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Oral history interview with Emily  
Mason Kahn, 1965 Jan. 27

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# Transcript

## Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a recorded interview with Emily Mason Kahn on January 27, 1965. The interview took place in New York City, New York and was conducted by Harlan B. Phillips for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. This interview is part of the Archives of American Art's New Deal and the Arts project.

The original transcript was edited. In 2022 the Archives retranscribed the original audio and attempted to create a verbatim transcript. Additional information from the original transcript has been added in brackets and given an -Ed. attribution. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability by the Archives of American Art. The reader should bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of spoken, rather than written, prose.

## Interview

EMILY MASON KAHN: I don't know what they're talking about.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well—

EMILY MASON KAHN: I think there's a lot of [laughs]—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I think probably the [inaudible] way to get into it is in personal terms to find out what it was you were doing in '32, '33, and '34. This period has to be recreated, in terms of its atmosphere, and this is the stuff that is elusive and vanishes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Let's see, now was I in in '32? Maybe so. Forgotten exactly when I went in.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, it didn't start until '35.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Five, yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Right. But back before that, what were you doing?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, well I wasn't even in Washington then. I was—well, nothing at that point, really. I was—that was probably the only part of my life when I wasn't doing something professionally, because I was a concert pianist, you know, before. And a carillonneur. I did do some carillon work in Chicago, I was living in Chicago, and substituted there, and I was practicing six to eight hours a day on piano, which stood me in a good stead when I went to Washington because I gave a lot of radio programs and White House concerts before I went in the WPA

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You did?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: How did you—how did this opportunity on the WPA come to you?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, Mrs. Roosevelt, in the first place, knew of my work in the settlement house in Albany when they were governor, and so, when Ellen Woodward and Nikolai Sokoloff and Harry Hopkins were looking for someone to head up the education part of the Music Project, they thought of me. So that was my—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Had you known Nikolai Sokoloff before?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, I knew him a few months before, not—[side conversation] Will you have some of these?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I've got some, yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —a few months before I went on it, you know. You know, so much of the work was done at cocktail parties and informal dinner parties, and so on, and I was invited in on those, and that's how I met Nikolai.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative]. When you went to Washington what did you find? What did you join, in effect? What was the Federal Art Projects Number One, I guess they called it. Or the Federal Projects Number One which included music?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Where were they? Where were they located? What were you—what did you have to do?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, it was nearly a—sort of a mess. [They laugh.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: A lovely word to describe it.

EMILY MASON KAHN: I mean, it was a great deal of floundering around to find out how to get going, and get these Projects started, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: And, of course, we had the people on the relief rolls. We knew their names, at least, and what they were supposed to do. And then the point was, were they capable of doing this work, or were they has-beens, you see?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: And, well, of course, they had to be interviewed, didn't they? They had to have—oh, what do you call it?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Had to fire for effect?

EMILY MASON KAHN: No. Tested, but that's not the word. In other words, they had to play for us, in order to see if they were capable of fitting into the unit, you see. Now I'm talking about the playing unit, of course. And then I had the teachers, and most of them—oh, practically all of them on the relief rolls had only taught those individually, you see. And also the old methods and so. So the chief job was to retrain the teachers, and teach them to teach in groups, which was a tremendous job, because, in the first place, they resisted it, and—well, as a matter of fact, I was a teacher myself, and I had a little resistance to teaching in a groups, too, thinking that children need more individual attention. But from it we developed an excellent system, and we trained the teachers so that they could get back in to their own lives and teach them in groups, where they could earn more money for the same length of time, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I see. The training program, was it a school—an institute established, for training? How was this done?

EMILY MASON KAHN: We travelled, all the time.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Did you really?

[00:05:05]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Held seminars and so on, with the teachers. It was a constant job of training. And then we also got out books for them, and pamphlets, to teach them how to teach. And—so then, there was also—there was a travelling—I don't know how much we travelled—all the time. Of course Nikolai was out most of the time, conducting the orchestras and working with the conductors. But we travelled also to raise the 25 percent local funds, which was required, because it was—Julius [ph] probably told you about it.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And it meant going to the mayor, the union, the music teachers' associations, and so on.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sponsorship.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Sponsorship. Trying to get that 25 percent that was required from each project.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Yeah. That was not a little difficult in negotiation, or what?

EMILY MASON KAHN: It was quite difficult, in most cases. And I had a great deal—whenever I think about the union striking, I get so mad, because I really had—that was one of my big jobs, was working with the unions to get them to contribute, because their musicians were on the roads, you know?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And they just couldn't care less, the members, you know.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: All they wanted was their dues, and they didn't care whether they got on the Music Project or not, you know? And I really had some real battles.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Did you—when you had been in Chicago, did you see Petrillo?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes, I saw Petrillo a couple of times, but I didn't have any difficulty with him. Of course, he was national—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —and he understood the problem, and—it was some of the little boys, you know.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: The local fellows. Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And you see, the unions—I don't know if they still do it, but what they were doing then was giving few men jobs all the time—every time a job came up, it would be the same men that would be called up. Therefore, these people never got any jobs and they had to go on relief.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes, yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: So they still felt the same way [laughs] about contributing to the Music Project.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But it was—you know, for a period of time, it was more or less successful, wasn't it, in gaining sponsorship from the unions?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But there was an initial period of resistance and hostility because they really didn't understand.

EMILY MASON KAHN: No, they didn't.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And then, when you get a big project—I mean, a big symphony orchestra like Buffalo or Oklahoma City—and so on, then they really saw what was being accomplished—really something might come out of it. Then they became more interested in letting go of the purse strings.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. How was all this organized from Washington? I mean, you know, who took care of the store? [Laughs.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, you see, there was a—you mean—we were within the framework of the WPA, of course. And I might say, one of the step-children, really, you know, because a lot of the people at the top—I mean, the regional people and the district people and so on that were far off from being musicians or interested in the arts, and it was real difficult to get them to give us the proper people and pay the proper salaries and, in other words, to

recognize the value of it. But it all—it was an uphill struggle, but it was a tremendous crusade, and that's the way we felt about it. We really felt that we accomplished a tremendous amount. And our hearts were broken when we had to stop, because of the defense projects. Because we thought with a few more years, we'll get local sponsorship for our teachers and for the orchestras and the bands, and for the artists, too. And the theater. And we would really have a federal art center, or organization. All we needed was a little more time.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: A little more time.

EMILY MASON KAHN: But that's the feeling we had. Now, whether it would have come, I don't know, but—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I'm interested in this crusade thing.

EMILY MASON KAHN: That was—we all had the feeling. I don't know if Julius [ph] mentioned it to you, but we did. [Inaudible] Julius and I were also in OPA [Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply], and worked closely together. And it wasn't the same feeling among us, you know.

[00:10:02]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: But we still, as I say, we have friendships in the WPA all over the country, yet. Julius looks them up and he goes around, when I go places, I call them up to say—you know, we still have a good comradeship.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: How effective was Mrs. Woodward? Or how—she comes out of a wholly different kind of background.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Southern lady, a political background. How does she do—I think she was, what, the administrator? Effectively, the deputy administrator.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah, in charge of Women's Projects and the Art Project for a while.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, she wasn't [laughs] the easiest person in the world to work with.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: She wasn't?

EMILY MASON KAHN: No, and—from our standpoint. But she's—I think—because I don't care about working with women anyway. I mean, it's very difficult. And the men found her quite difficult, but when her successor came in, we found that maybe we would rather have Mrs. Woodward—Ellen Woodward [laughs] than the one we got.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mrs. Kerr was something else.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mrs. Kerr, yes. Florence Kerr. She was a district—head of the Women's Project—regional, in Chicago, and we were very fond of her. You know, all of us that travelled there and thought she did a magnificent job, and I remember very well being in the Chicago office when news of her appointment came through, and I said, Oh, Florence, I'm just delighted we're going to have you. It's going to be wonderful.

It went to her head completely, you see. And she just—well, we called her the "little white mother," I mean, because she—you know, she had this troop of yes men around her all the time, and just demanded this—and she lived in the same apartment as I. And she—I'd see her coming, coming home with men carrying packages for her, and flowers and so on. The regular entourage she had. And—oh, she gave poor Julius an awful time, and all the men—except the ones who said yes, and I remember very well that after I'd gone to OPA and Walter Keplinger [ph] came down and asked for a job. And I said, Walter, what happened? Well, he didn't tell me, but I heard afterward. You know, he'd always, "Yes, Mrs. Kerr. Yes, Mrs. Kerr. Yes, Mrs. Kerr." And one day he said, "No," and he was out. [Harlan B. Phillips laughs.] And this was the way it was. So, Ellen Woodward wasn't quite that bad, but—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, did she understand the nature of the Music Project?

EMILY MASON KAHN: I think so, yes. One of the first projects was—one of the very first field trip I took was to Mississippi. And of course, Mrs. Walston [ph] was there, too. And they gave me wonderful support down there, and I really set up a very good education practice all over the state. Because they were there at the time I went, and they sort of, you know, gave me the push in the right direction and support.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: Local people saw that I had their support, and of course, they were two darlings of Mississippi, so they were—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: So, it just came up roses?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes. [They laugh.]

I think they were really both interested in the Music Project, but they were much more interested in the sewing project, mattress project, and the—they could see results.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sewing rooms, lunch kitchens.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Hot lunch.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Hot lunches.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Laughs.] What did we used to call those? Hot school lunches, yes. [Laughs.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Hot school lunches, yeah. Well, the—was anything done at all for children? I mean, you've indicated that teachers were retrained, but you know, I've had—I learned how to play the baritone horn in 1935. Someone threw me a baritone horn and said, This is yours if you'll learn how to play it.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I learned how to play it. It was by the school. Now, I don't know whether WPA was involved in this sort of thing, or not. Suddenly, the school had instruments. And we've had a band day in Mount Vernon, New York, ever since. Every school with a band, you know?

[00:15:03]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, yes. I think a great started from that, and the—well, one of a—I wish I could quote the statistics now, but I can't—but I used to in my talks around the country—tell what happened to the audiences at the orchestral concerts. Not ours, particularly, but the real ones, you know. Where it would be that most of the audience before WPA consisted of middle-aged and older people who were always—it was a thing to do to patronize the orchestra, you know, and go there. Like the Philharmonic here, and so on. And—but after we'd exposed the children, they had music appreciation, you see, with our orchestras going into the schools and giving concerts—not coming back to them—giving concerts on a graded basis. In other words, they were first exposed to easy to listen to music, and the conductor, or somebody who was capable of doing, would give the stories about the music, and play the different instruments, so the children would learn what the instruments were. And maybe have the children come up, and you know, get close and look at them. And then we'd have [inaudible] next hard-to-listen-to music, or maybe the next concert or maybe would be for the next year, you see. And we wrote up the programs—suggested programs for the conductors to follow, so that they would build their programs to suit the intelligence and knowledge of the children. That made it so that the audiences for the symphony orchestra changed to the point where there were so many children at this—I don't mean little children. I mean teenagers, 12 and up, composed, say, 50 or 60 percent of the audience.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Oh.

EMILY MASON KAHN: They saved their money—their milk money or their soda money—for something like this, so that they could go to the next concert of the symphony orchestra. So, that was one of the big things we felt we were doing, was building an audience. I remember very well being in—I don't know if you've ever—have ever seen *the New York Times*. [Laughs.] I was in New York with Sokoloff one time, and he gave a press conference, and it was in the beginning, and he said, "We have too many musicians already," you know, and, "They're on relieve. There are too many. What we need is audiences. We should close all music schools for five years," see? [Laughs.] "And not produce any more musicians, but we should produce audiences—intelligent audiences who have music appreciation." Well, blasted, of course, one after the other by the schools, you know. [Laughs.] They couldn't see their doors closing [they laugh] for five years. Or course he was always putting his foot in his mouth. And—but that was one of the things—big things we did achieve. Was an audience of music lovers, and who knew good music and knew how to listen to music.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: That's good.

EMILY MASON KAHN: So, I've—that's what we did for the children, mainly. Now, there are things that we did teach them, and we had many, many children. I don't say that we developed geniuses, but at least, that's another music appreciation, don't you see?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sure.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And you had people who understand and like music, at some standpoint where you—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You're already ahead. Sure.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah, sure.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You've planted a seed.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: If nothing else, you've planted a seed. What—there's another aspect to music, too, is the composers. An American composer might wait a long time to get his piece played. It would be wholly by chance, sometimes. Is anything done for, like, a composer's workshop, or—where their music would be heard, or they could get some—

EMILY MASON KAHN: We did some of it, yes, but that was probably the biggest stumbling block we had.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Was it?

EMILY MASON KAHN: We could—well, you can't employ a composer, you know, like we did an oboe or a French horn, or something like that, and say, "Well you write music eight hours a day, or six hours a day, five days a week," or something like that.

[00:20:12]

And you can't do this. They can't compose that way, you see. And no more than an artist, I don't—some artists, I've heard, who do sit down in the morning and paint all day, or something like that—special hours to paint, but composers can't do that, and that's why we got into the stumbling block. We couldn't hire them, you see, on a regular basis. Now, we did commission some works to be done by some composers. Howard Hanson worked on that, I know, and some of the others on the committee, but I have no idea how many works were commissioned, but we did play American composers, of course, on the—with the orchestras.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes. Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And quite a great deal. And Sokoloff was interested in the write and did push it, but there was a point where we couldn't hire them at all.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: What sort of an administrator was Sokoloff?

EMILY MASON KAHN: He wasn't. He just wasn't. He—you give him an administrative order

that come down, you know? He'd throw it on my desk, "You read it. I don't understand it." Just didn't understand any—just a musician, that's all.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: And so, gradually, the whole thing was thrown in my lap, you see. And I did all the administrative orders for the Music Project, and all the training materials. I called in some people from the field, and worked on training materials and instruments. I didn't know, you know. And [side conversation]—but that was it, the—and gradually all of the correspondents came over to me. And Sandra Munsell was brought down in the beginning as his administrative assistant, and she did all the correspondence with him. In other words, she'd go over the mail with him, and he'd give her a couple of ideas of how he wanted the letter answered, and she'd answer it and he'd sign it, and then of course, she left—came back to New York. So, as I said, as time went on, and Nikolai and I were running the thing, I had all the administrative details.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And of course, I had never been an administrator in my life, I'd only been a musician [laughs]. But I had to do it.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: You know? But it was nice that he was traveling, most of the time, with the orchestras. And now Earl Moore [ph] was an administrator.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Was he?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Terrific.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Have you talked to him yet?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No, I haven't. Someone else, I believe, has talked to him. He's in the University of Michigan, I believe.

EMILY MASON KAHN: He was, but Julius told me, when I talked to him last, that—I think he said he was at the University of Oklahoma, or in Texas. One or the other.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I have no idea. The last I heard of him, he was in the University of Michigan.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, yes, he was head of the music department. He got a year to come to Washington, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: A year off, but he didn't dare stay any longer.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: He did not?

EMILY MASON KAHN: No. He was afraid that he would lose his pension and his benefits from the university if he stayed longer, and so—because they raised quite a bit of fuss about his coming back at the end of the year. We certainly hated to see him go, because he was a great guy.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Was he, really?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes. Terrific administrator, and just—he did a marvelous job on that Music Project, really, very good. And he would—he had the ability to get along with people, you see, and to, sort of, bend them to his thinking without their really knowing it, you know?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Persuasive presence. Yes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes. And very sweet, but he had the fist—the iron fist and the velvet glove, but you see, Sokoloff would blow his top if he didn't get his way or something, and so



it was quite a different experience working with Earl Moore [ph].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, was Sokoloff interested in teaching? Or was he just interested in orchestras?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Orchestras.

[00:25:00]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: The podium and that was it, pretty much—

EMILY MASON KAHN: And as much as he could conduct the orchestras, too. He liked to conduct.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: What did he think of the orchestra?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, some of them he thought were excellent.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Very good.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I mean, did he have standards even within these limits of conducting?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: On the podium.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. He did.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: He seemed—and I just infer this from what you said—I mean, just the way you—what is it? You caressed the name Earl Moore as distinct from Sokoloff, Sokoloff may have been in the service of a vast vanity, for all I know.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, yes. Definitely.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Terrible, yeah. Which is self-defeating sometimes, because, you know, show me a vain person, I'll show you a self-deceived one. And—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, he's not a top conductor, you know.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No.

EMILY MASON KAHN: I mean, he wasn't ever.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No, but he—

EMILY MASON KAHN: And he thought he was.

[Cross talk.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But the image—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Of course, then he went to Seattle, and that was a big fiasco. And his wife bought him in a small orchestra in La Jolla, before she died, [inaudible]. And I think—what happened about that, whether it was—something happened that it was held up for a while. He wanted to do music appreciation [inaudible] in colleges out in California. I don't know what happened—I haven't seen them in a long time, but—not since his last marriage to the librarian of the Metropolitan Opera Company.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: He's a strange fellow.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, very. Very.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But, you know, one of those thrown into the service in 1935—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, you know, he built such a reputation on building the Cleveland Symphony, and may—everyone believed that he did it single-handedly, you see, and this is why he was brought in, of course. Think what he could do with these orchestras and these men, you see. And—but he's not an administrator, he's not [inaudible]—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, I've talked with Harry Hewes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And Harry Hewes—I don't know—being a public relations man has a slight tendency to exaggerate, you know?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Definitely.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And I suspect that he burned incense to Sokoloff most of the time, so that, perhaps, the success at Cleveland was not a little related to Harry Hewes' ability to express it in paper.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, I know. I mean, he just—see, Nikolai brought him in from Philadelphia, and—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: He just worshiped the ground he walked on. I mean, he followed him around like a little puppy dog, you know, and of course [mechanical buzzing] [we used to have -Ed.] more fun with Harry.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: He is a lot of fun, as a matter of fact.

[Cross talk.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: I know it.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: He still is.

EMILY MASON KAHN: You kid him, you know, we used to kid him so. Because he'd come in in the morning [inaudible]—I mean, in the first place—well, he was always going around and giving these extravagant compliments, you know, and he'd walk in the morning, and he'd say, "My darling, you look beautiful, this morning." You know, this, that, and the other thing. I can't even remember all the things he used to say. So, Sandra and I had used to say, "What do you think Harry's going to [inaudible]? Number 389 this morning?" [Laughs.] Or something like that. [They laugh.] It took us a long time to get to like Harry, but then, when you all lived in the same apartment house and we were together all the time, and—as a matter of fact, Harry lived with me for about five months, me [laughs] and my ex-husband, I think, in Washington when the Music Project was over and he was down and out. We're very—still very close. He was here a couple of years ago, and we had a lovely evening.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: He's an interesting fellow, really.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes, but he lives in the past—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Oh, sure.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —and he, you know, dreams these dreams—always has. But he's always been that way, so [inaudible].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: He's comfortable.

EMILY KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: In a lot of ways. Comfortable.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, did you have relations with the other projects—how about Holger Cahill, did you ever bump into that—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, sure. We—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —strange fellow?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Everybody was all together, you know. I mean—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: What's his measure?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, I would say that Holger—we called him Eddie—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Eddie, yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —was more practical than Sokoloff, and really—but I'm no judge to what he did on the Project, whether it was good or bad.

[00:30:05]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative.] Well, was he the administrator? Was he—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes. He was more practical and more of an administrator than Sokoloff, and of course Alsberg was—[laughs] I don't know how to say that.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: A strange guy.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Very strange. Of course, we were all a bunch of strange people, you know.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But deeply committed to what he was doing.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, of course. Dedicated.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And with a fierce, I think, program, carefully etched and arranged as to its result.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And did a terrific job.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sure.

EMILY MASON KAHN: On those state books and everything. A marvelous job, I think, really. And of course, Clair Laning was a tremendous help. I don't know if you talked to Clair. I don't know where Clair is.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I don't either.

[Cross talk.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: He was Alsberg's assistant. He just disappeared off the face of the earth, because he moved to New York. We used to see him frequently, and so did Edwina Kuhns [ph], and his mother became [ill or died out in Michigan -Ed.] and we never heard from him since.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Hm.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: How about the—what is it—the flaming bombshell, Hallie Flanagan?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, Hallie was quite a gal. Still is, I guess. She really worked very hard, and of course, it was so controversial, even though the Theatre Project was worse than Art. Of course, [laughs] I've always said that if I just want to get in wrong with some people, all I have to say is I work in WPA and OPA. [Laughs.] They'll say, "Ug."

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: But the Theatre Project was more controversial than any of them.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And she really had a tremendous struggle on her hands—but I know she had high hopes, and that's why I say it was a crusade up hill, but it was a crusade. Marvelous.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Let me throw a couple of names at you, they may remind you of something.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Is this the—what is this—I asked Julius if there was a—oh, well, I must've been [inaudible]—was in a report, a final report on history somewhere, and he said yes. Did he tell you where?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes. Yes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: In the archives, he said.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes, he talked at great length about that, and it's on tape, and it's out at the archives in Detroit.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I can't remember the specific things, but the writing of the history went through successive variation, some better than others. Some people collected a lot of material, and some not, you know. But that story as he told it is on tape and out at Detroit.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: It's an interesting story.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: It's how he backed into it, really, until he got to his own interest, which was the financial part, trying to explain federal projects to the general services and the—you know, the government auditors and so on. Partly because of—

EMILY MASON KAHN: And Congress. [Laughs.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Partly because the WPA wasn't staffed with old line people. It was—just as you say—young people, largely, who had, you know, 24 hours in which to do something, and they spent 18 hours of the 24 trying to get it done. It's that kind of—turn on the power and, you know, and brook no interference. Well, Hallie Flanagan's the same way.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You write something, and it goes on the stage, and doesn't make any difference if it quotes a congressman correctly on the subject of housing, and it creates an uproar in congress. And art, you know, is a pure sort of thing. Well, maybe, you know, it's not easy, but this is what she did, and this is what was going on. And Mr. Davidson expressed himself as being in a kind of key spot, largely because he could explain one side to the other. Either to Mrs. Woodward, who perhaps was—I can't believe she was—what is it? She hadn't much in the way of background to understand the four projects—music—

EMILY MASON KAHN: No, of course not.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No. But nonetheless she was

[Cross talk.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Very few people did.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: She had the political sense, and yet she went right down the line with Hallie Flanagan, defending her in front of congress.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: In front of the congressional committee. Marvelous job. She's quite a woman.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Quite a woman.

EMILY MASON KAHN: It's very true.

[00:35:00]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: She may not have understood all the implications of it, but this was her child, put it that way.

EMILY MASON KAHN: That's right.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: These are my—this is my kid.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: [Laughs.] That's a tremendous kind of clan loyalty, in a way.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, did Harry Hopkins figure in all the total atmosphere that you remember?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, in the beginning, he was in on the planning and seemed to be interested in it and, of course, I think a great deal of that stems from the fact that he knew Mrs. Roosevelt was interested in the Arts Project, and also, she—Ellen Woodward was very close to Mrs. Roosevelt. I mean, they were friends and so, when Ellen wanted something, she'd make it known to Mrs. Roosevelt, and you'd see Mrs. Roosevelt pass it on to Harry Hopkins, and of course, he would do it. So he was interested in the beginning and seeing it going, and getting going and so on.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sometimes, the spirit of a man who is the head of an organization gives the organization its tone.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I don't know whether you have any sense this way or not, I suppose the daily detail, you know, trying to—what—make a piece of paper walk, or create an organization, takes all your energy, but the stabilizing influence in it all may have been a fellow like Hopkins. You know, who had an idea of—put 'em to work, somehow. We'll worry about what they do later.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah, I know. This whole idea—we had—I had forgotten about the short time to get everything going. And then, of course, there was an upheaval every six months of getting money from Congress, you see, and preparing a statement and poor Julius having to go up on the Hill, you know, and plead with them. Mr. Taber, for instance.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: John Taber.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, Taber. [Harlan B. Phillips laughs.] I'm even in the congressional record.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Forgotten what I said now [laughs]. Somebody said something about me.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But this is true. Congress didn't—probably didn't like the whole idea of the WPA, and so kept them on a short snaffle [ph] financial bit, made them come back frequently for funds. Maybe every three months, something like that, or six months, or whatever it was.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: In short, there wasn't—

EMILY MASON KAHN: You never could feel safe in opening up and planning anything, you

know?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Because you never knew if the whole thing was going to be so thrown out the next time Congress said, "Give us the money," you see?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah. Yeah. And this all operated under the Appropriations Committee and Mr. Taber.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, he—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Even on a clear day, that was not an easy job to sail through at all.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-mm [negative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Let's see, as '38 and '39, there's a perceptive change in atmosphere in the United States as a whole. We had some weird and horrible voices from across the ocean making their voices heard. Hitler, Mussolini, and we began to turn our eyes away from internal affairs to foreign affairs. Well, WPA was a straight internal matter. We were dead center as an economic institution. Something had to be done. The RFC [Reconstruction Finance Corporation] had been helpful in some respect, but it didn't get down far enough. The WPA seemed to be a direct way in which they put people to work, not on a dole, but given something to do to save—preserve their self-respect and thus increase buying power

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —purchasing power. And it worked. It began to work. But it—

EMILY MASON KAHN: And I would say the rehabilitation of a lot of these men—it was a great pleasure to us to have them rehabilitated and go into private industry. It was—now, I may be jumping ahead of what you want to say, but when it comes to the defense projects, then that was another matter.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes, well, you see, I think this is true, namely—there is this retraining program, this rehabilitation program, and the statistics of the number of people who leave the relief role, and more particularly, the Art Projects, is quite sizeable, which would illustrate that there is this retraining and reentry into a life and a—

EMILY MASON KAHN: I'm sure a lot of people didn't believe that we did this, but—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah, but the story—

[Cross talk.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: We did, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: That's right.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Sure.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But I wondered, you know—

[00:40:01]

EMILY MASON KAHN: I remember a woman who's a violinist in the District of Columbia. Oh, she was a pitiful soul, and of course I had had no experience interviewing people, you know, for relief jobs or anything like that, and so I had cried with all of them, whenever they came in to be interviewed, and this one in particular, I'll never forget it. And she was so pitiful. She hadn't eaten for I don't know how many days—thin, you know, and in terrible shape. Well, sometime later, I don't remember now whether it was a year later or something like that, I was visiting the orchestra [inaudible], and generally, you know, we'd go around looking at the projects, occasionally, and talking with the people. So this woman came up to me and, "Hello. How are you?" "You don't recognize me, do you?" And I said, "I can't quite remember. No, I don't know you." And she said, "Yes, you do. I was starving when you interviewed me," and she says, "Now, look how much weight I've put on and how much I've improved." [And she said it's all due to the Project. -Ed] And she was so grateful, and so that's one—you

know, she went on to teaching at the Dundee [ph] Academy and became an independent citizen again. And when you see things like that, you just—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Worth everything that it involved, yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Oh, sure. But then, you know, as the—well, did you have a sense after '38 or '39 that the WPA would become a back eddy? You didn't have that sense? But '38 and '39, we were beginning the struggle between the America First Committee, and the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. William Allen White, and so on, that crowd. So, the argument moved off into a—

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HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —another level. And we began building planes and preparing for ships and so on. Defense contracts were being drafted in '38—earliest '38 in the navy department —

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —you know? So, that this scene was moving, changing. I wondered if, you know, confronting this—what the Music Project in general—specifically, and the Arts Projects in general thought about how they could make whatever they were doing relevant to the preparedness? Was there anything like that? Any—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —thinking along those lines?

EMILY MASON KAHN: —the thing was, of course, that we had seen what music [ph] had done for stepping up work and plans and making for more contentment in workers and so on. And so, we had—at the request of many, many companies, we had put units—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —in those plants. In other words, live music rather than the canned music. And they were very pleased. And this was a facet we were really working on.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: So, when the defense project started in—and we knew that the nonessential projects were probably go—but our bands and orchestra in the plants, as long as they were defense plants, they stayed.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: And—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: So, there was this new need that you seized upon.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: In order to keep some of it going.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But then—

EMILY MASON KAHN: And we had to—but we did have the problem, finally, where the men in the orchestras and bands were offered jobs in defense plants. You know, that was compulsory.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: They had to try out for them and so on, and that was pitiful. I don't know how many of our musicians lost their fingers, their hands, became crippled, because they weren't used to being around machinery.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And they had to go. I mean, I remember in New Jersey, some of the men talking to me [inaudible] wept all over the place—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —because they had to go into these plants and had to work, because the unit had to be dissolved, and they had to have something to do. And they just didn't know how to be around machine.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: That's what I meant before when I said it was horrible when—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Pitiful.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, was there—was there any effort made for retraining of these people for defense work? Was there are a retraining program?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, they gave them a training—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —you know, for machinery or whatever it was they were working on. Some of them, I suppose, did adapt to it, you know.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: But an awful lot of them couldn't.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: There's no substitute for long continuity of experience.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-mm [negative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No.

EMILY MASON KAHN: No.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: It must've been crushing, though, on—

EMILY MASON KAHN: You're right.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —those individual lives.

EMILY MASON KAHN: It was awful. Really, it was terrible. I just hated to go to a new unit, you know— I mean, a unit where I hadn't been safe for six months or something like that, and talk with the men, because it was the same story everywhere.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: And—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: They were being squeezed out of one area, which they enjoyed and loved.

EMILY MASON KAHN: The only one they'd ever known all their lives.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes. And—

EMILY MASON KAHN: I mean, they were only musicians. They had never been anything else.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.



EMILY MASON KAHN: And it just didn't go, in many cases.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, is this—is this related in part to the fact that, administratively, the Federal Art Projects or Federal Project Number One was a federal administered project and that maybe after '38, '39, when the World's Fair opened and Congress, you know, terminated the Theatre Project expressly in a bill—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —did they pass the other projects in Federal Project Number One to the state? Did they change the whole organizational setup?

[00:05:00]

EMILY MASON KAHN: No. I don't think so. No, I think it all just—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, I don't know but it would see that they must have, because if people in New Jersey were being forced out of the Music Project—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, it was because we could no longer justify the existence of units that were not contributing to the defense work.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I see.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And federal funds were not—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Were dwindling. So for—

EMILY MASON KAHN: —funding.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Now, in some cases, the local people did contribute money to keep the orchestra going, like Buffalo, Oklahoma City, you know, and—well, several others of the big—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —symphonies. They did raise local—money locally and keep them going after we had—the federal funds were no longer available.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I see.

EMILY MASON KAHN: That's why they're still in existence now, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: In other words, the opportunities they—in New Jersey then were from some other agency, which—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Now, the—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Defense mobilization.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Which was a national organization under Knudsen. Not only under Knudsen, there was another man also. But they had the problem of manpower. And they may have—or been tipped off, or were aware of the fact that funds were dwindling for certain purposes, and here was available manpower. What to do with it? So, they—

EMILY MASON KAHN: [That may be. -Ed.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: I don't know. But I'm just thinking of—I just mentioned New Jersey in particular, but it was all over—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —that—where local funds couldn't—where people weren't sufficiently

interested to keep the orchestra going. I mean, and some of these were smaller orchestras, I'm not thinking of—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Oh, yeah, trios. Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —big symphonies, but the smaller ones at 20 pieces, 15 pieces in the small towns and so on.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: And there just wasn't the interest in keeping them going. Now, the—I was talking with Merle Montgomery not so long ago; she was my music education supervisor in Oklahoma. And she said that every one of her teachers was taken over either by recreation department in their locality or schools. So, I mean, in other words, every teacher was placed by their city or town, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: When—

[Cross talk.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: [Inaudible.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: —the [inaudible], yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: [In short, there was sponsorship then. -Ed]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes. So, you see, in a lot of places—of course, I don't know all of them. But I'm sure in a lot of a places locally, the men—the people were taken care of—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —one way or another. Give jobs. And I don't mean in plants, I mean as musicians.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: As musicians, yes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: In towns where people were sufficiently interested to keep it going. But we had done so much work for the recreation department and for the schools. And they hated to lose this service. And so, they found the funds to keep it going, you see?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative]. But that would vary vastly.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, yeah, from place to place.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I guess as the program itself varied from place to place too.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. That's right.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah. Let me throw a few names [inaudible]. I don't know how valid this is, but who was Mr. William C. Mayforth [ph]?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mayforth [ph]. Nikolai brought him in—I'm trying to remember where he found him. Oh, I guess he found him on a Philadelphia Project. And he brought him in as his deputy assistant, like a deputy—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —administrator, whatever it was. Deputy director.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible] he was impossible.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: [Laughs.] He wasn't a good—a deputy directory from what you've said, no?

EMILY MASON KAHN: He was—he was terrible and—well, Miss Munsell and I used to have our problems with him really, and, I mean, he was—he's a graduate of McGill. And for 16 years, he was head of the music department at Converse College. And I—when I was out in the field and down in South Carolina, I talked with some people from Converse, and they said he didn't—he ruined the music department down there, absolutely ruined it. That's why they had to get rid of him.

[00:10:00]

And I remember very well, it was when Miss Munsell and I were at a Watergate concert in Washington, and Mayforth [ph] was there, too. And so, the next day, we were discussing the program, and so he [didn't know anything about this -Ed.]—I've forgotten what it was now, some composition. It was so beautiful, that one. And they didn't play it. They hadn't played it. They changed the program. And he didn't know the difference. So, this is the kind of musician he was. And no administrator either, he was [inaudible]—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I gather from this that Sokoloff was no judge of administrators. [Laughs.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: That's the human story.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Laughs.] I know. I hate to say these things about people.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, no, but I'm very much interested, because all it is is a name to me, and I've never been able to find him.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, I didn't even [inaudible]. Well, the last I heard, he was working in a music store in Washington, D.C.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I'll be darned.

EMILY MASON KAHN: You know, sheet—selling sheet music or something. I don't know, maybe—I don't know if he's still there. Did Harry mention him?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Not a word.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well he didn't like him either [laughs].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No. Not a word. [Emily Mason Kahn laughs.] Well, that tells its own story.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: He's a genial guy, Harry Hewes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, sure.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I guess everything about Mayforth [ph] must have been reprehensible. Otherwise, he would've remembered him, because if there's a sense of joy in it, [inaudible].

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, how about Mrs. Ruth Ottaway?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, she was there briefly. You know, she was—I knew her years and years and years ago. She was president of the National Music Association, I think it was called.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: And I was—I remember [I used to attend conventions so I knew her from that -Ed.]. And the first thing we knew was Nikolai had met her somewhere—I don't know where—and found out she was a very wealthy widow. And so, he brought her into the Washington office. And I never knew what she did except travel with him. And then, they

finally were married. And she's the one who brought the orchestra for him out in La Jolla. And she died, oh, I don't know, maybe 12—15 years ago. And I met him at the Harvard Club [ph] 20 years after that and weeping on my shoulder how lonesome he was and how much he missed Ruth and about [four months later he was married to this music librarian -Ed.] So, [laughs] I don't know, He was [inaudible]. [They laugh.] Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, there's a—there's a regional staff that's listed here, Mr. Guy Mayer [ph]—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Does he ring a bell at all?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, yes. I know Guy very well. Mm-hmm [affirmative]. As a matter of fact, I have a picture I came across the other day of all the regional people.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: And that's one of our first meetings in Washington. And I was trying to think of his name. I remembered the picture, but I had forgotten his name. Yeah, Guy Mayer [ph] was a—was a—he did a creditable job.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: How did people pick the regional staff? Was this one of your functions?

EMILY MASON KAHN: No, I didn't pick the top regional ones.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You didn't?

EMILY MASON KAHN: No. Nikolai picked them with the help of Arthur Judson [ph]. And they—he had a national music committee.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: We did. And they were advisors. And that's—he knew a lot of musicians around the country. And Lee Patterson [ph] and Guy Mayer [ph] were, you know, the twins. [Laughs.] [Inaudible.] They were very good. But I would say most—national advisory committee. That's what it was. They helped him—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —pick the regional people.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Is that where they found Dr. Thaddeus Rich?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And Dr. Bruno Usher [ph]?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah, he was on the West Coast though. He was a character.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Really?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Thaddeus Rich was a—was a—of course, a very famous violinist.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And head of the music department—the violin department of Temple. As a matter of fact, his wealthy sister just died about six months ago. I didn't know that he had died. He had.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

[00:14:54]

EMILY MASON KAHN: And—but Thaddeus is a sound musician and beautiful violinist. I don't say that—of course, he was the head of the violin section of Philadelphia for 25 years, I guess, something like that. I wouldn't say he was a great regional director, but he was a sound musician and knew how to pick his people and knew whether the other musicians

were good or not. You know—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —this and that. And—but—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You said Dr. Usher was quite a character.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, he was. We had problems with him. I can't really bring to mind any specific thing now but the name [laughs] just brings up all these problems of—we had an awful lot of problems with the Music Project on the West Coast anyway. The—well, with the non-relief people they were always trying to bring in—we needed non-relief—they needed all these non-relief people. And they were getting the sponsorship. And then, we had a lesbian out there, who caused a great deal of difficulty. She was put in a responsible position, and she, you know, caused a lot of trouble. And so—and so, it was—it was difficult on the West Coast, in California. I wish I could remember more specifics. [Inaudible.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: What—he didn't make it any easier, I guess.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-mm [negative]. [Inaudible.] I've forgotten his nationality now, but —

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: [Inaudible.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Nathan Auerbach [ph] was—what was Nathan? I know he and Usher used to have big set-tos [ph]. I think he was district—either that or he was conductor [inaudible].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, you had—you had your own state directors, didn't you?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. And then, we finally got down to district.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Did you really? Even within—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —a state?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah. That was very difficult.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Now, I wonder, you know, when you have to—what—create an organization overnight, you know, you're bound to have—what—the human story.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah. Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And there—

EMILY MASON KAHN: And you see, the state directors of the—of WPA—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —were engineers. They were people like this, you see, politicians in a great many instances, or politically inclined, or under the political thumb of somebody. And to get them to understand about the Music Project and—you know, and the Arts Projects, I mean, you might as well be talking to a stone wall and saying, Well, we needed this director. Well, you know, we don't have any money for a district director. But we have all these projects, you see, and all these people and thought, We've got to have somebody who can watch over them, you know?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sure.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And the local supervisor, I mean, had—they had problems too, you see. And we need to tie the thing together and have supervision so that the standards would be maintained and so on. Well, you [inaudible] talking to some of these state people. You know, it was a big problem in the regional people too. Of course, you had to really go through the region first—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —because they—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And very few of the regional people were sympathetic to the Arts Projects just because it's so divorced from their way of life and their thinking, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes. "Painter? Have him come in, I'd like this wall—" You know.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: It's got nothing to do with art. [They laugh.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: "I like it plaid," or "Paint it black and white," but "Paint it." That's—you know, otherwise, I gather they might even preempt the funds. Well, I guess that's why it was set up initially as a federal project so that they couldn't because [inaudible].

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible.] They couldn't do it, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: But those, of course—the funds were for the projects.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: So, when you wanted a person, you know—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

[00:20:00]

EMILY MASON KAHN: —a non-relief person to a supervise, that's where you ran into difficulty—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —because then you could never find money that the state provided—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —if they didn't want to [inaudible]. Something in the back of my mind—I remember a struggle, biggest fight I had. I can't remember where that was.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Just on this ground? Were they—

EMILY MASON KAHN: They were—I needed a district person or a something—or a state person. I can't remember what. And oh, it was a big fight. Well, here in New York, when I needed a regional—assistant regional person—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —spent many days fighting top people here, you know, for it. We finally got it, but it—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Needless.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes, you know. Those things, you had to waste your time rather than planning and, you know—and keeping up the quality and the training and so on. So—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, Crandall is listed here in New York.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes, George Crandall.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: What's his—is it—what—

EMILY MASON KAHN: George Crandall.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: George Crandall, yes. In Albany. As a state director.

EMILY MASON KAHN: He just died, I think. I think I have a letter from Ed Hinkleman [ph] who was the state music supervisor in New York. And I think he wrote, did I read about Crandall?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah. Was this a man that you had to work with down to the local people? Did you have to go through him?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Or was he simply there to carry out the instructions that came from Washington?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, he was a—he was state—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes. Director.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —state director. Yes. And so, he worked with the regional people, and, of course, we would go down state too, traveled and worked with George, you see, and his supervisors under him.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative]. So, it was a steady diet of negotiation.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Huh? One—

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —problem man for another.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Laughs.] Yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Did the phone ever stop ringing?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, no. It was—it was really something. Then, of course, you see, we had the congressmen who were interested in their constituents getting on the Music Project. Local project. And they would call us and say, "I have this guy who is a qualified pianist" or violinist or teacher—music teacher and, in such a such a place in my state, and "I'd like you to see if you could get them on," you see. "Are they on relief?" "No, but they don't have anything," you know? Well, you can't put a pianist on unless they're on relief, because we can't say that it's essential to the operation of an orchestra or a band—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —you see, or anything like that. And it was very hard for them to understand. Well, of course, we couldn't make the Welfare Department certify them for relief if they didn't think so.

I remember Senator Murray [ph] of Montana, oh, when he had one of his constituents, she was a very nice lady, who was a piano teacher. And he tried. That man was calling me up every day practically. He wanted her to get on relief. Well, I checked with the Welfare Department, and they said, "We have looked into her situation. She has a piano. She has a few pupils. And we just can't certify for relief." Ans Senator Murray [ph] was very mad about this, of course, but what can you do? I mean, we can't put them on.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No, [inaudible]—

EMILY MASON KAHN: I mean, this is just one instance.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Johnson used to call up. [Laughs.] I mean, Lyndon B., about his constituents in Texas.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: That's his function, you know? It's a service he provided.

EMILY MASON KAHN: They had to do this, yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Of course.

EMILY MASON KAHN: In fact, I know, because I remember one of my congressmen from Albany, when I used to live up there, he never did anything for his [laughs] constituents. I mean, it was—I realized that they were trying to do their job, you know—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —and so on. But still, in all, we—in every instance, we could not help them out.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sure. Besides, you had no way of knowing whether the person to be helped wasn't sitting right in front of them while he was making the phone call.

[00:25:03]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Might've been. [They laugh.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: That's a different kind of music, you know?

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Laughs.] Yes.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But it's necessary, apparently, in our society.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But nonetheless, on the receiving end, it's kind of a jockeying, where the rules are, as laid down by Congress, quite clear as to what you could or could not do.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Definitely.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And just let us step out of line one time, you know?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: That project is out.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: [Laughs.] Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And as I say, that was one of our biggest problems on the West Coast, because between Usher and Orobos [ph] and a few of the other people there, they would always say, "In order to maintain this orchestra, we've got to have another oboist." "We've got to have this"—well, this raised the non-relief percentage way up—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —beyond what we were allowed, you see.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And they were always fighting. Then we'd say, "Well, you get local support. Get somebody to pay their salary, you see. You put them on. We can't do it." And they were always stepping out of line. So. Don't mistake me. It was a lot of fun, and [a real ball -Ed.]—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Oh, look—

EMILY MASON KAHN: —and marvelous.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Look, I mean—

EMILY MASON KAHN: I wouldn't give it—I [wouldn't not have been a part of it for anything in the world -Ed.].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You're—moreover, you know, it's—you can—you can put yourself in the person's place out in the West Coast who wanted another oboe player.



EMILY MASON KAHN: Of course. Of course. I knew. I knew. [Harlan B. Phillips laughs.] They wanted a beautiful instrument, don't you see?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sure.

EMILY MASON KAHN: A beautiful big symphony orchestra. And of course, we were all aiming for something like that, but that was not the central purpose of the—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —Project.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: No. You know, I think this is something that's probably not thought about either. When you think of the kind and quality of music that was made and created solely from relief rolls plus a percentage of non-relief—in other words it's perfectly amazing, isn't it? Because it's the chanciest thing in the world what you find on the relief rolls.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Of course.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You know? And so, just to insist through your regional directors and your state directors on a kind of minimum standard of performance is a tough problem quite apart from trying to enrich an orchestra with another oboe. I mean, you know, when you have to—you have to take what you find on the relief roll, tailor make your program to fit what you have, and then float it and hope that it might gain local sponsorship.

EMILY MASON KAHN: That's right. Well, you see, they—one of the things we were trying to do in the last two years was to retrain these orchestral and band musicians—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —and give them harmony and theory, which they hadn't had, so that they would be better musicians when they went off. And that's what I say, I brought in people from the outside, I mean—other than the pianist, I mean, the violinist, oboists, and so on—to help me write training programs and also set up the standards. And so, then these went back out in the way of pamphlets, and so on, to retrain these musicians so that they would be able to go back into private industry, you know?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And I think we did a pretty good on that. Not—well, not soon enough, but at least we did a lot of that.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

[Interruption to close Venetian blinds as sun is shining too much. -Ed.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: [As soon as I close the blinds the sun will go away. -Ed.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: You know it's a shame, because it made a halo right around your head.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, really?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Just marvelous. Yeah. [Emily Mason Kahn laughs.] [Inaudible.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: It's probably the only I'll ever have.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: [Laughs.] Look, they're hard to come by. [They laugh.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, was there—were there differences in regions in the country, like New England as opposed to the South? Any difference at all, that you can think of? Of course, we've already indicated that the—what conceivably could be done was related to

what the relief rolls show. But music qua [ph] music, you know, from—take a place—like, let's see, what's even here. Well, I don't—well, Mississippi's here. Florida's here.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, of course, there was no orchestras in the Mississippi program. They were mostly—it was mostly the music education project down there.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Was it?

[00:30:00]

EMILY MASON KAHN: A few—there was a few small—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —band or something. Most of their work was in the schools there—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —and in recreation centers and so on. But—and I would say that's the same for Georgia. Florida, we had a couple of nice, little, small orchestras. And the—I would say, for the most part, the quality of the musicians in the South was not up to New England just because of the Boston and Bridgeport; Hartford and Maine, for instance, New Hampshire, you know.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: There wasn't much in Vermont, but it was mostly—they were mostly the teachers.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: And so on. [They didn't have any teachers. -Ed.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: We couldn't form any decent-sized bands and orchestras up there.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But, you know, this harks back to an earlier—much earlier form of amusement and appreciation in almost any town in, you know, the turn of the century. They had their brass band, had their band concerts in the park. Heck, I grew up in a town that had a park and a bandstand. I never knew what it was for until the '30s—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —because, suddenly, there were concerts in the park.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And somebody said, Well, that bandstand, that's what they're using it for. Well, the park dated back to the 1860s, you know?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And the bandstand had been there for Sunday afternoons in the park or Fourth of July celebrations or whatnot, which is an old thing in America. But when we got into this century, sort of dropped out. And the bandstand, so far as I know, wasn't used or cleaned. [Emily Mason Kahn laughs.] A marvel [ph]—

it wasn't nice until the mid-30s. Then suddenly it had a band concert in the—in the park.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Marvelous. I finally knew what this structure was for, you know?

EMILY MASON KAHN: That's very interesting.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: It was a marvelous place to play tag. [Emily Mason Kahn laughs.] But that isn't—that isn't what it was for. Suddenly—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —there was a band out there and people sitting all over their lawn and the grass. And it's just marvelous. Well, this is an older tradition in America, this kind of—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —self-activating, self-sponsored by local communities of their own music.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Before the advent of radio and so on. And the '30s is like an attempt to tie back that original impulse, or in part, it seems to me.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, I think probably many of them have—are still going on that we developed, you know?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: They're going on locally that way.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Might give summer band concerts or something. Also, our small units—and, of course, some of our large units, but very few of them—traveled.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Oh, they did, yes.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: An expensive proposition, though, wasn't it?

EMILY MASON KAHN: Of course, it had to be—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: You know, we didn't have the funds for traveling. It would have to be—somebody had to put up money if they wanted them. But they did—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —get to travel.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Not any great distances. You know, as you say, maybe they came to your little town and gave a concert and so on.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah. We have—look, I never would've known what a string quartet was, probably. I might conceivably have stumbled on it. But I had this every Sunday afternoon in the local library.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh. Very nice.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: String quartet, WPA, you know.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Uh-huh [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And they put on these concerts. Well, you know, what does a kid do who's, what, 14, 15, and 16? Suddenly, you're introduced to a whole, you know, area of music that you theretofore hadn't even been aware of.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Of course.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: It was great, you know. [Emily Mason Kahn laughs.] I haven't gotten quartets out of my blood since.

EMILY MASON KAHN: [Inaudible.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: But for that. And those were well-attended, surprisingly enough. They'd fill the whole main room in the library. I say fill it—maybe 300-500 people. Sunday afternoon.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Of course.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: It was the place to go. It was something to do—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Sure.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —in part. Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, you see, those are the things that we don't—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —actually know, because of the accomplishment of what we actually did do—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —in those seven years.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Sure.

[00:35:00]

EMILY MASON KAHN: And well, I know now when I went in the Project, August 1935.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah. That's right. It was announced in July, and they had problems negotiating for funds, early.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: And I think they had to borrow initially a slice of funds from Harold Ickes' Public Building project, because he was—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —designing contracts in order to keep the politicians from getting their hands on the funds that should be federal funds to build poor houses and post offices—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —and so on. But they could never design a contract, never could get it fool-proof.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: So, he was—well, then the bottom started to drop out again, you know, and something had to be done. Things were getting desperate. So, they brought Harry Hopkins in, who was going to be a sort of general coordinator. But then they suddenly gave him the whole problem of WPA and filled it with funds. I mean, we had the first medical survey—national medical survey, because Harry Hopkins passed whatever the funds were necessary for it to the Public Health Service.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I mean, there were projects galore just to put people to work—statisticians and so on, interviewers and so on, where people in the local towns would go around and interview various other people on disease. And you had the first national health survey. Marvelous. [Laughs.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yeah.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Never would've thought about it otherwise—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —I would suppose. But at least it's a—it's a beginning. And that's had continuity.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Yes. Sure.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yes. Well, anyway, this is a live period, I gather. You had not a little fun.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, great.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Mm-hmm [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: It was really great. Mm-hmm [affirmative].

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Probably worked yourself to frazzle.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Oh, yeah. We—nothing—you know, we worked all the time. You leave the office, and then you go—you know, and instead of having a regular meeting or something like that, it would be a cocktail party. And all these things would be decided. I remember when, oh, Eva Le Gallienne came down for—about the Theatre Project—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Uh-huh [affirmative].

EMILY MASON KAHN: —with Arthur Goldschmidt, and Baker—what was his name? You know, Mildred Holtzauer's husband?

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Jake Baker.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Jake Baker, and Bruce McClure, and I don't know how many others of us, all meeting in Arthur Goldschmidt's house in the evening and deciding who was going to head up the Theatre Project, you see. And for—it was all things like this. We worked, you know, until midnight or afterward. Really.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Although we were having a little social time too.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Be there at the crack of dawn the next morning, working again. So, it was—it was great.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Yeah. Well, I'm much obliged to you for your views.

EMILY MASON KAHN: Well, I haven't [laughs] really given you anything, but—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Well, wait till you see, you get a chance to see it again, it'll come back in a transcript form. Don't look upon it as Pulitzer-Prize-winning prose. Look upon it as what it was intended to be: just talk, talk about true [ph] memory back to the age that you have certain feelings about. I think you'll be surprised at what it is that came out. [They laugh.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: I probably will. I know what you mean. But I was trying to find some things. I didn't know whether you wanted any—

[Cross talk.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Records? We have—

EMILY MASON KAHN: —records—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: —we have—

EMILY MASON KAHN: —or documents or—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Oh, yes, indeed.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —anything like that.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Anything that you care to have us—

EMILY MASON KAHN: Now, I have a—of course, I've scanned the newspaper clippings and things like that. But I didn't really look into these envelopes. I just saw they were WPA, and I —but if you want to—

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: Love to.

EMILY MASON KAHN: —glance over them, see—because I told you in the beginning I didn't have anything.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: I know. But most people do, and then they discover they—you know, like squirrels, they put things away. [Laughs.]

EMILY MASON KAHN: I remember my secretary putting all these envelopes together—

[Audio break.]

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS: We're in business.

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[END OF INTERVIEW.]