give any artist a job until we found a sponsoring body for it so that we found Elizabeth Jones, for example, did a library in Medford. The Medford people paid for the murals .

WW: Was she Elizabeth Arhalt (?)?

JH: I believe so. We had, I found to my distress, I think that's the right word, more artists down in Provincetown than we could possibly keep busy on needed projects, and so we kept them all waiting until we could find them something to so. One day a science teacher from a high school on the Cape came in to see me with some sketches of murals that he thought would be nice for science in his high school. These seemed to be just right for Carl Knaths, who had signed up as needing work. Knaths as you know, does abstract realism, fisher folk, and so on, and it seemed to me this would be possible. With difficulty we got these sketches from the young science teacher and sent them on down to Knaths to ask if he would do it. He was quite excited and he went to work with a will, making murals, showing a singer in cross section with a larynx showing, a few things of this kind, musical bars, and so on, all of which made up a delightful abstract mural. It became one of the more worthwhile projects that we ever did. In Provincetown there was a possibility of getting murals for the town hall. Ross Moffatt was an artist of Provincetown who had signed up for it and Ross had some small drawings, or rather small oil sketches. They were only about eight by ten inches, I should guess, but solidly made and excellent and it seemed to me he might be good to do a mural in the town hall. So it was that Ross did the murals under the PWAP now in the town hall. These were paid for, that is the canvas for them was paid for by the town. We had several other artists, younger men I think helping him at that tim, also on payroll. Edwin Dickinson was another in Provincetown whom we tried to find a project for and he and Knaths both ended up in painting pictures: This is another exception which we had to give way to.

WW: You mean pictures as opposed to murals?

JH: Yes, pictures. These were easel pictures, I think is the term we used before. One of the people we had on our project was Oscar Bluemner. Bluemner was probably more trouble than all the rest of the artists together. I one day got a telegram from Ned Bruce in Washington, saying "Look up Bluemner," but nothing else. So we searched around and found in South Braintree an artist who had signed up and it was Oscar Bluemner. We put him to work painting pictures. He painted just -- he was a very slow painter, but painted -- got out his little sketches and made a larger thing with painstaking care. I think he did a total of two during the time he was on the project. One of these is delightful because it is called "Roosevelt Laundry." I don't know where this picture is today, I would like to find it. I fortunately have a photograph of it somewhere as I have collected a lot of Bluemner material. This picture of Bluemner's showed a laundry with a sign over the door saying, " The Roosevelt Laundry," and on the side it says, "We clean up the nation's spoiled business," and a sign above it in illumination in reds and yellow, old neon signs, was the NRA eagle. It was a very delightful and contemporary concept fitting the whole program. He did another, I think the only other one he did during the PWAP days, was one of a factory in Lynn. Carl Knaths' picture of clam diggers and one of Dickinson's both ended up, or were assigned, to the Springfield Art Museum. They were last I heard in the basement there. I don't know where they are today. One of the artist we had from the Cape was a man named Vernon Smith. I fail to remember the kind of pictures he did for us, but he did a number: he did far too many and the problem of finding homes for them was difficult. But we solved this by my persuading the Chairman of the Art Department of the Public Schools in boston that it would be a good idea to set up a museum within the public school system which they could send out to the schools. These materials the artists would organize under trends. "How to paint a picture;" "How to carve a piece of wood;" or other things of this kind.

WW: As traveling . . .

JH: As traveling units to go out to all the schools from the central headquarters. This idea of course is one that is in use at the Victoria and Albert Museum, which has a completely separate museum which the public never sees but which goes on tours throughout the schools of England. There is also a large museum in St. Louis, Missouri, and has been for many, many years, which is a school built entirely with this idea in mind of exhibits and teaching materials that go around to the schools from this central point.

WW: In the federal project the artists themselves took the things around. Is that it?

JH: No. In this case the schools sis. The school headquarters started to form a museum within the school system under the administration of the central office. Through this we ingeniously put to work all thirty-six or thirty-eight members of the wood carvers union mentioned earlier that were out of work. We gave they were all manually competent and we put them to work doing this kind of thing. Another device we worked out was with a man named Aripoff, who is now dead. I think he had a memorial show at the boston Public library a few years ago. He was a very competent Russian who had married a girl from New England and they had come back with the Depression to the Boston area and he was lived in Cambridge at one time, yes, and then later outside of Cambridge in Revere, or some place like that. Aripoff at the time I knew him lived down on Scully Square and he was put to work making a watercolor series of views of Boston. He wanted to paint oils, but the problem was that every time he started in with the canvas he would change what he had already put down. So it seemed to me as a competent watercolor painter he might do one watercolor after another and leave a documentary record behind which would be of value. I believe the Public Schools of Boston now has this Aripoff series. They were perfectly fascinating as a series of watercolors. One day he came in . . . let me finish this and then you ask the question . . . one day he came into the office to ask if he couldn't change from watercolors to oil, and I said, "Well, now why?" and he said "Well, as I paint my watercolors my water freezes and If I paint oils it won't happen." so We suggest he put glycerine in his water as to avoid this, as an antifreeze. I don't know what this has done to the permanence of the materials, but he series would certainly be worth looking at today.

WW: All the more I wanted to ask you, does that mean that the collection of those views of Boston are now in one school on permanent display or . . .

JH: I don't know whether they're in one school or whether they are with the headquarters, or whether tone superintendent of the schools has them in his own office as decoration. They were put in the custody of the Public Schools Department.

WW: In the old State House in the Bostonian Society . . .

JH: Yes. They might make a valuable record of Boston at some time. Gloucester wanted a documentary series of painters. There were a number of artists up at Gloucester and the problem was also to put the artists to work there. The library in Gloucester which is an old house, an eighteenth century Colonial house, had an idea they wanted to have murals over the mantel pieces, and this seemed to me a horrid idea, but I got hold of a friend of mine who was, I think, very active and responsible for the Historic American Building Survey being so successful in the Boston area. His name was Joe Chandler, J.E. Chandler, an older architect who had made a study personally of all the older buildings in the Boston area and like Frank Chutto Brown who was also with the first Public Building Survey, in making this study was ready for the project when it came that way. I got Joe Chandler to go up with me to see the library in Gloucester and it seemed the wrong thing to put a mural in the center of those old Colonial Panels. But we sold the idea to the Board of Trustees of making wall paper in the hallways running up the stairs, and they were equally enthusiastic over this idea. So it was that we got one of the artists, if not two of them, this I'm not clear on, to paint these murals in the stair hallway of the library, and save the old building . I haven't been back to see that project since. Someday I would like to.

WW: I'm not quite clear about the way you use the phrase "wall paper" there.

JH: This is like French landscape paper. Which would then, in design, would run up the stairs and you , it would logically move itself from one level to the secondary level and you would see it at any point and it would still be of interest. It was a landscape with the harbor of Gloucester on one side of the hall and the opposite hillside showing ont he stairway side of the hall. As we went around, let's see, what other projects we did? We had problems of no artist -- no work. I mean, no project, no artist to work. We had to go around and encourage different outlying areas to build up projects. We found in Manchester, New Hampshire, several people, John Lilly, the landscape painter, now dead, and a national academician, was one of those we put on the project as a painter. Another man was a man named Carl Ramsay who wanted to be put on as a painter and he, I found, was a specialist in orchids who with the Depression had come to live in Dorset, Vermont, in a little shack on the property of his mother-in-law. They were really down on their uppers. He really had a thorough knowledge of orchids and so I got him to make a series of documentary pictures of orchids; in Vermont and then later in the Eastern part of the United States.

WW: Had he grown the orchids?

JH: Some of them he was growing himself and then from this, in time he built up quite a little native place with orchids. He was largely growing corn, however, so as to be able to feed his family, because it's hard for us to remember how hard up everybody was in those days!

WW: A graphic picture of the Depression.

JH: The youngest age on the project was supposed to be eighteen, that is, people were supposed to be at maturity, voting age, but one day into the office came two young fellows with beautiful drawings and this was when the office was still at the Gardner Museum. Polly Parker came downstairs to see me to show me the drawings of these young fellows which she thought were quite remarkable. I agreed. And they were -- these two fellows were unfortunately both seventeen years of age and too young for the project. One of them was Jack Levine and the other one was Hyman Bloom. Both now are well known, but at that time they had booth since the age of twelve, been working under private instructors with the aid of who lived in Cambridge and was a patron of the arts. As you know, he started the Ross color system which is at the Fogg Museum, of which there are a great many plates, and I think all art students there still have to study them, don't they?

WW: I'm not sure.

JH: In any case, these two young fellows he had been training there since they were twelve. So this meant for five years they had been drawing under this artist in Boston and when they came and showed us these drawings, they were really beautiful and it seem to bad not to put them to work on the project especially when we found that both their families were really destitute. So, despite the fact that they were under eighteen, and over the strong objections of our red tape man from the government, we put both of them on the payroll and this was the beginning of Jack Levine's painting in oils: both of them we gave their first chance to paint oils. Somewhere in the files I recently turned up a letter from Jack Levine. It's in a very immature hand, dated May 21 of 1934 from 168 Dartmouth Street, in which he thanked me for a photo of a Titan. This is the great Europa in the Gardner Museum and he was thrilled with this photograph. He says in the letter it was certainly a wonderful thing to have. I remember once he also came into the office and Molly Parker, who had a rose or some flower on the desk, impulsively gave it to him and he burst into tears as he had never had anything offered to him this way before. He, of course, today is well off. He's one of the artists, I hear, who is having a hard time finding ways to invest his money and to keep from paying too much income tax! This is interesting, however, what has happened to the these artists who were on that project. There were a number of artists in Maine whose names I don't remember. Alexander Bower, I've mentioned, was the administrator of the project in that area and was at the Swear Museum in Portland. He was himself and academician, as you remember. Another area that was quite active in our earliest period was that around New Have. At that time Tubby Sizer, Theodore Sizer, was the head and in order to show his appreciation he got his artist working under Bancel LaFarge, the son of John LaFarge. Bancel was a very able painter, painter of murals . His son Tom also is a splendid painter. Bancel was the father of the present architect Bancel in New York City. Bancel senior was painting murals in the public library, the children's room of the public library, in New Haven and there were two or three other artists who Sizer go to work with him. I find a letter which is signed by three of them: John Balatour, a well-known painter today, of course, Tome Folds, who went from there to head the Art Department at Exeter Academy and then out to Northwestern University and now .

WW: In Cleveland?

JH: No, outside of Chicago and now he is Dean of Education at the Metropolitan Museum. The third person on this is Francis Coiro, who's been lost to me anyway and may be somebody of importance today. I went down to New Haven to visit the project. I hade to take time off from the Gardner Museum to do this, and Sizer was quite eager for me not only to see the work but to praise it and to be quoted in the local papers to show what splendid work they'd been doing. This of course wasn't too difficult to do because of the quality of the work and the nature of the men whom they had doing it.It was a splendid opportunity. Incidentally, this began the lifelong friendship I have had with the LaFarge family, whom I knew in another direction. And Bancel LaFarge's son Tom later became my best man. I might also say here parenthetically I think it ought to be in the Archives, if not on this tape, that Tome LaFarge later did a mural for the New London Post Office that I think is one of the best jobs done on that project, on the post office project. This is one of whaling and he was quite proud of his sketches, so they were good and he took them to New Bedford to show them proudly tot he Old Salts in there and they took him completely to pieces, nautically. He was crestfallen, but he came back and redid the whole thing. He studied whaling ships inside, and out and those painting probably will be among those of day after tomorrow, that is, fifty years from now, it'll be one of the great contributions of the post office paintings. There were a lot of wonderful paintings done at that time. I could go into that filed, but I think I'll stay with our Public Works of Art Project on this particular recording. I was relatively new in New England. I had been there only about six months as I have earlier indicated. When my vacation time came I had a month, I got and old automobile and went around New England to visit different projects that were going on. I went over to see how Ramsay and John Lilly were doing in Manchester, New Hampshire. I found Lilly very proud of the work of his grandson, John Lilly Davis, who had been painting with his grandfather from the age of five, and from the five to the age of eight grandfather had these pictures his son had been doing. They were first plain daubs and later they were extremely good in getting the effect of grandpa's work. They were, of course, done without draftsmanship, but they were overall effect was quite splendid. Grandfather had promised his grandson a horse when he got enough money to buy a saddle, fifty dollars was the amount involved. I paid that amount or more to get a series of young John Lilly Davis's pictures, from the age of five tot he age of eight. They show what could be done by a young fellow at that age. They're truly remarkable.

WW: Do you still have those?

JH: Yes, I still have those as a documented group. I was interested in seeing what happened later to young John Lilly Davis and I found that when he got into his teens he was no longer interested in painting, but was then playing baseball and football and things of this kind and what he's doing now, I haven't any idea. He's probably a farmer up in that general part of the world. But it was a sidelight and the sort of thing that can develop from a government project. I should mention also that on this tour I went up to St. Johnsberry that wanted a mural. I've forgotten the name of the artists they wanted to have do them. I was a little bit started at the place where they wanted to plan them and also, noting the competence of the artist, a woman, it seemed to me she might do some children's stories or something of that kind. I discovered in the library at the St. Johnsberry Athenaeum an addition, a children's addition, and it seemed that that would be a better place to put any paintings of this kind. It was not too much work to persuade them to let her paint some pictures in the library, in the new library, rather children's library extension on the old building.

WW: What was her name?

JH: I regret that give it to you off hand. That can be found by writing to the St. Johnsberry Athenaeum. There's another sidelight to this. A little librarian, a Miss Fairbanks, at that time asked me what relation I might have been to John Davis Hatch the architect of the building, and with astonishment I said he was my grandfather, not knowing that he had done this building. She said, "would you like to see the drawings of the building?" I said, "Well, certainly." The building, it turned out, was built in 1872 I think and they had the original architects drawings with alternate Mansard roof renderings on them and the little art gallery has all it original pictures still in it. It is, I think, probably the oldest standing art gallery in the country now with its original condition and pictures. It's a fascinating little building; but this was aside from me and kind of fun to have discovered.

WW: A deserved reward.

JH: Yes, that came back into my life in a different way at a later time when they wanted to alter it, and they wrote to somebody in Washington, who in turn referred them to me in Albany. I went up to make observations of the building and found they just didn't know how to close the ventilators in the building and this was the reason why it was getting cold in the winter. The main thing was that we saved the old building and the art gallery remained pretty much as it was originally designed. I haven't said very much about the Connecticut project except of the work done in New Haven. It became quite a chore for those of us who were professionally employed to carry on with the work and so we got a volunteer in Hartford, Paul Cooley, who was a volunteer assistant to A. E. Austin who was then the Director of the Wadsworth Athenaeum. And Cooley, as an unpaid volunteer, was persuaded to take on the responsibility of the .

WW: How large an area was this?

JH: That covered, I should say, most of Connecticut except the immediate New Haven region which Sizer himself took care of. I think technically Cooley became in title the director of the Connecticut unit of the project. I went down one day when . It was in mid-winter, I think it was in March, and we there was snow on the road leading from Kent over to Torrington and we had a hard time getting up the hill and had to go the long way around through Canaan to get back up that hill. But we visited several artists over there but the only artist that I remember, unfortunately, of that group was I don't even remember his name, a sculptor who we were going to get to do sign posts for the town of Kent. The town of Kent was willing to pay for these signs and we were going to get this man to make a little carved finals to go on the tops of the posts. Regrettably, I don't remember his name and I haven't seen the posts since they may have been executed. How many there were, though, I wouldn't guess. The finial was to be a seated squirrel, I believe. Sanford Ross was an excellent watercolor painter; who Paul Cooley had as one of his artists. he's the only other name I remember in Massachusetts, I mean, in Connecticut. There are two or three other names possibly which should be mentioned in connection with the New England group; Carroll Bill, who did watercolors, was one of the project artists and did a watercolor series which are also now with the public schools in boston. In Connecticut we also had Sodaberg doing some works, and in the Gloucester area we had a man named Lester Stevens. And Lester Stevens may have been the painter who did the mural, the wall paper, landscape wall paper for the library there. That's only a guess and it should certainly be checked.

WW: W. Lester Stevens, I believe.

JH: Sounds right. This man kept after me for a long time and he propositioned me to be his artist -- art manager. I had a number of artists who wanted me to be their manager, but he was the most persistent of all of them. I also had a number of artists who wanted to do my portrait. The only one I gave way to was my friend Aripoff, who came to my apartment in Boston, then on Myrtle Street, and did a portrait. It has since been destroyed. I think it was painted over and so

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. . . in touch with, who might well present a little added facet to this overall knowledge. It's possible, too, that both Krout and McIllhenny could likewise be of assistance.

WW: May I ask about the whereabouts of that photographic record that you made?

JH: I haven't any idea what happened to it, because I know that two copies were made of it, one put with the project in Washington, and I would guess that they may be in the Library of Congress. It would also be like me to have had another copy placed locally in Boston. study may turn them up at the Boston Public Library, or some other place of that kind.

So much for PWAP. I think I might add a little bit of sidelight on the government art projects because of my later experiences in Washington, D.C. After two years as Assistant Director of the Gardner Museum I went with Carnegie Corporation to make a study on the problems of traveling exhibitions. During this period I was in and out of Washington a great deal and saw both the office in Washington under Ned Bruce and subsequently, the greater order which was attained because of the changes in administration from one era to another, each required far greater staff of secretarial help than the previous ones.

WW: Was that under a new directorship?

JH: Holger Cahill was the final director, and by that time they had moved with drama and dance under the government projects into the old Reid mansion in Washington, D.C. During the time . . .

WW: You spoke of having two years in Boston and then in 1936 .

JH: This would be '35, '36. Going back to the PWAP period. At one time they invited all the directors and chairmen to Washington, D.C. for a meeting. Robert, who was assistant in the Treasury, I believe, gave a whale of a cocktail party at the Mayflower Hotel for the whole group. We also traipsed through the White House. I think Mrs. Roosevelt received us at that time, and Mrs. Morgenthau. Sometime in this period also I recall arriving at

Ned Bruce's office and seeing on one side of his desk a pile probably two and a half feet high of unanswered correspondence. He was looking cheerfully from behind it all, beaming from ear to ear and saying this is just part of a problem that we have to deal with. He had as one of his volunteer assistants in that day an artist named Olin Dows. Olin Dows is now in Washington and he certainly should be one with who the Archives of America Art should get in touch with to get what reminiscences he might provide. They should be of great value. He, as you know, is also an artist in his own right. He was very close to Ned Bruce and, I was, very fond of him. In later years, before Bruce died, he had a stroke which came on as a result of this terrific undertaking, in that period after his stroke, he was painting in Peru, Vermont, and Olin Dows was with him at the time. Olin also used to go with him when he was up in a summer cottage in the Blue Ridge near Washington, D.C. I spent at least two nights there with them during that period. Bruce was very cheerful, saw everybody. He decided the project should go further than just this first PWAP and one day he told me with enthusiasm of a new idea he had of getting the government to put into all contracts that a percentage of every contract should go into the decoration, should be available if there was a surplus for the decoration of the building. This was the beginning of the large expansion of new post offices and all murals subsequently grew from that project. Olin Dows was quite active with that phase of the work.

WW: What was that called, that particular branch?

JH: I don't remember. It was under the Treasury Department.

WW: That's the way it is specified, isn't it?

JH: It was under the Treasury Department. This was based entirely on competition and competence. There was some reluctance, I should add, under the PWAP, but very, very little, of artists going on the project, because at first it seemed like, as if they were going on relief and there was logical hesitancy for many to go on the project and thereby show they were in need. The real need was so great, however, that this was overcome very quickly. One of the tragedies of this attitude, however, on the project that I knew of was in Manchester, New Hampshire, with George De Forest Brush, who then was in his early eighties, a wonderful painter of the old school, who had all his life wanted to paint a mural. We arranged the project there in Manchester to have a great mural in the public high school. It was, as I recall, to be seventy-fife feet long. We arranged, too, because he was elderly, to have a series of artists working with him on it. The school system was going to pay for the materials. And just as the project seemed to be all rounded out his family, the artist's family, thought because of the stature he had in American painting it would suggest that he was on relief and it was wrong for him to accept such government help. So the whole project was quashed after all the work in trying to get it organized.

WW: A great loss.

JH: It was a great loss. Gifford Beal later once told me that every artist always hope someday to do a mural painting and I guess George De Forest Brush had always hoped to do a mural painting and this was to be late in life, of course, his hope. Whether it would have been possible to have brought it off or not I don't know. but it would have been certainly worth a try.

WW: The whole scheme would have been such a perfect illustration of the working project.

JH: The Treasury project of government murals in post offices and in the government buildings in Washington, D.C. had several sides to it. Many of the artists, Ben Shaghn, for example, Curry, John Steuart Curry, and I could name many others, all painted murals. It gave all these artists a chance to overcome that frustration of wanting to do a mural. I was on a jury for a mural in a post office near Syracuse later, and Grandma Moses, among others, was one of those who entered that competition. I wanted those sketches: somebody else got them. I don't know where they went to. We didn't give the award to Grandma Moses because we didn't feel that her sketches, which were charming, would blow up into a mural size, and be adequate for a mural. But it would have been a charming thing.

WW: She wasn't so very old at that time?

JH: Oh yes. She was in her late seventies if not her eighties already at that point. I might add parenthetically I once saw her -- because I was in Albany I once saw her over in her house and she at that time was sending pictures to a dentist in New York. She was then well known, and in the course of the visit if I'd like to see her pictures. It turned out that her arrangement with the dealer, and I put this in here not on PWAP, but as an added record that should be kept, was that she would send him all his pictures and put her price on them. He doubled the price and sent back to her the pictures he didn't think were saleable. She had a whole room in her house of these returned pictures. These were "green pictures," because her green pictures he didn't' think were saleable. Snow pictures were. I've often wondered what's happened to her green pictures.

WW: They certainly would be saleable now.

JH: Right. She said she had a contractual agreement with him that she would never sell to anyone. Then she added with a glint in her eye, "But he didn't say I couldn't give them away." She had given to a number of her friends in that area, farmer friends, and so on, these green pictures. Someday somebody will find all of these. It will be a great study for a Ph.D thesis, I guess.

Coming back to those government Treasury jobs, I recall John Steuart Curry working on the Justice Department murals. He, to his great credit, sent in sketch after sketch and they were rejected one after another. He finally had done, if I recall correctly, either one hundred and eight or one hundred and twelve sketches before he was able to do one that the people in Washington thought right.

WW: What was this? Subject matter or technique or . . .

JH: Composition I think chiefly, as well as subject matter.

WW: Curry was never controversial . . .

JH: Maybe that was part of the trouble. Maybe, this was the Justice Department and it had to be something to do with justice. The final version was very effective. I became greatly interested in his drawings as a result of this and that was one of the earlier interests that I had in collecting drawings, and thereby hangs another tale.

On other name comes to mind that's Ed Rowan, who with Olin Dows was very close to Central Headquarters under the first period when Ned Bruce personally carried a great deal of the load ont he PWAP. I don't know whether Rowan is still living. He was an enthusiastic young director at one time of the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, museum. He became, I think, assistant to Fred Whiting as head of the American Federation of Arts and then from there in turn went into this government phase of the work, certainly if he could be found I think he would add something as well. To add a bit more on this tape. What I've just recorded, or rather recorded up to the present is all my memory of the PWAP. I find in looking quickly through some letters here that bruce was head of the Advisory Committee of the Treasury of the Fine Arts, and also that the PWAP lasted for three months only and on April 28 ended officially. I apparently wrote Carl Knaths a letter in June in answer to one that he wrote me asking what had happened to his sketches for the Falmouth high school. And this letter, very luckily, indicates just what did happen to the PWAP project. Because apparently it moved into state organizations a s I indicated earlier and became Federal Emergency Relief Administration under the separate states, and that the Emergency Relief was essentially a state organization working in communities with a population of five thousand and up. And under their constitution we couldn't inaugurate any projects employing people in the smaller communities, such as Provincetown. This letter I think gives a direction on that. It may not be entirely accurate, but it certainly gives the impression of what those of us working in the field thought was the answer. I would like to say more about Knaths because las summer (1963) my wife and I took two weeks off and went around to visit the Cape, which I hadn't been back to since the Boston days. We looked up Carl Knaths. He is still painting away. He is affluent, I guess that's the word, the way to put it today. He has since been teaching in Washington with Duncan Phillips at the Phillips Memorial Gallery and his pupils apparently have been trying to get him to make a book on his ideas. This is not easy as his ideas are not the kind that get themselves on paper readily. One of his students has slaved over making a book out of his notes in class, very much as the Robert Henri book was, I assume, but the book has neither tail nor head and as brought together would be very difficult to make something out of. She came up to New Hampshire later last summer to see if I couldn't make some concrete suggestions as to how to put it together. It would be from my point of view, very difficult, and I had to be discouraging about it. We also found Vernon Smith who since PWAP days I had lost track of and except for having once seen a very nice or handsome overmantel painting in the home of Howard Rubindall, Reverend Howard Rubindall, who was then head master of Northfield schools. He now is president of Dickinson College and I recognized this painting as Vernon Smith's and they were equally delighted that I should know him. He had been a friend of theirs as well. He now, or since the project days, has had a small gallery and craft shop on the Cape and is now grandfather and a fairly respectable citizen living a nevertheless very informal life as one might expect an artist in a rural area to do. He has a hide-a-way down by a little lake where he flees from the world and reality. Otherwise he is a leading citizen of that particular community. Ned Bruce I should say one more thing about. I . . . as I've indicated . . . had known him because we were both form San Francisco. I didn't know him in his San Francisco days, but that brought us somehow together. When I was in New York in the '30's, middle '30's, I think I was then with the Carnegie Corporation, George Grosz first came to this country and Bruce asked me to come in for supper informally, as he wanted me to meet an artist who had just come to this country and it was Grosz. He also had Norman, the art dealer there. Norman had actually been responsible for Grosz coming here. I'll never forget that hot July day and the joy on Norman's face, he was very joyous person anyway, planting both hands ont he table, with fork in one and knife in the other and smacking his lips and saying, "I always enjoy coming to Mr. Bruce's house because I know I'll get a good dinner." Regrettably I don't remember much of George Grosz except that he was very quiet. This was quite logical at that particular time, having just escaped, I guess, from the Nazi regime. When speaking of Carl Knaths I should have said last summer I spent a lot of time trying to find his murals, finally discovered that they had been taken down when the high school had been made over into a new building and they are, I believe, now stored in the firehouse in Falmouth. Anybody wanting to see them will have to dig them out from there.

WW: Were they painted on canvas?

JH: All the murals that were done while I was on the project were done on canvas so they could be removed.

WW: As a matter of principle?

JH: As a matter of principle. Now on this, in this connection I think there may be an exception with the murals painted as wallpaper landscape in Gloucester house, as it would have been fairly expensive to have gotten canvas to cover that whole area.

WW: To cut it just right would have been tricky.

JH: That of course could be physically done, but whether they were willing to spend that amount of money to have a canvas done I would be skeptical. Carroll Bill, as an artist, lived in a little house in Weymouth, a charming little colonial house and he and his wife who use to make rugs, lived there quietly. He painted watercolors rather successfully afterwards and they have an architectural quality about them, at least in their handling. I have seen pictures that he's done at more recent times and they still have the same fine watercolor quality, nice color, good composition, and carefully delineated, which were characteristics of his earlier work. Of Oscar Bluemner I could tell you a great deal, and I think maybe we might profitably do so on some of this tape. But before I do that let me also introduce the idea of drawings. One of the sidelights of my interests in this period came up due to my friendship which had developed with Charles Sawyer, Charles H. Sawyer, who then was director of the Addison Gallery of American Art in Andover, later became director at Worcester and then headed the art department at Yale. Now is head of the museum at the University of Michigan. While he was at Andover he got from Macbeth galleries a number of American drawings. These were a new idea and they all had some from the Rosenthal collection, Albert Rosenthal, that is and Macbeth had them. I think Mr. Robert McIntyre, who was with Macbeth, and a cousin were on the committee of the Addison Gallery. Possibly due to his influence some of these drawings were there. It was the first time I'd seen so many drawings by early American artists and I was terribly excited about them. The Gallery thought maybe to buy a great number of them. In fact, said that I would buy them and hold them until the Gallery felt they could afford them if they wanted to have them. This was the beginning of my what you may say was my more avid or active period of collecting American drawing. While the Gallery did acquire one or two more than they had intended to, possibly due to this extra push of enthusiasm, they didn't acquire anywhere near the number I thought should have been and I later in New York at Macbeth Gallery found the source of supply and started in myself and from that day, and this was 1934, I date my active effort of trying to get a broader picture of American artists and drawings. I had bought a number earlier when I was out in Seattle and subsequently, drawings, but I hadn't gone at them as a serious thing.

I recall once when I was director of the museum in seattle having a number of artists at my house, including Dudly Pratt, who then was head of the sculpture department at the University of Washington. We were discussing one of the Picasso etchings which I had just bought, one of a whole group. You probably remember that large etching. I should still have it but instead I have given it away as I have too many things, as it now is of high value. It was a beautiful etching, however, and the finest, I thought, in that series, and so I had splurged and bought it as a young museum director. We were discussing this etching and collecting in general and Dudley Pratt said that if he were collecting he would collect textiles because he could fold them all and put them in a suitcase and take them anywhere and then if he had only boxes he could spread the out and look reasonably respectable. This hit me as a wonderful idea. I had two or three paintings at this time and I could see that I was really going to get into trouble if I collected paintings. And so it was I decided at that particular time that I would thereafter collect artists drawings rather than artists paintings. I had in my house one of Mark Tobey's and, let's see, who else? Kenneth Callahan, Tomita, Emily Carr, F.H. Farley, and so on. A number of these I gave tot he Seattle Museum when I left Seattle and went off to Europe and the oh, about 1930. I guess this was from my earlier mention, if I did mention a date in connection with this discussion, it had to ge obviously 1929, 1930.

When I was with the Carnegie Corporation for two years, 1935 and 1936, which is where I went from Gardner Museum on the recommendation of a committee which Francis Taylor headed on the study of traveling exhibitions and its problems. I went all over the country and then ended with an office in New York City. At that point I spent a great deal of time studying sources for American artists drawings and during the hunt for a solution of traveling exhibitions I traveled from Washington, D.C. to Bangor, Maine, barnstorming second hand book shops, antique stores, and so on, looking wherever I could for American Drawings, that is, drawings by past American Artists. In those days they were quite inexpensive and I used to buy anything I could find that was $15. It was perfectly amazing how many drawings one could pick up in those days. The result was that I managed over an avid period of activity to acquire one hundred fifty or more. Also during this time I bought from New York dealers: Kraushaar, Maynard Walker, from Macbeth,a nd so on and contemporary artists as well. During this time, to give one an idea of how things were, I remember going deeper than I ever had before and buying two Winslow Homers for two hundred and fifty dollars for the two of them; this is from Maynard Walker, who never sees me now but what he asks if I won't let him have them back again.

WW: You could sell them for a great deal today.

JH: I've never gone into that because I haven't been willing to do this, but I've made it a practice of acquiring drawings and of these drawings that Albert Rosenthal had that I mentioned there was a great many which I acquired and then after, he apparently, Albert Rosenthal, bought the residuary of the studio of Eastman Johnson, who also had in turn bought the residuary of the studio of Emanuel Leutza and Rosenthal, who was an excellent lithographer and an artist, collected drawings himself, and gave a great many illustrator's drawings, and I think works of other artists as well, I think say two, three, four hundred of them, to the Free Library in Philadelphia nd he still had many on hand. Now by this time, this was in the early thirties, he was an older man and was seeking to dispose of them. From Macbeth Gallery Peg Sullivan, who worked for Macbeth, moved to the newly formed A.A.A., Associated American Artists, Gallery, and when she moved there she also took the old master, if we can call them that now, the older American artists', drawings that still belonged to Rosenthal. There I continued to by more. Bart Hayes, who later succeeded Sawyer as Director of the Addison Gallery, also bought some and I now think that these drawings in different parts of the country where they have been sold from the A.A.A. gallery. This was sort of a sideline as they, as you know, went into contemporary artists chiefly. Around 1936, '37, I guess probably '36, Cuncan Phillips was adding a new gallery into his building in Washington, D.C. his old residence, and this was the basement. It was to be for prints and Mrs. Phillips was in charge of it, Marjorie Phillips, and I urged them, I knew them well, to have drawings also as well as prints in this downstairs gallery. And so they asked me if I wouldn't have an exhibit of my own collection of drawings there. And this is the first exhibit of American drawings of my collection of them, that was held, maybe one of the first held in the country, for that matter. They got out a very nice little catalogue with a Winslow Hommer on the front of it. This was not one of those that was sold by Maynard Walker, but another, a watercolor which because it has pencil on it I have always maintained is a drawing. I got this, I might add, from Macbeth, who got it in turn from Sweepings of or from the things left over at the Prospect studio of Winslow Homer. This one of the boys ont he beach is a charming little one and related to the engraving of the subject of the boys picking up chips which we find in one of the wood blocks which is in Harper's, I think. Of this I'm not sure. From the exhibit at Duncan Phillips Gallery, which for the first time let me see all my drawings together, I was really fascinated to find that I did have a collection! I was asked by the American Federation of Arts if I would circuit them through the country and I did this. They were all put under glass and sent around the country. They toured for two years and then we toured another collection which were the cast offs, the ones that weren't quite so good as the first ones. On these cast offs there is another story which I'll tell. The first group, however, after two years I withdrew and then they were sent for a third showing, a third year even, two years after that. So they really did a lot of pioneer work all over the country.

The story I wanted to tell is about my cast off collection. It has something to do with my collecting too, because one night I went to dinner with Louis Ledoux, the great collector of Japanese prints. Ledoux collected a limited number. I think he had two hundred as his limit and he made a practice whenever he got a new print to take one out so he always maintained a balance among his Ukiyo-e school Japanese prints. He would only show so many of them at a night at a sitting, just so many boxes, three, I think, at a time. In any case, we saw boxes of Harunobu, Nasibu, Marnohu. I think we skipped to the late school, Hiroshigi, or Hokusai. I was so impressed with that evening that Iwent home to my apartment not far away and got out all my drawings and didn't go to bed at all that night because I decided I would separate them. I divided them up into my best drawings, and my not so best drawings. This was a the time when they had come back from their national trip. As a result of seeing them this way, I started in with the Ledoux plan, as I shall call it hereafter, of limiting my collection. I've never regretted it, although I've occasionally regretted having been generous and given away some of the ones that I cast off. This is part of my story, however, because I had these leftovers and didn't know what to do with them and this accounted for the secondary exhibition that went around anonymously with the American Federation of Arts. They were offered for sale I might add at, I think, five dollars a piece for anybody who wanted them, and there were in the whole year a circuit of takers and they included drawings by Remington and many other name of importance today. I'm very glad there were no takers because I still have many of those remaining.

Well, not having the courage to really separate my other drawings I moved them into what I called a "study" collection and the study collection got bigger and but any drawing I added always had to go through the ordeal of living with that Caetano drawing I have which came from Dan Fillano Platt and I think is one of his finest drawings and with two Winslow Homers and any drawing that could live with these for a day or two and still be comfortable mo ed into my collection. As a result of this I was able to have a standard and try to limit my top collection to drawings based on the quality of the drawing itself. I've never regretted this, I might add. However, I never had the courage to really part with all those I called my study drawings, although I have given many away at different times, one at a time and it wasn't until I left Norfolk, Virginia, in 1959, that I took a deep breath and gave away nearly two hundred or more to the Norfolk Museum. I gave away another hundred and fifty to the Hampton Institute and I felt a lot better for have done this. Some of those I gave away I still am a little sorry about, but they do make a group, a balanced group, and I'm glad they do. I also went through a period when I thought I shouldn't have more than three of any one artist in my collection and during this time I gave away to the Addison Gallery an Epstein drawing that was quite like that I have and I'd like to have it back, but needless to say, it's there and it's in a good collection. This process of collecting drawings has gone on and I found that the problem of drawings was they're so heavy in matting that you can't carry them around. When I was one day was sick in Norfolk and I think the only time I can remember that way and I decided that I would make up a collection of small drawings. I went to the collection colored papers and out of this grew my "fun" collection. And now I have one hundred little drawings which I call my "fun" collection. This gives the story of American drawings, from Benjamin West right straight on through to Norman Rockwell, of our own time, and they have . . . There are two or three sequences in it of landscape artists of the 19th century that are rather fascinating. There are a group of pen drawings that are also of interest and a fascinating little group by John Q.A. Ward of his contemporary artists. While they were drawing from models in the studio he would draw them so they make a amusing little group. This little collection of one hundred, the fun collection, I used to swap off with the big collection and as I had an exhibit some place I would fill my fun collection. I would pull drawings from one collection to another and put them back into mats and then back again. A few years ago I stopped this and now I have a fixed collection of one hundred little ones and two hundred and fifty big ones, and there they stay. If something is added, something has to go out. A new idea, however, has now come up. Because of having given away to the Archives of American Art, among other places, a number of my little drawings, my fun collection drawings, I may have about decided I might keep all my little ones and put them into a reserve. The hundred at different times, like the recent ones by Ward which I've just found in St. Louis. This is my general background on collecting American Drawings. I might say that I once read somewhere about J.P. Morgan reached a stage in collecting when he collected collections and then he really collecting in a big way. My collection of drawings some way reached that state, too, when I started collecting collections. There was one by a man named Niles who collected them in 1850 and they had a lot of drawings by Bingham and Woodville and others. most of course I've given away except one or two which they kept, maybe wrongly, but it seemed then the right thing to do and I like to live in the upper story of decisions.

WW: May I ask you in that connection, if when you spoke of the Eastman Johnson and Leuza collections, if those were of their own drawings, by the two artists only, or they were collections that they had made of other men's work?

JH: No, they were apparently both. They were collections of other artists drawings, not serious collections, but small collections.

WW: But did they include their own?

JH: It included their own, particularly Eastman Johnson. Eastman Johnson's drawings were all bought by Rosenthal, the whole studio of them. Asa Twitchell, artist of Albany, apparently collected small drawings. They were fascinating little ones. I have many of those now because they were later found by a dealer, now dead, named Michael de Cherbnaon and de Cherbnaon bought this whole lot of Asa Twitchell's drawings and after his death, I acquired them from him, or from his widow. They form a backlog of my fun of the little collection, because they're all little album . . .

WW: . . . was the Leutza . . .

JH: Washington Crossing The Delaware man. It's interesting to see the relation between him and Johnson. Johnson was a younger man who had studied with him in Europe, Dusseldorf, I believe, or Munich.

WW: And Leutza came to this country?

JH: Leutza came to this country subsequently. Now so much for that collection. I mentioned Oscar Bluemner and probably I should put a little bit here about Bluemner. I mentioned that he was more trouble than all the rest of the artists on the project together. He was interested in pure pigment. He collected a great deal of pain in the pure pigment. He liked Chinese cinnabar lacquer red and to such an extent he even grew a row of beans in his garden because he liked the color of the red bean flowers and nobody was allowed to pick them. He grew them for their color only, not for the beans. This was down in his garden at Braintree. He kept methodical notes. I didn't know until he gave me once in Boston a little sketch of his, I didn't know at that time, that this represented one out of over five or six hundred. He kept very methodical notes, very careful notes. He apparently came to this country as an architect in 1891 or '92 with a group of artists who fled from the young Kaiser in Germany at that date. Bluemner came over as a very successful young architect hoping to get jobs in this country, particularly with the World's Fair in Chicago. He entered all kinds of competitions for libraries in Evanston, Illinois, and so on, and among other the Bronx County Courthouse, which competition he won. This was in early 1900's - 1901 or 1902; it could be checked in time. Tammany, however, did him out of it politically and he sued them and this suit went on for about eight years or more, ten years. All during this period form the 1900's till 1911, every weekend he would . He was then working for a small real estate company on Long Island, Windemere I think, he would go out and make sketches ont he weekend and all those he kept. They're a perfectly fascinating development of an artist form the 90's right straight on thru to 1911 or '12.

In 1911 he won his lawsuit and went on what he called his "honeymoon". He went off to Europe and this time his proficiency with crayon he was then using architects rendering crayon, pencil crayons in color and his softness was truly remarkable. He fascinating record of his trip through Europe, a whirlwind drip, I should add. A sketchbook he made, which I later saw, comes back in our story. When I was with the Carnegie Corporation I used to stop in South Braintree whenever I could to see Bluemner. He was a real character and was a lot of fun. During this government art project days, or while I was at the Gardner Museum, I used to have occasional open house for younger students at Harvard in the art department and Bluemner would be included along with them, like Neumann, who had brought him to this country, or vice versa. I think Bluemner had brought Neumann to this county, he liked a good mean, and he always enjoyed coming. So I had Bluemner at the house more than once and in gratitude he gave me this little tiny sketch. Some years later when I came through I found him completely distraught. His mind he thought was going. He had had during his government period when he needed money sensibly, salted away every cent he had and he finally got an exhibit in New York at Marie Harriman's Gallery. This exhibit was really fascinating as he's had many before that either with Nuemann or with Stieglitz. There's a fascinating lot of correspondence with Stieglitz and Bluemner and the Stieglitz correspondence is at the Yale library and I have the other half of it, the Bluemner end. Someday we'll get the two together and make a little book out of this. It's very colorful.

WW: The archives would be . . .

JH: I'm sure. Maybe after it's out into book form as one facet I think it we might consider that. However, Bluemner had this exhibit and on the cover he and had the pictures hanging on the wall of the gallery, all by itself, and then int he middle are a number of characters. All done in silhouette and these characters are all labeled: familiar names like Neumann and Francis Taylor, Juliana Force, and so on, Mrs. Horschild, who was a patron of his, and some others. He also had the remarks they would make on seeing the show and all of them are surprisingly in character, I might say. Francis Taylor's, incidentally, was, "Intelligence counts." Neumann said, "das is love." Aslo heard Mrs. Hofschild saying, " I always said it!" I could keep on going, but it's a perfectly fascinating catalogue in its own right. Well, bluemner went on painting, enlarging his small sketches and one day I saw these and he showed me his notes. He had about five boxes of notes which were methodically filed away and even letters from people and on those letters he had his own comments about his judgements of those people, the people involved now had written the letters. I noticed one of mine included and I always looked forward to the day when I could see that letter and see what he would say on it. Bluemner, on one particular time when I came up through Braintree in the late 30's, was completely distraught. He had had an attack, his eyes were going and he thought he was going mad. he would miss something and then mess up all his records looking for it, then he would destroy records then he'd come to his senses later and really we feeling terrible.

WW: Was he old?

JH: He was, yes. I guess he was in his late seventies. He begged me to take some of his things away and then for the first time I discover these fascinating boxes of little sketches. I took a few things he came out to my car and more things in and he kept putting more things in and first think I knew I had practically the whole production. I took it down to my office in New York not knowing what on earth to do with it, and I thought I'd just sit there waiting until I had further instructions. Meanwhile, I had had a chance to see these little sketches. Then he committed suicide word reached us. Juliana Force called me on the phone and said to find out if he had enough to pay expenses for a funeral, that she would pay for it. It was characteristic of her, I might say. I had been trying to interest different people in his pictures to help him out and I think Duncan Phillips had gotten one or two watercolors; Ned Bruce, who I had mentioned earlier, had gotten a beautiful one of his, etc. But as soon as I heard that he had died I wrote his daughter I had all of these things and asked if I might make a selection of sketches over the year period, taking out sixty or more to show the development of this one man, and she agreed that I might do this. So I had not, I might say I didn't know at that time that he'd left them all to me by will. I mad the selection carefully and I have them today as one of my other collections of about eighty little Bluemner sketches which show the development of an artist form the 1890's right on throughout to 1953. They're really a fascinating series. One of the things that I found among this lot was a sketch book, a beautiful sketch book, perfectly fascinating, showing page after page of strong colors, quick sketches, watercolor sketches taken out of the train window, I was perfectly fascinated. I might say that all Bluemner's notes were always written in a combination of shorthand; brief notes to himself, color notes, ideas he had, and so on, and they were a mixture of not only shorthand but of English and German and they are a terrific job to untangle. It calls for a complete knowledge of both Bluemner, German and, of course, English as well.

WW: Did he speak in that way?

JH: No, no, no. He had quite a think voice and deep, and very intense sharp eyes. Well, I took all these back to his daughter, put them all in the car and took them back. The I found that he had left the five boxes which I hadn't take down, these notes including his letters, to me by will, and his little sketches. He apparently had made little bundles. One little bundle for each of his children and these were ones that he thought they should have and the rest of them were to be mine. This I, of course, didn't know at the time and I have never felt that I had a right to all his production, anyway. Even thought I might find happy homes in museums or something else for them. So they went back to the daughter. Later, after being in storage for years they have now come back on the market and are now being sold a sketch at a time by Graham in New York. Meanwhile, I have this little set. The notes I have because I threatened legally to the daughter to get them. These five padlocked boxes, I went throughout the correspondence in which I had seen my own letter and found it gone. The daughter had apparently gone through the correspondence and pulled out letters she thought had some value. Lord knows where they are today. But I was grateful to at least pull these out. I don't think that many were taken out, but the only one that I'm really sorry about was the one that I wrote him. I'd like to have seen what he said. Well, Bluemner was quite a colorful person. Time will be kind to him as an artist.

WW: Is he represented in any big gallery?

JH: No. His total production I think probably was not more than eighteen or twenty large pictures, and also a fairly large number, may be thirty or so, of painting about fifteen by eighteen, eighteen by twenty-two, something of this kind.

WW: Did the Whitney Museum have some?

JH: Whitney had one or two, yes. She was definitely interested and had bought, as she did with a good number of artists. Bluemner never . . . Bluemner was sure of his importance and he was anxious to have permanent pigments and he ground his own colors for this reason. After he died I sold to several artists his pure pigments. Tom La Farge, for example, who had himself a small corner of cinnabar red, bought all the red paint. He was delighted to get it.

WW: Which he had already mixed?

JH: Yes. Which he had ground and kept himself.

WW: Tubes or . . .

JH: No, no, no. He kept them in dry form. He had his own formula for mixing paint. This formula, by the way, I have all down in the boxes of notes. There's a lifetime work for somebody. In fact, Neumann, when I had an exhibit in Norfold, Virginia of his little sketches to show the we had an exhibit called "Modern American," which included Hartley, and Dove and Bluemner, and so on. We also "Pioneer Moderns," we called it. We also had one show called "The development of a modern" to show with these little sketches, to show Bluemner's , and Neumann came down and gave a lecture and she in Norfolk in order to write this material, or put it together.

WW: A good subject for a biography.

JH: Well, there would be an enormous job for somebody to work on there.

WW: A psychological study.

JH: Certainly on several accounts there might well be. I mentioned his interest in permanent material. He got the best Belgian canvas, the best of everything to be sure they were permanent. He made great studies on the glues that were used to attach his paper to herder surfaces to as to be sure they wouldn't deteriorate. One day I found him in the office, or found he'd gone to the office of William Emerson, who at that time was on our New England Committee of the project in Boston. HE was also head, as you know of the Architecture Department at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Mr. Emerson had told me how he had heard his secretary talking in a very excited way outside and he'd come out and found this wild-eyed many talking to her and she cowering and he was apparently demanding an answer to a question. He in this case is Oscar Bluemner. He swung around to William Emerson, who ordered him out of the office peremptorily and . . .

WW: No knowing who he was?

JH: Now knowing who he as, and seeing his secretary obviously agitated by his wild-eyed person who was talking to him in this guttural way, Emerson had ordered him out of the office. Emerson is a great tall, thin, impeccable gentleman. Bluemner swung around to him and said, "I will leave, but first I want you to tell me, do you, or do you not, mount drawings?" Which was the questions he'd come into the office to ask, but because of his language and his looks he'd scared the daylights out of this poor secretary. Well, Emerson said, "No, we don't," and kicked him out, and out he went but he later found out form Emerson through me the kind of materials they used to mount drawings. He had an idea that architects would know what kind of glues, and so on, to use for materials. So that's how he mounted his things and I think one can really say that if you buy a Bluemner, or get a Bluemner today there's a fair chance that fifty years from now it'll be just the same, because he always put ont he back his formula, how he did it and what processes he went through, and so on. Just as a thorough German might well do it.

WW: Yes. That's definitely a Germanic approach.

JH: I'm sorry that nobody approached bluemner in his time or that Neumann did not make the promised record of him because I think Bluemner had a greater influence on American painting than is generally recognized. He had five paintings, as you probably know, in the Armory Show and incidentally, I have his Armory catalogue which also is full of notes and comments on other people all the way through including his own, indicating if they were good or bad or other wise, but his comments are very trenchant all the way through. Also in this box that I mentioned are letters from people like Arthur Dove, who expressed a great indebtedness to him. I think Georgia O'Keeffe, with whom I've talked since about Bluemner, only last year as a matter of fact, felt a kinship. I never asked her whether she felt an indebtedness there but I think there is unquestionably one, a great many other artists of that period generally were definitely his debtors, some of them able to admit it.

WW: Did he teach?

JH: He never taught. His Stieglitz chapter was a double one, actually. Stieglitz early he was a part of the studio group. Stieglitz gave him several shows during the period of 1914-1920 and then when Neumann came to this country Bluemner, to help him out, had a showing at his gallery and Stieglitz was furious at this and that friendship came to an end at this point. But then Bluemner painted a number of small pictures of moons, a whole series, I think, probably fifteen to twenty of just moons, pictures of the moon, and large moons occupying the major portion of the picture and Stieglitz was so excited by these that he forgave everything and they had an exhibit at Stieglitz's all over again.

Georgia O'Keeffe gave away Stieglitz's pictures to the Metropolitan Museum which picked a choice and the balance of them, or a great number of them, went to Fisk University. I've looked at both sources and have found none by Bluemner. I've asked Georgia O'Keeffe what she could remember, but she couldn't remember anything of them. bluemner's notes, however, and he kept methodical notes on all his little sketches, of exactly what happened to his pictures, clearly show that Georgia O'Keeffe owned several of them and Stieglitz likewise. I could add a good deal more about Bluemner, but I don't think that I should. Someday, if someone wants to write the life of Bluemner starting from this point, they might well do so. All of Bluemner's books he annotated heavily. Signac's book on painting, for example, which is in French, has a wonderful garbled collection of English, French, German shorthand notes on the boarders. There are several books on Chinese painting and on Japanese painting and Japanese prints that are very heavily noted in the margins, and there's there are one or two books on color that are also heavily annotated throughout. It's a fascinating lot of material for somebody, someday to work on.

WW: Do you have those books?

JH: They're all over the library and in safety I'm glad to say now they wont burn up.

WW: In your library?

JH: In my library, right, where they will remain until I find a more likely opportunity for their constructive use. I might add one bit more on Bluemner. I gave all his architectural drawings, of which there were many which he kept of the competitions he entered, and the Bronx County Courthouse ones, to the Avery Library at Columbia University, Architectural Library at Columbia University, which is making a deposit of architectural materials. Probably completely unrelated to the foregoing material I should add that I have likewise turned over tot them material on Ian Phelps Stokes, whose architectural remains, if I can put it that way, I had a chance to make disposition, not a great deal. My grandfather as I've earlier indicated was an architect. Hew was one of the founders of the American Institute of Architects I later discovered, and . . .

WW: Where did he work?

JH: He was in Yonkers and in New York City. He was doing a house, a farmhouse on Murray Hill, on one side of the Murray Hill, at the time my wife's family were building a house on the other side a townhouse on the other side of Murray Hill. Their townhouse, the Phelps, Dodge and Stokes houses, three in a row, were later acquired by J.P. Morgan and are where the Morgan Library is. There's a lot of extra, parenthetical material, but I might say when I was with the Carnegie Corporation I was concerned about this lack of documented records of architects. My father was an architect. I have he's dead, have very few records of what he did and I thought I might get the A.I.A. to sent post cards to all their members to send in to a common source all I got Carnegie Corporation, that is Keppel, then president, to say they would finance this, if I would, but I couldn't get the American Institute of Architects to do anything about it because they said it would be too much work for them to be bothered with. It seemed to me that if they could just keep in a common file somewhere at a major headquarters, a record of everything as it was being done currently, we then would at least leave a record behind for future scholars or even heirs, as I am in the case of my grandfather and father, a record of what they did.

WW: How long ago was this?

JH: This was in the middle thirties. I was all full of ideas at that time for an Institute of American Studies and all kinds of things.

WW: Have you thought later of the National Trust as . . .

JH: . . . for Historic Preservation?

WW: Yes.

JH: Well, I think this idea is something that someone else can pick up. I'm picking up other ideas now. I've come to the conclusion, I might say, that the answer is to do one thing at a time and do it as carefully and as thoroughly as one can, and on this sense I'm now working on a book on American drawings and under contract with a publisher, I might add, and this I want to have fairly definitive. I had originally planned when I was in Albany to write one and I helped the Slatkins with their material. They were then getting out four volumes on drawings and I persuaded them to start in with American drawings first rather than the French, which they had planned to do. And while they give me credit in the foreword for it, they used all the illustrations I planned to use but not he text, but I figured it would take a number of years before someone could get another book out on American drawings. Now I think the time has come, and this is in process.

WW: This one that you're working on now, is this to be a study of your own collection . . .

JH: No, no. I could be but it's not my drawings. It's to be drawings of a leading block of three hundred American drawings. And I've been persuaded by Hyatt Mayor, who was also one of the Committee, did I tell you of my Committee of Hyatt Mayor, Carl Zigrosser, Bob Macbeth, Ted Richardson (Edgar P. Richardson) . . .

WW: In connection with the . . .

JH: To start an archive of American art.

WW: Oh yes, of course.

JH: Only mine was to be called the since we were going to have it at the New York Historical Society. All this was started to save Winslow Homer's sketches and notebooks.

WW: That was really the genesis of the Archives of American Art?

JH: Very likely might have been. Zigrosser later made an archive in Philadelphia.

WW: Mr. Richardson . . .

JH: Richardson has taken the idea and one it better and characteristic of him has followed through in a thorough going way. We were discussing the archives plan, however, when I got off. One other thing was the study of American art. In 1938, I gave a paper to the College Art Association on American Art. I thought that something should be done in this filed and I in one paper, a short paper, read off and made comments on every exhibit relative to past American artists, every book, every magazine article that had been written during one year. And it was all . . . It was possible to do it entirely in one paper of this kind!

WW: That was 1938?

JH: 1938. At that point I had just finished a study for the American Council of Learned Societies on what was being done int he American field, that is American literature, American music, American art in American colleges and universities. It was a perfectly fascinating how little was being done. Then we had a war and then we had the American Legion got into the art, then William Randolph Hearst got into the art and by that time everybody became American art conscious and American background conscious.

WW: Very strange.

JH: But up to that time it is interesting that only I showed the American Council of Learned Societies that they only had one give, in all their years only one post doctoral grant in any field of American Studies.

WW: Amazing.

JH: While I'm talking about myself and my own personal interests I was once moved to write a directory of American artists all by myself, which of course no one person should really undertake. Later Grice did a job thorough or headed the effort through the New York Historical Society. But I was also trying to build a library of reference sources on American artists and up to 1940 no complete bibliography had ever been made of American artists, works on artists. So that while barnstorming from Bangor, Maine, to Washington, D.C. I was also picking up not only drawings, but books, writings on American artists and the result of this was about a thousand volumes, or a little over, and an equal number of ephemera and pamphlets. These I'm happy to say have now reached a safe haven and are all in Winterthur at the du Pont's place in Wilmington, Delaware. I still think that there is a need of clearing house in American art studies. I think there still has to be made a bibliography of American artists, and exhaustive one and an annotated one. All the little blocks of material that I've been collecting which were of course far to ambitious in its time, are just at the stage where they were in the middle forties, as I at that time tried to make a Master Index of every American picture and American sculpture which was perfectly absurd on the part of an individual. But I've been able to give blocks in different areas to those who've worked int he particular field with these different artists.

[END OF INTERVIEW]