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Oral history interview with Charles Sheeler, 1958 December 9

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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Charles Sheeler on December 9, 1958. The interview was conducted at Charles Sheeler's home at Irvington-on-Hudson by Bartlett Cowdrey for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

CHARLES SHEELER: And there were geometric designs, things about that size on an illustration board. There were small patterns that just happened to be there and different color schemes, and the different colors made them act in different ways, some of them were, one plane would be elevated as a result of the color that was within that, and another one would be flat, two-dimensional. But I didn't get as far as finding out what is the end payoff on all of this business in relation to design...

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, design is so close to architecture that it should be taught, but where painting comes in...

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, I didn't even know they had architecture at M.I.T. --do they?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes

CHARLES SHEELER: I thought it was all science, engineering.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Harvard from the end of the nineteenth century on had a school of architecture which more or less failed in the mid-20's, and I don't know when M.I.T. began in architecture (1865), but M.I.T. has come to the front in training good architects. Painting is not too remote from architecture.

CHARLES SHEELER: No, no, that I can understand, but I don't see how they keep drawing science and the arts so closely together.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, an architect needs a good scientific background, he needs both.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, I was thinking more in science I was thinking of the things that seem to predominate there, I was inside the reactor, and all of those things, busting neutrons and all that which I always associate M.I.T. with, that may be a limited association but I didn't see in this letter... (from Gregory Kepes), Professor (at M.I.T.).

BARTLETT COWDREY: There is a rivalry...

CHARLES SHEELER: In trying, it's a slow process. I don't want to just shoot it off at the mouth, but I do make a statement from my standpoint that I don't think of science and visual arts as being problems in parallel lines; science is all cerebral, and the visual arts are only to the extent of establishing the order which everything has to have.

BARTLETT COWDREY: You cannot design a building without a scientific background, mathematics, draftsmanship, and some knowledge of engineering.

CHARLES SHEELER: I was thinking of visual arts; well, all right, we don't believe in architecture, it's just frozen music, somebody said. But well, I just don't see the close parallel, and it seems to be coming closer...

BARTLETT COWDREY: Maybe the next generation will benefit by the fact that art, design, architecture, and engineering have been brought; closer together. Because when you think back to the 1900 period, there architecture is pretty bad in most cases. You had Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Wright is very conscious of design.

MUSYA SHEELER: Why don't you ask him again about his favorite architect?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes. Who is your favorite architect?

CHARLES SHEELER: Well. Saarinen, which I've just recently said. To me he's way up front. That doesn't mean he's solitary, but he's the top man on the totem pole, as far as I'm concerned. I like Stone very much too, I admire his work, it is beautiful. The Brussels Fair building was magnificent.

BARTLETT COWDREY: You probably would have loved to have gotten over there to see the Brussels Fair.

CHARLES SHEELER: Very much so.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I don't know whether they're keeping Stone's building.

CHARLES SHEELER: No, it was torn down, I've heard that recently. There was a little building there that was just insignificant compared to that, and it was offered to the Belgians, that is the big Exhibition Building, but they apparently didn't want it and it's being torn down, in fact I saw a photograph somewhere of it being disassembled. But this little building, whatever that was for, that they decided they could use. But it didn't represent an architectural feature.

BARTLETT COWDREY: At the time of the New York World's Fair, did you do any photographing of buildings?

CHARLES SHEELER: No. None at all. No, well the buildings weren't on the same plane as they were in this Brussels Fair, architecture has made fabulous leaps I think, within my recollection, from the day of the World's Fair. The Pennsylvania Academy in Philadelphia; ever seen that building? It was evidently the same architect who designed the elephant house at the Philadelphia Zoo. And it's very hard, except for the location, to distinguish them... (Frank Furness was the architect)

BARTLETT COWDREY: Tell me about your early training there in Philadelphia, when you were eighteen to twenty, were you studying at the Academy?

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Who were the teachers?

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, there were many teachers there, there was McCarter in the illustration class. Demuth was in Henry McCarter's class...And I studied entirely with William Merritt Chase, that is, all my studies of Life Class and Antique Class and painting, modeling and still life. And then there was Anshutz who was very popular with some of the students. He was supposed to be the profound one -- taste was superficial, a young character with brilliance on the surface and so forth. Anshutz was supposed to be able to unscrew the inscrutable you know. He taught Sloan, I think he was the teacher of Sloan and Glackens. There was a bunch of those men that studied at the Academy you know. Even Stuart Davis was there which I only learned of recently.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Anshutz did a painting of street delivery men, or workers at noon time, in their shirtsleeves, which might have been the inspiration for the Ashcan School. (Steelworkers Noon Time, ca. 1880, collection L.A. Fleischman, Detroit)

CHARLES SHEELER: I think most of these people had studied at some time at the Academy and it would have been with Anshutz.

BARTLETT COWDREY: This painting of Anshutz, which I think today is his best known painting, was in the Metropolitan Museum Exhibition in 1939, "Life in America". Anshutz had been forgotten and then his painting was shown, so people associate him with the street scene, but I did not realize that he had been the teacher of some of "The Eight".

CHARLES SHEELER: Well I said recently to several people, not a propos of this occasion or this project, but when the conversation comes up in reference to association with the Pennsylvania Academy, that that was the most prominent school in the country at that time. It is 152 years old, or something like that. And it was a large school, I don't know what the population is in the matter of students now, but when I was there, I would take a rough guess, it must have been two hundred and fifty students there. And do you know, of all that number, there were only two people that came through that you ever heard of again, that is, the rest were just gone with the wind, nothing, not one of them stayed on the surface. Demuth and Sheeler were the only two of that time that you ever heard of again. That's a pretty small percentage, isn't it?

BARTLETT COWDREY: It's a sad commentary. Was Demuth about your age? (born 1883)

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, just about.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I believe you knew of Thomas Eakins, but you didn't really know him.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, well. If you read the Constance Rourke book... Well do you remember that description? Well that was down at the school of Industrial Art. But I didn't know till afterward who Thomas Eakins was. And I still don't like him any better than before I knew him.

BARTLETT COWDREY: When it comes to "The Eight", Shinn and all the rest...

CHARLES SHEELER: Well they were before my time. I'd come in there...

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes. They had come out of Philadelphia and came to New York.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, that's it. I was there in 1900 and left in 1903. And I had been abroad as you know, two summers with Chase and his classes.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well as a young man were you interested in "The Eight", or were they outside (your field)?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh no, that was about my level and at that time, I thought it was wonderful. I even had some pleasant associations, very occasional, three or four times, with Robert Henri, (when) I connected up with a very favorite pupil of his. And in time, Henri brought me to one of those meetings. The next time was in New York. He was on Gramercy Square then. "Come in, take a look, and visit with me ...for a while." Oh I thought that was the equivalent of the Congressional Medal, because I had a very great admiration for him. I found afterwards it wasn't so much for his painting, it was just that his way of life was so earthy, and so honest, and well, just very real, I thought. That was the only part I could consider real. I loved him as a person. He did wear out with me, I had a certain enthusiasm at the beginning, the pictures I used t o see at exhibitions at the Academy...

BARTLETT COWDREY: His sister-in-law, Violet Organ, is still around, she has Henri's apartment on Gramercy Park.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh she does?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes, they call it a 5-floor walkup, but I call it a 6-floor walkup. And of course she is quite old now, but she still maintains the apartment which is full of history, full of Henri's works.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well she was somebody in her own right, wasn't she?

BARTLETT COWDREY: I think she had been an art student. (Miss Organ calls herself a writer.)

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh was that it?

BARTLETT COWDREY: And she knew that; generation of artists. Did you know Bellows, and did you know George Luks?

CHARLES SHEELER: No. They were just contemporary names when I came to New York in 1920. 1 had one letter from Bellows, in the year that I arrived in New York, just a routine letter. He was the head of some committee, and wanted a picture for some exhibition. And it was just a matter, it seems to me it was just a matter of weeks after that that I heard of his sudden death. (Bellows died in 1925)

BARTLETT COWDREY: When you came to New York, what were the art galleries? When, you went looking for paintings, what did you see, what was then contemporary?

CHARLES SHEELER: ...not only to see, but find one of them that would take their, foot out of the door and let me in.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I suppose Stieglitz...

CHARLES SHEELER: I never had anyone. Stieglitz was interested in a sort of semi-remote way, but I never was represented in any of his shows.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I mean in your spare time, if you wanted to see (American) paintings, what was new in your time?

CHARLES SHEELER: Well it seemed to me at that time, this couldn't be final necessarily, but living in Philadelphia, there would be super-colossal exhibitions, you know, where old masters and all the great names among collectors would have loaned pictures, and I would, if I could get the railroad fare together, and a dollar for overnight in a (New York) rooming house I would come over and spend a couple of days seeing...

BARTLETT COWDREY: What about Kraushaar and Knoedler?

CHARLES SHEELER: Of course I saw and was also a participant in the Armory Show.

BARTLETT COWDREY: 1913.

CHARLES SHEELER: And the First Independents.

BARTLETT COWDREY: 1917. Can you make a comparison between the Armory Show and the First Independents?

The Armory was international, I realize, but...

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, well it was; the eye-opener, the great eyeopener. The Independents just gave a chance to some of the local boys to...

BARTLETT COWDREY: But that was the wonderful thing.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, it was important, but the Armory Show gave the green light that it was all right to exhibit pictures like that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: It's our misfortune that Walter Pach has just died.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh he has?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes, about ten clays ago. Because we had hoped very much to gel; him talking on the subject. However we do hope that we will get his papers.

CHARLES SHEELER: Had you had much contact with him just before, because I knew he was on the (Archives) list, of the first tern?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes, he had been written to, and he answered, and then early in October, Dr. Richardson heard that he was ill, and Dr. Richardson went to see him in the hospital and he had a very pleasant conversation with him. Also Arthur B. Davies" widow is still living.

CHARLES SHEELER: I never knew her.

BARTLETT COWDREY: She was an M.D.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, I knew that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: She lives somewhere in upstate New York, I don't know exactly where, but Davies played a rather important role.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, immeasurably so.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I suppose if he had not known Lizzie Bliss...

CHARLES SHEELER: Starting with the Armory, and that bore no relation to his own personal accomplishment, but he had a fabulous influence on the people that you usually call on for sponsoring those big affairs; he was just a king among those people; if he said, "We must do this," they would write the check out, or give him a blank check and tell him to fill it out. I saw that very closely with Miss Bliss, a perfect person.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Did you know Miss Bliss?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes, quite well. Oh, I mean, quite well, I mean, well sort of comparable to a warm ice cube, you know. You never actually sunburned in her presence, nor did you get chilblains.

BARTLETT COWDREY: In the matter of persons, I wonder whether you knew Katherine Dreier.

CHARLES SHEELER: Just slightly, very slightly.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Because it seems to me that Lizzie Bliss and Katherine Dreier were extremely good influence in that period.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes.

BARTLETT COWDREY: They really helped.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, well Miss Bliss even more; I never thought that Miss Dreier had any influence in particular -she was in love with Marcel Duchamp, and I think that's about as far as she went.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, she did accumulate a collection of pictures, now at Yale.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, I know, but with the exception of whatever...she has of Marcel's they weren't outstanding examples; they were names of prominent people, but ...In the field, that is just as a collector, the Arensbergs were the top people, because they
assembled, they had -- Walter particularly had that great ability, radar eye, that is he could look right through a picture and back through the canvas again and come up with an opinion of it.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Did Lizzie Bliss learn, or was she entirely subject to Arthur B. Davies' advice, or did she really know what she was seeing?

CHARLES SHEELER: I think she yearned more that she learned. She was tough, she didn't have to reach out very far.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Did you like Davies as a person?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, he was a very nice person, he was especially kind to me because -- I don't remember just now how he really knew of me. At the time he was asking, inviting, some of the Americans to be represented in the Armory Show, but I did get a letter from him; he had six small pictures of mine in the Armory Show. And then later, I'm sure I got something from him, the very first thing after the Armory Show, and asking a host of friends around him to start buying my pictures. Modest ones, but that's all they were at that time, modest ones.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I was amused at Henry McBride's comment on Arthur B. Davies. McBride felt that Davies was a shy and odd character.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, he was, he was very strange.

BARTLETT COWDREY: And that he even, in his death, he went off to a mountain top in Italy, all by himself.

CHARLES SHEELER: Umhum.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Did you know McBride?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes. He was another one of the boys ...fond companions were Marsden Hartley and McBride. What thick times they used to have together, those two.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, Henry McBride is going strong.

CHARLES SHEELER: But he was one of the best, I mean the best in the sense of having some intelligence, of those early art critics who were on the various papers that we are familiar with, who were just dumbfounded, but he did come through with a little perception. And he became a very staunch supporter of course of the whole movement, that had just come to the surface at that time.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Of course I am always interested when I run into these ancient newspaper clippings, to see who the critic is, because there is no handbook, nobody has written about the critics of the period, and they have done so much either to make or break artists.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well I wonder if we don't overrate that. Maybe some ...more particularly where it's a more serious vocation as with the European critics, both of music and of art. I mean the music critics were also frequently composers themselves, that is.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I think at the moment we suffer from not having good critics.

CHARLES SHEELER: I suppose so. But nevertheless I still try to break in... and I can't do it. My little stone against Goliath's forehead. Mine doesn't seem to be as good as David's. There's so much increasing dependence on reading the latest book. Instead of looking where it's a visual art. Why not look at the work?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Perhaps you get the benefit of criticism from the collectors.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, I think very frequently so. Very frequently.

BARTLETT COWDREY: You take a man like (William H.) Lane, who knows what he's seeing.

CHARLES SHEELER: I still don't know of any critic who really makes statements about pictures, and makes sense to the extent that Bill (Lane) made in sitting down and
discussing with any congenial companion, talking about pictures. Yes, well another one, but with a much longer background... extensive background, Walter Arensberg, because he had been involved, he was a poet at, the beginning of his career, then that didn't stand by, and then the Armory Show came along, and he was overwhelmed by that, and so intelligently overwhelmed, I mean he just took it in his stride, he didn't have to have any new machinery installed or anything like that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Was he collecting at that time?

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, he was.

BARTLETT COWDREY: And I suppose he bought from the show.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, I don't think he bought very much specifically from the Armory Show, but immediately and continuously up till his death he was adding. He didn't pay much attention to the American things; he was one of those Francophiles, that really couldn't be encouraged. His number one hero was Marcel (Duchamp). And I think there's only one major picture missing that Marcel painted, and I don't know where that is, but oh, there's some prominent lawyer, as of that time, he probably isn't around now, in Chicago,, that got that. And I don't think Walter was able to pry that loose. He did get the, of all places, "The Nude Descending the Staircase", he missed that, the original one, at Gump's headquarters, you know? A fantastic place in San Francisco. Finally he wore him down and he did get that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I've heard it said that Henry McBride promoted the French paintings over and above the Americans.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes, he did, Americans were hardly noticed, and he was a snob in that regard, very much so; he was pretty much of a snob too.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well when did Lane begin collecting? I mean how long has he been (collecting)?

CHARLES SHEELER: I don't believe it's more than about six years.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well that's fantastic, he's done so much. If it's only that long, then I must have met him when he was really just beginning, because it might have been in 1953 or ' 54 but he did have a houseful of paintings.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes, but that, was quickly, very quickly.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Do you know what; brought him into the art field?

CHARLES SHEELER: No, I really don't know.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, we'll have to get a hold of him.

CHARLES SHEELER: When we met him which was I would say about 6 years ago, we were visiting over the line in Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire...She particularly was a friend of Bill's wife, who was also interested in a dog team, that she raised of Huskies, and Lorna, our friend Lorna, arranged for us to meet, and -- it's just maybe 35 miles or something like that between the two places. And we went over to Lane's one evening and visited at their house, and then they took us out to their club, in the neighborhood, and then we came back to their place again after dinner. And at that time, his avocation principally was music. And he had a beautiful library of the finest records, of all the most beautiful music, I think, and also of the singers or performers. And he played something; he took me into that room; played some Chaliapin records that we hadn't heard before and so forth and so on, and I heard a few later on. Well that was his status at that time, he didn't have any pictures. But I couldn't say just where the beginning was. He finally strolled in, oh maybe a year or so later, into the Downtown Gallery and looked around, and I think he saw a picture of mine that (he likes) -- Charles Alan was associated there, and he had the dealings with him on that. And well, he was a little shocked, it was over his head he thought, to spend $2,000.00 for a picture, and didn't do anything about it, but then later he became a customer. I produced a small one, which usually comes first, about 6 x 9, or something like that, and when that is to my satisfaction then I begin a large canvas, or much larger, 25 x 30, or something like that. Well, another time he came in and that one was in the gallery. So that one he did take home with him. And well, he started coming in the gallery to look around, he wasn't buying immediately, just didn't go overboard. And he'd occasionally pick up a picture that interested him, and then it just kept expanding, he started going around to other galleries having American things. He was never in doubt as to what he eventually wanted to collect, because he was a hundred percent American.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, it's fascinating to think that that collection of his was started such a short time ago.

MUSYA SHEELER: Well, I must correct you-there. His wife was... and she was a very charming person too, and very lovely. And she bought the first painting of Sheeler to give for him as a present of Sheeler, so she used to come here with Lorna and the dogs when they went to the Westminster Show. And she didn't know anything about the paintings but she just liked Sheeler ...And I don't know, maybe that had something to do, and maybe not. But that's the way it was.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, it really wasn't, Musya.

MUSYA SHEELER: Yes, it was.

CHARLES SHEELER: All right, but I’m saying that Charles Alan had him when he made his first purchase.

MUSYA SHEELER: Yes, I know.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, but what did she get?

MUSYA SHEELER: But she got your first little painting, and gave it to him as a present. Because you...

CHARLES SHEELER: Well I just don't know what the painting was, what the present was.

MUSYA SHEELER: Well, I know.

CHARLES SHEELER: Then I don't know that picture.

MUSYA SHEELER: Well, it's so long ago, it's easy to forget.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, anyhow, Lane faced American art and found he loved it.

MUSYA SHEELER: That's it, exactly.

BARTLETT COWDREY: And he's got a big collection.

MUSYA SHEELER; But also, ask Charles about the wonderful radar built-in eye...

BARTLETT COWDREY: And he has a marvelous picture memory.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, he has. He'll describe a picture that he just saw in passing to you in every detail, the areas, the colors, the designs. Well, we all look, but there's very few that see. There's quite a distinction.

BARTLETT COWDREY: When did Lane create the Foundation?

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, after he had a considerable group, then he made a Foundation.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Because I think that is a very fine thing; it allows him to enjoy his pictures, and lend them, and also to add.

CHARLES SHEELER: He has an exhibition now in the Currier Gallery in Manchester, New Hampshire.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I remember in 1949 seeing a new picture of yours at the Currier Gallery.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well that was a commission from the Gallery.

BARTLETT COWDREY: From Gordon Smith?

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes.

BARTLETT COWDREY: He's now out in Buffalo.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes. It was a carry-on from Bartlett Hayes, Andover's first plan, and that was having the artists, or having our family as a unit move up to Andover, to be on the campus and circulating around...

BARTLETT COWDREY: You must have enjoyed it.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, that was very fine, it was a very wonderful experience. And also, the plus of making very, very highly esteemed friends up there. The Hayes
family first of all, one of the first families of the country so far as we're concerned, and various members of the staff who were close personal friends of Bart's. Will you bring some sugar in Musya please?

BARTLETT COWDREY: When you were there at Andover, did you get over to Cambridge, to see the Fogg?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes.

MUSYA SHEELER: Tell her more about Bartlett Hayes, when we were in residence. There was a wonderful, memorable October month.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well he came in here one Sunday afternoon when he was in New York with Edith Halpert, and he said that he wanted to discuss a project with me and see if I would be interested, and then he said that he had thought that he would like to have every year a different artist for a period up there, as artist in residence. Of course that wasn't original because some of our writers had been around in various colleges and schools. I don't know whether any painters had been before that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Do you remember what year that was?

MUSYA SHEELER: I don't remember exactly what year that was.

CHARLES SHEELER: I think it was 1946.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well that was early. I think that since then more universities have picked up the idea.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well then we discussed that. He said he wanted us to, I mean the possibility, because it was such a surprise to have that proposition offered, and he said he would like us to come up. It was just Musya and I and Ebony at that time. He said, "I want you to come up just as your household is here, and the Sheelers will be living in Andover for the period, a month."

BARTLETT COWDREY: Who was Ebony?

CHARLES SHEELER: He was a little dachshund.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Oh, a dachshund, yes. I've seen the photographs.

CHARLES SHEELER: He said, "I tell you, come up, the three of you, and spend the weekend with us, and see," because I didn't know Andover, I'd never been there before that. And he said, "Look over the territory and see if it has interesting possibilities." And we did that, we mutually agreed. So, then we went up, that was probably mid-summer, I guess, and then October was our period that we had accepted, as our period of residence. Well they have a very nice inn there, it is one of those and, a very nice place, and we were to be put up at the inn. When I was actually at the point of engaging space, I told them frankly that we had a little dachshund. The inn had iron bound rules about that. And Bart had to go to the headmaster, who in turn backed up Bart and also went to the management of the inn and finally -

BARTLETT COWDREY: You were allowed in.

CHARLES SHEELER: We not only got in but we were accommodated in Mr. (Homer Cochran (apartment). And he was the godfather of, he had a very great and substantial interest in Andover, he is one of the Morgan partners, and he had his own apartment at the inn when he came up, because he was so devoted he came up fairly frequently, I was told. So we had that, we had a very nice sitting room, a bath, and a luxurious bedroom, that is, size and all that, very nice. That had the advantage from the management's viewpoint that there was a stairway just down to the garden right outside, we didn't have to come down into the lobby with a dog, you see? And it was a wonderful association, and still a very happy memory.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Did you do any painting?

CHARLES SHEELER: No, I didn't. I wasn't working that way then, and I still don't. I go out and look, and make any notes that I need, in shorthand, and I always work when I come back. I can't work in a new location. Because I'm so conscious, so conscious --I find out for myself if it has any interest in particular, if there's a piece of furniture or
some pictures there, anything, that's interesting, well my time would be mostly getting better acquainted with those things than it would be with the job at hand. So on campus I didn't have any duties ...some of the students would stop and speak in a friendly (way). Well then Bart since this was the inauguration of what he hoped would be the early plan which didn't materialize because his funds the next year didn't permit. He was pretty strapped down by his budget. But since he hadn't done it before, he developed the program as we went along. After we were up there a few days he said, "I'd like to have a small representative show of your pictures for the students to see while you're visiting here." Well, with that fabulous ability to get around and be two or three places at the same time, he managed that. He was scheduled to make the official address at the opening of the Carnegie Institute Show, and he had through the Downtown Gallery arranged to borrow those few pictures. He had probably a dozen, something like that, some of them were a fairly good size for me. And they were assembled at the Downtown Gallery. So Bart left Andover in his Model A roadster, drove into New York, parked the car there, took the plane that night for the address out at Carnegie, took the plane back again the next morning, to New York and the Downtown Gallery, where the pictures were waiting, packed them into his roadster -- they just went in, with the top down, they just went in the back between the driver's seat and the back of the car, being a roadster it was a two-seater. And how he knew the measurements, because you couldn't have gotten this napkin in between the last picture and the back of the car. It's just incredible. And remember the day, early flying from Pittsburgh to New York, getting those things, driving back, arriving at 1:00 or 2:00 the following morning. We of course were waiting for him and helped to unload the pictures from the car. And that's the nearest I've ever come to seeing Bart actually exhausted and not ashamed to admit it, because that was a schedule that I had never heard equaled by an associate of mine. It was just incredible.

BARTLETT COWDREY: And I suppose the exhibition was hung the next day.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, of course.

MUSYA SHEELER: It was!

BARTLETT COWDREY: And opened to the public along about 5:00, a reception.

CHARLES SHEELER: Something like that.

MUSYA SHEELER: He's and unbelievable guy.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, he also, I had just engaged Miska at this place, over, that I just described at Fitzwilliam, and of course he knew about that, and he tried to get some one of the girls to drive over and bring Miska over for the opening as a surprise for me, but he just didn't succeed in putting that through. Can you think of anything so fantastic?

MUSYA SHEELER: But what good friends we made there.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, that's what I said just a while ago, first of all, very much first was the Hayes family, and then a very choice collect group of people his age, their age, among the faculty. People that were conspicuous, first of all they were wonderful people, like Penn Hallowell, who comes from one of the first families of Boston; his father was a great friend of Koussevitzky; Koussevitzky would come out
and spend some time visiting at their house, and he next time he would bring part of the Boston Symphony out with him to play for them, things like that. And the Choates have one branch of their big family up there too.

MUSYA SHEELER: Priscilla is a Choate.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes. I certainly know that, Musya.

MUSYA SHEELER: Mrs. Hallowell.

CHARLES SHEELER: And then we know -- her brother is down here at Mount Kisco and is apt to breeze in on his motorcycle most any Saturday afternoon, he's a lawyer, and of course they -- these two, brother and sister, are grandchildren of Joseph Choate, who was our ambassador to London.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Bart's house there in Andover is a very pleasant spot.

MUSYA SHEELER: Why don't you describe Bart's house? Which is just fantastic.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, it's been a family house. And I think it maybe of its own volition grows. a room occasionally when it sees things are getting a little bit crowded with the increasing population. Because there are, four or five girls now in the family?

MUSYA SHEELER: Four.

CHARLES SHEELER: And then there are always various people visiting. His sister has in recent years, I guess she's a permanent fixture, but she was one of those that visited around among the various members of the clan, it's a pretty big clan. We don't really know all of it, just by hearsay. Bart has a brother we met once, 'cause we went back after that occasionally; we used to make more trips than we do at present, and we would frequently summer up in New England, why we'd, maybe it had gotten out that we were coming up that way, and he would say stop in and stay a while with us. And we did that a number of times. We met a brother who is sort of roving in his profession. He's a doctor. At that time I think he was mostly in the Far East somewhere, but he just happened to be home. And then he has a sister, a Mrs. Byers, who lives in the next house to theirs.

MUSYA SHEELER: And Mrs. Byers' husband is a head of the Archaeological Museum. (at Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.)

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes, he's the archaeologist -- they have an archaeological museum, Mr. Bayard is the head of that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I only visited Addison Gallery once, I'm ashamed to say, but I was very much impressed by the collections there. Like the Whitney, it's one of the few museums that is of American art.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, part of this, the terms of this artist-in-residence, was that I would presumably, would be intended that I should look around in the vicinity and if I saw anything that I thought represented material for a picture I would paint it, and they would acquire it, and that was accomplished.

BARTLETT COWDREY: What was the subject?

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, there was a place just on the edge of Andover which is old, it goes back to when New England was the great textile center, you've probably (seen) many places where all those places are just, I mean those textile mills are just carcasses now, the windows are out and all that sort of thing. Well, there was Ballardsdale, which was adjacent to Andover, it was a place like that, and was certainly of enough interest to me to devise a picture of it, and that was the subject for one.

MUSYA SHEELER: For the permanent collection, of course.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, I said that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: If I were only a benefactor, or a Lizzie Bliss, I'd persuade you to come to Passaic, New Jersey, where the textile industry once flourished, but unfortunately it...

CHARLES SHEELER: They're pretty gruesome, those places, aren't they. The worst of all that I know, when I got to Manchester I walked down the main street and I was just flabbergasted. I wanted to turn right around and come home again. Oh, it was so ghastly, because they had vastly more than this, that I was describing at Ballardsdale.

BARTLETT COWDREY: You find more decay in New England.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, they were actually right along the Merrimack -Merrimack is spelled with a K at the end -- River. Just the whole -- like a canal in Venice, of these continuous -- they just continued, evidently they built them by the yard. And that's what the picture of mine is based on when I did it for the Currier Gallery, the same plan of a picture, it was based on a view down that river, with the factories on the side.

BARTLETT COWDREY: In New England the factories go into decay, but in New Jersey the company dies but the factory is taken over by some television company, or by something that is new. In my own memory the Botany mills and the Gera and Forstmann-Hoffman have moved out, but something else moves in.

MUSYA SHEELER: I have a little secret to tell here. You know when he became the artist-in-residence in Manchester he was ready to pack his bag, it was raining -

CHARLES SHEELER: Couldn't work, because –

MUSYA SHEELER: _ No, no, not only that, he wouldn't work anyhow, but the point is this -

CHARLES SHEELER: No, but I mean I couldn't go out –

MUSYA SHEELER: -- that nobody came to greet him or tell him hello, or anything.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, it was not intentional; Gordon Smith's sister had died suddenly, I mean without illness, and he was out there, I was told that by the gallery. And he sent his regrets to me and said he would be back in a few days, just as soon as possible. And :in his absence there was nobody else, I think there was a secretary that he had, but no trustee or anything like that, you know. So we just hung around. The accommodations had been prepared for us, there's only one hotel, or was then, in Manchester, and that's a very nice hotel.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Was this the same year that you were at Andover? (CHARLES SHEELER was artist-in-residence at Phillips Academy in October, 191+6)

MUSYA SHEELER: Oh no.

BARTLETT COWDREY: This was '48 or --

CHARLES SHEELER: I think it was about two years after, I think there was a year intervening.

MUSYA SHEELER: It was '49.

CHARLES SHEELER: And then Gordon Smith proposed a similar thing to what Bartlett Hayes had inaugurated. I knew him just very slightly, it was more because of
whatever interest he had in my work, but during the WPA, Gordon Smith was the regional director. I was living in Ridgefield (Connecticut) at that time, and that brought me into the New England area. And Gordon Smith used to come in occasionally. He was also a Connecticut man, but Gordon Smith was the head in Massachusetts. And they had
two men working in there for sixteen days, making beautiful skillful, factual watercolors of these Shaker things, they made quite a collection, they did almost everything in the house, the more important thing;, so they were there for 16 days, living, and then Gordon Smith a couple of times during that time, came in and looked over what they had done, and visited with me a little bit; that was as much as I knew of him until I got this surprise

invitation to come up...

MUSYA SHEELER: Well anyhow I wanted to tell you that when we came there and when he was so utterly disgusted, you know, and he wanted to pack the bags, I went out on a pretense, which I usually did with the dogs anyhow, and there was a convention in the hotel and instead of going with the dogs out, I went into the telephone booth and called, "Bart (Hayes), S.O.S. Please! Help. Charles is packing the bags, and I can't keep him here unless you do something." And so Bart said, "0h, I'm going to do immediately something," so he got in touch with a -- what was his name? Frank Spinney.

BARTLETT COWDREY: He's the head of Sturbridge now.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well he was the head of the Manchester Historical Society. And the Historical Society was sponsored by a very lovely elderly woman -- oh what is her name?

MUSYA SHEELER: I don't remember her name. (Mrs. Charles Manning)

CHARLES SHEELER: She was very nice; we became acquainted and went to her very beautiful white marble house, in the vicinity and all that sort of thing.

BARTLETT COWDREY: So suddenly you had an interest in Manchester.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, and then, so --

BARTLETT COWDREY: I suppose you met Gordon's wife.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes.

MUSYA SHEELER: Oh, they're lovely people, both of them.

BARTLETT COWDREY: (Elizabeth) and I were fellow students and the University of London.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, you were?

BARTLETT COWDREY: in 1934.

CHARLES SHEELER: She was very nice, don't you think?

MUSYA SHEELER: Oh, wonderful. And I think Gordon Smith was very nice. He was just -- he was in that terrible mischief and he couldn't do anything about it, you see.

CHARLES SHEELER: His description was just fantastic, of what the Currier Gallery when he came was; it was really just a hothouse, he said; they changed the flowers fresh every day around the pool, in the entrance.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, Gordon came there at the right time. I think there was an endowment that was tied up, and in other words, there was money but no one could spend it.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, well they have an inexhaustible endowment. They never spend anything like all their income. They just reinvest the income...

MUSYA SHEELER: (Describing the town of Manchester, N.H., and the Main Street)-it is a design of all the windows, you know, windows, windows, windows, windows, rain, rain, rain, rain, and all in rain nothing else, and windows.

CHARLES SHEELER: It was sort of a, just a line drawing.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well then you spotted your factory.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes. Well, I couldn't avoid spotting them, but I didn't see anything I could do with them, because it was just...it seemed to be a question to me what the dimensions of the canvas were, like running out a bolt of cloth on the canvas, they were how many yards.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Or how many windows?

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, that's it. But the curious thing -- it also answers the frequent question, "How do you arrive at your pictures?" Not in this elaborate way of Kepes, or this Iowa man.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Kirsch, is that the Iowa man?

CHARLES SHEELER: No. Oh no. He's a pal of mine, there's nothing the matter with him.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Excuse me.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, it doesn't matter, I'll show you the letter later. Where was I?

BARTLETT COWDREY: You were describing how you arrive at a picture.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, well I explained with the experience of anyone, they may not be conscious of it when it's presented to them, but from my standpoint they can readily see that it's their experience too, I'm looking at this dogwood tree out here, and my eyes move to the far side of the Hudson. Well, just because I'm looking more recently at the Hudson; I still also been looking at previously, immediately previously. And it is the combination of the overtone of the previous image and the more present one, that combines in the picture. And the farthest that I've ever gone on that is a picture that is, I guess, that's about, as far as mine is concerned, Bill Lane's favorite picture, of those he has, it's called New England Irrelevancies, there's a colored plate of it around, I don't know whether you've seen that, he had one made for the catalog of the UCLA retrospective show. Well that's a combination of Ballardvale and Manchester. But more often, it's just within the same group of things that I'll walk around everything before I decide on one thing, and there are as many elements as I want (in) a previous viewing, I combine them in -- as overtones, in the main theme.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well did you, and Lane get together with a tape recorder?

CHARLES SHEELER: No, not yet. He called up...

MUSYA SHEELER: They made a tape record...

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, well that was miserable, that was for, just to see, get an idea how...

MUSYA SHEELER: Well, I think it was excellent.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, I wouldn't agree to that. It's still a project.

MUSYA SHEELER: Well, he's still going to make it, and he probably will give you that one too.

BEGIN REEL 2

(Talking about the new book "The Proud Possessors" by Aline Saarinen)

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, he certainly must have been just judging the caliber of man he must be, because lawyers these days, far as I know, don't stand out on mountains as individuals like he did, but the name of the great lawyer John G. Johnson, oh it was all over the United States, I think everybody knew that name.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, he bought the paintings that he liked.

CHARLES SHEELER: What he had on the beam, he had a perception evidently of paintings. And it wasn't in question a good bit of painting, and I think Aline Bernstein (her maiden name) (Saarinen), I didn't read the book but I read the review in the Times.

BARTLETT COWDREY: It's awfully good reading.

CHARLES SHEELER: Someone told me that, who was it? Oh, Bartlett Hayes. He said, "Have you read Aline Saarinen's book, it's very good reading. Quite a brilliant book." Well, you know, so much of buying is done among fabulous people, of great wealth or great prominence. Particularly it has to be of wealth.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes.

CHARLES SHEELER: It isn't like writing a poem. But the battle that's going on now that nobody, nobody can understand these unheard-of prices. And it's really a battle to impress...I'll name the most prominent culprit I know at the time is that Greek ship-owner who just buys, he buys the Edward G. Robinson collection, reportedly after he had it he said that, oh, he would only keep part of it -- he only bought it to have six or eight pictures out of it, the rest he would make other plans for. And it's still going up the line, I don't know, maybe he can't keep up with it, because it's $616,000 Cezanne. It's just incredible. A little drawing, possibly by Giovanni Bellini, $41,000. It's about the size of- your hand. And to me it's nothing. Most anybody has made a drawing, that isn't anything against the very great deserved reputation of Bellini for his overall work, but that little thing was just a note on a scrap of paper, it didn't have the -- it couldn't – just as if he were just completely disassociated from that and nobody would, I don't think, pick it out
with judgment and say, "Isn't this one of the most fabulous drawings I've seen:' There's little drawings, by

Rembrandt. You couldn't mistake them, there is a great drawing. Just little bits of etchings that he made of beggars, oh, they're done with about a half dozen lines, in characteristic garb, that is, sort of loose tunics, and heels, walking on the side of their feet, and all that sort of thing, various cases of extreme poverty among them, the people of his times, well those -- that's a different thing. To me it's pretty surely, it's attributed, I'm pretty sure of its attribution, that this is even a Bellini. It's not an authenticated one, for whatever that might mean, that is in additional value, but it's still a great drawing to me. All these things. You know, did you see in -- it was written in Time, on the art page, last week I guess. It speaks of the galleries being rather pleased because it is affecting the American artist too, it sort of moves us over into the American department, and all of our prices are very much up in the last say five years. And the galleries in general are delighted. And it speaks of this, particularly of this collection, it just was Kirkeby, or whatever it was, a hotel owner, you know. He's only had the collection about three years, and now he's selling it. Well, it was obviously just a speculation, like he'd buy some General Motors stock. And it's just admitted by those people that pictures are a good investment. Some man came in the Downtown Gallery, which was included in this article, that is along that line, and somebody had given him a list of the artists at the Downtown Gallery. And he said, "I want one picture by each of these artists." And Edith (Halpert) reportedly said to him, "Well, wouldn't you like to see just what your preference is?" "No, I'm not interested in the pictures, I just understand American art is a good investment." "Well," she said, "you'd better go somewhere else." So she didn't show or sell him anything.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Good for Edith.

CHARLES SHEELER: Time says that she's a purist, referred to as Purist Halpert. And by God she didn't do that, because, somehow, if it's humanly possible this has to be straightened out. And it's not on the big board at the Stock Exchange or the American Board, and so forth, and it really is in a different compartment, and that has to be reestablished.

BARTLETT COWDREY: To go back sixty years, seventy years, and see what brought the highest prices in the American field in the 1890's, 1900's. Practically all the top artists, price wise, have fallen. The late Innesses -- nobody wants (today).

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, that I know. Well, you come to a sort of dead spot, not fair, but -

BARTLETT COWDREY: Early Inness is one thing.

CHARLES SHEELER: Dormant, sort of a dormant period of those artists that were once famed.

BARTLETT COWDREY: And J. Francis Murphy; and people like that. They've lost...

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, that's true of any period, there're some in those periods, I mean Inness represented an outstanding person in his time, but not Murphy. I mean, he was just also in the swim, that's all. There're a lot of fish in the river.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Inness in his later years had so many commissions, that he had a helper, a studio helper. And I think that now we realize that those late Innesses are not as good as his early work where he by himself did the entire picture.

CHARLES SHEELER: It's amazing, because that was always true, accord-ing to my reading, that Rubens was that way; he always had a regular factory in his place, aside
from the design of the overall picture and some finishing touches to it, it was all done by
apprentices. They were more than apprentices, the artists that were in his studio, and yet I've never seen one that I felt wasn't just the mark of the master on it, did you? Did you ever see one?

BARTLETT COWDREY: No, because at that time that was the way things were done. The apprentices were trained.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, there ought to be an elaborate credit line, I think -- on those that are said to be great Rubens. Rubens and etc., etc., and company, Incorporated. Rubens, Inc., I think it should be rewritten.

BARTLETT COWDREY: There were no archives then, Mr. Sheeler. Today we'd catch that. I mean I hope we would. Then of course with Inness, I believe that his son painted in the manner of the father, and that didn't help at all. That was unfortunate. But thank goodness, there was a swing away from that misty, misty landscape; a swing back to looking at things the way they are. At Smith we had a huge collection of Dwight W. Tryon.

CHARLES SHEELER: Ah yes, I do remember him. And we had the Morans in Philadelphia, in my youth, very much in my youth.

BARTLETT COWDREY: They are forgotten now. And then Thomas Dewing with his misty figures.

CHARLES SHEELER: I wish you hadn't mentioned that. Weren't they the most saccharine pictures you ever remember seeing?

BARTLETT COWDREY: The only Dewings that I think are worth looking at are the groups, where he did groups of figures.

CHARLES SHEELER: I remember way back in the Annual, seeing those, and I said to a friend who was with me, I called them Nothing Dewing.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I interviewed Dewing's daughter a few years back, because I had to write a D.A.B. article on Dewing. (Mrs. Elizabeth Kaup) The daughter is a novelist, and she didn't like it at all that I was talking to her about her father. And I couldn't (understand). I felt there was something wrong. Suddenly I realized she wanted to be interviewed, as a person in her own right. Finally she told me she hated her father. But it wasn't really until the early 1920's that that misty period came to an end.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, it was a curious thing, a long time ago, it was in the neighborhood of the Armory Show. Not actually at the same time, but it was somewhere later, there was a fellow, I can't think of his name, oh, he was despised by the present crop of artists, I mean the earlier crop, and he wrote me a perfectly enthusiastic letter about a picture he had seen of mine, which I...and he was the, carried the flag of the Adacemicians at that time. He was the top man at the Academy, I mean he was greatly revered by them. I had it just for the moment, and then forgot it again. I wish I could remember what his name was, but I was so excited. But when I acknowledged it and I remember it -- I tried to point out that what he liked it for wasn't really there. Something to that effect. But our correspondence didn't continue.

MUSYA SHEELER: Charles, another story you ought to tell Bartlett is that, you know, when Jacob Lawrence came to the gallery. You remember?

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes.

MUSYA SHEELER: And Edith asked you whether he would be a worthwhile man to bring in the gallery?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh well, she'd already talked to him, she didn't have to depend on me, I just happened to be there when Jacob Lawrence brought his first armful of small pictures. He used eleven by fourteen panels, as I also did. And he brought a group of those in. He had a letter from somebody from where he had lived previously, down in Maryland somewhere, I think it was Baltimore; anyway, he came from some other city and he was coming to New York, to show these few things with him, and well, Edith said, you want to see these things? And I said yes. And we went in the back room and looked at them, and I was flabbergasted, and I know that Edith was, because she very promptly signed him up for an exhibition. And that was really a discovery. I don't like his work in these last five or six years, nearly as well as those early ones.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I suppose that was in the mid 1930's, when she discovered him.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes. About, I think, towards the end of the thirties.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I don't like to say anything about the time, but... I'd better start...

MUSYA SHEELER: Do you have to go?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, I don't want to tire you.

MUSYA SHEELER: Oh no, you can go on, converse please.

CHARLES SHEELER: We're having a good time.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, I'm having a fine time.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, do you want to skip the immediate train, then, and stay for supper? Have dinner with us?

CHARLES SHEELER: ...out in Pennsylvania, I was sketching, do you remember, and he came along and very courteously asked if he might sit down behind me, for awhile, and there are people who are in Who's Who that weren't -- couldn't possibly be half as interesting to me as that half hour he sat there.

BARTLETT COWDREY: A congenial soul.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes. Taxicab drivers are very favorite encounters with me; I have a way of describing -- when I get in a taxi, there's something -

MUSYA SHEELER: You don't have to describe them to me, they are my best friends.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, there's something about the back of the neck of that particular driver that usually tells me, "not this time,'° or it says "Yes, come on." He hadn't said anything but I give him a minute, when it's favorable, or when I think it's favorable, I give him a leading question. And I invariably get a philosophy that I'm very glad to have heard described. They're wonderful people, all those people.

MUSYA SHEELER: Not only taxi drivers, but also the truck drivers... They're the biggest -

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, all those people, that most of the population overlooks, unless they come to be one of them themselves. But it's just that all people are cut out of the same piece of cloth, and I really never forget that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: The taxi-drivers -- are constantly meeting different people, everybody who gets into a cab is different. I think that's what makes them philosophers. Yes, I sometimes wish I had a tape-recorder when I talk to those people.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, I do too, I wish they'd make one you could have on your wrist, something like that, like the Minox camera.

BARTLETT COWDREY: There is a portable, a pretty small gadget.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes, I remember reading about it, and the fellow that I referred to earlier, at lunch, who was the expert, he's coming up the first chance, he's a tremendously busy fellow, but he's coming up some Sunday and give us really valuable technical advice. And well, one time -- he visits Jack, an artist friend right next to him, their property in fact is...and I met him over there, and I had just read of a German portable, oh, a little bit of a thing, not much larger than a 35-mm camera. And I asked if he had ever heard of it, and he said, yes, it's curious, I was in a gathering and there was a man that was either the representative for it over here, but he was up at the top of that particular thing, and he had one in his pocket, and he said it's remarkably good considering its size. The only thing he thought was against it, and everybody else that I've talked to on recorders, it's a wire recorder, and people who really have knowledge don't think anything favorable of the wire as compared to the tape for recording.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I think that the wire recorder makes some noise.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, well one thing, I don't think that would be the only objection, that it is a disk, and I believe it can't be erased, like the tape. That is, once you've used it, you've used it.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, when you're using a tape, for history purposes, you wish it (the sound) could be frozen. That's why we...

MUSYA SHEELER: It shouldn't be perishable.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes, I mean this is perishable. This could be transcribed to a disk. That's what is done sometimes.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, well I think we could have read some technical remarks on that subject somewhere, since I've been conscious of recorders, and there's some place that they do record them on a disk.

MUSYA SHEELER: Charles, tell, for instance, when you went to paint the picture for Otto Spaeth.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Oh, you lent me photographs of Mr. Spaeth.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, that was it.

MUSYA SHEELER: It's very interesting, the priest that you met, remember? And all those things that happened to you there? It was very exciting.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, just as a person first of all, and I think that does come first.

MUSYA SHEELER: Yes, sure.

CHARLES SHEELER: Otto was very beloved to me. I mean he's a very exceptional person, and my relation, which happened to have been for a short time, quite close. He owned at that time a plant out in Cedarburg, which is about 20 miles from Milwaukee, and we connected up there, and he comes into the Downtown Gallery, and

occasionally I met him down there, before this happened. He had an idea, as of my first meeting, he'd been working on it independently of that -he's closely associated in the matter of stock with the Pabst Brewery, too, he and his father was one of the founders of the Pabst Brewery. And it puts Otto on very nice territory as a result. And he had an idea, looking through my eyes, gee, that would be a wonderful subject, so he thought, for me. And he said, "Would you be interested," and I said yes. He hadn't succeeded in selling the idea to the Corporation, but with the agreement that I would be interested, certainly in having a look, for that possibility. I think it took him four or five years, but he hung on to that, and he said, "Be on such and such a train, the 20th Century, of such a day, and so forth, and I will see you out there." And we went on from there, it was a very nice fulfillment, I did see a very exciting subject, which is called Convolutions, that doesn't probably as a title mean anything to you among my pictures. And then I was put up at Cedarburg, he had a casting plant there for a while, which he has since sold, aluminum magnesium castings, small castings for those things, I mean, might be some little parts for Chrysler, or whatever the end use of them would be. And in connection with that he wanted to induce Cedarburg, it's a small place, just a flyspeck on the map, but it has some small industries, his was a small industry too, and he wanted to attract some of the bigger, valuable men to come out and work at these plants. So he built an apartment house for them. Accommodations for about six families. And he kept one for himself, because he would shuttle back and forth to see how his own interests were doing in the plant, and then he hoped to get these people, these specialists, coming in from Milwaukee for instance, which is probably a good field to get them. Well at any rate, that didn't materialize, because he sold the plant about that time, or a little later. But in the meantime he put us up -- I never saw him for more that 24. hours out there, and then he'd be off on a plane for someplace else. One day we caught him. He had his own plane, a Beechcraft. One morning we all got up, the manager of the plant, myself, and maybe someone else, to see him off at about 7:00 in the morning for Dayton. Because he had promised to play golf with a friend of his at lunchtime. Now if that isn't flying high and fast -- things like that. He was a very restless person; that is, he never could stay put for more than 24 hours, I believe.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I understand he had a bus, or a van.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, well that was -- by hearsay, reading about it in the New Yorker, the account of it, that was the first I knew about Otto Spaeth, that he had a Greyhound bus that was built to order, and it had accommodations for six people, living on it. And a manservant to supply them with food, and all the necessities of life, and he would go off on trips, 103000 miles at a time, taking whichever of the family were accessible for that trip. That -sorry I missed, that's when I first met him, I said, "Gee, I wish you would take us out on one of your trips in your bus," and he said, "Oh, not now; we have just come back from 10,000 miles." And we never got any farther than that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Mrs. Spaeth is working with us in New York.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, she is a worker, isn't she --

BARTLETT COWDREY: Oh, she's fine.

CHARLES SHEELER: And she carries practically the Federation of Arts on her shoulders, doesn't she?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes, she's still very much involved. And that's why we were delighted that she would give us some of her energy.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, it's amazing how energetic she is. Well then he -- he is Catholic. I mean in the higher circles, he's a Papal Count and all that sort of thing, but only he would know how much he has done for his church. The first time I met him he was very excited, showing blueprints of the chapel he was building in memory of a very favorite priest of his. And then other things; and one time when I was out with him briefly, in one of his (?) at Cedarburg, he was talking, we had many little conversations of our own, at dinner together or something like that, or in his apartment. And he told about one of those little South American countries, where there was a great deal of goingson in the papers about. the -- (it was largely Catholic, 95% of the country), and they were really crucifying those that were not Catholic. Or so the newspapers were reporting. Well, he had a priest in Italy, I think, that he very much revered, and he had written to him and asked if he would provide the funds to really get that straight, as to just what the situation was down there. Well, he talked aloud in my presence, and said, "Well, I don't know whether I want to get into that or not. It's a time. Well, he said -- he referred to this church, and he was of course very close to the priest. And he said, "When you have time, while you're here, go over and call on the priest." He said, "I believe you'll find him interesting." Well, I did that, and it was a very fine experience. I love the man to this day. I was only with him about half an hour, but he was a worthy successor to the son of a carpenter, he was beautiful. When I first went there, his housekeeper said that he --
there's a parochial school right next door to the church, and she said, "Father's over there now, he's always over there at this time of the morning." And she said, "Well, I'll send over for him." And I said, "Oh, not that, just tell me when he's usually here." "Well, he's usually here about 12:00." I wanted just a few moments to speak to him,

you know. And I did that, and he was there in an old pair of blue jeans or the equivalent; an old black sweater, I don't know how many generations, maybe, it had been handed down. The
elbows out, and smoking a stinking pipe, and so forth, and we sat down in a little cubby-hole, sort of, where he had a desk, and it was a very memorable visit. There was an extreme simplicity and humility, genuine humility, it was a pleasure to meet that,
without all the official robes and pomp and circumstance. And I was told by Otto, and I think he will corroborate it; he said-something about priests, and he said he-really cared more about baseball than he did about the church. And he said, "I'm handy, and yet there's a step that is broken, I'd go out and fix it myself, I don't call anybody in to do it."
Well his whole pattern was just like that. He was just as though it were being recorded -- you know, he wasn't trying to impress me or win me to the church, or anything like that, it was just like two friends sitting down and talking.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Just a human being.

CHARLES SHEELER: He was wonderful, very wonderful.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, I was sorry to hear that Otto Spaeth is ill.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes, that was a catastrophe, it's been several years. I haven't seen him very much in this time; one of his major projects has been, for oh, within this past two years, it was published in the Sunday Times, he built himself a nifty modern house out on Long Island. And...

BARTLETT COWDREY: And now he can't enjoy it, I guess.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, he was that way before. That was a harrowing thing. It was the time when we were calling each other about something every few days, and he called one morning, and he said, "I have to go to the hospital for an operation. And you are one of the few people I wanted to know about it." Trying to be on the cheerful side, I said, "Which hospital is it, Otto?" "Memorial." I don't know how I finished that conversation, it was just like being struck by lightning. I knew he had complained at times, that "my throat irritates me a good bit," and so forth, he'd just casually say, but he wasn't bedridden or anything of the kind, he'd. just say that, once in a while.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, he has been a great support to art.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, I should say so.

MUSYA SHEELER: Tell also about Otto Spaeth, how he made this wonderful exhibition.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh yes. Well, out at his plant, in addition to the plant as it stood, he built a very nifty modern office building. I mean, when I say office, it was all on one floor, but it contained all the necessary offices for that small plant, and it was very attractive. And when he planned it, and worked it out with the architect, he made it so the offices on occasion could be exhibition galleries. And he had two or three exhibitions, which he organized, in the several years that he had it our there. They sold things, people could buy pictures on time, they bought them on a monthly basis, whatever the terms convenient to them were, the girl that worked as clerk in the book shop, she bought a picture on that basis, and all that sort of thing. One exhibition sold something like $11,,000 worth of paintings.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, it's a marvelous thing to --

CHARLES SHEELER: And that was the time when Eloise was out there, too, the three of us were out on that trip, and they were in the midst of hanging this exhibition, I was staying on, it was only sort of incidental for me, because I was still engaged on these commissions, I also had a commission around that time to do something of his plant. And the exhibition had a good attendance. It could only be open -- I think it was open Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday to the public. Because they were working rooms during the week. But I was surprised, Sunday afternoon, to see how the place was crowded. Because, as I say it was such a little town, it wasn't any bigger than Irvington, and much less sophisticated than Irvington would be, because these are practically all New York people, they're not just natives of Irvington that live here.

BARTLETT COWDREY: The offices of Neuberger, and Berman, that's Howard Lipman's firm -- are loaded with paintings. Contemporary American art.

CHARLES SHEELER: I would imagine. Because Roy would have to have some place to put the pictures, no apartment that he would have could contain them.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Of course a lot of Neuberger's pictures are out on loans, for the whole year, so it was quite

a fascinating experience to see that office.

CHARLES SHEELER: He just bought -- about a year ago, Roy just bought one of my pictures that had been in the Venice International, you know, two years ago. And he had a couple before that. God, there's another ball of fire. Isn't he something.

BARTLETT COWDREY: I hardly know him. But I do hear of him. (Roy Neuberger)

MUSYA SHEELER: Oh yes. He certainly is. He's a wonderful fellow.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, and full of beans. I never, oh, just as though he just heard the grandest news in the world. He comes in, at one of the openings, stands awhile with his arm around your shoulder, has a heart-to-heart talk with you for a few minutes, and then he's off to the next fellow. You feel as though you're a customer.

MUSYA SHEELER: Tell Bartlett about your experiences painting for Edsel Ford. You know, at the plant there, you went to live with Edsel Ford, you know?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, well, I didn't paint any picture for him.

MUSYA SHEELER: No, you didn't?

CHARLES SHEELER: I didn't. I was out there on a mission of photography. Period. And when I got there, I took a chance on opening the other eye and so then I thought maybe some pictures could be pulled out. But I had to come home, and it was several years later that they had really digested, and they started coming out; there were four pictures eventually. And one of them, a Classic Landscape, you may remember, the grain elevator, well, it looked classic to me, naturally, that's the reason I called it that.

MUSYA SHEELER: Oh, you did just the photography.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes.

MUSYA SHEELER: But you got the picture of that --

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, but I was there so long, I was saturated with it. At a later time -- several years later -

MUSYA SHEELER: Oh, I see. Well, I got all mixed up.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, well I painted the first one, that was the American Landscape, at the –

MUSYA SHEELER: Did you live with Edsel Ford?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, no. I was on my own, the basis was, that I just account for my own expenses, and then the settlement for the work that I had done, well it was ample to include the cost of staying there, but I didn't stay with him.

MUSYA SHEELER: Oh, I mixed it up. I'm sorry Charles. You know, there is another thing, that you told me, that you lived in Williamsburg, painting for Mrs. Rockefeller. Oh, that's the thing I got mixed up about, that's when you lived in Williamsburg.

BARTLETT COWDREY: While we're still on Detroit, I hope you got in to see the Detroit Institute, when you were out there for Ford.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, well, that was a long time ago, it was 1926. I was out there 6 weeks at that time, and Dr. –

BARTLETT COWDREY: Valentiner.

CHARLES SHEELER: He was there, and he was the chief, and I saw Edsel frequently, and I could have seen him any day in the office down at the plant. He was very friendly, and I found him very highly intelligent. I always compared him in my mind with one of those very sharply sharpened pencils, lead pencils, you know, with a needle-point on it. Really wonderful. Even in play moments; there were a number of people that represented at least some of the crowd that he mostly saw socially, that had a round of dinners. I had a joint exhibition with Burchfield there -there was something called The Guild (Society of Arts and Crafts), I forget what its name was, and well, there was an artist (John Carroll) -- up here in New York state as far as I know, that was teaching there. Well, I can't remember the particulars. But Edsel -- they had a night class there; I understand that a good many of the same people that I met socially had also attended that night class, one of them told me that he thought, well, I'll go over there tonight and get in there and get some work done before Edsel comes. That's what they

thought, Edsel was already there when they got there.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Oh, you mean he --

CHARLES SHEELER: And then this little round of parties at his friends' places, that they gave, it would be an evening party, or a dinner party or whatever, it happened to be for an evening occasion and there was a great fad for --they are called charades, where somebody gives you a clue, and then you put a prospective word down on a piece of paper and collect it at the end of the session. Would that be -- I don't know what it was called. All I know, the main point is that Edsel would be already finished before anybody else was. And he'd be looking up at the ceiling and so forth until the rest were up to him.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Mrs. Edsel Ford is one of the backers of the Archives, and she's an awfully nice person.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, I used to see them in New York also. They would sometimes just run into, not by appointment, but they came when the gallery was down on 13th Street, I saw them several times there. One time they came in, we had something different, Edith used to always have some new idea. We -- all of us, I believe, that represented the group that time, took a hand at various forms of industrial design: fabrics, silver, glass, wallpaper -Kuniyoshi made some very nifty designs in wallpaper which were actually published by that big place on West 40th Street, it's one of the big wallpaper -

BARTLETT COWDREY: Schumacher?

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes. Well, when the results were all in we had an exhibition, down at the gallery, and I just happened to be there the day Edsel and Eleanor and the two boys who were then attending the Hotchkiss School up in Connecticut came in. And Edsel looked around; I had a little glass thing that held flat silver in it, and he came over, he took a look at it and said it was no use to ask who did that (piece), just like that. And there was nothing based on having seen something else that I did like that, because that was the only time -- first and only time that I did that.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Good for him.

CHARLES SHEELER: And then he offered me later, on one of my trips out there, it might have been the time that I've just previously been describing, the Model A was just coming out. I was out there during that hectic period. As a matter of record no one has ever had so many lines of free advertising as that car had, in history. The excitement! You know, the River Rouge plant, that is the administration office building, is enclosed in a wire fence similar to this, .except higher, and you'd see people out there when I went out, the Ayer men, asking what my approach was in photography; they were the advertising agency for Ford at that time. And when they -- there was always somebody from there out at the hotel where I was staying. And we would go out, and we were always out there early, just about the time things were opening up. And you'd already see cars lined all around with binoculars, trying to see one of the Model A cars up in front of the office. Incredible. Well, he offered me the chance, if I wanted to do it -- (to design) the little ornament that used to be always on the radiator cap, you know. Well, just at that time I was tied up with some kind of commission for somebody, and I had to just stick to that, I never got to it. I might have been one of these steamship owners by this time.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, tell me about Williamsburg. You went there and looked...

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, I went down to look first, for about a week. This was a proposed commission from Mrs. Rockefeller. It came through the Gallery of course, as I had no acquaintance with her before that. She came up - well, she had bought a picture of mine from the Gallery, but I didn't enter into it personally. She bought the American Landscape, which she later, on the fifth anniversary of the Museum, gave to the Museum of Modern Art. And she already liked my work very much. Then this commission was proposed, to paint two pictures for her, the Governor's Palace -- do you know Williamsburg?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes, I've been there.

CHARLES SHEELER: The Governor's Palace, and -- did you know Bassett Hall? Probably not. It isn't one of the public buildings, on display. It was one of the very beautiful residences of the original time, and had been restored, and things like that. And it was -- I was told then, it was reserved for Mr. and Mr. John D., that is, the Seniors, when they were in residence there. It was very nice, it was off the beaten track, and a very lovely place; well, I painted those two pictures for her. And well, I was there three months, I went just a day or two before Christmas and I came back the beginning of April. And while I was there, I lived in this -- one of those little brick houses sort of built into the wall of the Governor's Palace, on the right hand side as you're approaching it. A little four-room house, but it goes to show it doesn't need to be any bigger that four rooms; that was a little gem. And I had a very pleasant environment, I think, in which to live for that time; and the curator of the interiors of all the buildings, fortunately it coincided he was going to be away in Europe making further purchases of objects for the interiors, so I just sublet this house and also his very wonderful maid; she came from Kentucky -- that she had

grown up with on their homestead in Kentucky, and I just sublet her and also the house, for the duration. Well, I was very enthusiastic, when I landed; it was such a novel thing to me to see that, and also to live in that house.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Was this the mid 1930's, would this have been '35?

CHARLES SHEELER: That was '36. And when I made my official call the next day on Mr. Geddy, who was the director, manager in residence there, he lived in the first house, next to the Governor's Palace on the left-hand side as you are approaching the Palace, it's one of the beautiful houses. I learned while we were down in the Spring that he's passed on; well, he was pretty well along when I saw him, that was '36. Well, I went in to report to him, and very enthusiastically, oh how much I liked this house of Cogar's, and also overextending; I said, Gee, if there was another house like that in Williamsburg, I'd move down. And, well that was all that was said; there was no carrying on of that idea. And I lived very pleasantly, with all the people of the restoration, and Mr. Chorley, who's the top man on the totem pole, with offices at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, and he used to come down practically every weekend and look things over, and have conferences with the men who were in residence there.

BARTLETT COWDREY: He has just retired.

CHARLES SHEELER: Has he?

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes, I think it was last spring.

CHARLES SHEELER: Is that so? I haven't seen him all these years. Well, he would come down there mostly every weekend; he always came in and visited me; sat upon the four-poster bed; I had -- it was the only place I could work, in that, I wouldn't have selected from choice, but you make the best of what you have. It was a very nice bedroom as such, with those little deep dormer windows, you know, windows about that size, and he would sit up on the four-poster in back of me and watch me working. And to that extent it was very pleasant. But we never -- we didn't have any closer association than that. Well then came the time that I was scheduled to come home. Sunday night was my last night there. And that was the night that my maid had off, so I went out to the Inn, that is the old Williamsburg Inn, one of the real old-timers, not as old as Williamsburg, originally, but I mean it was definitely an old one, and the other two recent ones were of course only blue-prints on paper. And well, after I was seated at my table -- they had a big dining room in that inn, I saw way over against the wall, at a table, I saw Mr. Chorley. Well, he finished his dinner before I did, and he came over to me. "I hear you're leaving tomorrow," he said. "How serious were you when you said that if there was a house in Williamsburg like the one you were living in while you were
here that you would move to Williamsburg? Because if you really meant it we'll build one just like it and rent it to you." Can you beat that?

BARTLETT COWDREY: You might have been lost to Irvington.

MUSYA SHEELER: Well, anyhow, I wanted him to tell you that story, because I think that is absolutely wonderful.

CHARLES SHEELER: ...in thinking of it, because it was just so overwhelming, to say that "we'll build an exact duplicate for you, if you move in, if you really mean that you'd like to move in." It was really -because -- I liked it for the novelty, and I also revere what Williamsburg originally meant to this country. But I couldn't stand the idea that in order to enjoy the Eighteenth Century, you had to be in Eighteenth Century costume. I couldn't do that, I couldn't go that far back, in fact, I could in spirit but not in fact. But it was still a nice thing. I'm glad he said it at any rate.

BARTLETT COWDREY: You were there this past April; was it this year?

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Then you had a chance to compare the growth and development.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, it was several times larger.

BARTLETT COWDREY: It's a real tourist industry.

CHARLES SHEELER: When we had decided on the trip, and what the program would be, where we were going and when, we'd already decided on time. I said, "If we go early in April, that would be the best time. Because when I was there, that's the time people were flocking from all over the country, because the spring growth is much earlier than it is up where we are. And it should be just at its height. And that would certainly be the time to see it." And another thing was to get accommodations, because the whole United States knows that that's a favorable time. "Well, I tell you, I'll go and see if I can get any assistance from Mr. Chorley." And I hadn't seen him since the days when I was down there. So I went in (to New York) but Mr. Chorley was abroad, and wouldn't

return for a couple of weeks. And that would have been too late to be of help to me. And the girl at the desk said, "Would you like to see Mr. Chorley's secretary?" And I said, "Well, that might help." All those people employed by the (Rockefellers) -- any of that whole family are such elegant people. They're such entirely intelligent people, have you had occasion
to know any?

BARTLETT COWDREY: A few of them.

CHARLES SHEELER: Well, the secretary was a very fine person. And I introduced myself in some connection I had had in the past with Williamsburg, and all that sort of business, and -- I had a circular from somewhere about the Motor House, which was new. It was only about -- less than a year old when we were there. And she said, "Well yes. The Motor House," she told me about it, she said, "Everybody is interested in it, very popular, people like it very much, and it certainly is a lovely place." "Well," I said, "that would do very nicely; well do you think you could engage me (,a room) for the dates and so forth," and I also asked her about the dates, and whether she thought that was a good time, whether the -- it wouldn't be just packed with people. And she said no, she thought that would be a very good time, that the school children (came during the Easter holidays --Easter came early last year, or this year, rather. I think that would be a good time." "Well," I said, "I'll write down there for (one or two nights). I haven't decided on a date." Well as a matter of fact, when we got there we stayed eight days. But oh, that Motor House was just something you couldn't anticipate. The comfort, you couldn't be any better off in the Waldorf Towers than the environment they created there for you -- your own compartment, and it had I think a great advantage over the Inns on a trip, because you have your car right out in front of the door. Every night you go in, you don't have to take cameras out, or -- if you have several suitcases, and you're not going to use one, you can leave it outside. And you can just take things out as you want to. And they had a very excellent cafeteria, that -- just that word cafeteria doesn't sound much, but there are very few places in New York that serve better food than that cafeteria that they have. And we stayed at very nifty motels on the whole trip. There are beautiful ones down there. Better than they seem to have up in the northern direction. I mean, they were comparatively new, obviously not more than two or three years old, and they were in new condition. And then they were so extensive; there would usually be 50 or 60 compartments to one of those outfits. Also there was one in Charlottesville where we stayed, and right adjoining it -- the motel was beautiful and a beautiful view right over the valley, right from your room, and then next door was one of the niftiest restaurants that I've ever been in anywhere...

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, that's a new development in our civilization.

CHARLES SHEELER: I know, well, let's see, where were we?

MUSYA SHEELER: You'd better tell more about Williamsburg.

CHARLES SHEELER: We had an unfortunate circumstance in regard to weather, which everyone has to take, on the trip, which was a couple of days less than two months. About 50% of the time we sat in whichever motel, saying "Do you think it's going to clear this afternoon?" It just poured, day after day, at least 50% of the time it was raining there.

MUSYA SHEELER: But look, also, another thing -- when we went to the Inn, the pictures were so badly placed.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, yes, they were badly hung. Oh, well, Mrs. Rockefeller broke up her collection, she divided it into three parts. She gave the two Williamsburg pictures to the Restoration. And I'd known --it was the first time I had seen them there, but I knew from friends and a sister-in-law some years ago, since they were there, that they were hanging in the larger of the inns. Well, I was naturally curious to see them. We had to go around a couple of times over the same ground before we finally saw them. In a narrow corridor that gave way between two large rooms.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Well, that isn't a fair place to hang.

MUSYA SHEELER: No light or anything.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Did you see the new Museum?

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, Mrs. Rockefeller's -- yes, that is a beautiful building, I'm glad they did that.

MUSYA SHEELER: Well, we saw everything.

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, oh that's beautiful. Well, that's just recent, you know, not more than a couple of years, I think. I saw the collection when it was in Paradise House, but that was of course only intended to be temporary.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Then Nina Little did that book on the Abbey Rockefeller collection.

CHARLES SHEELER: Oh, I have not seen that. It's a very swell collection.

MUSYA SHEELER: But we had the most wonderful time in Williamsburg, because this was my first trip. And you can imagine how much I was excited by it. And of course Charles was excited about seeing it again.

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes. Did you see William and Mary College?

CHARLES SHEELER: We didn't go in there. We went into the grounds approaching it, and I called attention to the Sir Christopher Wren building, which is very beautiful, but we didn't actually go in on a visit there. The college is at the end of the prospect there.

MUSYA SHEELER: But anyhow, we went to church. The Bruton Parish Church. Sunday morning. And -- wasn't that lovely? It was a very nice sermon.

CHARLES SHEELER: I think I told you several times, probably before, the rector of the church, as of that time, that is of just before the Restoration, he was the one that sold the whole idea to Mr. Rockefeller. Of restoring those things.

BARTLETT COWDREY: And Rockefeller had gone down to attend the Phi Beta Kappa Convention. And then saw Williamsburg and saw how it needed -

CHARLES SHEELER: Yes, and he probably had to write home to Mama, Will you send me a little more money, I seem to have spent my -

BARTLETT COWDREY: He gets a lot of credit.

MUSYA SHEELER: It's a wonderful family. Absolutely wonderful.

CHARLES SHEELER: I enjoyed so much -- I had a more extensive visit to Yorktown and Jamestown this time. Before, when I was there for a longer time even, it just happened that somebody from -- one of the officials of the Restoration was going over there, and said, "Do you want to go along to Jamestown, or Yorktown?" And I grabbed the opportunity. But this time we were on our own, and we could stay as long as we wanted to, and it is a very impressive spot. I wish people generally would appreciate it more than they do, because –

BARTLETT COWDREY: Yes, even if it is restored.

CHARLES SHEELER: But the old are still there, as far as they could conceal the American soldiers.

BARTLETT COWDREY: It's still a field for archaeology.

CHARLES SHEELER: And the harrowing story of Jamestown –

END OF INTERVIEW

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