Smithsonian
Archives of American Art

Oral history interview with Louis Bouché, 1963 March 13

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Contact Information
Reference Department
Archives of American Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington. D.C. 20560
www.aaa.si.edu/askus

Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Louis Bouché on 1963 March 13. The interview was conducted by William E. Woolfenden for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

The reader should bear in mind that he or she is reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose. This is a rough transcription that may include typographical errors.

Interview

for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1963 March 13

LOUIS BOUCHE: With an old time -- next to the Miller Building and the Lincoln Arcade, I guess the Sherwood Studios are far more expensive than they were (inaudible) Lincoln Square . Yes, we got a studio there.

And there were four of us, a young chap by the name of Carlson who had studied with us at the League. And then another chap, a little German guy -- I can't remember his name now -- and Alex Brook and myself. And Alex Brook was -- we were always roughhousing. It's believed he was a real dynamo, and he did very little work before he did the Stanford (phonetic) work. And I was attached to him because I sensed that he had real talent. The other two were from our studios (inaudible), but not so good.

We shared the studio before this, and we had models. And, of course, the most fabulous model that we had in that studio was the baroness, the German Baroness of Babout (phonetic) fame, Baroness Else Freytag-Loringhoven or some such name. And she was a real character. She died in Paris, if you remember. She died in Paris after -- oh, in the '30s, I think it was. And she was really respected by the Dada crowd in Paris, later by the Syralese (phonetic). She wrote very sketchy verse. But she was a real character. I remember when I first laid eyes on her -- you must have heard of the baroness.

ROBERT F. BROWN: Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: When I first laid eyes on her, I saw her writing in the Broadway subway. And she had on a Polynesian (phonetic) French helmet (inaudible) hat. She was very German, and she had an accent that you could cut with a knife, a German accent. And she wore this blue, horizon-blue helmet on her head. And I forget just what her clothes were at the time. But anyhow, she had various costumes. For instance, she used to go around with a little wooden birdcage hung around her neck with a canary.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And then she wore a bustle. And on the bustle, at the base of her spine, she had a taillight.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And at night she'd turn on the taillight. And she'd explain, with this German accent, that after all, bicycles and automobiles had taillights. And she didn't want to collide with anybody. So she just felt that she had to have a taillight.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: Anyhow, she posed for us. And she was a fantastic creature, with not a very lovely face, but a really beautiful figure. She was madly in love with Marcel Duchamp. And one day when she was posing for me she said, "I wrote a poem in honor of Marcel." And she said, "The poem goes this way: 'Marcel, Marcel, I love you like hell, Marcel.'"

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: So one day I wanted to make her feel really happy. So I brought her a newspaper clipping of "The Nude Descending the Stairs." She made it -- she gave herself a sponge bath with it. She loved (inaudible).

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: Sounds very Dada.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, and she was very Dada.

Well, anyhow, in the Miller Building Studio, we did occasionally work. I think I worked more than any of them. I worked harder and with not very good results. But next door to our particular studio, there was a studio that was occupied by a young painter who was older than myself by the name of Jack Parker. And Jack Parker -- our studio was very big. But Jack Parker had a few Oriental rugs hanging from -- chandeliers, or, I mean, he tried to make the studio look romantic. We didn't give a damn. We didn't have time or the money or the experience to really create an atmospheric studio.

Anyhow, George Parker -- I got to know him pretty well. And he sort of took me under his wing. He was as old as Marcel. And eventually, he introduced me to Walt Kuhn. And Walt Kuhn had already started the Penguin Club at that time. The Penguin Club was situated opposite the Rand School on 15th Street between Union Square and Fifth Avenue on the south side of the street. Several years later I found out the, curious the -- about the Penguin Club, the location of the Penguin Club was that it was in the very house that Walt Kuhn had rented. He had rented the parlor floor on this brownstone building. It was in this very house on 15th Street that my father and mother were married. My grandmother lived there. My grand-aunt's mother lived there in her heyday. And she was a very fashionable dressmaker in the '70s and the ' 80s.

MR. BROWN: What was her name?

MR. BOUCHE: Her name was Antoinette Grapanche, G-r-a-p-a-n-c-h-e. And you might be interested to know that some of the costumes that she made, which were really very handsome -- and she was a star in the dressmaking field in New York at that time -- today in the Museum of the City of New York where they have been kept.

Well, anyhow, I forget the actual number of this house on 15th Street. But as I say, it was in that house that my father and mother were married. And as a matter of fact, it was in that very house at a Penguin party that I met my wife, which is, of course, fantastic --

MR. BROWN: New York history.

MR. BOUCHE: The saga.

MR. BROWN: Where did the name come from?

MR. BOUCHE: The Penguin? I haven't any idea why Walt Kuhn chose the name Penguin, because I assume it was Walt Kuhn because Walt Kuhn -- although he always pretended that -- always tried to remain in the wings and not seem to be the star of the official club, I'm sure he named it. But there were -- I know there were ads put in the newspapers, "Penguin Exhibition." And one little guy came down from New Haven, not suspecting that he was coming to see an exhibition of painting and sculpture. He thought he was going to see an exhibition of penguins.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And he was happy to -- probably even went back to Grand Central and returning back to New Haven immediately.

MR. BROWN: Well, when you first knew about it, how many members did they have?

MR. BOUCHE: Well, that's hard to say. Actually, there was no membership. Walt Kuhn had a great ability to collect people. And I hate to say this because I love Walt, and he taught me so much. Walt had a great capacity to collect people that could help him. And the Penguin existed, at least financially, only because -- once the Penguin put on an artists ball. And this ball took care of the rent, took care of the lights, took care of any other necessities that the Penguin might require so far as expenditures are concerned.

There was no actual membership. There were no dues, there were no bylaws. There was nothing about the Penguin that had any similarity to anything that resembled a club.

MR. BROWN: You didn't exhibit together?

MR. BOUCHE: We exhibited together. And also at times, Kuhn would invite people who had nothing to do with the Penguin, who didn't know anything about the Penguin, who may not have even lived in this country, to exhibit in our Penguin exhibitions.

I say "our." Well, as I said before, Jack Parker introduced me to Walt Kuhn. I was a kid then, and Walt Kuhn apparently liked me. And he took me into the fold almost immediately. I can't say that I was a great help to him because I was not a carpenter. I couldn't make things. I couldn't make model stands and so on. But this was a wonderful center for artists who came from Europe, who could come there and relax and talk shop. And we had a model once a week. We had a little sketch class. And at that time, there were many artists who had fled the

first World War in Europe and who came there, like Willie Pogany and Albert Gleizes, Immanuel, Kano (phonetic), (Inaudible) Pascin. Pascin, of course, of all the names remains probably the most famous. And Gleizes actually left his mark in the development of Cubism in France.

But this -- it's hard to explain. It was a wonderful, friendly -- it had a wonderful, friendly ambience, where a painter from abroad -- of course, Walt Kuhn more or less had to invite them because they didn't know about the thing.

Another painter who, I guess, is no longer remembered here who nevertheless was a very good painter and played a very interesting part with us is an Australian by the name of Horace Brodsky. And Brodsky remained here throughout the first World War. And as a matter of fact, he stayed here for many years after the first World War. And then finally he turned (inaudible) and went over and lived in England.

MR. BROWN: Well, how long did the group stay together in the Penguin Club?

MR. BOUCHE: I don't remember exactly. I think the Penguins' life was, I would say not more than about four years.

MR. BROWN: So from about 19 --

MR. BOUCHE: Well, it had started before I met June. I would say -- let us say it started in 1915 and probably folded up in 1919, maybe even 1918. I don't remember. But these artists balls that Walt Kuhn put on, because as you probably -- I'm sure you know Walt Kuhn had a marvelous sense of direction. And he could direct a play. He was a great manager. And these artists balls weren't tramp affairs. These were beautifully organized and beautifully planned affairs.

And each year there was a special feature. And of course, the feature that I remember best and I think was the most exciting one was the year that we had -- I don't know what they call it in the circus. But he had us make a lot of papier mache horses with little petticoats to hide our legs, and we'd get inside of the horses, the papier mache horse with a pair of suspenders around our shoulders, over our shoulders. And I guess it must have been a circus ride or whatever. You know, we'd have the circuses and the horses act prettily and dance or whatever they do.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, anyhow, this was the feature of one year's ball, this equestrian parade, circus.

MR. BROWN: Well, that must have been about the time of the Armistice. Isn't that the cartoon you have of the --

MR. BOUCHE: No. That was the year -- that was shortly before the Armistice, because the cartoon I have -- the horses were stored in the Penguin room. And of course, Walt Kuhn, who was always out for the razzmatazz -- you know, he was sensational -- when we had the first -- I can't remember if it was the first or the second Armistice Parade, Walt Kuhn's idea was to drag out what he called at that time the Penguin Cavalry. And I'll never forget that. There were about 12 of us with these papier mache mounts. And we waited in good order, in formation, on the corner of 15th Street and Fifth Avenue. And when Walt Kuhn, who always remained in back of the scene, saw a magnificent army band coming out with fellows (inaudible) trying to get out in some of his band.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: I happened to be riding the stallion, a beautiful white stallion. And we created this (inaudible) army parade. I had on a collapsible opera hat and my uniform, and I led the Penguin Cavalry.

MR. BROWN: Do you suppose there are any written records around of the Penguin? Did you do shows that would have catalogs?

MR. BOUCHE: The sad part of it is that I don't think -- I really don't think anything exists. I know that before Kuhn died, he always -- he really didn't suggest, but he always implied that it might be a good idea if I sort of sat down and tried to recollect what the Penguin was and tried to write it down.

MR. BROWN: Who were the other Americans? Did Brooks go in (inaudible)?

MR. BOUCHE: Alex Brook came in because he was a friend of mine. Kuhn didn't know him, but I was very close to Alec, having said and at that time still there in the same studio. Alec became a Penguin. Kuniyoshi became a Penguin, but very much later. When I say "became a Penguin," don't forget that you did become a Penguin. You were invited, and if you were liked you hung around. And if you weren't liked by -- I was going to say "by the crowd," but it's really -- I hate to implicate Kuhn, but he was really the boss. If he didn't take to you --

MR. BROWN: You were out.

MR. BOUCHE: No, you didn't come back.

But outside of the Penguin Cavalry and our march up Fifth Avenue, one of the greatest, one of the most interesting things I think that happened under Kuhn's direction and under the banner of the Penguin was the decorating of Fifth Avenue with Red Cross posters. These posters were gigantic. They were stretched on stretchers, and they were painted on muslin, either in -- well, they were mostly painted in thin oil color because, after all, they were to be hung outside. If they had been painted in tempura, with the rain and so on they would have been destroyed.

But a great many well-known painters of that time answered Walt Kuhn's call to arms and did Red Cross posters. One of them was Joe Stellar, which I'll never forget. Kuhn and Stellar never got along. Kuhn was a terrific tease. And he told Stellar that Stellar can do a poster, you see. And Stellar -- he told Stellar that he had to submit a sketch. Well, Stellar didn't like the idea of being brought to toe by Walt Kuhn. But anyhow, he wanted so much to be exhibited on the side of a building -- you see, these were hung outside of the windows. I think they must have been -- oh, they were a good 15 feet tall by maybe 10 feet wide, and they were all upright.

Stellar submitted a sketch. And Walt Kuhn said, "No, I don't like your sketch. Do another one."

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: So, Stellar was furious. He wanted so much to be a part of this thing that he went back to his studio, or wherever he (inaudible), and made another sketch, and finally Kuhn accepted it.

Well, one of the finest of all was the one that was done by Max Weber. I remember it very well because he did the rear view of the World War I agony. And there were stretcher-bearers taking out of all the soldiers. And (inaudible) we all painted these posters in the Penguin rooms. There would be big stretch muslin frames in the room, and four or five of us worked at the same time. And it was at one of these parties when we were all working that I met Hopper (phonetic) and also Dubois, who later became Dora's father-in-law, Deepen (phonetic) Dubois.

MR. BROWN: Um-hm. (Inaudible)

MR. BOUCHE: Yes.

(Off the record)

MR. BROWN: There we are. Now let's go back and -- shall we go back to the triumphal arch?

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. I meant to tell you about that. At 40th Street there was quite a magnificent theatrical triumphal arch. We thought it was the culmination of the whole idea of this great Red Cross display that Walt Kuhn had organized. And the triumphal arch was (inaudible) at the time of Archie B. Davies. And Archie B. Davies, as you certainly know, also did sculpture. And he modeled out of papier mache some of the supporting figures of this triumphal arch. The rest were done, I remember, in painting.

Now, there was another thing. I don't know whether it was 40th Street or Fifth Avenue. On the corner of 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, right off of the Public Library, I remember so clearly there was a big panel. Let's say it was about the size of an ordinary billboard. And every week during the Red Cross drive -- and mind you, this is before the Armistice; the war was still on. Every week a different artist would paint a picture on this great billboard on the Public Library.

And these were not men of Walt Kuhn's choice. They had nothing to do with the Red Cross exhibit on Fifth Avenue. These were, I remember, the best known at that time. There was a man by the name of Henry Reuterdahl. And Reuterdahl had done wonderful war posters. He was a marine artist and very well known at that time. And, oh, it (inaudible) there were a great many war artists in America at the time of the first World War who tried to make a record of the first World War. And I collected a lot of reproductions out of magazines and newspapers of the work of these men that had to do with the subject matter of the first World War in America.

And at one point -- oh, well, Forbes Watson was still in Washington. He even spoke to me one day about these artists, and I told him that I had made this out of a little scrapbook of these artists, including Reuterdahl. And he said, "I'd love to see it." He said, "I was thinking of maybe writing a short book about this period." So I gave him all my material. And although I thought Forbes Watson -- he was a great friend of mine and so on, something happened; I never got these things back.

MR. BROWN: We now have Forbes Watson papers. Maybe I'd better check around and see if we have your scrapbook.

MR. BOUCHE: You may have the scrapbook.

MR. BROWN: I'll look.

MR. BOUCHE: Because these were interesting people. Anyhow, to come back to the Penguin. Of course, for me one of the most -- outside of Walt Kuhn, whose work I admired very much at the time, one of the most fascinating artists who came to the States (inaudible) was Pascin. And I think everybody (inaudible) Pascin at that time; at least I'm sure Walt Kuhn was. And we all admired him tremendously. Well, Pascin had a dexterity. And he had a facility when it came to drawing that (inaudible). And we had these models come in and pose for it. And I remember that Pascin would get on top of the stepladder and look down on the model and get the most wonderful fore-shortening.

He treated his drawings as if they were just worthless. And one of the -- my place in life as a very young man in those days was to go out to -- after the sketch class, go out with Walt Kuhn and Pascin and other members of the Penguin. And we'd go to (inaudible) on Sixth Avenue and sit down and drink beer or coffee or what-have-you. And Pascin would never stop drawing. He'd have all kinds of tricks. He'd draw your portrait with both hands, doing both eyes at the same time, both ears at the same time.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: Or he might draw your portrait with his eyes shut. And he kept making little drawings all the time. And then he'd take them, and he'd rumple them up. He wouldn't tear them up. He'd rumple them up and throw them on the floor in the restaurant. And time came to go home, and we'd all start leaving the restaurant, I always had a pretext to go back that I'd forgotten something, and I'd pick these drawings up off the floor and stuff them in my pockets. And then I'd get home at night, and I'd try to iron them out.

And I made quite a collection of Pascin's sketches that way. And at a time when I needed money very badly, I went up to see my old friend Dwyer (phonetic), who was a book dealer on Lexington Avenue, and I asked him if he'd be interested in buying these Pascin sketches. Well, he bought the whole lot of them and saved my life for a little while. And he has made (inaudible). "You know, Mr. Dwyer, I was a damn fool to sell you all those little Pascin drawings I had. I wish I had them today." He said, "Well, Louis," he says, "It's all right." He says, "I still have them. You can buy them."

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And of course, by that time they'd gone up (inaudible), of course.

MR. BROWN: So has he sold them finally?

MR. BOUCHE: What?

MR. BROWN: Has he sold them finally?

MR. BOUCHE: I don't know whether he still has them or whether he sold them.

One of the things I'd love to tell you about in terms of the Penguin, which was really a marvelous party -- Walt Kuhn -- Walt Kuhn was not only organized in artists dances, artists balls. But he was also great for dinner parties, which he (inaudible) only artists. And in a fairly crummy restaurant outside of Union Square, because Walt was in love with 14th Street. He loved 14th Street. Park Avenue meant nothing to Walt, but really his heart was in 14th Street, in the most garish side of 14th Street.

Well, anyhow, he had organized this party, which was called -- by golly, I may still have the invitation to this party. It was called Union Square Volunteer Firemen's Annual Banquet, or something like that. And we all had red undershirts. And where Walt Kuhn got the firemen's hats, I don't know, but he got firemen's hats for the whole bunch of us. And he got us all to decorate this restaurant. It was a basement restaurant. It was a restaurant with a basement for private parties, and our dinner was held in the basement. And we all did great posters or great murals of groups -- of silly groups of firemen, you know, with one -- one was standing behind the seated fireman with his hand on his shoulder.

And there must have been 20 of us doing these tempura paintings. And one would do all the art, and one would do all the handlebar moustaches, and another guy would do the hands or the red shirts or the helmets, and so on. And this dinner, this particular dinner, which was held at this restaurant on 14th Street -- oh, there's one thing I've forgotten.

In the restaurant, Walt Kuhn was such a marvelous -- he could have done anything in the theater. Again, we made papier mache horses, which just meant the chest, the head, and the forelegs. And there was straw on the ground, and there were chains in front of the horses like in the firehouse, you see. And they were in a little

alcove in the restaurant. Magnificent fire escapes were there at the restaurant and looked at us throughout the whole meal.

Well, Brancusi was the guest of honor. You see, this dinner was for us. But Walt Kuhn discovered that Brancusi was in town, invited the great sculptor to this dinner to be guest of honor and to see how American artists act. And I was placed at the speaker's table because I think I was the only one who could speak French.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And I had to talk to Brancusi to tell him what was going on. So I sat next to Brancusi. And Bob Howard, the California sculptor -- I don't know if you know him because he's quite a character.

[END OF RECORDING]

MR. BROWN: The great achievement -- now try again.

MR. BOUCHE: (Speaks French)

MR. BROWN: We always thought one of our great achievements was that for some strange reason on this tape that Bud Phillips did with Stuart Davis, Davis sang. And when he got -- you know, the next day he was just absolutely horrified to find that he had gotten so carried away. But he was tight partially just because he was talking so much that he got so carried away. And he kept saying to everybody, "Well, you know, I even sang on that damn thing."

Well, now let's go back to the --

MR. BOUCHE: This is our theme, you know.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Is it going now?

MR. BROWN: Yes. Let's go back to the dinner party in the basement restaurant when you were sitting --

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I had mentioned the fact that Bob Howard, a painter in California and old friend of mine, happened to be in New York at the time of the dinner, and he was invited probably by myself. And he'd had too much to drink, I think, that night. And I was sitting, as I said before, I was sitting next to Brancusi because I was acting as interpreter for the old gent. He seemed pretty old at the time.

Bob must have had an awful lot to drink, but we all had a lot to drink, I remember. But Bob must have had more than most of us because I was basically talking to Brancusi, and all of a sudden a missile came flying through the air and I was hit smack in the face with half a grapefruit. And this was a little too collegiate for Brancusi. And he was pretty shocked, and I was pretty upset. And I think Walt Kuhn frowned when he saw that all this collegiate stuff was going on.

Well, I told you about the horses and the stalls.

MR. BROWN: Um-hm. Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: About the magnificent decorations on the walls and about our costumes, the red shirts and the helmets. I forget who else was there at that dinner. But I'm sure the whole Penguin crowd was there and maybe some other invited guests.

MR. BROWN: What do you suppose Brancusi was here for?

MR. BOUCHE: I really haven't any idea. It's possible that he was having an exhibition at that time in New York. I don't know. I don't really remember.

MR. BROWN: Did you feel that -- well, the painters -- I think the younger painters today felt that the group of European artists, the French and Germans who fled Hitler and came, had a tremendous impact on the American scene. Was this true in 1918 that New York was enriched by -- you talked a little about Pascal.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I think the enrichment came with the Armory Show.

MR. BROWN: But not in the physical presence?

MR. BOUCHE: No.

MR. BROWN: I mean, did they fit in with you?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, they fitted in beautifully. I mean, of all the -- the two biggest influences in my limited experience, at least with the Penguin, were Pastion (phonetic) and Albert Gleizes.

MR. BROWN: Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: I can't at the moment think of who worked with Pogany. After all, he was a very bad artist.

MR. BROWN: Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: Pogany's claim to fame was largely the wonderful egg-like portrait that Brancusi did of his sister, Miss Pogany.

MR. BROWN: Which was a sensation.

MR. BOUCHE: Which was a sensation, I believe, in the Armory Show.

MR. BROWN: Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, that's about all I can remember anyhow of the dinner and 14th Street and some of the firemen, the Volunteer Firemen's party. As I said before, there were -- Kuhn was always organizing parties.

There were also sales made at the Penguin exhibitions. And I guess the biggest buyer of all, of course, was Kuhn's friend John Quinn. And Kuhn had a way of negotiating these sales without telling anybody who the sugar daddy, the buyer, was.

MR. BROWN: Right.

MR. BOUCHE: And I remember he sold two of my paintings to Quinn. And he wouldn't tell me who had bought them.

MR. BROWN: Do you think that was Quinn or Kuhn?

MR. BOUCHE: No. Walt Kuhn sold the paintings to Quinn.

MR. BROWN: I know. But I mean, Quinn had a certain kind of secret.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, they were all secret, the greatest secret of (inaudible). (Laughter)

MR. BROWN: Did you know Quinn?

MR. BOUCHE: I knew Quinn slightly. I mean, I met him at the time of the Penguin. And then in later years when I had my gallery at Wanamaker's, Quinn used to come in and see my exhibitions. And one -- did I tell you about the letter I wrote Quinn asking to see his collection?

MR. BROWN: No. It's like writing the Barnes (phonetic) almost.

MR. BOUCHE: No. This is just as bad. This is about -- I would say it must have been around 1917. It was before I got in the service, I know, because I knew about this wonderful collection of Quinn's. And I was teaching at the time. I was teaching drawing in a young girls' finishing school. And I used to take my class to the Metropolitan Museum. And I had a big, good idea -- or in my innocence it was a good idea -- to take the class to visit John Quinn's apartment, which at that time was in Central Park West. He had a huge apartment. And so it was paintings, were on the floor and all over the place.

So, I wrote John Quinn a letter, and I had some feeling of assurance that I might get a decent reply because I knew that he owned two of my paintings. And I'd met him. So, I wrote him and I asked him if I could bring my class to visit his collection. And I got the nastiest letter back from him, in which he said that his apartment, and his collection, was not an annex for a young girls' finishing school, and that furthermore he had heard me with my group at the Metropolitan Museum some weeks before and that he had never heard such nonsense in his life.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: So, of course, he wouldn't permit me to come with my class to see his pictures.

MR. BROWN: Isn't it funny when somebody buys paintings, which you always feel belong to -- you know, eventually, they belong to the world.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Yes. And some people take that as a responsibility and are so willing to lend or to share. And then these other people who sit and -- the whole Quinn, you know, selling the collection in Europe and then the family tying up all the papers. And in the end it's just going to block Quinn out except as kind of an eccentric.

MR. BOUCHE: I'm glad I have the Quinn catalog (inaudible) because it's a marvelous catalog.

MR. BROWN: It's wonderful.

MR. BOUCHE: He did a lot.

MR. BROWN: Yes. He did a lot, certainly, but not as much as he could.

Well, then, in other Penguin sales, were there other buyers that you were conscious of that were consistent?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, sure, there must have been. Because, you see, there were these shows. We had several shows.

MR. BROWN: Did you?

MRS. BOUCHE: He sold my first painting, watercolor painting, for five dollars. And the man was a man name of Bruno, whoever that was.

MR. BOUCHE: Bruno?

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I remember how Pascin liked your paintings. Pascin, incidentally, was a very decent, generous guy. I mean, he was all for encouraging young artists. And he was terribly, terribly nice about it, not critical and not mean, and always helpful.

MR. BROWN: Um-hm. Why did he come?

MR. BOUCHE: Pascin? Well, I guess Pascin fled Europe. He fled the first World War. You know, he had been in Germany. He had worked for Simplest (phonetic) Instruments in Germany for a long time. And then he moved to Paris. And he was a Bulgarian. And Bulgaria was on the side of Germany, I believe. And he probably saw what was coming, and he just got out of Europe. He got out of France and came over here. And he became a naturalized citizen.

MR. BROWN: In the Penguin shows, do you think the dealers were conscious? Was this a place where people could be picked up for --

MR. BOUCHE: I don't think much of that way now. I don't think the dealers paid much attention. I don't think the -- I never remember hearing Charlie Daniel speak of the Penguin. He knew about it, but I don't think he ever came to the exhibitions. Marius Dessius (phonetic), I think, was here at that time or maybe shortly after. And, of course, there was Montross. Kuhn had contacts with Montross, and then of course there was Alfred Stieglitz. But I don't think the dealers came down to see our shows.

MR. BROWN: They didn't go to your parties or anything?

MR. BOUCHE: No, no, they didn't go to the parties.

MRS. BOUCHE: The parties were for fun, not necessarily work.

MR. BROWN: Well, you know, sometimes you have to mix a little fun with hoping that somebody is going to buy something, too.

MRS. BOUCHE: Not in those days.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I know Kuhn was anxious to have these various artists sell. At the same time, he -- I remember thinking he didn't run the place as a business or as a gallery.

But while we're on the subject of the Penguin and Kuhn, we had auctions among ourselves just for the fun of it. Some evenings we'd meet and bring drawings or watercolors or something. And then we'd bid. And Wood Gaylor, who was one of the Penguins and one of the most faithful ones, who married Adelaide Lawson, the painter, who was the sister of Howard Lawson the playwright -- Wood Gaylor worked for the Buckeridge (phonetic) people.

MRS. BOUCHE: Hatters (phonetic)?

MR. BROWN: Hatters and designers?

MR. BOUCHE: Buckeridge.

MR. BROWN: Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: And Wood got in at a pretty good salary. And he was really a primitive. He was not either a mature man or a mature artist. But in his primitive, simple, curious, funny little way of drawing, he was very interesting. And of course, there was a cult of primitives at that time, was beginning. I've always -- and I may have mentioned this before that I've always felt that Walk Kuhn discovered Elshimis (phonetic).

But to come back to Wood Gaylor and these auctions we had, Wood Gaylor would buy most of the drawings and most of the watercolors. And Kuhn, who was an awful tease, used to bring reproductions of Howard Pyle's drawings out of some old magazine and then tell Wood Gaylor that these things someday would be worth a lot of money. And Wood Gaylor would pay some crazy price for a picture cut out of Munsey's magazine or something or Howard Pyle.

And Kuhn just had to be a devil all the time. He looked like a devil of a man.

MR. BROWN: Yes. (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: He looked like a charming devil.

MR. BROWN: I think that Mrs. Gaylor -- does she live outside of New York now?

MR. BOUCHE: She lives in Long Island, I think.

MR. BROWN: I think she gave us the manuscript of an autobiography he was writing. And I had never heard of him. I'll have to check that when I get home because this would be very interesting.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, that's the same Mrs. Gaylor. I never heard of any other Gaylor. And Wood Gaylor was a real standby of the Penguin because he was such a dopey guy he'd do anything, you know.

MR. BROWN: Well, did he give up then and stop painting?

MR. BOUCHE: I don't think so. After the Penguin stopped, he went on. And he had acquired quite a nice little collection. He had some beautiful Pascins, by the way. And I think Pascin painted his portrait. He had some good Pascins. Gaylor bought some of my paintings. He bought from everybody. He developed a real mania for buying, but it wasn't like Quinn. He didn't have a lot of money. But instead of spending money in nightclubs and so on, he loved to buy drawings or etchings.

MR. BROWN: Who was Grace Johnson?

MR. BOUCHE: Who?

MR. BROWN: Grace Johnson.

MR. BOUCHE: That I don't know.

And then this thing we did at the Penguin -- and these things come back to me. We had a press down there, and we used to make dry points.

MR. BROWN: Oh, really? You mentioned this Howard Brodsky. Was he --

MR. BOUCHE: That's not Howard. It's Horace.

MR. BROWN: Horace, Horace, yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Horace Brodsky was the Australian who was over here during the war and was a very faithful Penguin. And after a good many years here, he returned. He went to England, as I told you before, and lived in London.

MR. BROWN: And John F. Parker was?

MR. BOUCHE: Jack Parker was not a very exciting painter. He had -- he sort of painted in an Oriental vein. They were not very good. And he's never left any name, as far as I know.

MR. BROWN: And what about James Dougherty?

MR. BOUCHE: Ah, James Dougherty. He was the marine painter. He was a serious academic painter and a member of the National Academy. Oh, no, let me see. James Dougherty -- am I thinking of the right one?

MR. BROWN: The acrobats?

MR. BOUCHE: No. James Dougherty was not the marine painter. There was the -- the marine painter was another Dougherty. This Dougherty lived -- painted acrobats and circus scenes and so on and lived in Westport, Connecticut. And he was a pretty competent painter, a good genre painter.

MR. BROWN: What about Morgan Steinmetz?

MR. BOUCHE: Morgan Steinmetz. Morgan Steinmetz was quite a pioneer, as I remember. His work reminded me a little bit of the work of Morton Schamberg, who was a Philadelphian who was a great friend of Sheeler's. And Steinmetz -- Steinmetz?

MR. BROWN: Steinmetz.

MR. BOUCHE: Steinmetz did sort of pictures and drawings of machines. That's the thing that seemed to interest him at the time, as I remember.

MR. BROWN: One of the things that interests me is that Walt Kuhn evidently didn't show in this. Was he (inaudible)?

MR. BOUCHE: He might have done that on purpose. He didn't want to -- Ben was another member of this.

MR. BROWN: Oh, was he?

MR. BOUCHE: There he is right there. Ben Benson (phonetic). I had Alexander Brook, Glenn Coleman. I mean, David, Pascin's wife, used to exhibit. She was living here with Pascin. Stuart Davis. Audra B. Davis. Hunt Dietrich (phonetic), the sculptor.

MR. BROWN: What's the date on that? That's quite a different list than what -- this is April 1917, March and April.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, this is October and November 1917. It's the ad the Penguin had.

MR. BROWN: People came and went.

MR. BOUCHE: You mean in the show?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, he didn't have the same ones all the time.

MR. BROWN: Oh, I see.

MR. BOUCHE: And remember. These people were not sort of Penguin habitués. They were --

MR. BROWN: Ah, they were just looking for a place to --

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. Walt Kuhn discovered them or monitored the show.

MR. BROWN: There's quite a few women -- I'm surprised -- in all these shows. Was Frost -- or Frost, Junior -- was that the son of the well-known illustrator?

MR. BOUCHE: I would think so.

MR. BROWN: A. B. Frost Junior, it says.

MR. BOUCHE: Is it the same initials?

MR. BROWN: Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, he might have been. Here Kaminski was an interesting painter, and there's Kuniyoshi.

MR. BROWN: Who was Kaminski?

MR. BOUCHE: Kaminski was -- I don't know when he came to the United States. But he was a Central European,

and he was an interesting graphic artist. I remember, I think probably the first picture I ever bought was a large drawing of Kaminski's.

MR. BROWN: Where do you suppose the blonde ink (phonetic) would have come from?

MR. BOUCHE: The blonde ink might have been a loan by -- it might have been loaned by one of the dealers. It might have been loaned by Dessius, or it might have been loaned by Quinn, or it might have been loaned by Arthur P. Davies.

MR. BROWN: I know here's a Gautier --

MR. BOUCHE: Vajska.

MR. BROWN: Vajska.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, now, Gautier Vajska -- Quinn admired Gautier Vajska very much. And so Quinn had a lot of his sculpture and had a lot of his drawings. Also, Gautier Vajska was an intimate friend of Horace Brodsky's. And Brodsky knew him very well before he was killed in the first World War when Brodsky was living in London. And Brodsky wrote a book on the life and the work of Gautier Vajska.

MR. BROWN: I was going to ask you, too, in here is Mabel Dodge. Was she serious?

MR. BOUCHE: Well, that was Mabel Dodge, Luanne. Yes, that was Mabel Dodge.

MR. BROWN: And she was --

MR. BOUCHE: I don't know. She may have been (Laughter) making watercolors or painting at that time. I don't remember.

MR. BROWN: Down here, H. F. Taylor. That couldn't be Frank Taylor?

MR. BOUCHE: No, no. Henry --

MR. BROWN: Oh, Frit.

MR. BOUCHE: Henry Fitch Taylor.

MR. BROWN: I never saw him sign "H. F." He's still alive, I think.

MR. BOUCHE: He is? My god, he must be old.

MR. BROWN: Now, after this period and this, you went to Daniel, or he came to you?

MR. BOUCHE: No, I went to Daniel about --

MR. BROWN: Did you move up and then --

MRS. BOUCHE: Why don't you sit there? I'll sit here.

MR. BOUCHE: No, I went to Daniel's -- it's hard to say. Well, let's say 1919. Let's make a guess, 1919, because I had my first one-man show at Daniel's in Long Island in 1922. Nathaniel's had the most -- Nathaniel's was a real pioneer so far as modern art was concerned. Daniel and his brother owned a saloon. I think it was on the corner of Eighth Avenue and 42nd Street. And this was a very prosperous business. And one of the customers, a man who came into the saloon very often, was a Glenn Coleman.

And Glenn Coleman got Daniel interested in pictures. And there may have been friends of Glenn Coleman's who came in there and stood around the bar. Daniel became so very interested in the idea of pictures that he decided to open a gallery. And I believe his first gallery was where I first met him; in other words, Number 2, West 47th Street in an office building. And he had the most marvelous stable. He had Marsden Hartley. He had Demas. He had Doug. He had Marin. He had John Carroll. He had Milton Manigold. He had Charles Sheeler. He had Paul Berlin. I believe he had Stuart Davis. I mean, the list would go on and on and on and on.

And Daniel was a queer duck. He took all the money out of his share of the saloon, because he left the business, the saloon, to his brother. And he took his share and sunk it into this enterprise, this gallery. And Daniel was a bad businessman. His idea was to discover an artist. And after he had launched the artist, he began to lose interest. As soon as the artist began to sell his work, somehow the game was no more fun. He had produced this new talent. And instead of pursuing it, as most dealers would, he seemed to lose interest.

MR. BROWN: Did the artists leave him then?

MR. BOUCHE: No, they didn't leave him. But he didn't sell as much, that's all, after he lost interest in one and wanted to make a new discovery. What he did with me and he did with the many other artists -- for instance, Preston Jacobson, I know -- I was terribly young when I first started out in the gallery there. And he gave me the magnificent sum of $25 a week. I had a studio on Marlstone Square South. And naturally, I couldn't live on $25 a week, but my family gave me money. And this $25 a week went to buy materials and so on.

Daniel became the owner of all my work, of all my artwork.

MR. BROWN: Outright?

MR. BOUCHE: Outright, yeah.

MRS. BOUCHE: For $25 a week.

MR. BROWN: Amazing.

MR. BOUCHE: But with this investment, small as it was for him, naturally I had to push myself in order to get rid of the pictures. And by golly, he did get rid of every damn one of them. But he supported, or rather he had the same system of stipend with Dickenson, with Preston Dickenson, all his life until Dickenson's death in Spain. And he owned every bit of Dickenson's output.

MRS. BOUCHE: A lot of them did leave him, though, go to other galleries.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, they only left him when -- some of them did leave him, yes. But there weren't many galleries until later.

MR. BROWN: But did he have any -- it was just by, say, some of those names you mentioned left him and went to Edith Halpert. But they kind of -- she had no official connection?

MR. BOUCHE: With Daniel?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, no.

MR. BROWN: Just the same --

MR. BOUCHE: You see, Edith Halpert came a lot later.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: In 1917, Edith Halpert was a child.

MR. BROWN: Well, now, after your first show, did you show there (inaudible)?

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. Then he had my work in group shows. And then I don't remember when the second one-man show came up in the gallery. I mean, it was around 1925. And -- oh, another artist who was there was Lawson. Ernest Lawson. And Lawson -- Daniel had sort of a gallery in the back which was never used. It was full of Lawson's pictures. And Lawson's was always in there touching up his pictures. He'd change them all the time.

(Laughter)

MRS. BOUCHE: He had Prendergast, too.

MR. BOUCHE: And then he had the two Prendergasts. I can't remember all of them, but he had everybody that --

MR. BROWN: Well, now, some of them must have left Macbeth -- didn't they? -- to go there?

MR. BOUCHE: No, no, no, no, no. Macbeth didn't have --

MR. BROWN: Didn't he ever have Lawson?

MR. BOUCHE: He might have had Lawson, yes. And the next-most-modern gallery after Daniel's handling the American art was Montross. And Macbeth was much more conservative than Montross or Daniel. Daniel was the real wild man.

MR. BROWN: Well, were Montross and Daniel contemporary in their gallery? I mean, at the same time?

MR. BOUCHE: Yes, except Montross was an older gallery. Montross had already been in business for a good many years before Daniel went in the business. But Montross was interested in modern art, and not only in American art, but Montross put on -- I remember -- in the early days that I'm talking about, they put on a marvelous exhibition of Matisse (inaudible) paintings and sculptures and drawings.

MRS. BOUCHE: But Daniel was all American.

MR. BOUCHE: Daniel was all American.

MR. BROWN: When did you leave Daniel?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, I didn't leave Daniel until -- I went from Daniel to Valentine Dudensing, and I think that must have been 1929.

MR. BROWN: Well, you'd changed this arrangement of $25 a week, hadn't you?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, yes, that stopped.

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: Was he agreeable?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, sure. Then he took the things on consignment. And from 47th Street, Daniel moved up to Madison Avenue between 57th and 58th Streets. Oh, yes, sir, that arrangement stopped by the time I got married. I know that because I couldn't have afforded that, and I'm (inaudible).

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: Do you think, did Daniel have an eye?

MR. BOUCHE: Daniel had a flair. The combination was wonderful. Daniel's assistant was Allison Hardpinch (phonetic). And Hardpinch was really a live wire. Daniel was a softie, and Hardpinch was not a softie. And the combination was very good because I think Daniel is a man who had the flair, who made the discoveries. And Hardpinch tried to keep him on the tracks. In other words, when Daniel's interest began to slip, Hardpinch tried to make him realize that he could maybe begin to cash in on these various artists.

MRS. BOUCHE: I think that the story of how you got into Daniel's Gallery is kind of an interesting one as far as your own personality is concerned.

MR. BOUCHE: You mean my mother?

MRS. BOUCHE: No, your salesmanship. (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: I think you're wrong about that. You're thinking of something else.

MRS. BOUCHE: No. You'd never carried any pictures up there.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, no, I didn't carry any. As a matter of fact, I know exactly what happened. There was a French family, a couple, who had the lease of the Casino in Central Park, which in those days was quite a restaurant. And they ran this concession there in Central Park. And they happened to be friends of Daniel's. And they spoke to my mother. They knew that I was painting and so on. They said they knew this man who was a picture dealer, and it might do me some good to meet him.

So, I was given a letter of introduction and went to see Daniel. But Marian says I didn't bring any work with me. And I had a nice chat with Daniel, and he said he'd like to see my stuff. And I didn't act too eager, because I didn't think it was wise, although I was very young and so on. But (inaudible).

MRS. BOUCHE: But I remember that you told me that Hardpinch said to you one day, "Well, bring some of your work in sometime," because you'd been in there looking at the exhibitions quite often without ever speaking of yourself.

MR. BOUCHE: And then what did I say? Because my memory fails me at times.

MRS. BOUCHE: Well, you brought your work in. They took you on. That's all.

MR. BROWN: Would you think that probably Daniel did little catalogs right from the beginning, like the one you

showed me?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, I'm sure he did. And Daniel is still alive. I mean, it would be -- he's very old now. He lives with his sister up in Westchester or someplace.

MR. BROWN: We have some material, and I must check that when I get back and see how much it is and what we did with him.

Then after Daniel, you never were with Montross?

MR. BOUCHE: No, no. I exhibited at Montross in group exhibitions, but I never was with Montross. I was first with Daniel, and then Valentine Dudensing gave me a one-man show. And I think I was only with him about a year. And then I was, for a very short time, with Farrago, probably a year or less. And then I went to Krashow (phonetic).

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, no. You were with the Downtown Gallery, Edith.

MR. BOUCHE: And the Downtown Gallery.

MR. BROWN: When you were with Daniel, evidently it was loose enough arrangement so that you could exhibit where you wanted to in groups?

MR. BOUCHE: No, no, no.

MR. BROWN: (Inaudible)

MR. BOUCHE: He took care of the whole thing.

MR. BROWN: I see.

MR. BOUCHE: I brought everything to him.

MR. BROWN: And if he wanted to put them at Montross, that was --

MR. BOUCHE: Yes, that's right. It was entirely up to him. So then, that's right. I'd forgotten about the Downtown Gallery. I was with the Downtown Gallery for, oh, about three or four years, I guess.

MR. BROWN: Was there something about Hardpinch that we were going to remember? You know, before we had that machine on, we were talking about him.

MRS. BOUCHE: I think that was the story of that.

MR. BROWN: About how you had to go?

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, oh, about the fact that our courtship went on there in the Daniel Gallery, the lot of it?

MR. BROWN: What were you doing there?

MRS. BOUCHE: I was taken there by Louis.

MR. BROWN: Oh.

(Laughter)

MRS. BOUCHE: And I didn't know anything about art at all. And he would try to teach me.

MR. BOUCHE: And another artist who was in the Daniel Gallery was my friend from Philadelphia.

MRS. BOUCHE: Bill Yarrow?

MR. BOUCHE: Bill Yarrow. And Bill Yarrow was a very vigorous, strong young man. He came from Philadelphia. And he was taken on by Daniel in a kind of a small way. And he was in a group exhibition. And they hung his picture up near the window where you really couldn't see it. It was obscured. So he came in one day, and Hardpinch said to him, "Well, Billy, what is the title of your painting?" So he said, "It's called 'In the Dark.'"

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: So Hardpinch said (inaudible).

MR. BROWN: What happened to Yarrow?

MR. BOUCHE: “No fun, now. Now, I mean, don’t be silly. What is really the name of it?”
“It’s ‘In the Dark,’ that’s what it’s called.” And with that he took Hardpinch, who was very slender and short, and he took him up by the scruff of the neck and by the seat of the pants, and he said, “There’s the painting. It’s called ‘In the Dark,’” and it was pretty cruel. There was something very -- it was certainly almost pathetic about Hardpinch.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, yes. He was weak. As a matter of fact, he died of --

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. BOUCHE: He died of Parkinson’s disease.

MRS. BOUCHE: Parkinson’s disease, something like that.

MR. BOUCHE: But he was a very weak man, and very much unlike Daniel, who was --

MRS. BOUCHE: The opposite of Daniel.

MR. BOUCHE: -- the opposite of Daniel. Daniel was heavy, tall, jovial, and full of fun. And Hardpinch was taciturn and just the opposite.

MR. BROWN: He did provide something that Daniel didn’t have.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, yes. (Inaudible) Daniel used to love to take his favorite artists out to dinner to have steak dinners. And then I’ll never forget with Marian we went to a movie with Daniel once, and there was one of these scary movies. It was an onrushing train. And Daniel got so excited and so childlike about it, he started hitting Marian (inaudible).

(Laughter)

MRS. BOUCHE: You know, he didn’t know how to deal with women at all. And I thought it was a great compliment to me, but it caught me on the back, a terrible clout. And this was a proof of his friendship.

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And then Daniel had a good trick over them. He kept saying to you --

MRS. BOUCHE: “How old are you?”

MR. BOUCHE: “How old are you?” You know, he wanted to keep track.

MR. BROWN: Well, when you parted, did you part friends? Or was the gallery just a business?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, yes, yes. He was kind of -- he felt badly that I left him because I left him at a time when the business was going downhill so badly that I just couldn’t take it anymore. And most artists left him. His pet became Kuniyoshi after he moved uptown. And Kuniyoshi came much later, but he really admired Kuniyoshi’s work and did a lot for Kuniyoshi.

MR. BROWN: Were either Daniel or Hardpinch good about getting your things in museums? Was this a --

MR. BOUCHE: Not too good. I mean, he had this client Ferdinand Howell, of --

MR. BROWN: Dayton?

MR. BOUCHE: Dayton? No, of Columbus.

MR. BROWN: Columbus, Columbus. I mix those two.

MR. BOUCHE: And he sold so much to Howell, in fact, to the Howell collection.

MR. BROWN: Is that where it all came from?

MR. BOUCHE: It all came from the Daniel Gallery.

MR. BROWN: You know, you see those things, and you always wonder how somebody in Columbus collected the things you did at the time he did, because it was quite a group.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, he came to -- Howell came to New York. He was another curious duck. He hadn't the personality of John Quinn. But he was a very quiet, silent man. But Daniel certainly sold him an awful lot of pictures, and he sold him a lot of good pictures. And the first museum at that time that they were represented in was the Museum in Columbus, because I was in the Howell collection.

MR. BROWN: What were your other first big sales about that time?

MR. BOUCHE: There were no big sales except what Daniel did for me. And then the place that -- I painted what I call my "lace curtain" period, when I painted Victorian atrocities.

MR. BROWN: You know, there was that little print of yours in that --

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, in the League?

MR. BROWN: Was that from that period?

MR. BOUCHE: Sure, sure.

MR. BROWN: It's lace curtains.

MR. BOUCHE: Lace curtains.

MR. BROWN: What about shows -- we're always interested in your reactions to, say, exhibitions or reviews that you felt were important and really representative of your work.

MR. BOUCHE: You mean, personally?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, the man who gave me the greatest boost at that time when I was with Daniel was Henry McBride. Henry McBride wrote some wonderful pieces about me. He was -- he liked the Victorian things I was doing. He thought they were different and so on.

MRS. BOUCHE: Glorifying bad taste.

MR. BOUCHE: Glorifying were buying bad taste.

MR. BROWN: (Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And Henry McBride really liked them. So, who else wrote them? I don't know. But I mean, the best reviews I got in the papers were from Henry McBride.

MR. BROWN: Is there any one catalog that you think of as --

MR. BOUCHE: You mean of a one-man show?

MR. BROWN: Yes. We were talking about a retrospective that you had. Is there one retrospective that you felt was --

MR. BOUCHE: No. The only --

MRS. BOUCHE: The one in Des Moines. Was it Des Moines or Cincinnati? Des Moines.

MR. BOUCHE: Des Moines, Iowa?

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: What about it?

MRS. BOUCHE: Well, I mean, that's the only retrospective you ever had, isn't it?

MR. BOUCHE: No.

MRS. BOUCHE: No? There was another show?

MR. BOUCHE: I had no -- oh, you can't have a catalog of the Des Moines show. But I don't quite get your question.

MR. BROWN: Well, when we were researching, we wanted to document your career. Sometimes, there is an

exhibition which perhaps you wrote --

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, probably the exhibition in Des Moines.

MR. BROWN: Sometimes, you know, they will work with an artist, and you make the selection to a certain extent of what goes in it. A lot of people would rather, you know, indicate, “Here. I feel my work was represented the way I would like to see it.”

MR. BOUCHE: I think the best show I ever had outside the one in Des Moines, Iowa --

MRS. BOUCHE: Last year?

MR. BOUCHE: -- was the one at the Century Club.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, at the Century.

MR. BOUCHE: There’s no catalog of that.

MR. BROWN: We could get a list from them, though.

MRS. BOUCHE: I liked the one in Des Moines better.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, it might have a list. As a matter of fact, I think I threw the list away the other day. I had it in my photos (inaudible).

MRS. BOUCHE: Never throw anything away (inaudible).

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: Yes. Yes. Never throw anything away. I’ll come down and go through your wastebasket.

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: But it’s just that I was wondering if, you know, there was a record someplace which you felt was -- are you going to do anything in the way of an essay or a piece for the Albany Show?

MR. BOUCHE: No. What do you mean? Write something?

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: Of course, that is one of the reasons the tapes are important.

MR. BOUCHE: Um-hm.

MR. BROWN: I always thought it -- you know, it’s so often some -- well, I don’t even know where they find these people that write introductions for exhibitions that are held in deluge. And they’re usually interpreting what they think the artist is doing where the artist has, often, something entirely different in mind.

MRS. BOUCHE: You’ve written some yourself, haven’t you? Introductions to catalogs?

MR. BOUCHE: To other artists.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Other -- sure. I never wrote any --

MR. BROWN: About your own.

MRS. BOUCHE: About yourself.

MR. BOUCHE: Any credo or anything like that.

MR. BROWN: Other than you have indicated that you had a great respect for Kuhn and that he, you know, took an interest in you early in your career and that you felt Pascin, too, was someone whom you admired greatly, was there anybody else at that period whom you --

MR. BOUCHE: Well, in Paris the man, before I came back to America, the painter whose work I really idolized was

the Frenchman Arabao Benar (phonetic). And I felt when I was a kid in Paris in art school if I ever met Benar I'd collapse. I had a real hero worship for him. There were a lot of other French painters. Of course, I was mostly -- the painters I knew in Paris were mostly the French painters. But there were American painters who were teaching over there like Frizika (phonetic), whose work I admired. And also, Richard Miller. Richard Miller, I don't think was as good -- even then I didn't think he was as good a painter as Frizika, and I still like Frizika.

And then when I came back to America in 1915, I'd shown my great loves of artists over there, although it did change. And at one time I was very interested in Matisse. But Bonar and Brear (phonetic), from a very early -- well, from about 1914 on, I had seen their work in Paris. And I admired them greatly. But when I came back to America, Brear and Bonar were unknown here. I don't think their work has been known in America more than about 35 years, 30 or 35 years.

MRS. BOUCHE: They're still heroes to you, aren't they?

MR. BOUCHE: They're still heroes to me. And I'm just -- I'm not -- I don't know. But I have an idea that the first man, the first American to really invest in Bonar and Brear was a man by the name of Worcester in Chicago. I don't remember his first name.

MR. BROWN: The Worcester collection? Does the Institute have it now?

MR. BOUCHE: Gee, I don't know.

MR. BROWN: They have some marvelous things, you know, those early French painters.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Well, when you were in Paris did you stay at one school?

MR. BOUCHE: No. I fluctuated between Telarasi and the Conshomier (phonetic). And they were both (inaudible) tiny little street in the Latin quarter, and sometimes I worked in one and sometimes I worked in another. And then I did take courses at the Ecole Ebosar (phonetic) in perspective. And I was completely lost in perspective because it involved mathematics, which I was lousy at. And I was a boy.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: So I quit.

MR. BROWN: Where would you see these paintings at that time, even in Paris?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, in Paris, the gallery that I felt was -- there were several galleries with very modern work. And the one I visited most often was Bernheim.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Right off the Boulevard. And then there was the Gallery de Louis (phonetic). And, oh, there were several of them. And then there was Kahnweiler, but that was a little later, who had a gallery and first began to show Picasso. But that was really -- Picasso wasn't shown in Paris in 1914.

MR. BROWN: But Kahnweiler was one of the French lenders the Armory Show Committee contacted. We have a lot of Kahnweiler correspondence.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. Yes. But let's see. The Armory Show was in --

MR. BROWN: '15. They collected --

MR. BOUCHE: Well, Kahnweiler probably had a gallery then at that time.

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. BROWN: -- that were in the Armory Show were his.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. I didn't know Kahnweiler's gallery until after I -- we came to France after the first World War. And I saw it for the first time in 1920, as a matter of fact.

MR. BROWN: When did you first teach?

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I taught in Madam (inaudible) School for Young Ladies in 1917, but that wasn't really serious teaching.

MR. BROWN: Teach painting or?

MR. BOUCHE: No, teaching drawing. Let's see. When did I start teaching? Help me out, Marian.

MRS. BOUCHE: I don't know, dear.

MR. BOUCHE: I don't know when I started teaching. Was it the Tyler School in Philadelphia that I started?

MRS. BOUCHE: No. It must have been the League you started.

MR. BOUCHE: No.

MRS. BOUCHE: No?

MR. BOUCHE: Because I went from -- Philadelphia, I went from Temple University from the Tyler School of Fine Arts to the League.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh.

MR. BROWN: Well, now, what were you doing? Were you commuting?

MR. BOUCHE: Yes, I was commuting. I had my car down there. I kept my car in Jenkintown in a garage. And then I'd take the Reading Railroad and rave about the landscape all the way. The landscape right through that part of New Jersey was really very exciting. The train, the Reading, went north of Trenton. And it was maybe -- because I had a very good class there. I taught there for two years. I took Franklin Watkins's place. And my students would say, "Did you see such-and-such an exhibition in New York?" And I'd say, "No, but I saw the landscape on the Reading Railroad."

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: Which they couldn't quite understand because they were art lovers.

But that was a very stimulating experience because it was an extremely good school.

MR. BROWN: Now, what year was that?

MR. BOUCHE: Well, now, that was just before the beginning of the second World War. That was 1929 and -- no, wait a minute. No, no, no, no. No, the war -- I was teaching in Philadelphia at the time of Pearl Harbor.

MR. BROWN: 1941.

MR. BOUCHE: 1941. So I was there '41 -- '40 and '41.

MR. BROWN: And then Watkins went to the Academy? Was that it?

MR. BOUCHE: Watkins had a leave of absence from Tyler. And he was painting portraits or traveling or something. And he asked me to take over, which I did.

MR. BROWN: We have an interesting letter Watkins wrote to Richardson -- at the academy. That's where they met. And Watkins was there at the same time, and then Richardson came to Detroit as curator of education. And when he left to go to winter tour, he turned over a lot of letters. And one of them is written about 1931. They had all just gotten out of school, and Watkins was writing, saying, "Can you get me a job waiting on table or ushering at theater?" And this terrible Depression.

MRS. BOUCHE: 1931.

MR. BROWN: Yes. These kids not knowing what they were going to do.

MR. BOUCHE: You mean to say Frank and Watkins were so hard up at the time?

MR. BROWN: According to his letter, he would have taken anything in his way.

MR. BOUCHE: I'm surprised.

MRS. BOUCHE: Didn't you find that during the war you sold better? I think I remember you saying that.

MR. BOUCHE: This was during the war, yes.

MR. BROWN: This is before.

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, you're talking about the Depression.

(Simultaneous conversation)

MRS. BOUCHE: I thought you sold well during the Depression, too.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, no. I didn't. I was doing murals up to the Depression.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, well, then you made money. That was my idea.

MR. BROWN: And then after -- you either came to the League --

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I came to the League when I left Philadelphia. I came to the League --

MRS. BOUCHE: In 1941, then.

MR. BOUCHE: 1941.

MR. BROWN: Did you enjoy it?

MR. BOUCHE: Sure. But that reminds me. (Laughter) "Did you enjoy it?" Sure, I enjoyed it. I loved to teach or I wouldn't teach. It's exciting to see -- I had students with talent and you could make great things possible, out-distance the teacher. But when you say, "Did you enjoy it?" it reminds me of when I was down on jury duty just before Christmas, and I was being examined by a lawyer for a possible place on his panel. And he said to me, "Mr. Bouche, have you ever served before?" And I laughed, I said, "I've been serving for years." And he said to me, "Do you enjoy serving on jury duty?" And I said, "No. Of course I don't enjoy it. It's a civic duty. I've got to do it, but I don't enjoy it." He said, "You're excused, Mr. Bouche." So he fired me.

MR. BROWN: For heaven's sakes.

MR. BOUCHE: I was supposed to say that I was crazy about it.

MR. BROWN: The thing you wanted most to do.

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: Who would have been --

MR. BROWN: Have you had any students that you were particularly interested in?

MR. BOUCHE: You have to be -- you have to have taught for many, many, many years and be pretty damn old -- because I'm old, but I haven't taught long enough -- to have students make the grade and have a great reputation. One of the best students I ever had and the one that made the biggest reputation, and he was my student at Tyler's, was Martin Jackson at Philadelphia. And then --

MRS. BOUCHE: Davis?

MR. BOUCHE: The Davis Gallery.

MRS. BOUCHE: Shikler was one of those.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. Aaron Shikler was one of my students. And he was with the Davis Gallery, and he's been very, very successful. He's a brilliant painter. And Davis, the man who runs the Davis Gallery -- you know the Davis Gallery?

MR. BROWN: No.

MR. BOUCHE: He was a student of mine. But he decided to give up painting for business, and he's running this very, very good gallery of young realists. And then Alvin Ross has also made a name for himself. He teaches at Pratt Institute. He was a student of mine at Temple University.

MR. BROWN: When were you at Temple?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, Temple University is when I was at the Tyler School.

MR. BROWN: Tyler, I see, I see.

MR. BOUCHE: See, the Tyler School of Temple University. That was in Philadelphia.

MR. BROWN: Have you always taught painting at the League?

MR. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: How many classes do you have?

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I have just one class at the League. I go there twice a week in the morning. And then I have -- the same day I go to my classes, the National Academy -- I teach at the League and the National Academy of Design.

MR. BROWN: Do you notice a difference?

MR. BOUCHE: Well, the National Academy, don't forget -- the National Academy is in 89th Street between Fifth and Madison Avenue, and it's very near Park Avenue. And there are an awful lot of ladies that come to my afternoon class. And I more or less get the carriage trade, I get the fur coats. And at the League, you get younger people. And so it's messier. Actually, the Academy school is the more comfortable, but having been a student at the Art Students League, I have, in a sense, more affinity for the League. It seems like more of an art school.

(Off the record)

MR. BROWN: We're getting down, really, to the thing that's hard for you to think, I think, because you know this so well. But we're getting down to things that we're just not going to get otherwise. And this is why we're so interested.

You know, when you were saying at lunch something about names come up that you can't remember. But you really have an excellent memory. And you can tell you've always been interested in people, which is a very important gift because you remember these people as real people and not just some guy that you happen to have sold a picture to or two or somebody you knew along the way. And while you shouldn't be giving so much of your time to all these academies and things, on the other hand, you know, you do -- you must get something out of it.

MR. BOUCHE: (Inaudible)

MRS. BOUCHE: He does. He does.

MR. BOUCHE: Is your thing on now?

MR. BROWN: Um-hm. Well, should we do the Folsom? Is it --

MR. BOUCHE: F-o-l-s-o-m. What was Folsom's first name?

MRS. BOUCHE: I don't remember.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, Folsom had a gallery in New York on Fifth Avenue. It was near Altman's, the lower part, between -- I think it was between 34th and 36th Street someplace. And then he moved up to 57th Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenue. And at that time, this was about 1919, I guess.

MRS. BOUCHE: Just before we got married.

MR. BOUCHE: Just before we were married. We were married in 1920, in the fall of 1920. So it must have been -- I must have had the time then, 1919.

MRS. BOUCHE: In order to get married you took the job.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. I took that job in order to get married, really. And the gallery, I think, was situated at 57th Street West. And I needed a job, and I'd never had a job in my life before. This was before Wanamaker's.

MR. BROWN: Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: And my brother-in-law was an architect and lived with my family, and I also lived with my family. And we wanted to do something that had to do with the arts. I mean, you're never going to make any money at painting, so you'd better -- I had to get a job someplace.

Here was this man Folsom, and called him up, and he said, "My brother-in-law is -- you might find a place for him

in your gallery, he knows a lot about pictures and so on." So I went to see Mr. Folsom one day, and I told him I'd be interested in working for him if he could find a place for me in his gallery. And he had over there all the typical American painting -- J. Francis Mercy, Dilween, Henry -- what was his name? -- Singer, and -- oh, I don't know, the whole American landscape school of that time and before, the real academic painters.

So I went in there and called on him one day. And I told him what I'd like to do, that I'd like to work for him, and so on. And he said, "Well, let me think about it." And I said, "Well, maybe we might be able to meet for lunch sometime." And he said, "Why don't we meet in a week from now?" And I said, "Well, Mr. Folsom, maybe you'll have lunch with me, and you'll tell me how you feel about it, and I can answer more questions at lunch." So he said, "All right. Fine." He said, "Where do you want to go to lunch?" And I said, "Well" -- I was playing as high as I could. I said, "Well, let's have lunch at the Ritz."

MR. BROWN: Really?

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: We had a wonderful old Ritz on Madison Avenue. So we met for lunch at the Ritz. And it so happened that that day was my lucky day. Everybody I knew that had any money, they were all having lunch at the Ritz at the same time.

MR. BROWN: I'm sure you didn't arrange that.

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: No, I didn't arrange that. So I went around from one table to another saying hello to everybody. And when I got back to the table, Folsom said, "The job is yours."

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: So, the job was beautifully paid in the amount of $50 a week. And what I was supposed to do is sort of give the gallery a shot in the arm, which it needed very badly. And I'll never forget, after the first week I worked for him, as I left, he handed me -- I left at five-thirty or six o'clock. He handed me a check. And I walked out towards Sixth Avenue, and I looked at the check. And it was a blank check. There was nothing on it. Folsom was a very absentminded man, and I don't think I'll go into all the queer --

MRS. BOUCHE: Why not? It's kind of interesting.

MR. BOUCHE: -- issues. Well, I don't know. This is kind of dirty toward Folsom. That's all.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh.

MR. BOUCHE: Folsom was a weak man. He was unmarried and very crazy about the ladies, particularly chorus girls and actresses.

MRS. BOUCHE: And alcohol.

MR. BROWN: And alcohol.

MR. BOUCHE: And alcohol. So when he combined the two, he used to get in terrible jams.

MR. BROWN: I hope he didn't give them blank checks.

MR. BOUCHE: No, he gave them real checks.

MR. BROWN: I see.

MR. BOUCHE: And part of my job, my extracurricular job, was to -- some evenings, he'd ask me to go along with him to keep him from being too generous with his staff.

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: I'll bet they loved you.

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: They hated my guts, you see. And it itched him so to give away money when he was feeling really happy with alcohol that one night I remember he gave me a check for $100 because I'd kept -- I'd saved him from the gals, you see. And I know the next morning he was very agitated and stomped around the gallery. And

he finally said to me, he said, “Louis, did I give you any money last night?”

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And I said, “Yes, Mr. Folsom. Here’s your check.” But I really did a good job there, if I say so myself.

MR. BROWN: Did you introduce younger artists?

MR. BOUCHE: I introduced younger artists and artists from abroad --

MRS. BOUCHE: You got a lot of publicity for him.

MR. BOUCHE: And I really got a terrific amount of publicity for the gallery. And, yes, I was making sure that issue of the little review -- John Storrs, who is an American sculptor from Chicago, lived in Paris for a good many years.

MR. BROWN: S-t-o-r-r-s?

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes, S-t-o-r-r-s. And I got a one-man show of Storrs. And -- oh, I forget who they were now. But we put on a lot of really very good exhibitions. And then one of the -- the Milch Gallery was above ours, above the Folsom’s Gallery in the same building. And Folsom would bring in a painting by Guy Wiggins or somebody like that. And he’d say, “Louis, this is a two-day picture.” And I’d say, “What’s a two-day picture, Mr. Folsom?” He’d say, “We’ll have it in the gallery for two days and it will be sold.”

Well, this didn’t often happen because the business wasn’t too snappy. And Folsom made a great mistake. He loved to talk, and he was so nervous. And sometimes after lunch he’d have too many cocktails. So he’d go up and tell Milch that the next morning at nine o’clock a big collector was coming from Chicago.

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: And so Milch would be out in the sidewalk.

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: Ready to catch him first.

MR. BOUCHE: Ready to catch him (inaudible).

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I had to fight with Mr. Folsom. But anyhow, this Folsom business couldn’t go on forever.

MR. BROWN: How long were you there?

MR. BOUCHE: I was there, what?

MRS. BOUCHE: Till we went to Europe.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes, until we got married, which -- I don’t think I was there more than nine months or something like that.

MRS. BOUCHE: No.

MR. BOUCHE: And so one day I came to him, and I said, “Mr. Folsom, can I have the morning off?” And he said, “Sure.” I said, “I’d like the morning off because” -- I didn’t tell him why I wanted the morning off. And we got married that morning, and I came back, and I said, “Well, Mr. Folsom, I got my business accomplished. I got married this morning.” He said, “Oh, well, Louis, you can have the whole day off.”

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: It was Mr. Folsom who was down in the Village?

MR. BOUCHE: No.

MR. BROWN: We’ll get to that.

MR. BOUCHE: He was never in the Village. And I remember that same day, the day we were married, I think -- or maybe it was a few days before -- we went to call on Walter Arensberg --

MRS. BOUCHE: It was the day we got married.

MR. BOUCHE: The day we got married we called on Walter Arensberg. And Walter was terribly sweet, and he gave me a check for $100 or $150 outright as a wedding present. So Marian and I rushed over to Bendels or one of these big ladies shops on 57th Street, and we spent, I think, the whole amount on underwear. And then we decided, as a wedding trip, it would be very good, we'd start out very thoughtfully. I had a few pennies in the bank. And we decided to go down to Atlantic City. Did I tell you this?

MR. BROWN: No. Not on tape.

MR. BOUCHE: So we went down to Atlantic City. And we got a room in a nice hotel. And then I said, "Hurry up, hurry up. Let's go out and walk on the boardwalk. It looks beautiful outside." We walked along the boardwalk and looked at the ocean. And I said to my young bride, I said, "Oh, this is stupid. I mean, let's go to Europe."

MR. BROWN: Much better idea.

MR. BOUCHE: We checked right out of the hotel.

MRS. BOUCHE: Nothing loaf.

MR. BOUCHE: We went down to the Battery to the Cunard line. I guess you had to go down in those days.

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: And we engaged first-class passage on the Carmania to England. And we sailed probably a week or so later --

MRS. BOUCHE: It was on that boat we met Sinclair Lewis, who had just made his big noise with --

MR. BOUCHE: With Main Street.

MRS. BOUCHE: Main Street.

MR. BOUCHE: Sinclair Lewis was full of beans and a happy guy, so successful.

MRS. BOUCHE: Knopf, his publishers, were onboard, too.

MR. BOUCHE: And Arthur Truck (phonetic) Knopf was onboard, and Heinemann, the publishers.

MRS. BOUCHE: He was an English publisher.

MR. BROWN: Who was Lewis married to?

MRS. BOUCHE: Grace.

MR. BROWN: Is she the one that's just written the book? Didn't she --

MR. BOUCHE: I don't know. This was his first wife, big, tall, handsome woman.

MRS. BOUCHE: Very pretty, really, really pretty.

MR. BOUCHE: They had this little boy, this little lost (inaudible) with them.

MRS. BOUCHE: So pretty.

MR. BOUCHE: It was a pretty little boy. And he was the one who was killed in the last war (inaudible).

MRS. BOUCHE: Well, I know Lewis was then later married to Dorothy Thompson.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MRS. BOUCHE: Now, she may have written a book.

MR. BROWN: No, it was the other wife. Did he marry again after Thompson? There may have been a third wife.

MR. BOUCHE: I'm sure he was married three times.

MRS. BOUCHE: I think he married three times. But whether Thompson was the last or the middle one or what, I don't know.

MR. BROWN: Don't know. Did you tell Mr. Folsom in the meantime that you were leaving?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, yes.

MR. BROWN: After he had been so nice and given you the whole day off to get married?

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: Well, we didn't. I didn't leave immediately.

MRS. BOUCHE: He didn't leave right away. We didn't go to Europe right away.

MR. BROWN: How long did he go on?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, he went on for several years after that. He had a lot of money.

MRS. BOUCHE: He was a rich man's son.

MR. BOUCHE: He was a rich man's son.

MRS. BOUCHE: The father wanted him to do something, so he set him up in this business.

MR. BOUCHE: But he wasn't a businessman for a long time. I mean, before I ever (inaudible).

MR. BROWN: Did you meet Arensberg?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, there's a question.

MRS. BOUCHE: Because I met him through you when we weren't married, and we used to go to his parties.

MR. BOUCHE: This is crazy.

MRS. BOUCHE: Marcel Duchamp used to be there.

MR. BOUCHE: I can't remember. Sheeler.

MRS. BOUCHE: All kinds of people were there.

MR. BOUCHE: Sheeler, and Sheeler's first wife, who used to vamp him with chocolate cake -- poor old Charlie Sheeler, you know. He was just about -- he was just about as warm as --

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, no, he had some warmth.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, he had some warmth, but he certainly didn't look warm.

MRS. BOUCHE: No.

MR. BOUCHE: And he was not -- he was not a chaser of ladies.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, no.

MR. BROWN: Don't forget what Arthur B. Davies turned out to be.

(Laughter)

MRS. BOUCHE: That's right.

MR. BOUCHE: That's right. That's right.

MR. BROWN: But was Arensberg working here?

MRS. BOUCHE: He never worked, did he?

MR. BOUCHE: Arensberg -- no, he never worked.

MRS. BOUCHE: His work consisted in his -- he'd try to find out whether Bacon or Shakespeare wrote Shakespeare.

MR. BROWN: And it goes on.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. Well, Arensberg lived in that wonderful block on --

MRS. BOUCHE: Sixth-seventh West.

MR. BOUCHE: Sixty-seventh, was it, West?

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes, big studio.

MR. BOUCHE: And he had a magnificent studio there. And of course, he had all these Matisse's, and he had Picassos. And he had those big glass panels that Marcel Duchamp made. And he had a marvelous collection of early American furniture, really very crude stuff. And it looked marvelous with these very modern paintings. And they were sky'd way up to the ceiling, he had so many of them.

MR. BROWN: Did he buy Americans?

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: He wasn't just --

MRS. BOUCHE: No, not just French.

MR. BOUCHE: He bought one of mine. He bought a few Americans. And he had a brother-in-law who was sort of a mediocre painter. I don't remember --

MRS. BOUCHE: Parker?

MR. BOUCHE: No. Parker wasn't his name.

MRS. BOUCHE: Well, he had a brother-in-law by the name of Parker.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I don't remember that.

MRS. BOUCHE: Witherdawn (phonetic)?

MR. BOUCHE: No, not brother-in-law.

MRS. BOUCHE: No?

MR. BOUCHE: He was a charming guy.

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: And he used to write. Used to go to the parties, and he wrote art criticism.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh. Oh, yes, the brother-in-law was short.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes. Parker -- he was not related to --

MR. BROWN: But Mrs. Arensberg was there?

MR. BOUCHE: Mrs. Arensberg was always around. As a matter of fact, she was there, but she was never around --

MRS. BOUCHE: As a matter of fact, she was almost never around. She was always out to the opera and would come home after the opera, and the party would be in full fling, and she'd greet everybody politely and pleasantly, and disappear.

MR. BOUCHE: Yes.

MRS. BOUCHE: This was his life, not hers.

MR. BOUCHE: And then there were plenty of drinks at the party. Walter would smoke --

MRS. BOUCHE: Murads?

MR. BOUCHE: Murads, I think. But the evening around one o'clock when it was getting late, it was about time that the rice pudding came out.

MR. BROWN: Rice pudding?

(Laughter)

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: He always had rice pudding at every one of his parties.

MRS. BOUCHE: Various things, but there was always rice pudding. A funny kind of food.

MR. BROWN: Oddly, what he found was an antidote to too much drinking or something.

MR. BOUCHE: I told you the story about the army (phonetic) Rousseau I got for him in Paris.

MR. BROWN: Yes. You should tell that now.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I went to Paris in 1920.

MRS. BOUCHE: That was on our honeymoon.

MR. BOUCHE: No, the year before.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, the year before. That's right. Before we were married.

MR. BOUCHE: I went to Paris in 1920, and Walter said, "If you see anything that you think I would like very much to have, I wish you'd get it for me." And I got in touch with Madam Delaunay, Robert Delaunay's Russian wife. Delaunay, the French painter, was still in exile in Spain because he had skipped France to evade military service. And I knew that he had a lot of paintings like the Douanier Rousseau. So I contacted Madam Delaunay, and I met her at her hotel. And she promised to have some of Rousseau's paintings there. And I bought for Walter Arensberg, I bought that marvelous Rousseau of a jungle scene with two monkeys and one of them holding something that looks like a milk bottle.

And the price was $700, which was really fantastic. And it's now, of course, in the (inaudible) collection in the (inaudible) museum. And the director told me -- I think you -- and I asked him not so long ago how much he valued the painting at. I think he said something like $60,000.

MR. BROWN: I'm sure. You know, they say (inaudible) good ones.

You know, Delaunay, when he was in Spain, he had a connection with that Dr. Waxom (phonetic) that we've talked about.

MR. BOUCHE: Waxom.

MR. BROWN: Yes. And we had the most beautiful letters -- you know, he always decorated them. He drew his designs on the top. And it's exactly the same period because he's talking about how difficult it is to be there and the war problems. And I don't know how they ever got together.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, Waxom -- well, I guess Dr. Waxom must have gone to New York. Let's see.

MRS. BOUCHE: You must have a lot of stuff in all this research you're doing on Arensberg, haven't you?

MR. BROWN: Not much yet.

MRS. BOUCHE: No?

MR. BROWN: We run across his name. But we must go down to Philadelphia sometime. We did the museum before the collection went there.

MRS. BOUCHE: No, I mean about the parties that he gave here in New York.

MR. BROWN: No. Nobody has ever talked about them.

MRS. BOUCHE: No? Because we went to an awful lot of them.

MR. BOUCHE: Who were the others? Now, Sheeler was always there.

MRS. BOUCHE: Arlene Dresser.

MR. BOUCHE: Arlene Dresser.

MRS. BOUCHE: Arlene Dresser.

MR. BOUCHE: Marcel Duchamp.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, he had all kinds of funny people, too.

MR. BOUCHE: Herman Patrick Tappe (inaudible).

MRS. BOUCHE: Tappe. He liked to call people (inaudible).

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. BOUCHE: There was a prizefighter that used to go there.

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes, a prizefighter. All kinds of weird people would come. And then there was that funny woman that lived in their house. I don't know if she was a countess or what. And she said to us once when we were going up in the elevator, "I don't know why they give us rice" -- or rice pudding -- "rice is for mice, I say."

(Laughter)

MRS. BOUCHE: And we were stupid enough to tell them about it. We thought they'd laugh. But they didn't; he was furious.

MR. BROWN: Really?

MRS. BOUCHE: He said she could never come to his parties again.

MR. BROWN: Wow.

MR. BOUCHE: And then I know Walter used to take us out to dinner once in awhile.

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: And we used to go -- he used (inaudible) part of the Claridge Hotel, which is still, I think, in existence at Times Square.

MR. BROWN: Yes, it is.

MR. BOUCHE: But the Claridge was a very nice hotel in those days. Today it's --

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. BROWN: I suppose a lot of these hotels down --

MR. BOUCHE: Well, the Astor was nice, too, in those days.

MR. BROWN: You told me -- I thought it was -- was it when you first were married or something, about this man down in the Village that had -- didn't you live down there with somebody?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, oh, oh! I rented a small room, really, which I called a studio --

MRS. BOUCHE: From Watt Williams?

MR. BOUCHE: -- in Boston Square South in an apartment that was owned by a man by the name of Watt Williams, who was a housepainter. It was a ground-floor apartment. And Watt Williams was a sort of a messy, heavy, heavily built, and heavily mentally, and not a very attractive, although a nice guy. And I had this little studio, and I paid my rent and so on. And he said to me one day, he said, "The Missus is coming home." And I didn't even know he was married. I said, "Well, where is your wife?" He said, "Oh, she's on the water. She's coming back from Paris. She's been living in Paris."

So Mrs. Williams did arrive one day. And the shock was tremendous because although Mrs. Williams was not beautiful, she was --

MRS. BOUCHE: Far from it.

MR. BOUCHE: She was far from being beautiful. But she had a nice figure, and she was quite smartly dressed. And she didn't seem to be the right mate for this funny housepainter.

Well, on the way back to America, she had crossed the Atlantic with Marcel Duchamp. And she apparently had fallen seriously for Marcel, and she seemed to pay no attention to her husband at all. He went along with his scaffolds and his turpentine, and she started going to lunch at the Lafayette with Marcel Duchamp.

And there was another man that she'd met onboard who seemed to trail along after her and Marcel Duchamp. And I later found out that he had a terrific yen for this Mrs. Williams, and he was a man by the name of Leo Arnarvi (phonetic), who was --

MRS. BOUCHE: Syrian.

MR. BOUCHE: Levantine, a Syrian. And he decided that Mrs. Williams had no use for him and was not really serious, and he was crazy about her. So he wanted to commit suicide. But he wanted only to commit suicide in my studio. And I wouldn't have any part of it, you see. I'd try to urge him to go out and kill himself --

(Laughter)

MR. BOUCHE: -- in Boston Square, but not in my small studio.

MR. BROWN: It would get a little messy, I should say.

MR. BOUCHE: So this went on for years. He was a cute guy. And you see, he went to Baroness and with Mrs. Williams -- Marcel Duchamp was a very attractive man, and all the dames seemed to fall for him.

MR. BROWN: He must have been busy.

You know, we also talked -- this reminds me of Duncan.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, yes, Charles Duncan.

MR. BROWN: Now, where did you know Charles Duncan?

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. BOUCHE: Charles Duncan was a friend of Charlie Daniel's.

MR. BROWN: Charlie who?

MRS. BOUCHE: Who?

MR. BOUCHE: Of Charles Daniel, the dealer. And I'm not sure but what Charles Duncan didn't have some small watercolors or something in the Daniel Gallery. I don't remember his ever showing.

MR. BROWN: I didn't realize he -- wasn't he a housepainter?

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes, as a living.

(Simultaneous conversation)

MR. BOUCHE: He painted for J. O. Goude (phonetic), or whatever it's called, the billboards, outdoor signs.

MRS. BOUCHE: They would like to have been painted. He probably did paint.

MR. BOUCHE: But he was a very modest guy, and he was a great friend -- as you know, he was a great friend of Marin's.

MR. BROWN: Marin's.

MR. BOUCHE: And he lived over near Marin in Palisade over in (inaudible) quarter, you know, over there. And he was a very, very nice, attractive person.

MRS. BOUCHE: He was. A darling.

MR. BOUCHE: He was lots of fun, a very curious character.

MR. BROWN: Was he very much of the art world?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, yes, he was very much of the art world. But he wasn't really a practicing artist. He was kind of mysterious. We never knew what he was doing and so on. But I knew that whatever he'd do would have quality because the man himself had quality.

MR. BROWN: Is he alive?

MR. BOUCHE: I don't know.

MR. BROWN: We have these letters, and I think he gave them to us. Marvelous Marin letters, which are just like his paintings.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, did you meet him?

MR. BROWN: No. Those were there when I went with the Archives.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh.

MR. BROWN: I was interested that you had known him. And I had this trivia (inaudible).

MR. BOUCHE: I've got snapshots of him.

MR. BROWN: Really?

MRS. BOUCHE: He used to come and see us a lot.

MR. BOUCHE: He was the redheaded --

MRS. BOUCHE: He used to come and have dinner with us.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, he used to come and have dinner with us.

MRS. BOUCHE: I used to think he was kind of a lonely person.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, he was. He was a lonely person, very shy.

MRS. BOUCHE: We talked about his love affair with Gertrude Lawrence.

MR. BROWN: Oh.

MRS. BOUCHE: He'd tell us he was madly in love. And we'd say, "Tell us about her." He didn't tell us who it was. And he saw her every night. And finally we said, "Well, who is she?" "Gertrude Lawrence." He didn't know her at all. He just went to the theater every night, see.

MR. BROWN: I guess there are a lot of people like that, that do.

(Laughter)

MR. BROWN: You know, the other thing that I think we should talk about -- we've talked about the first day -- was your father and his work.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I think I told you that my father worked for a French -- you mean when he started in decorating?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: He started in the interior decorating field with a Frenchman by the name of Fionor Allard, A-l-l-a-r-d. And his business, his offices, were on Madison Avenue between 34th Street and 35th Street. And my father worked for him on a salary. They weren't in partnership. But Mr. Allard took care of the business in Paris, and my father had full charge of the business here.

MR. BROWN: Now, you said he'd been trained in jewelry?

MR. BOUCHE: He had been trained in jewelry designing at the Ecole Des Arts (inaudible) Metier in Paris. When he came to this country at first, his first job here was in designing jewelry. And apparently at that time -- it seems queer -- but the center of jewelry designing, of the jewelry trade, was in Newark, New Jersey. And that's where he first went when he came here.

MR. BROWN: That's strange, isn't it?

MR. BOUCHE: Um-hm. And he didn't speak any English at all.

But when he was with Allard, he did a great deal of work with Sanford White and with Horace Trombar, the architect in Philadelphia. And I was telling you about the Tyler School. Well, right across the way from the Tyler School out in Jenkintown was the big Widener estate. My father did the whole interior of that Widener house.

MRS. BOUCHE: And he did the Plaza.

MR. BOUCHE: He did the Oak Room at the Plaza. He did --

MRS. BOUCHE: The Metropolitan Opera House.

MR. BOUCHE: -- the Opera House interior. He did most of the big houses in --

MRS. BOUCHE: Newport.

MR. BOUCHE: -- Newport, the Berkshires, Lenox, and Stockbridge.

MR. BROWN: Now, when you say -- would he design fixtures?

MR. BOUCHE: No. He actually designed paneling and the interior architecture. In those days the words "interior decoration" I don't think existed.

MR. BROWN: No. Before Elsie de Wolfe.

MR. BOUCHE: Before Elsie de Wolfe. And he really designed the interior, architectural interior of these rooms. And he may not have even had anything to do with fabrics or furniture, although I think he did have.

MR. BROWN: Now, did you keep any of his drawings?

MR. BOUCHE: I have a few of them. I don't even know where they are.

MRS. BOUCHE: You have a little book of his, haven't you? Or is that your grandfather?

MR. BOUCHE: No, no, no, no. I have no books of his drawings.

MRS. BOUCHE: That book of drawings you have?

MR. BOUCHE: No.

MRS. BOUCHE: No?

MR. BOUCHE: I have a book of pencil drawings, and it has nothing to do with him.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, I thought they were his.

MR. BROWN: Did he ever paint parts of the ceilings? Or did he paint any of the pictures?

MR. BOUCHE: No. He didn't actually do any painting. But I remember -- you see, his drawings were -- ones that I remember, and I'm sorry I didn't keep them -- entirely disappeared. It was all my mother's fault because she never kept them in any kind of order. And I suppose a lot of them stayed -- most of them stayed in the firm.

But he did watercolors of details, and he did watercolors of suggestions for ceilings with cupids or clouds or what-have-you. But of course, they were executed by other people. These were just the designing notes.

MR. BROWN: How did he switch from the jewelry?

MR. BOUCHE: Well, I think it was a matter of necessity. He -- at one point he worked for Tiffany's. And then he decided that he would go in business for himself in interior decorating and interior architecture, which he did, and he failed. And that's when he went in with this Frenchman, this man by the name of (Inaudible).

MR. BROWN: Tiffany may have -- because at that time they were doing interiors, too. They used -- I know there's a famous boat in Detroit that has Tiffany interiors. They just went in and did everything.

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BROWN: There's another big house in Detroit that had Tiffany interiors in them. It was in a changing

neighborhood. When it was sold, a Negro bought it. It belonged to one of the Fishers, and when the Widow Fisher found out that it had been sold to a Negro, she was outraged. So when she left she took all the Tiffany door handles. Well, this Negro doctor was very bright, and he just called Tiffany and told them the house, and they said, “Why, of course, we have those designs in our files.” So he ordered them and got even with Mrs. Fisher by having -- he still has Tiffany door handles, which to him were very important.

MRS. BOUCHE: (Laughter)

MR. BROWN: But you never worked with your father?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, no.

MRS. BOUCHE: Oh, no. Louis’s father died when Louis was about 13.

MR. BOUCHE: I was 13 when he died.

MR. BROWN: But it is -- it’s a tradition, anyway, of art.

MRS. BOUCHE: Um-hm. Um-hm.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, he was the first one to encourage me. And he wanted me to learn how to draw, and he got me a drawing teacher when I was a little bit of a boy. And I don’t know why he laid so much stress on that, whether he’d planned that I’d become a painter someday. Because you see, he wanted to be a painter and he couldn’t afford it.

MRS. BOUCHE: Well, that’s why.

MR. BOUCHE: So by the time he died, I was already -- I’d claimed many (inaudible). I was doing the best I could. And then it was at that time, after my father’s death, a few months after, maybe six months after that we moved to Europe in 1909.

MR. BROWN: But your mother did come back, too, when you came back?

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, yes. She came back, and then she used to go abroad nearly every year. And then she lived in Paris after we were married. She lived in Paris for quite a few years. And then she’d come back here because --

MRS. BOUCHE: Well, she had to. As long as she had the French -- the American citizenship she had to come back every so often anyway.

MR. BOUCHE: Oh, that’s right. She was a naturalized citizen.

MR. BROWN: Yes. It’s an interesting tradition, again, that’s broken down, that the -- the fact that paneling was hand-designed and designed by somebody with some training, that he worked in jewelry, too, before he went into that. It’s a kind of (inaudible) painting today.

MR. BOUCHE: And you know the funny part of it is -- you’ve seen the watercolors.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: You know, my father had this terrifically minute sense of scale, which I suppose came from his designing the paneling and so on, and this architectural designing. But I think he loved that detailed scale. And it’s in my work.

MR. BROWN: Yes, it is.

MR. BOUCHE: Funny thing. I loved detail, you know. I love small scale. I say to myself now, “I’m going to cut it out. I’m going to do something on a big scale.” And I find myself going right back to the same old thing.

MR. BROWN: Your things also have a big scale. It’s a very big -- in all these, no matter what the big scale, it’s a very big overall --

MR. BOUCHE: Well, that’s very nice, but I don’t see it.

MR. BROWN: I think it’s very clear in everything you do that there’s a big overall conception that holds the detail. But I would never think -- you know, when you talk about it, I never think of your work -- when you say “detailed,” because I think you work in very big areas, too.

MRS. BOUCHE: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: There's been a lot of little stuff, too, inside of those big areas.

But he -- he does (inaudible). I've got another watercolor of his in my bedroom of flowers.

MRS. BOUCHE: That (inaudible).

MR. BOUCHE: No, that isn't, dear.

MRS. BOUCHE: You've got your father and your grandfather mixed.

MR. BOUCHE: (Inaudible)

MR. BROWN: That one we did look at, and I knew that that was older.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, that's older.

MR. BROWN: Were your family Parisians?

MR. BOUCHE: My father was. My mother was born in Algeria. Because my grandfather on my mother's side was a French army officer. He actually fought in the Crimean War, which seems fantastic.

MR. BROWN: Yes, it is when you think of it.

MR. BOUCHE: He fought in the war of 1870. And he was a tall Frenchman. He was six-foot-four. And in the Franco-Prussian War he was shot in the leg. And I think he rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel.

But then, you see, he had a lot of kids. Of course, they were Catholic. He had a lot of children. And he couldn't support them because to be an army officer in France in those days you had to have an independent income. I guess you still do. And he couldn't support all this brood. And my grand-aunt, Madam Drapauche (phonetic), who lived on 15th Street, was his sister. And he asked her if she couldn't take a couple of the children. So she said, "Yes, send them to New York." So my mother and a sister of hers, my aunt, came to New York, first my mother and then my aunt later.

And my mother came here when she was eight years old. My father when he came to the United States, I think, was 18. My father was a Parisian, but my mother was born in Algeria because that's where my grandfather was stationed at that time.

MR. BROWN: Have you ever considered leaving New York?

MR. BOUCHE: No. You mean to move to some other city in the United States?

MR. BROWN: Yes, along the way, yes.

MR. BOUCHE: No, because -- oh, I don't know. New York is the city in the United States that's nearest to Europe. It's the most cosmopolitan. It's certainly the greatest art center in the -- I was born here. I really like New York. I curse it all the time, and (inaudible) it's pretty exhausting. It's conducive -- it's expensive and conducive to high blood pressure, but it's a wonderful city. I love Paris and I lived there for a long time. But I don't think either Marian or myself would -- I know she wouldn't consider being an ex-patriot. I don't think I'd be happy living outside of the United States.

MR. BROWN: When did you first -- when were you elected to the Academy?

MR. BOUCHE: National Academy of Design? Why, this is terrible -- dates.

MR. BROWN: I can find that. That's --

MRS. BOUCHE: That's easy to find out.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. BOUCHE: You have the book that I --

MR. BROWN: Yes, I've got that. I must bring that out. I have it with me.

MR. BOUCHE: I also don't know what year I was elected to the Institute of Arts and Letters. I forget.

MR. BROWN: Is the Institute nominated from the Academy?

MR. BOUCHE: No. No. The Institute -- they're going to do the National Center for the Arts.

MR. BROWN: But in the Institute, there is rank, isn't there? I mean, don't you get to be --

MR. BOUCHE: That's right. The National Institute of Arts and Letters -- there are, I believe -- what is it? -- 50 chairs or 25 chairs in the American Academy of Arts and Letters. And you are not automatically, but when somebody dies in the Academy, you can be nominated, elected from the National Institute of Arts and Letters to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

MR. BROWN: I see. That's what I understand.

MR. BOUCHE: But the National Academy of Design, of course, has got nothing to do with either one of these organizations.

MR. BROWN: No. But I realized that there was another academy which was a limited one.

MR. BOUCHE: Well, that's this one, the Academy of Arts and Letters. I haven't been in the Institute too terribly long. I was elected in 1953. I've been there 10 years. But I've been in the National Academy of Design a lot longer than that.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MRS. BOUCHE: (Laughter)

MR. BROWN: I think we should listen to a little of this, and then I should let you go.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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