

ORAL HISTORY OF WILLIAM HARTMANN

Interviewed by Betty Blum

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Chicago Architects Oral History Project
The Ernest R. Graham Study Center for Architectural Drawings
Department of Architecture
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PREFACE

I met with William Hartmann in his home in Castine, Maine, where we recorded his memoirs on October 30th and 31st and November 1st and 2nd, 1989. His thirty-six years with internationally-renowned architecture and planning firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill began in 1945 in the New York office, but it was in the Chicago office to which he relocated in 1947 that his noteworthy career took shape. Hartmann retired in 1981 and now lives quietly in a small, beautiful village in Maine. In Chicago, his legacy and the days when he made things happen will be remembered for years to come. Because Hartmann was one of the few forces of continuity during a period when the urban landscape endured rapid and dramatic change, Hartmann's memories and judgments take on special authority. Unlike Skidmore, Owings & Merrill co-founder Nathaniel Owings's characterization of Bill as inscrutable, "sitting apart under the banyan tree with the inner glow of polished jade..." (*The Spaces In Between*), I found Bill to be warm, friendly, and unexpectedly refreshing in his conviction and appreciation for the role "good luck" played in shaping his career.

Our sessions were recorded on eight ninety-minute cassettes that have been transcribed and reviewed by both Bill and me for clarity and accuracy. The transcript has been minimally edited in order to maintain the flow, spirit, and tone of Bill's original narrative. Selected published and unpublished references that I found helpful in preparing for this interview are appended to this document. This oral history text is available for study in the Ryerson and Burnham Libraries at The Art Institute of Chicago, as well as in a complete electronic version on the Chicago Architects Oral History Project's section of The Art Institute of Chicago website, www.artic.edu/aic

I thank Bill Hartmann, as will future historians, for his cooperation and the generosity with which he shared his firsthand recollections. We are grateful to Skidmore, Owings & Merrill for its support in funding this documentation. It seems fitting that Hartmann's oral history is sponsored by the firm whose reputation and prominence he helped create. My appreciation is also extended to Tessa Craib-Cox and Arlene de Smet at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, who searched for the information that I requested, and to Carter Manny, Walter Netsch, and Marshall Holleb for the generosity with which they shared their recollections and information about Hartmann. For their help in finalizing this document, Joan Cameron,

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Betty J. Blum
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William E. Hartmann

Blum: Today is October 30, 1989, and I'm with William Hartmann in his home in Castine, Maine. After studying architecture at MIT, traveling in Europe and Asia, serving four years in the military, you joined SOM in 1945, and it was there that you made your career for thirty-six years until you retired in 1981. For thirty-four of those thirty-six years, you were the head of the Chicago office. And you promoted your vision of Chicago to city officials, civic leaders, and private individuals. Perhaps today you are best remembered as the man who brought the Picasso to Chicago. But I know, after doing some research on your career, that that's only one highlight of a very long and important career. In an article published in 1982 that profiled architects who were important to the development of Chicago, you made the most powerful list. You've been called a mover and shaker, an architect philosopher, one of the centers of influence in the city, and Nat Owings wrote that you are "tough, compact and valuable." Now, could we begin as close to the beginning as we can, and in your own words, hear how it all took shape? Why did you select architecture for your career?

Hartmann: Well, this goes back into pretty ancient history because I'm seventy-three, I guess, now. We're talking about sixty years ago, right? That's quite a long time ago, when I might have been thirteen or so. I was born and raised in New Jersey, and we lived for most of my formative years in a town called Somerville. My father had an interesting hardware business on a scale that doesn't exist anymore. This was in a rural area. There were many farms and dairies around Somerville, which sent their produce and products to New York. This was part of the Garden State which was the breadbasket of New York. This business sold all kinds of products to these farmers and the people of the town, and there also was some industry in the area. It sold things such as seed and barbed wire and kegs of nails and appliances, thousands and thousands of items. In the course of that, they were involved with many

construction projects. If anything major was built, my father used to bring home the plans, and he would work at night going over them, taking off the hardware and other kinds of things. There was one architect nearby. I thought he was quite an interesting gentleman. I became familiar with what an architect did and what the results of his work were. I went to the local schools in Somerville and decided in my last year of high school that I would see if I could go to MIT to study architecture.

Blum: Do you remember the name of the architect?

Hartmann: I regret I can't remember his name. The kinds of projects of any significance that there were in and around this area at that time would be some school buildings or an addition to the hospital or some small commercial buildings.

Blum: Did you actually watch the construction?

Hartmann: Oh, yes, and went over the plans. My father would have them laid out, and he'd be marking off the quantities. We would go to New York then to the manufacturers of these items to pick them up. So it was in that side of things that I had some orientation.

Blum: Did you come to know the architect or was it just through the work that he gave your father?

Hartmann: Oh, no. I knew him and his family. It was a small town, a town of perhaps five thousand.

Blum: Were you aware of what he did and how he worked?

Hartmann: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Blum: And he inspired you?

Hartmann: I don't recall much about his inspiration, frankly. But we did go to New York

quite often, maybe once a month, and I saw many buildings being built and, of course, many notable older buildings.

Blum: Why MIT?

Hartmann: Well, in looking into schools of architecture, MIT had the best track record of any school. MIT was the oldest school, and it had a very long list of distinguished architects that had gone there. You must also remember that this was at the time of the Great Depression. Architects were not terribly busy, and there wasn't very much encouragement to become an architect. It would be better to become a chemical engineer or some other kind of an engineer or a scientist or whatever. But I thought an architect is what I wanted to be. I must say, my parents, bless them, didn't discourage this completely and said go ahead, and so that's how things started.

Blum: Did your high school offer technical drawing classes? Did you take those?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. Mechanical drawing. I enjoyed those things. It was the kind of high school that you see in country towns still. Many of the children came by car or bus from various farms all through the area. It was that kind of school, not terribly large. I think my graduating class certainly wasn't any more than two hundred, or maybe even smaller than that. As an aside, my first experience in working was with my father and going to work, because I was expected to work, you know, selling horseshoes or whips or horse collars because many people in the early years, before I was ten years old, I suppose, came on horse and wagon into town. Right? And the blacksmith was just down the street a little bit. I remember that very well. There were Amish people living nearby, and they'd come in austere, black garments and black bonnets and wheeled carriages to shop. So, you know, my lifespan goes from the beginnings of the automobile. My father had a horse and wagon to deliver his goods and eventually got his first truck and so forth. All those were great experiences that I remember very well.

Blum: You're describing another time in history, one that most people only read

about now.

Hartmann: That's right. When one begins to think about it, the span of my life has been absolutely fantastic in its history. So, MIT had a five-year curriculum for architects.

Blum: Did you do a five-year curriculum in four years?

Hartmann: No, no. I was not that kind of a genius.

Blum: When did you enter MIT?

Hartmann: It was in the fall of 1933. I graduated from high school in the spring of 1938. Just as an aside again, the School of Architecture at MIT was in downtown Boston in the original MIT building that was built in the 1800s or something like that. The main part, the rest of the campus was over in Cambridge. In other words, all the engineers and scientists were over there. The architects were alone in this old building near Copley Square. That made it a very special experience because this was a fantastic, strange, funny, old building with the enormous flights of stairs to walk up five floors to the drafting rooms. I was sort of a country boy without much experience with other people outside our relatively tight community. To backtrack for a second can I do that?

Blum: Of course.

Hartmann: My father and mother did travel frequently. They took me with them across the United States and on a ship through the Panama Canal and other adventures. They were very interested in seeing things.

Blum: And you traveled with them?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. I was fortunately of the right age to go with them. I had a younger brother who was too young and an older brother and sister who were too

old. So I was right. I was fortunate, again, in choosing a school of architecture, because the class couldn't have been more than twenty or twenty-five. I was fortunate in making close friends with a couple of them, Harry Weese and Ben Irvin. They were friends all during that time, and Harry and his family, ever since then. The school was compact. It had five classes and a graduate year that were all in this building. They had some terrific, talented people there among the students. I really think you learn as much from the students in an architectural school as you do from your teachers, pretty near. Because the discussion, the arguments and why you do it this way, why you think that way and so forth and so forth about architecture is fervent, and it's illuminating. It helps you develop your own architectural philosophy. I think that's terribly important. I can't imagine that there could have been any better place at that time than MIT.

Blum: That was a time when schools were in transition between the Beaux-Arts approach and a more contemporary or modern approach. What was MIT's approach?

Hartmann: In learning about schools when I was deciding where to go, I became familiar with what the Beaux-Arts was and what MIT was like in terms of its architectural philosophy. The Beaux-Arts was still in existence when I started at MIT, and most of the schools, including MIT, had some relation to it. There were standard problems. I remember the Paris Prize problems and others were still being pursued at MIT, but the basic design courses were not in that mode. We didn't submit our projects to a Beaux-Arts program, which would be sent to New York and judged. There was a certain style associated with a certain formalism and certain techniques that were common to the Beaux-Arts. MIT was fresh and asked a student to develop his own individual attitude about design and develop himself rather than follow a framework from outside the school. MIT had wonderful, different students there from Texas and from all over the country and abroad.

Blum: Students or professors?

Hartmann: Students. Oh, it was terrific. Absolutely terrific. Men and women gosh, I'm sorry. My memory is bad on those early names, but there were some great people.

Blum: Do I understand you correctly to say that MIT, although they participated in the Paris Prize Competition, permitted students to develop their own approach?

Hartmann: Yes. We didn't do Beaux-Arts problems as a matter of routine.

Blum: I see. You didn't do the pavilion and the garden of Allah type of problems.

Hartmann: That's right. We didn't do those. We had our own problems devised by the faculty. Most of the faculty were also terrific men—Larry Anderson and Herb Beckwith. Then there were some older architects of Boston. A Mr. Walter Clap oh, gosh, what were some of their names? There was a man named Harry Gardner who taught color and shades and shadows. There was a Professor Henry Seaver who taught European civilization and art—terrific man. Seaver oh, he was just fantastic. Again, from my point of view, coming from a small rural town and having my eyes opened up as to what Gothic architecture was all about and all these kind of subjects, it was just fantastic. He did it with a joy. He loved his subject, and it was a joy to have experienced it through him, believe me. He was a great man.

Blum: Did you become friends?

Hartmann: I want to interrupt you a minute. I haven't mentioned Dean William Emerson, and, of course, Dean Emerson was again extraordinary in my recollection.

Blum: What was so special about him?

Hartmann: He epitomized what a cultured man is to me: in his dress, in his demeanor, in his taste, in his use of language, in his civility, in his courtesy. He was

absolutely a role model. Not that I could aspire to be anything like Dean Emerson, but he was the one who had the vision to bring Anderson to MIT and to lead in this breakaway from the Beaux-Arts to an independent attitude about architecture. He had the vision to do that, you know, so he was absolutely incredible.

Blum: Was Anderson the man you remember on the faculty as being a proponent of, say, modern architecture?

Hartmann: He was special in another way, I think. He wasn't a loud voice in dominating the institution. You benefitted from Anderson by being privileged to work for him or with him or having him as your instructor. He was soft spoken, intelligent. And you must appreciate that the literature was now coming along—the literature of Le Corbusier and others. Modern architecture in the U.S. was just beginning in its recognition of CIAM [Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne] and Sigfried Giedion's work. All of these ideas were just becoming important. Nobody was dominating and telling you to do it this way. They were offering you the chance to explore and seek to develop your own understanding of architecture. That was philosophically terribly important. Absolutely terribly important. Modern architecture did become a kind of a religious feeling to most of us—Harry and Ben Irvin and these other fellows and girls and Gordon Bunshaft. He was a graduate student when I was there.

Blum: Did you meet him then?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. It was a small enough school so that you'd wander around and see what everyone was doing. Oh, another great man was Sam Chamberlain. His name mean anything to you?

Blum: Well, it does, but only from *Gourmet* magazine as a photographer and a traveler and a writer. Is that the same person?

Hartmann: That's the same Sam Chamberlain, traveler, writer. I think he went to MIT.

And he was a very great etcher. He taught drawing and etching at MIT. John Reid was another one who was there. John Reid taught freehand drawing and he was a very special person. That was such an opportunity—to come from a rural, semi-rural background and all of a sudden here's this terrific blossoming of ideas. I mean, the whole thing is staggering. Then when you traveled anywhere, why you'd look for ideas. You wouldn't be looking really. You'd be sort of sensing,. But after that, you began to look and look and look. Oh, another student was Charles Burchard.

Blum: He was a student at the time?

Hartmann: Yes. He had a very distinguished career as head of a school, I think, when he finally retired. Charles Burchard came from Reinhard and Hofmeister's office in New York. He was a young draftsman. Andrew Reinhard, I think, sent him to MIT. Burchard could draw like nobody else. Of course, this is the kind of influence that students had on one another. Gosh, we always used to look at him work, and he revolutionized how we drew things. He was absolutely sensational. Andrew Reinhard used to come up to see him, and then he'd take a group of us out to dinner. Andrew Reinhard and [Henry] Hofmeister, of course, were the executing architects for Radio City. Yes, oh, yes. He came there with his waxed mustache. He was a wonderful character.

Blum: That must have been very impressive.

Hartmann: Oh, it was for us!

Blum: You know, MIT, because it's the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, strikes me as having a heavy emphasis on the engineering as opposed to design. Is that correct?

Hartmann: No, I don't think so. No, I think that distinction is not a serious one. They offered courses in engineering. We were in downtown Boston and the engineering school was a couple of miles away across the river, so there was very little contact. We were right at Copley Square, right across from Trinity

Church and the Boston Public Library, very great buildings still today.

Blum: I suppose what I had in mind was maybe comparing Yale, which was, again, an old architectural school, with MIT and their respective orientations.

Hartmann: The orientation would not be much different. Although people would think it might be.

Blum: Well, perhaps in just a very superficial way from the name.

Hartmann: Right, yes.

Blum: You know, I want to share with you something that Harry said. Harry said that you and Ben Irvin, were roommates, and you shared an attic room on Beacon Hill.

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: It sounds pretty classy to me for students. However, what he said about you was you were quiet, you were neat, you took walks, and you played squash, and what else would you want in a roommate?

Hartmann: Harry was highly talented. Very talented. He went off to Yale, I think, for his fourth year and then came back.

Blum: And then on to Cranbrook.

Hartmann: And then on to Cranbrook. He had extraordinary talent which he has used throughout his career. In addition, he had a wonderful mother and father. His father, a banker, wrote music. Harry played several instruments. I remember he played on a big double bass in a jazz band.

Blum: He didn't tell that about himself.

Hartmann: He didn't? Oh, he was darn good! Lugging this great, big bass around. I think his mother was into weaving, and they were a wonderful Chicago family. I got to know them very well. Are we finished with MIT at the moment? I know that MIT was the formative influence on my architectural life, the institution and its curriculum. But more importantly, it helped an individual find what he wanted to find in architecture what he sought to find, what he's capable of finding, and so forth. That all came out of MIT. They had a number of fine students there. There was a wonderful architect named Cesar Concio from the Philippines. I remember him. He could draw, too. He was a terrific draftsman and letterer. He opened my eyes for those kind of things.

Blum: Did you have to work on a thesis project to graduate?

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: What was yours?

Hartmann: Well, it was a great project. Ben Irvin and I did it together. Ben was another very special person. Older than any of us, but with terrific ability. Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, because I know he lived the life he wanted to live, the war was not helpful to him. He had to be in the army. After the war, he really didn't work, and he ended up being a carpenter in Sausalito, California.

Blum: What do you mean the war was not helpful to him?

Hartmann: He didn't have any freedom to develop in any way throughout his military experience. That was four years for all of us. Four long years, you know? Not easy. I'll tell you about that when we get into that. He and Harry were the most talented of our group without any question.

Blum: What was your project with Ben Irvin?

Hartmann: Well, he and I decided to do a project together. There was talk about Boston

University becoming a more important institution. They were downtown right next to MIT in another building that used to belong to MIT. So we decided that we would design a new university for Boston University. We went to them and got their curriculum, their schools, and some of their dreams and talked to the president. We designed this university where Boston University now is. They should have taken our thesis and done it. Those things don't happen. But it was a big piece of work. It was, you know, big in scale. Why not do something big in scale? It was colossal. The drawings were yea long.

Blum: It was very ambitious for the two of you.

Hartmann: Oh, it was ambitious but we worked at it, and it was good.

Blum: Did you teach at the Boston Architectural Club in 1938?

Hartmann: Oh, yes.

Blum: What was that all about?

Hartmann: Oh, gosh. Well, that's curious. The Boston Architectural Club still exists, and it is very important in Boston still. The Boston Architectural Club operated a school, and I think it is still the kind of school where young draftsmen, young people or it doesn't have to be even so young but people who weren't able to go to college to an architectural school, can go. They could work in an office during the daytime and come to the Boston Architectural school at night. They would receive training from other architects. I did that for a couple of years. It was terrific. One of my students ended up winning the Rotch Travelling Fellowship, I know.

Blum: My goodness. That was not an official school.

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: Did the Boston Architectural Club actually have a four-year degree or five-year degree program?

Hartmann: No, no. It had years. I can't remember exactly how it's organized, but there was a degree of formality in it. If you finished at the Boston Architectural Club, you probably got a certificate or something, and this helped you in getting another job or licensing or whatever. It was kind of a night and weekend school. The lawyers have similar schools, too, in different cities.

Blum: Well, the Chicago Architectural Club had that sort of atelier situation, but I'm not sure if there was a degree or certificate attached to it. It's just for people who wanted further training or wanted to get training from established architects. But you were still in school at the time in 1938, were you not?

Hartmann: Well, I was just finishing. Then I stayed on there for another year.

Blum: What is it that you like about the teaching experience?

Hartmann: Oh, you know, we learned so darned much and developed so much passion for architecture that it became obvious that it would be great to try to help other people understand that. It was just fun. I was working, and this would be a place to go at night with these young architects full of questions and talk and argue and draw. What fun, huh? Gosh, I'd like to do it today.

Blum: Did you teach anywhere outside of your office, where I'm sure this happened informally? Were you on the staff or did you teach occasional courses at any of the schools?

Hartmann: No, no. That wasn't done, and, frankly, once you get involved in a career, it's a twenty-four-hour-a-day job to some people. To me it was.

Blum: In 1938, you worked for Donald des Granges.

Hartmann: No, no. I'm going to set your record straight. Nineteen thirty-eight was really,

from the point of view of architects building anything, the bottom of the depression. When I graduated from MIT in 1938 after five years, I was one of the lucky ones to get a job, and I got a job with Hogg and Campbell, Trevor Hogg and Walter Campbell, in Boston because I wanted to stay in Boston. I loved Boston. I was paid a munificent salary of five dollars a week. Full time. Five dollars a week.

Blum: In what capacity?

Hartmann: As a young architect just out of MIT starting his professional career. Five dollars a week, and believe me, I was one of the lucky ones. They were very nice people. They were, again, cultured men who were kind and intelligent and loyal and full of integrity and, believe me, they would have taken more work if they could. But they didn't have any jobs to speak of, and it would be a room in a building or something. Walter Campbell and I would go over, and I think I was the only employee for these two men. We'd go over and measure the room and take notes and then make some drawings. It was a start, but they didn't have any big projects at all. That was very sad, but they remained friends of mine until they finally both died. Over in Cambridge, the only major building being built in all of the Boston area was the new headquarters for Lever Brothers. The builder of this building was Stone Webster. They had an association with an architect who could do all their architectural work, and that was Donald des Granges. He offered me thirty dollars a week after I had been at the other place.

Blum: What a promotion! Six times the salary!

Hartmann: Well, things were looking up!

Blum: How did you happen to go to him?

Hartmann: Well, I think he asked someone at MIT when he had a place for a young person. So I went over to Stone Webster. It was right in the Stone Webster Building. This was a different kind of experience, you know, going from an

office with just two people in it—I don't think they even had a secretary—to the powerhouse of Stone Webster, who were designing power plants and enormous things, dams and everything all over the country. Some of that work was going on even during the depression. So Donald des Granges's office had about four people in it, I think. Maybe I became the fifth or the fourth.

[Tape 1: Side 2]

Hartmann: There were two fellows there I remember. One fellow always had a cigar in his mouth, I remember that. Another one was very interested in art outside of architecture. I used to go with him to Cape Ann, and we'd visit with artists on weekends and things like that. Anyway, this was a chance to be involved in quite a major project. Charles Luckman, as you recall, was the head of Lever Brothers. I remember helping to design and detail his offices and the various major rooms and elevators and lobbies and all that. It was a chance to work on something with a scale. This was quite a big and important building. MIT owns the building now. It was terribly well built. I mean, it was absolutely rock solid. Everything was marble and granite and bronze.

Blum: Very different from your other job.

Hartmann: Very different from the other job and very different from anything else being built. It was a great and good opportunity to be able to work there.

Blum: Now, were you designing?

Hartmann: I did everything. The greatest opportunity then came after I was there a few months. Anderson and Herb Beckwith asked me to come over to MIT to work with them. They had an office at MIT to do work for MIT.

Blum: Was this the Bemis Institute?

Hartmann: No. That was John Burchard. MIT wanted to do something about athletic

facilities. The athletic facilities were very inadequate. All the money had gone into brick and mortar for laboratories related to science and engineering, and they had a few dormitories but not very many. So they wanted to do something about athletic facilities, too, because, I suppose, the basic idea was that the students should have a chance to do things physically as well as mentally. So, we designed an athletic complex. Larry Anderson led the design effort, and Herb also contributed to that. They were doing some other things outside of MIT, but I was not involved in them. I was just involved with what was happening at MIT. The first project of the athletic complex was a swimming pool. That still exists. It was one of the first major projects of Anderson and Beckwith. I must say, it was a darned good building.

Blum: Is that something you worked on as well?

Hartmann: I worked on that with them. That's right. But I was always gearing myself to try to win the Rotch Travelling Fellowship, and you had to have worked a year before you could do that.

Blum: Before you could submit for that?

Hartmann: Yes. If you graduated from a school in Massachusetts and worked a year, then you were eligible.

Blum: So these jobs were really short-term jobs?

Hartmann: Relatively.

Blum: Because you mentioned three of them.

Hartmann: There were three. That's right. Starting probably in June of 1938 to July or August of 1939.

Blum: When you graduated, did you have have some idea of the role of an architect that you saw for yourself?

Hartmann: Oh, I don't know about that. Yes, here again, nobody knew whether the depression was going to be a permanent way of life or not, and it was terrible. I remember in my father's business in the depths of the depression, the farmers would almost barter. They would bring in a couple chickens and ask for some nails or something, you know. It was great desperation. Great desperation. And no one saw us coming out of it. This isn't original with me, but I'm sure that World War II brought us out of that depression. In 1933 all the banks were closed. Bank holiday. All the banks were closed all over the country. That was a terrible time as far as money goes. I used to live in a boarding house before we lived in that apartment. And our apartment was on the top floor of a little building on the top of Beacon Hill. No view, and soot would come in like mad, and it was about a third the size of this room.

Blum: The location sounds very good.

Hartmann: Well, it was a nice walk. And I used to go to breakfast at a little drugstore across the street from MIT. Breakfast was twenty-five cents, and that was a small glass of tomato juice and a poached egg on toast and coffee. That was breakfast. I was lucky. I could find something like that. Anyway, this is part of it.

Blum: But when you graduated did you have an idea of what you wanted to do as an architect?

Hartmann: No, I can't say that it was all clear. I can't pretend that it was all clear and I had a career in mind at all.

Blum: Did it begin to take shape after you'd had some work with various architects?

Hartmann: No. Let's get through the Rotch Fellowship first and then the war. It will be easier to understand this. I'd been around the United States a fair amount, but I'd never been to Europe. Naturally, I had heard of people having fellowships. Harry went abroad a couple times. Ben Irvin was going abroad. I

decided to try for the Rotch and was successful. I went and met Ben Irvin in Holland in the summer of 1939.

Blum: Before you went overseas, what did you have to submit to qualify? What was the process?

Hartmann: You have to do a problem.

Blum: I see. Did everyone do the same problem?

Hartmann: Everyone did the same problem.

Blum: So, then it was really a competition?

Hartmann: Yes, it was sort of a competition.

Blum: Before you talk about that, there were some very important events architecturally and otherwise that happened during the thirties. As a college student, I wonder how any of these affected you. What about the 1933 Century of Progress International Exposition in Chicago?

Hartmann: Oh, sure! Yes, there you go. Excellent. I'm glad you refreshed my mind about that.

Blum: Did you come to Chicago to see it?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. I went to Chicago to see the fair. That was the summer I finished high school, in 1933. You know, it was mind boggling to a young man. My uncle and aunt and I drove there in a car. We had flat tires in every state between New Jersey and Illinois. Flat tires were relatively common then.

Blum: What did you think of the architecture that you saw at the fair?

Hartmann: Well, it was a spectacle, of course. I think that fair was the most important

fair that I was able to go to. Much more important than the New York fair in 1939, because, again, it was the introduction of modern architecture into America. It coincided with that. The industrial designers were working. Industrial design was way ahead of architecture for quite a long time. It was a great experience to be able to go there.

Blum: What do you remember especially?

Hartmann: I can't remember any single building.

Blum: What about the Keck houses?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. That's right.

Blum: There was the House of Tomorrow in 1934 and the Crystal House in 1933.

Hartmann: Yes. Fred Keck's work. SOM had several buildings, I think. SOM really got its start at the Chicago fair.

Blum: Wasn't that when Louis Skidmore and Nat Owings met?

Hartmann: No, they had met before in New York. Skid was married to Owings's sister, and Skid was offered the job of chief of design at the 1933 fair. Owings became in charge of concessions or something like that.

Blum: What does "concessions" mean?

Hartmann: That means Sally Rand fan dancers and all the entertainment parts of the fair. But they were young, relatively young, and full of energy, full of ideas. Skidmore, I've always felt, was a man of great taste. He wasn't necessarily a great architect, but he was a man of great appreciation of design and taste and knew how to work with people. From that fair, it translated to working with clients, having clients respect him, his judgement, and his taste. If Owings says this person is right for that job, Skidmore would do it, you

know. It was that sort of thing. That's right. That sets that history straight. And, of course, they became friends and knew everybody in the Chicago region and all of the business people and that's where SOM started. The idea for SOM started there.

Blum: And the architecture of the fair made an impression on you?

Hartmann: Oh, no question because it was modern architecture.

Blum: Now, that was before you had been to MIT?

Hartmann: Yes, I knew I was going and that I was going to be involved in this. Before that, new buildings might be banks or schools and things that were, oh, pretty ordinary. These were new materials and new color and light. This was a spectacle.

Blum: Another thing that happened during the 1930s while you were in school were the arrivals of Moholy-Nagy at the Institute of Design in Chicago and Walter Gropius at Harvard. A year later, Mies van der Rohe arrived in Chicago. What did that mean to someone studying architecture like you?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. Well, as I mentioned earlier, the literature from Europe was beginning to flow around 1933 and 1934. And modern architecture really had most of its roots in European sources. In Japan a little bit, but mostly in Europe. Of course, we knew who Gropius was and Mies and all these fellows.

Blum: Had you seen their European work in publications?

Hartmann: Oh, yes, in magazines and books and photographs. That's what I'm saying. The literature had been flowing, and, believe me, we pored over that stuff. I suppose at one time I could have told you chronologically every building that Gropius was involved with from housing in Berlin to the Bauhaus to his own house in Massachusetts.

Blum: Were many students at MIT as voracious for this material as you were?

Hartmann: Those that I mentioned were certainly, absolutely. I mean, those who became involved in a religious sense of the word. Paul Goldberger, you know, has written about the fact—that was one of his criticisms that modern architecture became a religion to certain people, and that was one of its shortcomings. I couldn't have had it any other way. It had to be a religion just as some of the furniture that's around here, I've designed, like the table there. Now that table is a worktable for us, and we do all kinds of projects on it and whatnot. But it is a completely honest table and all solid cherry. There are no veneers or no tricks or no nothing about it. It's absolutely basic, you know. Those chairs are by a Finn and those are terrific chairs. So the spirit is still absolutely strong to me.

Blum: And this came to you at MIT during those years?

Hartmann: Absolutely. No question. One character I should spend more time on is John Burchard. John Burchard was, again, a very special character at MIT. He became dean of humanities finally, and was a tremendous, enthusiastic, intelligent, innovative, alive man. It was just a privilege to come into contact with him. He was very important to me at various intervals of my life after MIT, too. He wasn't an architect, but he knew all about architecture, I'll tell you more later on.

Blum: Sounds like there were a lot of people who inspired you and whom you appreciated.

Hartmann: Oh, I had the privilege of knowing Dr. Karl Compton fairly well, who was the chairman or the president or whatever. What a man! What a great, great human scientist. How lucky can a person be? Nobody could have been luckier than I was. Maybe even half of it's nostalgia, but I still feel it.

Blum: Were you still in New York for the 1939 World's Fair?

Hartmann: No, that was being built in 1938. That was being built, but I never really saw that.

Blum: By that time you had won the Rotch Travelling Fellowship of a magnificent sum of \$2,500. You took off and you went, if I can believe it, to so many places, from Tibet to India, the Miideast, the Orient, Europe—all on \$2,500 in two years?

Hartmann: Year and a half.

Blum: Year and a half. Nat Owings had a couple of words to say about it. He said that on an environmental basis, Tibet was rejected by your wife-to-be as inappropriate for a honeymoon and that it shook up parochial Boston Rotch trustees, but you bought a yak or two and set off. My question is why Tibet, why India, why all of these exotic places?

Hartmann: I had good fortune. Bad fortune has always turned into good fortune for some reason or another. In 1939, I went to Europe and joined up with Ben Irvin. We went from Holland up to Germany and Denmark and over to Sweden and Finland and Russia. Ben Irvin and I were in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, and we happened to meet a very distinguished lady, Catherine Bauer. Does her name mean anything to you?

Blum: Yes, I recognize her name.

Hartmann: All right. Good for you. Well, Catherine Bauer was one of the people most interested in housing in America. We were in the Hermitage, she, Ben, and I, and a messenger from the embassy came over and told her that the ambassador wanted her to know that war had commenced. The Germans had marched into Poland, and the British had declared war.

Blum: That sends chills down my spine.

Hartmann: It should. That's right. That was in September of 1939. Ben Irvin and I had planned to go to a number of cities in Russia, and we were told we couldn't go. We could go on to Moscow, which we did, but we couldn't go to other places. We wanted to go to Gorky and other places to look at architecture and monuments of Russia. They said, "No, you'd better leave," and so we cut our time short and went back to Stockholm.

Blum: Now, you said you had been through many countries with Ben.

Hartmann: Yes, from Holland up through Russia and then back to Stockholm.

Blum: What was your program of study, so to speak?

Hartmann: My basic idea was to travel in the summer and then spend the winter at the American Academy in Rome. Other Rotch people had done similar programs because the summertime is the only nice time to travel. There is no daylight to see anything in Sweden in winter. We, naturally, prepared ourselves by reading all relevant journals and books. We knew lots of buildings, and we went to special lengths. You know, we wanted to see the Unilever buildings, wanted to see this in Rotterdam, wanted to see that, and so forth.

Blum: Were you especially looking for modern buildings?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. Mostly, mostly.

Blum: In Germany? You said you went to Germany?

Hartmann: Yes. My recollection is that we didn't spend much time in Germany at this time. We didn't know the war was going to happen, and anyway we would have come back down into Germany later. I think we practically skipped through Germany and up to Denmark. We had architects to see. Well, you know, we knew names of architects, so we'd go knock on their door.

Blum: Who?

Hartmann: We saw [Alvar] Aalto. We saw [Vilhelm] Lauritzen in Denmark, Kay Fisker—oh, gosh, names I can't remember.

Blum: These are people to whom you had letters of introduction?

Hartmann: We had letters of introduction to some of them; to others we didn't.

Blum: Did you get to Paris?

Hartmann: No.

Blum: I was wondering if you saw the Le Corbusier buildings.

Hartmann: No, not in France, but we did see one in Moscow. I'm going to explain. So we came back to Sweden after war broke out. There were a lot of people in Sweden who were in similar boats and didn't know what to do. So, I had a choice. Originally, I planned to do touring and then concentrate on something in Rome. You're supposed to do measured drawings of old work such as fountains or parts of churches or something like that and send them back to Boston. It was a question of either going home from Sweden or trying to go through Germany and get down to Italy. So I asked the Rotch trustees if I could change the plan and attempt to go around the world instead of spending the winter in Rome and doing those normal things. They graciously gave me permission to do this. At that time, you could really travel very cheaply. I had a knapsack on my back, just like kids do it today. I would sleep anywhere and eat anything and scrounge. If somebody would buy me a dinner, that would be great, you know. It was that kind of thing. I looked into the possibility of getting a job in Sweden. There were so many architects and so much uncertainty that nobody would agree to do that. And Sweden, of course, was one of the leaders in architecture at that time. Oh, yes.

Blum: Did you speak Swedish?

Hartmann: No. Almost everybody speaks English. I made the necessary arrangements and set off to Germany. I went to Berlin, and I did have a letter to some people there. I was there at the time when the Jews had to wear armbands and were being harassed in terrible ways. It was quite disgusting. I went to a German office. I think it must have been Albert Speer's office. All these fellows treated me with great deference and showed me fantastic models of monumental projects for Hitler.

Blum: Why do you think you were so honored?

Hartmann: I wasn't honored. It wasn't necessarily honor.

Blum: Well, you were treated with respect.

Hartmann: No, they suggested I might like to stay there and work. I had these credentials that they would know about. But I think, frankly, they wanted even then to have Americans regard them favorably.

Blum: What was the atmosphere in Germany?

Hartmann: There were blackouts. There were these poor Jewish people scurrying around. There were Polish prisoners coming on trains. It was pretty bad. It was pretty tense. I went on down to Munich. Of course, I told them I wasn't going to stay in Germany and I'd go on down to Munich and then to Italy. I said I had to be in Rome to study, I couldn't stay in Germany. I arrived in Munich the night there was a big explosion in a beer hall. This was written up. I mean, this was a famous night in Germany, some Nazis were blown up in this beer cellar. These beer cellars in Munich were enormous. They're not small taverns. They're great big places. I remember this curious day. I was walking around the next morning, and these two men appeared by my arms and said, "Please come with us." So we went off, and I'm sure it was to Gestapo headquarters. They wanted to find out when I had arrived in Munich. They were trying to find out who had planted the bombs. Fortunately, I wasn't in Germany more than a couple days and certainly

couldn't have been there that night to take care of all these bombs. They let me go again. Then there was a terrible parade full of Nazis in honor of these people. I stayed in a little pension, and the lady who had the pension said, "Be careful, be careful."

Blum: People were afraid?

Hartmann: Yes. You had to be careful. So then I went to Rome. The American Academy, again, was a fantastic experience. The head of it was [Chester Holmes] Aldrich. Well, he was of a distinguished family of architects and of New York society. Aldrich and his sister ran the academy. They were terribly nice. Again, highly cultured people. They welcomed me. I don't know how much detail you want to go into on the rest of all this.

Blum: As much as you remember and will share.

Hartmann: The American Academy has a place for the people who are given the Rome Prize in music and in architecture, in sculpture, in painting and all that. And they all live there, you know. They live there, and they have some extra rooms. If some rooms are empty, they would take a person like me and say, "Sure, come and stay. Pay your fee."

Blum: Was Ben with you?

Hartmann: No, no. He went back to America from Sweden. I can't remember all the reasons, but he decided to do that. So, the academy was pretty full with all these regular people plus the people like myself whose plans were interfered with by the war. We lived there, and that was a great experience over December and January into 1940.

Blum: Now, this was your original plan.

Hartmann: Well, I planned to stay there for maybe six months. The Rotch required that I be out of the United States for fifteen months.

Blum: As you were traveling, were you sketching, were you photographing, how were you documenting this?

Hartmann: Photographing a lot, yes.

Blum: Sketching?

Hartmann: Sketching? Not a great deal of that. Hopefully absorbing something.

Blum: Who else was at the American Academy in Rome? Did you know anyone?

Hartmann: I knew lots of them. I can't remember their names now.

Blum: And then how long did you stay there?

Hartmann: For maybe six weeks. There's lots to see around Rome, and I did see all those things.

Blum: What was the atmosphere in Rome like, considering it was 1940 and this was Italy?

Hartmann: And this was Benito Mussolini's time. All the people that I came in contact with hated Mussolini, didn't like his architecture, and didn't like anything about him. I did meet some great architects. The best ones were a group in Milan—Banfi, Belgiojoso, Peressutti, and Rogers. They were the best of the younger architects of Italy. Ernesto Rogers—I don't know if he's still alive, I doubt it—was the editor of *Domus*. His son is Richard Rogers, of Piano and Rogers, who designed the Beaubourg Museum in Paris. Gianluigi Banfi was the senior member. He died during the war. Ludovico Belgiojoso barely made it, and Enrico Peressutti came to the United States. He was, I think, either the head or the most important figure in Princeton for a while. They were very good architects. Italian modern design at that time was doing very well. They were very, very good. They were very busy.

Blum: Now, did you have a letter of introduction to them or did you just walk in?

Hartmann: No, I had a letter to them.

Blum: Who gave you letters of introduction?

Hartmann: Professors at MIT. It was customary. Even if they didn't know the person, under the name of the MIT School of Architecture, they'd write a letter to somebody who had some association or had written or had sent a student. You know, "I'd like to introduce William Hartmann. Help to his visit would be appreciated." That kind of introduction.

Blum: That's nice for the traveler.

Hartmann: Oh, yes, it is, because they do respond because it is reciprocal, too, you know. When they come to this country, they expect to get the same treatment. So I went all over northern Italy, and I went down to the south in Italy and went across by boat to Greece and over to Athens and from Athens up to Istanbul. In Istanbul, another character whom I should mention was Bob Van Nice. He was a young architect in Istanbul who went to MIT. Dean Emerson was interested in the Anglo-Iranian Foundation, I think it was called. Bob Van Nice and his wife were sent to Constantinople to record and analyze Hagia Sophia.

[Tape 2: Side 1]

Blum: Mr. Hartmann, you spoke about your childhood up and into the Rotch Fellowship award. Is there anything from yesterday that you think you'd like to go back to after thinking about it last evening?

Hartmann: Right. In thinking about it, I left out something that was terribly important that I should have commented upon earlier, and that is the influence of my parents. My father was born in this country of German ancestors, who left

Germany in 1848 when there was a democratic upheaval. They went to England and then migrated to the United States. My mother was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, and she came with her family as child to the United States. They were both devout people in a religious sense. We attended the most pervasive church of the region around Somerville, New Jersey, which was the Dutch Reformed Church, because that area had been settled by the Dutch early in the history of the United States. They were very good people, generous people. They believed in any sacrifice for the education and welfare of their children. They had a very strong sense of community and were active in all kinds of groups and programs and whatnot that related to the town in which they resided. They were respected, and I think they convinced their children that they had responsibilities for self-development and self-responsibility and, most importantly, a community responsibility.

Blum: You know with you having said that, I can certainly see that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Hartmann: Well, no, those things are true of all of us, you know. I mean, we all have those kind of influences in one degree or another, and they are important.

Blum: But they can take different shapes.

Hartmann: They take different shapes, that's right.

Blum: I can see the link between what you said about your parents and what I know about your career.

Hartmann: Yes. That's why I thought it was important to say that.

Blum: Exactly. Did you have brothers and sisters?

Hartmann: Yes, I had tragic brothers and sisters. The oldest child was a sister who was quite a brilliant person, went to Vassar and was involved in drama, went to study drama in England after Vassar and got married. They had a couple of

children, one of whom was a spastic child, terribly retarded. And that ruined my sister. She lived for that little girl who finally died at about the age of eight, I think. Had no motor skills at all. This shouldn't be written up at all, but she took that child all over the country and this was many years ago. There wasn't as much known about it as there is now. It finally killed my sister.

Blum: Did she have a profession?

Hartmann: No, her husband worked at various things in the depression. He was a very fine man, a wonderful man. He died, too. I mean this spastic child killed them both. They both died in their thirties.

Blum: That's tragic.

Hartmann: You know, it just consumed them, right? And then I had an older brother who was not terribly well, and he died when he was in his thirties, too, a long time ago. And then I have a younger brother who is still alive, and he lives in Princeton and is a professor of political science.

Blum: So you were the third in a family of four children?

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: When your older brother and sister both died, did you then feel an additional responsibility to accomplish something in your own career?

Hartmann: I wouldn't say that, no. I wouldn't say that went through my mind at all. They were almost blessed events, because if you grew up in a religious household, if you've been a relatively good person, you're going to go to heaven and find peace and happiness, right? And they needed that.

Blum: Yes, that's true. I'm very glad you spoke about that. Could we now return to where we left you and your travels on the Rotch Fellowship?

Hartmann: Right. We're in Constantinople, and Bob Van Nice and his wife are there, and we go through Hagia Sophia. I should digress a little bit and tell you that Bob Van Nice was there before the war, and then during the war he was in the OSS. After the war he went back, and he has devoted his whole life to Hagia Sophia, this terrific building.

Blum: Exactly what was he there to do in the building?

Hartmann: The culmination of his work is a set of documents, and I don't know whether they're completed or not, but you might be interested in them. The last I knew, and this was several years ago, he was at Dumbarton Oaks, and they were making these tremendous volumes, recording every stone in Hagia Sophia, with every crack in every stone. In other words, if Hagia Sophia was in an earthquake and collapsed, they could rebuild it. And he made cross-sections through the building in ways that had never been done before and developed the base of information that analyzed the true structure of the building. Of course, you know, at one time all the mosaics were all covered with whitewash. There was then a program where they took all that whitewash off. When I was there that was just about done, and it was just a tremendous experience to go around this building over many days with him climbing on the roof and all over the place.

Blum: You really got a tour that few people get.

Hartmann: Oh, absolutely, yes. It was a very memorable experience. But anyway, continuing travels—and I don't know that we ought to go into all this very deeply but I went by boat from Istanbul down to Haifa. This was on a deck passage. Bear in mind, we're now in early 1940, and this boat was jammed with Jewish refugees from Germany, who had gotten into Romania. This boat started in Romania and came down to Istanbul and went on around to Haifa. The boat was just packed, absolutely packed. I didn't have a cabin or anything. You slept on deck. Everybody was just sleeping all over the decks. There was a big question, of course, whether the British would let the boat

land in what was then Palestine, but they did. Then I went on down to Egypt and met the Aldriches there, and they were so kind to me. They knew Egypt very well. I remember they hired camels. We took food and the camels and went from Cairo down to Saqqara to see the pyramids. We stayed at Shepherd's Hotel, and they took care of me. They were trying to show me the Egypt that they knew so well. That was very memorable. Of course, later I went around Egypt a lot, up to Aswan and Luxor and all the archaeological sites. From there I went overland back to Palestine because you have nice interesting experiences on boats, but you don't see much. You see water.

Blum: How long was your boat trip from Istanbul to Haifa?

Hartmann: Oh, it was probably two or three days.

Blum: What was Palestine like in 1940?

Hartmann: Palestine was fantastic. Of course, there was conflict between the Arabs and Jews and between, for example, Jaffa and Tel Aviv. You had to pass through barbed wire to get from one side to the other. But it was a relatively calm, quiet country area with internal tensions. It was very, very moving in a religious and historical sense. I went all around. I was very interested in archaeology, and met many archaeologists, like Sir Flinders Petrie.

Blum: In Palestine?

Hartmann: In Palestine. They were there working. I went to all the sights that were important in biblical history. If you had to study the Bible as we did as children, you knew a fair amount, and you recognized the names anyway. I remember walking from Tiberias up to Capernaum. By chance an Arab came along with a car and picked me up. He said he worked for the Palestinian government and was going to go up to the mouth of the Jordan. He said if I wanted, I could come along with him. So, we went up to the mouth of the Jordan River where it flows into the Sea of Galilee. Here was this little community of fishing people, and he was going to have a meeting with them.

They had prepared this elaborate lunch and all that for him, which I participated in. It consisted of an enormous fish on a bed of rice and eating with your fingers and pouring coffee from pots with long spouts. The problem he was there to discuss was this. These fisher people were still fishing with the techniques that were used in biblical times. In other words, they cast nets. They would stick a pole in the water with a net fastened to it, then cast the nets and row the boat around and come back to the pole again and bring in the nets. These fishermen were concerned that new people, Jews, were coming into Palestine and using motorboats to catch fish. They were very concerned that the balance of nature was being disturbed and that they wouldn't be able to get so many fish. That was what they were talking about.

Blum: But that's remarkable to be so concerned about that at such an early time.

Hartmann: Oh, they were. They were direct participants. But anyway, those were the kind of fun and interesting things that happened.

Blum: What were their buildings like there in the desert?

Hartmann: The buildings there were mud brick buildings. You've seen lots of pictures of those. There wasn't much architecturally. It was the archaeological things that were the most interesting. There was a lot of interesting work going on. There were no new buildings. Tel Aviv had some new, modern buildings that architects who had come from Germany or wherever had designed some small apartment houses and things in Tel Aviv.

Blum: What kind of buildings were they?

Hartmann: Well, they were very reminiscent of the buildings of Gropius and Alfred Roth concrete and glass and austere.

Blum: So, they were contemporary?

Hartmann: They were strictly contemporary and very nice. Very good quality. Excellent

quality.

Blum: Wasn't it Konrad Wachsmann who tried to export or tried to bring to Israel, or Palestine at the time, a prefabricated type of housing?

Hartmann: I don't know about that connection. I knew Konrad very well.

Blum: I don't think it was successful.

Hartmann: Well, he worked on prefabrication in this country at General Panel Corporation. Unfortunately, he didn't ever get backing enough to succeed. He ran into building code problems and all those kind of things, and it never really took off. That whole business of prefabrication was fascinating, I think. That's another subject.

Blum: With an influx of new people needing housing right away, I wondered how that need was accommodated.

Hartmann: I think they were still using concrete blocks.

Blum: When you were in Egypt, did you have any connection to the archaeological explorations that were going on or initiated by the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute?

Hartmann: Oh, sure.

Blum: There was Chicago House at Luxor.

Hartmann: Oh, I went there, and I've been fortunate to go back many times since. Naturally in Egypt and all over that part of the world, archaeology was the major subject to be interested in. From Palestine I went over to Damascus and then over the desert to Baghdad.

Blum: By camel like Lawrence of Arabia?

Hartmann: My voyage from Damascus to Baghdad was fascinating. If you had money, you went on something called the Nairn transport. They were big air-conditioned conveyances. Well, I didn't have that kind of money, so I went in an Arab bus. The Arab bus was crowded and full of goats and chickens.

Blum: And poor people.

Hartmann: Very poor people. One bus driver drove us for twenty-six hours from Damascus over to Baghdad with no roads. He had to go by the stars. It was a memorable adventure. Then in Baghdad, everybody was suspicious that I was a spy because there weren't many people traveling. No Europeans were traveling at all.

Blum: How did you feel being a sole traveler in many of these places?

Hartmann: A sole European traveler. I wanted to go through Iran, through Afghanistan over to India. The Iranians, however, wouldn't let me in. After going around Iraq and down to Basra, I took a boat to Karachi and then began my Indian experience, which was one the highlights, I suppose, of that whole adventure. I traveled almost everywhere in India and began, not as a *pukka sahib*, but as an ordinary person, third class, eating Indian food and all those kind of things. India is such a fascinating place, it is just fantastic—even now, when they're going through these elections. I think they have more than 500 million people in India, and they speak fifteen official languages and many hundreds of dialects. The highlight of that—part of it I went up to the northwest frontier, to a place called Peshawar. Again, I had letters to different people, and I stayed with the president of the college there. And then I took sick. I got something called sandfly fever, which is still, I believe, common nowadays. was cured by a missionary doctor there who, after I was cured, said I ought to go to Kashmir to convalesce.

Blum: What happened to you during sandfly fever?

Hartmann: Well, you're flat on your back and become debilitated. It was a fairly serious illness at that time.

Blum: Was it from the food?

Hartmann: No, a bite. Sandflies. A bite from this insect. But it's not uncommon. It's a well-documented disease.

Blum: Were you cured with medicine or prayers or what?

Hartmann: Well, a combination. You brought it up, so I'll tell you a funny little anecdote. In my religious background, a prayer was your private communication with God. That's your private thing. It's not a public affair at all. And anyway when I was cured, the Scottish doctor gave a little dinner for me and invited some friends and all. We were sitting around in the drawing room after the meal and he said, "Don't you think it's time we all prayed?" I suppose there might have been a dozen people there. So they all fell on their knees and held hands and a prayer went from one to the next, to the next around the circle, and I was flabbergasted. I was unprepared. I could give thanks or something like that, and that's all I did. It was certainly a shock to me when called upon to join in that kind of a public prayer. You can imagine.

Blum: You were doing so many new things, this was just another.

Hartmann: Right. Anyway, well, to get to Kashmir wasn't easy in those days. You could fly if you had money, even then. You could go by horse and wagon or by an occasional native bus, and I went by bus. I had a letter from the Peshawar doctor to a doctor in Kashmir. The medical doctors then were all basically related to the British Christian Missionary Society that had different hospitals and delivered health services to areas of India. So I delivered it to this chap. He kindly introduced me to a British medical officer who was on leave there, and together we made a little expedition into the Himalaya mountains. Kashmir is a fantastic place. There were practically no vehicles, and you went around in little rowboats. Kashmir is a valley surrounded with snowcapped

peaks. Sir Thomas More said it was "an emerald set among pearls." So, we went to one of these pearls and climbed the mountain and spent about a week doing so. So, in doing that and talking to people and whatnot, I found out that there was something beyond these mountains to the east, and it was Tibet. I said, "I'd like to go there." And the medical doctor said, "Well, I could help you to the extent of seeing if we couldn't find a man named Asid Mir," who had been a cook for the previous head of this hospital. He used to go every other year over these mountains to treat people. He would go there and do some medical work along the road. People would know about it and they'd come down and he'd treat them. So, the doctor said, "Maybe you could get Asid Mir to go with you because he's made that journey several times." And so we did. It was possible to rent gear, tents and other essentials. There are no roads. We stocked up on simple food and all that. In western Tibet there's an area called Ladakh and then comes Tibet. My objective was to go to the capital of Ladakh, which was a town called Leh. Then I'd see what I wanted to do after that. Leh was probably a minimum of two weeks to travel on foot, walking over the mountains. We went up and over the Zoji La Pass, which has been well documented in history books. There are now roads. You can go by jeep to Leh. Beyond Leh the area has been disputed between China and India. That's where there has been fighting, because the border is not very well defined up there. Nobody lives there anyway. This became a tremendous experience because we were getting into an area that was quite remote, and it had a lot of different meanings. That part of the world is very holy to the Hindus and Buddhists. It is the source of life for all of India and that part of the world because all the major rivers, the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and the Indus all start from a relatively small area. In the mountains, of course, the melting snows feed these little streams that become major rivers. The people themselves are Tibetan, and they speak Tibetan, and they practice their form of a kind of decadent Buddhism. But they're also very spiritual. They carry prayer wheels, and there are many other manifestations of their concerns about religion. But most importantly, it's an area of the world where they are entirely self-sufficient. The only thing that they really prized was a steel needle.

Blum: A steel needle?

Hartmann: Yes, steel needles so they could sew. But nothing else. They made their own shoes and clothes, dyes and just about everything, so they were self-sufficient. I had been reading a book by Aldous Huxley I can't remember the title now. But, anyway, he talked about the "goodness, beauty and truth" being common values to all people. This became quite evident to me in this area where I had no normal contact, no normal relationship. They were them and I was me, but the bonds were goodness, beauty, and truth. They were the things that we could all feel. And the beauty they have some terrific costumes, and their important buildings are fantastic, you know. They are not big, but monumentally sited and very expressive of the physical situation where they are placed. They're high on the hills and look out. The people are kind. They would be as curious of me as I was of them. I don't want to go into every detail.

Blum: You were traveling only with your guide?

Hartmann: I had a small caravan. By the way, I had to get permission. They didn't encourage people to travel in those days.

Blum: For safety reasons?

Hartmann: No, because of the balance of nature. The people are glad to sell you their food, and if too many travelers went there, the people would starve. They think that would be a normal thing, to sell the food and then starve. They didn't encourage expeditions, and this is true even today. I read that expeditions must carry their own food and things like that. I had to get permission. My caravan consisted of ten ponies to carry the loads, or ten yaks, or twenty humans. The custom was that you would come to a village, and you'd spend the night. They had a designated place to spend the night where you'd pitch your camp in maybe a little grove of trees. You would pay off your transport there and they would return home, and that village would be expected to provide the transport for the next stage of your journey, for

the next day or two days if there was no village in between. I had a tent for myself, a kitchen tent, and a cook tent and then clothes and beds and chairs and tables and bathtub and all kind of things. A case of whiskey and everything.

Blum: This was all on your fellowship money?

Hartmann: Yes, it was. Absolutely.

Blum: That's amazing.

Hartmann: I forget how much my cook was paid. I think he was paid like twenty-five cents a day plus food and clothes, which I had provided for him. And he was highly paid. In those days it was very modest.

Blum: I can see how mind-expanding it must have been, but was there any link that you saw between these very exotic places where you were traveling and where you came from in the sense that you came as an architecture student?

Hartmann: I can't honestly say that there was any direct linkage. But I would say that one of the purposes, I've always felt, of these traveling scholarships is to understand better who the people of the world are and what the world is and to get rid of any strangeness. I don't think I could feel strange anywhere. And, by the way, the basin that goes up this way is the Indus River basin. And, of course, the irrigation systems winding their way down the mountains. You've seen pictures of it in *National Geographic*. Terraces for miles and channels of water channeled down to flood these hundreds of little fields. We're talking about very high altitudes. The highest inhabited altitude that I was at was about 15,000 feet. Just the relation of the people to the configuration of the land and all those things was staggeringly beautiful. Their development was utterly natural. Nature governed everything the people did. It was truly organic as Frank Lloyd Wright or anybody else could define it.

Blum: Do you have a sense that we, in the Western world, live so far removed from that kind of contact?

Hartmann: Oh, of course. No question.

Blum: At that time?

Hartmann: Yes. Oh, I'm sure. That would have been very obvious. Anyway, I got to Leh. There was one British government representative there and he had a house and a radio. He invited me for a drink and dinner, and we sat there listening to the news. It was the fall of France, June 16th, some date like that. What a blow! Here we are way off on the top of the world somewhere else very remote from it but still we could have a feeling about it. I decided not to go back.

Blum: Go back to Europe?

Hartmann: No. Not go back towards Kashmir right away. So I set out from Leh and went over the next major pass. By the way, these passes are routes. This used to be all part of the Silk Road. We decided to go over another pass called Chang La, which was about a 20,300-foot pass and heavy with snow in June and July, over to a big lake, a big salt lake called Parejong Tso. We made a big circle over to the headwaters of the Indus. This was western Tibet where there are nomads and yaks. I had one little wonderful experience there. We made camp along this lake in a village, and they said there was a dance nearby. From time to time, I had other people in our group. My Kashmiri cook could speak about twelve words of English, but he could speak Kashmiri and Urdu and I could speak a little Urdu by that time. Then we hired another person to come along with us to help out with things, and he could speak Tibetan and Kashmiri. So we would go from Tibetan to Kashmiri to Urdu to English. That was the way we communicated. I made a dictionary as I went along.

[Tape 2: Side 2]

Hartmann: I thought it would be interesting to see this dance, this festival, so we climbed up to the village. It took a couple of hours to get up to there. They were having a party, and the feature of the party was a bow-and-arrow contest, an archery contest. They made two little mounds of earth with a piece of goatskin for a bull's eye, and they would shoot the arrows from one end down to hit the bull's eye. Then they went to the other end and shot back at the other one, back and forth. Everybody would ante up a needle, and then if they hit the bull's eye, they'd take a needle out of the hat. There were people cheering all the time. There were only maybe a hundred people, not any more than that. They were cheering, distracting the archers and drinking this barley beer. They were having a fine old time, and they were very nice to me. They gave me a rug to sit on with the headman so I could watch the proceedings. There was a little band, copper drums and a reed-like instrument, homemade, you know. They made Tibetan tea. That's in an urn with rancid butter.

Blum: Did you develop a taste for these things?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. Sure. They were part of my diet. I decided to offer a prize. I said I would offer a prize of twenty-five rupees, which was maybe a dollar. That caused great consternation and people jumped out of windows of the houses and all came to join in the contest and party.

Blum: You mean to win the prize?

Hartmann: To win the prize. It was a thrilling event. The only trouble is that they got so excited, nobody could hit the bull's eye after that. So I gave the prize to the head man and said maybe somebody could win it another time.

Blum: Oh, how funny.

Hartmann: Then he said come back at night. So I did. I'm making this very short. They

had two threshing floors where they would flail barley. They made a little fire in the middle of them, and this little four-person band was there to play for the dance. It was a wonderful, dark night. Stars above, this little firelight and these figures. At first, the ladies would dance. They had enormous headdresses that went from the forehead all the way down their backs, a piece of leather, and all covered with turquoises. They would go slowly around this threshing floor, back and forth. Then the men would dance. They wore big yellow conical hats and robes with scarves drooped over their arms. They would go around the threshing floor, around and around again, you know, to this night music. It was just a remarkable experience. I was treated as nothing special. I was just a visitor who happened to be there, and they weren't showing off for me at all. This was for them. Marvelous. Where else in the world could you have experiences like that? Nowhere. So, I'll make it short. My route was a big circuitous loop, because I had to go back to Kashmir and get Asid Mir home again.

Blum: Did he stay with you the entire time?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. That whole thing took about three months. We would buy a sheep, for example, every three days, a little sheep.

Blum: To eat?

Hartmann: To eat. Of course, Asid Mir was a Mohammedan. The butchering practices are very much like Jewish butchering practices. They would cut the throat of the sheep and hang it up and let the blood all drain out. Then they would notch the heel at the rear Achilles tendon and start to blow, and they'd blow the skin separate from the body, then take the skin off so they could use it. They'd use every part of the animal, clean out the intestines and all these kind of things. The whole group had some meat. These were tiny sheep. That and apricots were about all that we bought. Otherwise, we carried everything. I think my life has had these different kinds of special facets, and this was one. Doing it alone was important. I think doing something alone like that was more important than doing it in a group or with anybody.

Professor Seaver, whom I mentioned earlier, said you must travel, but do it before you get married. I think there's something in that. The reading that you do, the writing that you do, the thoughts that you have, one has no other influences except your own thoughts, and that's what's important.

Blum: Did you document that year and a half in any way?

Hartmann: Not really.

Blum: Did you write, did you keep a diary?

Hartmann: Well, I wrote letters and things. I had to write letters to Rotch. I wrote to them kind of a monthly letter or so.

Blum: Was it like a report?

Hartmann: Yes. A report. They didn't demand, and it was very nice, too. You don't want to be conscious of having to remember. You know, I've got to remember this, write it down. All this. I'll tell you a story about that later, but anyway that ended that, and then I went all through India over to Burma, Siam, all through Malaya, down to Singapore and up to China and over to Japan and finally back to the United States.

Blum: You really went around the world.

Hartmann: Oh, I did go around the world. I came back from Japan on a Japanese boat in steerage class. You could do that then. I don't know whether one can do it anymore or not, but if you wanted you could do it very economically and people did—the way most of the people in the world have to live anyway.

Blum: Did you come back a different person than you went?

Hartmann: Oh, for sure. I'm sure of that. No question. You couldn't not, having that kind of wonderful, eye-opening experience in many different cultures, with many

different peoples. You have strong impressions. It is hard work sometimes traveling around for an extended period of time, alone.

Blum: Because it's so lonely?

Hartmann: It is, yes. It is not the easiest thing. Once you get accustomed to it, it's okay. It's what am I going to do today? Where am I going to go tomorrow? What's the next thing? I've been very fortunate in being able to do that kind of thing many times since.

Blum: So then what Nat Owings wrote was not absolutely correct. I had the wrong impression from what he wrote. I thought you already had all of this arranged in your mind, you knew you were going to Tibet before you left. That was my impression from what he wrote.

Hartmann: Oh, never. I think it is much more valuable if you have the time and the money and whatnot to go down any byroad that you want to go. Don't have a rigid plan. You hope that your money lasts. You know you're going to be tight. I think the Germans have a Wanderjahr they used to talk about that back in the 1800s as being important for the personal development. Wanderjahr means that a person goes off and finds himself. In my case, of course, there was a basic orientation towards architecture. But at the same time, a performance of an opera in Vienna or something else might be a special experience to be treasured.

Blum: What was the perception of the war in India and Tibet? Was there any other means of communication other than the radio?

Hartmann: You felt the war in the Middle East because the Germans had old ties in many of those areas, and there were many British, primarily troops. In India, no practically nothing except when you came into contact with the British. When I entered India, I had the only strip search of my life. Why is this young man coming to India, very suspicious, and I had been to Germany. What was he doing?

Blum: Did you ever feel unsafe?

Hartmann: No, never felt unsafe anywhere in the world. Never. So, anyway, we get back to the United States. It's early 1941. I ought to get a job. Here, again, John Burchard's name will come up. He had a generalist's kind of an interest in everything that related to architecture and engineering. He was in tune with lots of things. He was a fellow I could talk to in a very personal way about anything, get a good conversation, get a good response. The war was on. We knew that the war was going to involve us. He suggested that I might go see Oskar Stonorov, who was working in Philadelphia. So, I went to see Oskar, and he offered me a job. So I started to work for Oskar. With Oskar were two fantastic other people—Oskar, himself, was an extraordinary man—namely, George Howe and Lou Kahn.

Blum: That was quite a team.

Hartmann: Quite a team. George Howe, who had an important career as an architect, came from the mainline of Philadelphia. He did the most beautiful Norman chateaus on Long Island and elsewhere. Mellor, Meigs and Howe were architects of tremendous distinction. That was one extreme of his career or one facet of it. Another facet was his relationship with William Lescaze, and they did the PSFS [Pennsylvania Savings Fund Society] Building in Philadelphia, which is a landmark building in modern American architecture for sure, and nobody but George Howe could have pulled that off. Nobody. George Howe had the credentials and the associations that made that possible. When I was there, we were working on one private commission and that was for the *Philadelphia Bulletin*. We were doing over the editorial spaces for the newspaper in modern style. Every work station was designed and beautifully executed with the fineness of details that George Howe brought to architecture. And taste, high taste. The other work was military. There were large projects; a whole program to build defense housing. You had industry maybe it was in Camden, New Jersey building boats or something. So housing was built nearby for people to live in. The office was heavily

involved with these housing projects and Lou Kahn was very much in their design of the site layout, the planning, and the design of the buildings. Oskar was also. It was a marvelous experience. We used to go out to Avon Lea, where Oskar lived on weekends. Lou, George, and Ed Bacon, who lived about a half mile down the road, and I would work all weekend studying this or that in pursuit of solutions so that when we got back on Monday we could inspire the troops to get to work.

Blum: You know, one of the interesting things in Oskar Stonorov's published profile is that he was a planner, one of the earliest to know how to use government financing for large-scale residential planning. Is that something that you were exposed to for the first time in his office?

Hartmann: Well, Oskar had already started this well before my time. I mean, he was known as one of the national leaders in housing. He did a major housing project for the garment workers union. He was very much related to the unions. As a matter of fact, he was killed in an airplane crash with Walter Reuther. The labor unions were interested in improving housing for their workers. Catherine Bauer was related to all that, of course. But Oskar was a true leader in that area. I can't comment really as to what his influence was in getting government financing. I don't know about that.

Blum: Was this your first exposure to that type of mass-scale planning?

Hartmann: Oh, yes, and in community planning. Absolutely. There was a dynamism because it was related to the war effort. There was very little time for fooling around. The efforts were really being harnessed to perform, to get things sorted out and done, executed.

Blum: Do you have any recollections of Stonorov having also been a sculptor?

Hartmann: Oh, Oskar was one of the most delightful and wonderful men I've ever known, and he was absolutely multi-faceted. He was a brilliant pianist. In his house at Avon Lea, there was a balcony and there were two grand pianos. He

would get another pianist and they would play music for four hands, and it would be absolutely beautiful. He could have been anything, truly. He was a Russian and had this tremendous spirit. He injected his spirit into everything, and it was a beautiful spirit. He was married to Betty Foster, who came from a wealthy Philadelphia family, and they had a marvelous life, a couple of kids. They lived out on a farm out in Charlestown near Paoli, called Avon Lea where Oskar designed the house. It was full of Le Corbusier furniture. It was terrific. In the office then there were several other architects. Willo Von Molke was there. Do you know Willo? Does that name ring a bell?

Blum: I've heard his name, yes.

Hartmann: Yes, he was one of the young architects there.

Blum: That was quite a beneficial exposure for you.

Hartmann: Oh, yes. It couldn't have been better, because it became evident that the war was going to have more and more of an influence. At MIT, even in those years, it was recognized, and so Ben Irvin and I were both ROTC.

Blum: When you were at MIT?

Hartmann: We both graduated and had commissions in the army. We felt that it might be a good thing. After I had been with Oskar for about nine months, I guess, I received a telegram to report to the army. Here again, John Burchard comes back into the picture. The only branch of the service that we, as architects, were eligible for at MIT was something called coast artillery, a most boring concept. I was ordered to active duty somewhere at some fort. I could just see I was going to sit out the war on this island or on this outpost and aim these guns at anybody who might come along. I hated those guns anyway. So as soon as I got this telegram, I called John Burchard and told him I didn't look forward to being in the coast artillery and wondered if he had any suggestions. He said, "Well, come down to Washington." He was in Washington for a meeting.

Blum: Was he serving in the army at the time?

Hartmann: No. He wasn't in the army ever, I believe. He said, "Come on down," and so I went down to Washington and met him at the Cosmos Club, and we had lunch and we discussed this. He recognized what I was talking about, and he said, "Well, I know one man in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who is doing some interesting work. Why don't you go see him?" So, he called him up and this person told me to come on over, so I went over. His name was Major Ewart Plank, and he was in charge of something called the Air Projects Section of the Chief Engineer's Office. This was a little tiny section with a half dozen or so people. I introduced myself and told him what my predicament was, which he recognized right away. He said, "Well, would you like to come here and work?" And I said, "Sure." He said, "Well, consider it arranged." So he called the Bureau of Personnel. Then he said, "When can you start?" I said, "Well, I could spend a few days straightening out my affairs, but I could start tomorrow." "Fine, start tomorrow." So, I started the next day. He said, "We'll get the paperwork straightened out and get you transferred from that coast artillery outfit." This was, of course, one of the most important aspects of the military at that time. The air force practically didn't exist at that time. Very few airplanes and air facilities. The Air Projects Section was to provide facilities for the future air force that we were going to be building. There were liberators and flying fortresses and fighter airplanes. We had to see that the factories got built, that the airports got built. All the facilities that go with an airport have to get built. That was this man's job. Of course, the activity was growing like mad. This was, again, a fortuitous event because I stayed with this officer, Major Plank I was a second lieutenant at the beginning all through the war and right until the time I retired from active service.

Blum: Did you stay in Washington the entire time?

Hartmann: No. Every time he changed his assignment, he took me with him. In fact, I was the only person he took with him.

Blum: What was his name?

Hartmann: His name was Plank, Ewart G. Plank. He was alive a couple of years ago, but I think he's died by now.

Blum: So, you began working as a second lieutenant in Washington for this airport construction program as an architect, planner, what?

Hartmann: Mostly this was administration, but it was more than administration. It was finding ways to do things that had never been done. I'll go into it a little bit. This man, Plank, was a fireball. I worked for him for four years. The only leave I took was after the end of the war, really. We worked seven days a week, I don't know how many hours a day, continuously for all those years. He could understand where I was coming from and said, "Well, the first thing, you got to get a little training here before you know what to do." A lot of our functions involved letter writing, memo writing, report writing. Everything has to be written down somehow. You're sending a directive to somebody in California to get going with this or that or whatever. Plank said, "Now the best way is, this will be unorthodox but I want you to work for a man I've got working for me. You're an officer and he's a civilian, but, believe me, this will be an experience you won't forget and it will be a great influence." This man was Max Weintraub. Max Weintraub's job was to write letters, that had to come from our department, for senators and congressmen and the president, people like that.

Blum: He was a ghostwriter?

Hartmann: No. A senator would say, "I've got an inquiry on this airplane program someplace in California. Please give me the information and prepare a response." So we'd have to draft something that contained all the facts and the position and all that, and it might be one page or it might be a dozen pages, with all the statistics and money and whatever the subject was. We'd have to go around to different sections of the Chief Engineer's office to get facts, assimilate them, boil them down, present them, write them and then it

would go to this major for a final check-off and then be sent to the senator or the president. This man was a whiz! I worked for him for about six months, and my objective was always to get a letter by him that he didn't change. You know how it is? That's all he was good at. He was a terrible person otherwise. He was an awful person! He had a brilliant faculty for organizing things in an absolutely clear way. I became very close to him. I was the only person to work with him and covered all kinds of subjects. That was a tremendous, valuable experience. It was a whole college course in six months.

Blum: In business administration or letter writing?

Hartmann: Letter or report writing, organization of material, and all this kind of stuff.

Blum: Well, now, did you ever write a letter with an error that he didn't catch?

Hartmann: Nope, never did. No, a wrong comma or an awkward phrase, he'd change it. I got better and better, and finally I was finished with him. By now our group was growing and growing and growing. For example, aircraft assembly plants—they decided to build these factories, big, big factories, to build big airplanes. There weren't any, and the airplanes weren't even completely designed. They were just building prototypes and things like that. But the whole effort was in motion. I remember I was sent out to Cleveland once. I was to locate an assembly plant in Cleveland at the airport. So, I would go to the president or the chairman of the power company, the mayor and others. See what they're ready to commit to on the land. Is there power available? Is there labor available? All these kind of things. Decide where that plant was going to be and how big it was going to be and then select the architects and engineers and get the project going. Just like that! Off to Omaha on a modification plant. Off to somewhere else. Detroit. The Fisher body people. Edward Fisher, I went to see him. He would be the leading industrialist on getting a plant in Detroit going. I was a second lieutenant, hardly wet behind the ears, and had the tools of government to do staggering projects, to be able to do them in a coherent way. What an experience, right?

Blum: Fantastic training.

Hartmann: Absolutely. I mean, these are all other facets. This happened to be an important one. I remember, this major who was probably now lieutenant colonel and I was maybe a first lieutenant wasn't about to stay in Washington with a war going on. I was there when war broke out in December.

Blum: You mean, when the United States entered the war?

Hartmann: I started to work in September and by December the Japanese attack had taken place. This major wasn't about to be a paper pusher in the war, so he made arrangements to go to Europe, and I went along, too. But my last job before that was a fabulous job. Roosevelt and Stalin and Churchill had met somewhere and out of it came the idea of flying fighter airplanes to Europe because the U-boats were sinking many ships. We got the assignment of trying to build a series of bases across the Arctic. A regular army officer, Captain John Ely, and I were given this assignment for our part of the responsibility, and that was to provide the facts for where air bases could be located, to assemble architects and engineers, to generate the contracts, and others. I remember going over to one outfit to get sixty dump trucks delivered to Montreal by a certain date to go on a boat, going to the navy to get ships. It was operating in a scale that was unusual and challenging. World War II was terrible. My war experiences were special to me in that I never destroyed anything.

Blum: What do you mean?

Hartmann: I never shot a gun. I never blew up anything. I was always building something.

Blum: Would you have been a pacifist had it come to that?

Hartmann: I doubt it. I don't know. It was important more philosophically than anything else. I had a gun. was expected to go to target practice. You are supposed to

know how to operate these pistols and things. Never went to a target practice. I always had some reason not to go. Never shot that gun once!

Blum: But this was a good war for us, good war in quotation marks. It wasn't like Vietnam.

Hartmann: In that context, no. I had seen Germany. I had seen what had happened to many Jews and all that, and there's no doubt in my mind that we had to do this. There's no doubt. Don't you think?

Blum: Well, this was the American feeling about it, sure.

Hartmann: A growing feeling anyway. Especially after the Japanese attack. So, we went off to Europe and Plank by this time was colonel, I suppose. He was in charge of an area responsible for the construction of a hundred airports for all the American bombers.

Blum: In England?

Hartmann: In England. Build a hundred airports, which is no small assignment. One airport is a big assignment. There were a hundred of them. He was commander of what was called the base section, then there was the chief engineer, Joe Vollmer, who was a construction man from St. Louis another terrific, wonderful man. I was Joe Vollmer's deputy. He was young and by now a first lieutenant or a captain or something. They shoved all these different kinds of people at us people who knew about airport pavements, about electricity, about communication, who knew about this, about that. These people we assimilated and organized. We started from scratch. No typewriters and no nothing. People had to develop their own filing system and all that. There was no experience to go by, and so we just made it up as we went along.

Blum: Where were you headquartered?

Hartmann: Just outside London for two years.

Blum: This was from 1942 to 1944.

Hartmann: This was July 1942 to June 1944.

[Tape 3: Side 1]

Hartmann: Again, this was a tremendous experience. I'm not going to bore you with all the unusual things that took place.

Blum: What you remember is really significant so please go on.

Hartmann: These are human things. There was no military establishment where we were, so the British people had to accept us as billets. Here's my fantastic luck. I'm billeted with a Mr. and Mrs. Godson. Mr. and Mrs. Godson had two daughters who were married and lived away from home and had always wanted a son. I lived with them for two years not as a forced guest, but as a member of the family.

Blum: And they adopted you?

Hartmann: In a way. But that is damn difficult for anybody to accept. A boarder for two years. Mr. Godson was managing director of the Wells Watford Brewery, so this was the best billet in the whole world. He had a quarter keg of beer brought into the house every week for me, once a week, or for any guest, because he never drank his beer. He drank spirits. So any kind of spirits that anyone could possibly want was available at any time. I had a very nice room. They had a maid, which was extraordinary in itself, who used to come in with my morning tea at five-thirty or six. Initially I took some meals with them because that was expected and required, but as soon as we established our own mess I didn't. I'd go off and then come back late in the evening after work was over. I spent many wonderful hours with them and went back to see them every year after the war until finally one died, and then the other.

Time does pass. But that was tremendous. Then, at work, this Joe Vollmer was a great construction man and as fine a person as I've ever known. But he was certainly nonmilitary, so I had to take care of all the military aspects. From time to time, important officers of the army would come to visit us and want to make an inspection, and I would have to organize these tours. It might take three or four days.

Blum: Tours of the airfields?

Hartmann: Yes. We used to get the train of the Duke of York. That was a private train. We'd attach some flat cars for automobiles, and the train might hold twenty people with private staterooms. They would have Scotch guards as servants and cooks. Off we'd go. We'd take the train to one place and get off and then tour maybe three projects a day, and then the train would pick us up at another place. We'd spend the night on the train and then go on. We did that kind of tour several times with these generals who'd come to see how we were doing. I also used to go out to these fields all the time on various problems. We had 25,000 U.S. troops and about 100,000 British civilians working for us.

Blum: Were the architects Americans or were they British?

Hartmann: There were no architects.

Blum: Well, who designed these airfields and buildings?

Hartmann: The airfields were almost set formulas. You found a place for the runways. Then there were places for the containment areas and mechanical and maintenance shops. There were these standards. It had to be done repetitively. There was no creative work at all.

Blum: Where was the original design? In Washington?

Hartmann: In Washington and with the British Air Ministry, because many of the

components that we used, like Quonset huts, Nissen huts, and things like that, were British design.

Blum: The Quonset hut was originally designed by...?

Hartmann: The Nissen hut, I'm sure, was British. Now, whether the Quonset hut was or not, I don't know.

Blum: But it was the same type as a Quonset hut?

Hartmann: Yes. Smaller. It was used for barracks and offices and hospitals and all of that. Everybody hoped that these things would be temporary. There was no attempt to make permanent airports. As you looked down from the air over East Anglia in those times, you'd see dozens of these all close by. It ruined the countryside. Oh, it was terrible. And, of course, they would take off from each airport, and then they'd fly in a pattern and group around and go out. I flew up in the bombers. A little side experience. The king and the queen had a small reception on Thanksgiving each year while American forces were there. The second year, the year before the invasion, I was invited to go to Buckingham Palace to take part. I remember being introduced to the king, and the king asked what I was doing. He said, "Isn't it terrible? The transformation of East Anglia, what's happening to the land." Because East Anglia is the area of farms, beautifully flat, relatively flat. A few roving hills, but it was ideal for making airports and for agriculture. And it was terrible absolutely. Most are gone now. A couple of them have been used and made into permanent airports. That was a necessary thing, but it was certainly a desecration of all this forest and land.

Blum: Did that trouble you at the time?

Hartmann: Oh, of course. It was really terrible because it was beautiful. English countryside is just so beautiful. Old, old farms and hedgerows.

Blum: But you said this was for a purpose, and you thought of it as temporary.

Hartmann: Oh, yes. There was no way you were going to have thousands and thousands of airplanes based anywhere. It would be unnecessary at some time. So it was unfortunate. There were ideas of building runways that wouldn't be concrete, but they didn't work. I can tell you, those runways are yea thick, and many of them are still there, I'm sure.

Blum: During this construction program, were you exposed to new technology, new materials, the idea of prefabrication because things were temporary and went up very quickly?

Hartmann: The Nissen huts did go up quickly.

Blum: Was that new technology?

Hartmann: Frankly, there wasn't time for anything. It was a desperate race against time. And, believe me, when I said we worked seven days a week for at least sixteen hours a day, we did. I had to devise a control system for these hundred big construction projects, because there might have been two hundred different elements in such an airport. You know, the petroleum, the night lighting, this, that, and the other thing. There were certain critical ones, you couldn't operate if they weren't there. You just couldn't operate. You might operate if the barracks were crowded and later made more open. But there were certain things you had to have. I had to make a control system to illuminate deficiencies so we'd have advance warning on critical items and so that we could bring required action to maintain schedules.

Blum: So you really had to understand the operation completely?

Hartmann: Absolutely. This was a huge construction program. It was executed as a construction program. We had a heck of a time.

Blum: And you did this for two years in England?

Hartmann: Not quite two years. By then it is time for the Normandy invasion, the airdromes were finished, or operable, but it wasn't the intensive effort that we had applied for the prior two years. Major Plank wasn't going to be left behind when there was going to be an invasion and I certainly wasn't either.

Blum: And where did you and Major Plank decide to go?

Hartmann: By this time, he was probably a colonel. So, he became the head of something called ADSEC (Advanced Section Communications Zone). ADSEC's mission was to support the armies: the First, the Third, the Seventh, all these armies in the invasion. It was a very specific assignment and a very interesting one. Colonel Plank organized this outfit, and it included a wide range of specialists. It included engineers, port operators, signal corps, medical and others.

Blum: Where was this ADSEC based?

Hartmann: It didn't exist in a fixed location, it moved with the armies. It was designed to take part in the invasion. So, about two months before the invasion, he left and I left and he went to work on assembling the organization. I went down to the Salisbury area. I was fairly much alone doing this particular thing, but I was sent down there to inspect engineer units that were going to be in the invasion, basically to be sure that they were ready to carry out what they were supposed to do. These were all kinds of odd units.

Blum: Were they British?

Hartmann: No, American. American troops, by that time, were flooding into southern England. Thousands and hundreds of thousands were flooding into southern England getting ready for the invasion, and they'd all be developing their own camps all around the area. I would go to one organization, and their mission might be water supply. What are we going to do with water supply? And another one would be petroleum—how to get petroleum from ships onto land and distributed on land. And then, of course, the invasion came

along. I would make one comment. I was staying in Salisbury during this time in the south of England and got to know the cathedral very well. What a setting! Many English cathedrals are right in the centers of towns, but Salisbury sits out. It's not exactly on a plain, but it has ample ground all around it. It was a very great, great experience. Are you familiar with that building?

Blum: From pictures. Did you see much destruction of the monuments in England?

Hartmann: Oh, God! We were located at the end of the subway line north of London. That's where our headquarters was. There were various elements of the American activities in London so we had to get to London very frequently. That's one of the reasons we were located at that spot. The destruction of London was something one can never forget. I remember being there on several occasions when there'd be fire bombing and whole blocks would be ablaze. The underground was full of people sleeping. Monuments and buildings, whole areas were just a pile of rubble.

Blum: Were any measures taken to protect, say outdoor sculpture or glass in church windows, things of this sort?

Hartmann: Oh, for sure. Many significant ones were removed. Many areas were sandbagged. There was as much as could be done. The British were heroic in weathering that storm. The destruction was just terrible. Of course, it wasn't all peaches and cream and building buildings. I was involved in one small design project. My commander came to me one day, "Well, we've got our first airman killed in action. We have to have a cemetery." A place was selected in Madingley Wood outside of Cambridge. I remember making the first layout of this wood that the British had made available to us for a cemetery for Americans.

Blum: So you planned a cemetery?

Hartmann: A small increment of it, the beginning of it. I don't really know how much it

expanded. There are rules and regulations about military cemeteries. How they're oriented and the sizes and how the crosses go and all that kind of thing. But you have to site it and try to spare the trees.

Blum: Then what happened?

Hartmann: Well, now we're going to have the invasion. Of course, we were a support organization. We weren't moving on day one. We went in on D-plus-four. You know, the fourth day. And, of course, this was another kind of a war adventure that I wouldn't have missed. If you want to be a part of that, you want to be in the action. So, we were at D-plus-four. We went into Utah Beach and climbed out of our landing craft through the water and up the beach. We had a map. We had to march to such-and-such a field, and we would go and make our camp there for our organization, which was probably a hundred people.

Blum: And you're still with this airport construction?

Hartmann: Oh, no. That's finished now. I'm finished with the airports. They're flying off those fields and dropping their bombs and all that. I could speak a little French at that time, too, fairly well, enough to get by. I was given the responsibility to take care of the water for our group.

Blum: Drinking water?

Hartmann: Yes. Water for ablutions, for drinking, for whatever purpose. Because we were out in the field on the farmland.

Blum: This was in Normandy?

Hartmann: Normandy. I went around to the adjacent farms, and, of course, the farmers were delighted to see me. They offered me their best calvados and all that. I explained that we needed water so they offered great, big cider casks. They were probably ten feet long and six feet high. They were empty then because

this was June. So, the farmers filled them with water and dragged them over to our field and all our men could shave in water that had a nice tinge of cider. But anyway, I won't go into elaborate war experience recitation. I was very fortunate in having a series of remarkable assignments. As I said before, none of them involved blowing something up or killing anybody. Another officer and I went to Cherbourg just after it was liberated to assess the damage and make a plan to get the harbor open again, as quickly as possible. We weren't alone. The navy took care of underwater obstructions and mines. Cherbourg was heavily damaged. We had a number of engineer units with about 5,000 men who we could assign tasks to.

Blum: French or American?

Hartmann: American engineers. They would do these things so we could reconstruct Cherbourg quickly.

Blum: Were architects involved in this kind of effort?

Hartmann: Not as such, I wouldn't say. We were just bent on clearing the stuff out, clearing up the rubble, being sure that the roads and bridges were safe and all that. No sense of architecture to speak of.

Blum: Did you, in any way, work with any of the local engineers, construction people, the French people in that area?

Hartmann: Later on, but not in Normandy. It was too fast moving. We weren't about to wait for anybody. You know, or consult anybody.

Blum: You just moved yourself?

Hartmann: You're damn right. There was no time to be lost. This was a drive.

Blum: This was after the war was over?

Hartmann: No. This was just after the invasion. This was a month or two after the invasion. It was a question whether the invasion would be successful. There were still German forces south of us in France. We were being contested every step of the way.

Blum: Were you helped by the French resistance forces?

Hartmann: Oh, there was help, but we didn't have time to look them up. We had our own missions and we were going to get them done and we did.

Blum: You say you spoke a little French?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. I get along with the French very well. I spoke to many of them. But, believe me, we were organized and we knew what we had to do and we worked to accomplish it. But anyway, I was describing one small facet. Another small facet this was a wonderful experience. By this time, our headquarters, General Plank, is in Le Mans. I am off doing something or other, and I get a call to come down to see him. So, I go down and there's a French gentleman there.

Blum: A military man?

Hartmann: No, a civilian. This French gentleman has escaped and reached us from Paris, which was still in German hands. He was an official of the SNCF, the French railroad system. The French railroads all fan out from Paris. You can't go from Cherbourg to Lyons without going through Paris. So, Paris is the bottleneck. If you want to have railroads go from Normandy towards Germany, you've got to go towards Paris. So, he said, "The French railroads are ready to help with the Allied war effort if you will have somebody come and tell them what to do and help them with equipment, supplies, whatever they would need." In other words, the French railroads are ready. The whole thing needed coordination and material. It was evident that Paris was going to fall soon.

Blum: And this man was from the French government?

Hartmann: French railroads.

Blum: Weren't they government run?

Hartmann: The railroads are quasi-government.

Blum: So, he was a civil servant?

Hartmann: Yes. And the French railroad was and still is one of the most efficient organizations in France, and it was a highly respected organization. Their engineering and all is very good.

Blum: Had they been terribly damaged?

Hartmann: Oh, well this was the thing. All the bridges on every one of these lines coming into and out of Paris were down.

Blum: So, how could the railroads function?

Hartmann: Couldn't function. That was the problem. Sitting in Paris, they didn't know what we the Allies wanted. And we out in Le Mans don't know what the situation was there. The Germans knocked down all these bridges deliberately, all the way around. Deliberately. That was part of war. I went into Paris with a driver and a jeep with General [Jacques] LeClerc's division. I remember arriving in Paris. It took us six hours almost, as I recall, to get downtown from the Bois de Boulogne. The crowds were delirious. My driver was never kissed so often in his life. Where to stay, where to spend the night. Well, the American Army followed LeClerc right along, and they set up a housing office. I went to the person in charge of housing and said, "I want a billet." He gave me a list of hotels that had already been taken over that I could go into, and I told him I really wanted to go to the Hotel Ritz. That wasn't on his list but he guessed it was all right. He gave me a piece of paper

and told me to go over. So, I went over to the Hotel Ritz and presented myself. The German general staff had been there about the day before. So they welcomed me, and I had a wonderful room in the Hotel Ritz, which is right on Place Vendôme and the grandest place in Europe, I think. I wasn't living on three dollars a day now.

Blum: Right, you sure weren't.

Hartmann: So, I lived there for the next three months. My driver was billeted somewhere else, and I went to the French railroads, the Installations Fixe, which was in charge of all bridges and right-of-ways, signaling and all that. They gave me an office. In a day or two, we figured out which bridge was the most repairable, quickest, and we organized our joint effort. That was at Juvisy. We sent American troops there. I got some tools and gasoline and various things for the French.

Blum: What bridge was this? What line was this?

Hartmann: This was a place called Juvisy. It was south and east of Paris. There's a Grand Ceinture and a Petite Ceinture. We did find a way to get the trains through underground on the Petit Ceinture, but it was very laborious. We could only get three trains through a day, as I recall, on that system. We needed, of course, much more than that. So, I worked for the French engineers and the French railroads. This was just after Paris was liberated. It was fantastic.

Blum: It must have been an exhilarating time.

Hartmann: Absolutely. Again, my life has been privileged to have these kinds of facets which are terrific, and that was a great experience. I left when the supreme headquarters (SHAEF) took over. They had a whole railroad division, a big group of people worried about railroads all over Europe. They came in and set up their office, and I turned over my activities to them. They had generals that were in charge of railroads.

Blum: Were you in the American army office on Avenue Kléber?

Hartmann: No. I set up my office in a SNCF office. I was on Rue de Chateaudun in the Installations Fixe. They gave me a wonderful paneled office full of gladioli, I remember.

Blum: Gordon Bunshaft was in Paris at that time. Did you see him then?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. I think I saw him there. I knew he was working on military hospitals or something like that. Did you know that?

Blum: I'm not sure what he was doing. He thought he was not making much of a contribution. That was his feeling. He was just sort of waiting for it to be over.

Hartmann: For so many thousands. And poor Ben Irvin. That's what he was doing.

Blum: And was it so different for you?

Hartmann: I had a feeling there was still more I could do if I had the energy and the skill. I was so fortunate, absolutely fortunate.

Blum: Well, it seems you made those opportunities for yourself.

Hartmann: I don't claim that. For some reason, it worked out that way. Oh, gosh, that was something. Well, my organization had been west of Paris when I started, and now they were way east of Paris. I think they were in Reims and then moved up to Namur in Belgium. There we spent the winter. The Ardennes offensive was then. We were on the banks of the Meuse River in this town of Namur, which is a very pretty town, indeed. I had a responsibility for roads then, I think. I did meet with officials in Holland and Belgium. The roads in that part of the world are *ponts et chaussées* and they are, again, a very old, Napoleonic idea. If you've been traveling in France, you know these *ponts et chaussées*, little buildings every once in awhile along the road where a family

lives. Well, that family is in charge of the road for a certain number of kilometers either side of that house keeping the ditches clean, drainage open, cracks filled. It's a whole organized system dating from Napoleon's time. So, I would go to the *Ponts et Chaussées* headquarters in Holland and Belgium and France and get them to help take care of the roads which were important for our armies. If I could get dump truck loads of this or that deposited along the road, these men would be glad to sprinkle it on the road so cars and trucks wouldn't skid. They would help keep them clean and operable. It was an appreciation for the roads. In certain areas, many of those roads were built on chalk. In the springtime, during the spring thaw, they became quagmires, and you had to have troops work day and night on keeping the roads open. After the Ardennes offensive, we started to push east further. Then we were involved in the crossing of the Rhine. Our organization had certain troops on the bridge at Remagen trying to repair it and keep it open when it collapsed. And there were pontoon bridges up and down the Rhine River. We replaced those pontoon bridges with pile bridges.

Blum: This was along the Rhine?

Hartmann: Along the Rhine, railroad bridges and cars bridges. It ought to be written up sometime. The story of the steel mills in Luxembourg where they roll meter beams was fantastic. Those are beams thirty-nine inches high the biggest beams in the world at the time. These were vital for our bridges. Our organization got those plants. They were never destroyed in World War I or World War II by either side.

Blum: Deliberately?

Hartmann: Deliberately. They produced these beams, and we had these beams to make our bridges with, and they were fantastic. Great fun. So that's enough of the war, I guess. Can we go on to Germany?

Blum: Before you leave, when you were in Paris did you see any Corbusier buildings?

Hartmann: No, I can't say that. Of course, I went to Notre Dame and some other monuments. But, frankly, maybe because of the leadership that others had over me or whatever, I can't remember taking an afternoon off to go look at something.

Blum: You didn't see the Swiss Pavilion or the Salvation Army ?

Hartmann: No, none of those things.

Blum: You were very focused.

Hartmann: Oh, we were focused and we had to be. It was only when the war was over we were by that time up in Germany, just this side of Kassel in a place called Fulda when the war was over and my immediate superior by that time was a General Emerson Itschner, but General Plank was over both of us. Itschner and I hadn't had a holiday in three years at all. Not one ever that I recall. It might have been one day or something like that. I said, "Come on." He was a regular army officer, very nice guy and well over me in rank. "Come on. Let's go down the Riviera and just take four or five days." The war was finished, and we were biding our time to figure out what else to do. So we had this terrific Mercedes a German staff car with the longest bonnet you ever saw. An open touring car with overdrive and all that. It was liberated by one of our troop units, and he was able to borrow it for our purpose. We set out, and poor Itschner, we go to the airport in Frankfurt because he wants to report in with General Plank, who was coming in by airplane from somewhere else, and just before we go to touch base, he falls down the control tower steps and wrenches his back.

[Tape 3: Side 2]

Hartmann: So, I had to undress him and put him to bed at night and try to help him. I suggested aborting, but he said, "No, we'll go on." Our driver didn't know how to drive this car, so I took over the driving. Off we went, barreling down

to the Riviera. Had a nice two, three days. Then, I began to think of architecture, and so we decided to drive back through Milan. We had come down from Germany through Strasbourg and through France to the Riviera and went back through Milan and up through the Brenner Pass. And so I stopped off to see Banfi, Belgiojoso, Peressutti, and Rogers. They were very glad to see me, but the only one there as I recall was Belgiojoso.

Blum: Now, this was six years since your Rotch travels?

Hartmann: 1938 and 1944, yes. 1939 and 1945. Six years later. They had some bad experiences during the war. They were still in the office, but they had some bad times. But anyway, I wanted to stop and see them, just as a feeling of friendship, not to talk about architecture. I had been abroad for three years without being home. I had quite a high priority to get home. I went to another general I knew who was in charge of transportation. So far as General Plank was concerned, this European war was over and I could go back home. So, I went to see him and he said, "Well, we're trying a new route from this part of Europe to Portugal to the Azores and then to Newfoundland and the United States," and if I'd like to, I could go on one of their test flights. So I got on this big liberator, a B-24, with about five or six air force chaps and we set off. Of course, we landed in Lisbon and there was something wrong with the airplane. Now, whether this was a put-up job or not, I don't know. We were about the first Americans to appear in uniform in Portugal. There were many Americans in Portugal all in civilian clothes. It was known to be the spy capital of Europe. But you couldn't be there in military uniform while fighting was going on. We were among the first. We were welcomed as heroes and entertained right and left. We had a wonderful three days because it took a very long time to get this small part for the engine.

Blum: Did it sound to you that there was something contrived about this?

Hartmann: I'm very suspicious that they knew what they were doing. And so, off we flew to the Azores and back home. I had thirty days leave or something like

that, and by that time the war in Japan was over. I was free.

Blum: Ready to return to civilian life?

Hartmann: Yes, in New Jersey.

Blum: You returned to New Jersey?

Hartmann: To New Jersey. My mother was still alive. My father had died, but my mother was still alive, and so I returned there.

Blum: Your last job had been in Philadelphia, but you didn't consider that your home?

Hartmann: No. That was only for nine months. I went home and then what do I do?

Blum: What did you do?

Hartmann: What do you do? You know the direction of my life by now. I called on John Burchard.

Blum: Of course! He pops up at the most critical moments.

Hartmann: Very critical moments. Absolutely. I had a conversation with John Burchard. I had been out of touch for three years. What's been happening, what's going to happen, and what should I do? By this time, I had a wife and a child.

Blum: When were you married?

Hartmann: In 1941 to my first wife.

Blum: Before you went overseas?

Hartmann: Yes. I talked to John Burchard and now, by that time this is 1945, I'm twenty-

nine, right?

Blum: Yes, you're not very old to have lived this very full life up until that moment.

Hartmann: That's right. I'm twenty-nine, and I had to get serious and a career. With the background that I now had, if there's motivation and a direction and all, I was relatively sure I could do damn near anything. I mean, I was not afraid.

Blum: Was there any doubt in your mind as to what you were going to do?

Hartmann: Oh, I was going to be in architecture for sure. No question about that. What's been happening in the profession? Who's alive and kicking and where would be the most interesting opportunity? And he suggested and I thought New York. So he said, "Well, go see Ralph Walker and Wally Harrison. And there are a few young fellows including Louis Skidmore, who are a kind of a new breed. You might want to touch base with them. Don't know if they're going to make it, but they're energetic and have fresh ideas about things."

Blum: Did he have his doubts about them in 1945?

Hartmann: I'll go into that in a minute. So, I went to see all those gentlemen.

Blum: In what order?

Hartmann: I can't remember what order. Anyway, I saw them. Another fellow I should have mentioned a long time ago was a man named Bissell Alderman. That doesn't mean anything to you. Well, Bissell Alderman was a couple years ahead of me at MIT, and he married Dr. Compton's daughter. They're are still living in New Hampshire, and we see them once in a while. I caught up with him several times during the war. He was involved in technical analysis of bomb damage. When the war was over, we both compared notes, and he decided to work for Voorhees, Walker, and I decided to join Skidmore.

Blum: When you went to see Ralph Walker, were you offered a job?

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: When you went to see Wally Harrison were you offered a job?

Hartmann: No. It was very fascinating. Voorhees, Walker was a major office for many, many generations before Walker. I can't remember the names anymore. But anyway, they were busy all during the war doing defense work of various kinds and had a big office. They were good. Ralph Walker was a highly regarded person in the profession. Bissell decided to work for them, and I decided, after visiting with each, to join Skidmore. Wally Harrison didn't have any work. He didn't flourish really during the war and grow in the sense of being involved in military things, I don't believe. He told me he was very sorry, because I was very employable because here I come with a nice uniform. I haven't got my civilian clothes yet. I'm sure without any question Wally Harrison was a very fine gentleman. Absolutely top flight as a gentleman and a good man. I met Skid and a partner, Bill Brown, in the King Cole Room of the St. Regis Hotel. I'll never forget that Skidmore and Bill Brown.

Blum: Is that where you made an appointment with them?

Hartmann: I called them, and I guess he was going to take me for lunch or meet for a drink or something like that. So we meet in the King Cole Room. I don't know whether it still exists or not but that was a barroom with a big picture of King Cole on the wall, a big mural. It was called the King Cole Room, and it was a favorite watering place. I go to the office with them, and I'm offered a job, and I decide to take it. We've gone through certain of these facets, and now we come to the next one.

Blum: And now you're in the New York office of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

Hartmann: Right.

Blum: What was that office like? Describe the office as you remember it when you first walked in.

Hartmann: All right. It was at 5 East 57th, which was a very narrow building. It was only one room wide, as I recall. I forget which floor Skid had. He had two floors, and there was a little circular stair between the two floors. Oh, gosh, at one end on the upper floor there was kind of a conference room, and that conference room was Skid's office, too. Katy Keenan had a little, tiny cubbyhole next door to it. Katy Keenan was his secretary for many years. Towards the front was the drafting room. There was room for about four people across the width of this room, and there was a series of tables. I can't imagine there were more than twenty people there.

Blum: Who were some of them? Do you remember?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. I remember some of them very well. There was Bill Brown, Bob Cutler, Walt Severinghaus, Carl Landefeld, Wayne Soverns, a girl named Natalie de Blois. Now, I'm getting slow on the names.

Blum: Bunshaft?

Hartmann: Bunshaft was still in the army. He couldn't get out as quickly as I could.

Blum: Was that because he had a big position in Paris?

Hartmann: No. It's just because I'd been in and abroad longer.

Blum: Because of connections?

Hartmann: No, not connections. Connections wouldn't make any difference in this. I went into the army before Bunshaft, I'm sure, at least six months or a year probably. Maybe longer. I was ordered into active duty and have this ROTC and all that kind of business. So with my tour of duty, I would be high priority for being let out. That's what it was. There was no pulling of strings

or anything like that at all.

Blum: Approximately how many people were in the office?

Hartmann: I can't imagine that there were many more than twenty, twenty-five, something like that at the most.

Blum: Who was in charge of design?

Hartmann: Well, nobody was.

Blum: Who were the designers?

Hartmann: Natalie de Blois was a designer. Carl Landefeld was a designer. He was kind of a special person. He had had a long association. He was a very distinguished architectural designer at the time. Have you ever heard of him? No. He was a teacher. I should digress for a minute and tell you what Skidmore, Owings & Merrill was at that time. Nat and Skid established Skidmore, Owings & Merrill back in 1936, I think, after the Chicago world's fair experience, and they were getting ready for the New York fair in 1939. That's right. The New York fair was beginning to take shape. They established this office, and there was practically no work. They built a house for a friend here and there and nothing of any consequence. But they were energetic. The fair had shown to others that they had this energy and drive to do things. Really, the world's fair contributed to the establishment of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. The war made it into a responsible organization. They were seen as having energy, and they were selected to do Oak Ridge, Tennessee, which was again, of vital importance, I think, to the historical development of SOM. They did some other projects and government projects were all that existed. In New York, they did some projects for aircraft warning sites. But the primary effort was Oak Ridge. When they started at Oak Ridge, they started with a very small nucleus. They didn't know what it was all about. Nobody could foresee what Oak Ridge was going to become and so forth, and they grew along with the growth of

Oak Ridge. By the time Oak Ridge was finished or the war was over and our activity ceased, SOM had the capability of dealing with almost any kind of project, whether it be a school or a hospital or a house or prefabrication or anything. The organization had capability. SOM became a large organization. I don't recall the numbers, but I'm sure it was in the thousands. That includes city planning. They made the town plan of Oak Ridge. I don't know if you've ever seen it, but that's a wonderful, early town planning document. It accumulated some people of great talents. Walter Netsch was hired to work on Oak Ridge. John Merrill really came in about that time and became the head of the Oak Ridge effort in Oak Ridge. Many other people—engineers, architects, and all kinds were grouped together in that effort. That established the spirit of SOM as a professional organization. So that was terribly important. The New York office had a minor role in Oak Ridge.

Blum: Was the Oak Ridge job out of Chicago?

Hartmann: Oak Ridge was really the responsibility of Chicago. All the accounting and coordination back and forth because Chicago was the center. I should say that there are three people that really established SOM, and they were Skidmore and Owings and Gross Sampsell. John Merrill came along a little bit later and made his own important contribution. But SOM started because of Skidmore, Owings, and Marshall Grosscup Sampsell, who was a lawyer and a marvelous figure. He was of great importance in how SOM was established. I'm sure it would have fallen apart if he hadn't existed.

Blum: How do you remember him?

Hartmann: As a terrific friend and one of the most honorable men I've ever met. I don't think a great deal of lawyers, but I do of Marshall Sampsell.

Blum: Now, he was in Chicago?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. He was in Chicago. Chicago was the center for legal activity, accounting, management, administration, all that kind of thing.

Blum: At the time you joined Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in 1945, what was your understanding of the relationship between the two offices in terms of capacity, size, and emphasis?

Hartmann: It was very quickly apparent that each office was autonomous so far as delivery of professional services was concerned. They operated entirely independently. Skidmore was very necessary to Owings, and Owings was necessary to Skidmore. They were on the phone everyday. They talked over everything. One stimulated the other. It was a flowering partnership.

Blum: Owings was in Chicago and Skidmore in New York?

Hartmann: That was because a world's fair was announced in New York. I wasn't there, of course. Skidmore hot-footed it to New York from Chicago this is written up in a book somewhere and started an office with the objective of doing world's fair buildings for people they had gotten to know in the Chicago world's fair, like Jack Heinz and others.

Blum: How do you remember Nat Owings?

Hartmann: Well, to keep it on track, I'd rather start with Skidmore.

Blum: Okay. You met him at the St. Regis bar. What was your impression? How did you come to know him?

Hartmann: I think very highly of each of them. I only begin with Skidmore because he was the first. Skid was a great friend. He was a man of very great taste. I think I've said he wasn't necessarily a great architect in an ordinary sense of the word, but he had won the Rotch Fellowship, and he could draw. He was a wonderful draftsman. He had a way of making 122 people trust and kind of love him, no matter what discipline they were in. Some of his best friends in New York were construction contractors. Bob Moses, he had a wonderful relationship with him. Nobody disliked Skid that I know of. I can't imagine

anybody being envious or disliking him. He wasn't a show of wealth at all. I don't know whether he was wealthy or not. It never occurred to me. He never had Cadillacs or summer houses or any of those things. I don't think he assembled objects at all or material things. He existed because he loved his life and what he was doing. He had, I think, excellent intuitive judgment. He was a fine person.

Blum: Was he part of the reason that you accepted a position at SOM?

Hartmann: I think so. Oh, for sure, because I liked him and I'd known enough. Some of the things that they did at Oak Ridge were very good architecture. The work with Bunshaft although he doesn't maybe talk about what he did when he was in Chicago was certainly outstanding at its time. The Hostess House at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, projects like that. Super buildings.

Blum: Well, it wasn't a Lever House. He didn't consider the Hostess House one of the major projects in his career, so it doesn't count much for him.

Hartmann: To many people, it did count.

Blum: I know, many of his colleagues have said what a good building that was.

Hartmann: Sure. Oh, and there were others that they did. And the thing is, you know, you've got to understand that "prewar" was "depression." Very little activity. There were no skyscrapers being built at all prewar. Then you had wartime activity, and that was projects related to the war in one form or another. Now you begin the period after the war, and I divide SOM into these distinct episodes. The ten years after the war from 1945 to 1955 or 1950 to 1960 roughly is a time filling latent demand. Latent demand for everything for office space in New York, for hospitals, for schools, for university buildings, all the things that had been pushed aside for the war. Latent demand, right? Tremendous demand. It would take various kinds of architects to deal with that and to be able to grow with it and effectively execute it, but also to have a vision of what all that ought to be in America.

Blum: How did this affect your thinking as you were being interviewed by Skidmore? Were you aware of these things? Did you have these ideas in your head?

Hartmann: I wasn't unique, believe me. Any thinking person knew instinctively that that was the condition of our society and economy. The war was over and millions of boys coming home and girls coming home and re-orientation from a military economy to a civilian economy.

Blum: What was it about SOM that influenced you to accept a position with them?

Hartmann: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill were relatively young compared to Ralph Walker and others. They had exhibited an independent attitude towards architecture.

Blum: Did you know they were committed to contemporary architecture?

Hartmann: There was every reason to think that. Every reason from whatever literature might have been available. Oh, yes. I'm sure of that. Oh, yes. I think, by that time, for example, Jack Rodgers was working in Chicago, who had been a student at the Bauhaus. Bill Priestley had been a student at the Bauhaus. I don't know when Ambrose Richardson started. Do you know what year?

Blum: Prewar.

Hartmann: Was it prewar? Oh, he was there all that time. And Ambrose was certainly an intellectual person who knew about all these things and had studied them.

Blum: So you were aware of the leanings or commitment of the firm?

Hartmann: Orientation is a better word.

Blum: So much has been written about architecture as a vehicle for social reform

from about 1945 on. At that time, after you had seen the world sort of come apart, was it the time to rebuild? Was that part of your thinking?

Hartmann: Frankly, the social reform, I think, was stronger before the war when I was with Oskar and he was involved with the labor unions. That was a strong period. You had the New Deal. That's what the New Deal was—social reform, right? And it's a question of degree and how it was carried out that distinguishes various aspects of it. Postwar, there are a couple things. I'm just thinking off the top of my head. This shouldn't really be written down this way. Social reform, immediately after the war, I don't think was a major problem. The major problem was satisfying these demands, and these demands were heavily influenced by the rapid rise of technology. Technology had jumped from 1941 to 1945 or 1946 in major ways. So any hospital built before 1945 or 1946 or 1947 was almost already obsolete because technology was beginning to play a new role. This applied to everything. Now, I've got the track. The buildings built before 1945, 1946, almost all the office buildings in Chicago, as I recall, had direct current, not alternating current. They all had these big power plants in the basement. Enormous power plants. This is just one example of this. All the lighting had to be incandescent lighting on direct current. You couldn't use fluorescent lights which required alternating current. This is just, as I say, one example. Now, you come to the illumination levels great debate and great research on what should be the illumination levels in drafting rooms and offices and all this. These levels were beginning to increase every year or every six months. Of course, incandescent lighting could hardly do it. Incandescent lighting could not do it. We began to change to alternating current in our cities, and these power plants became obsolete, and the engineers that worked on them were obsolete. And, of course, air-conditioning. The buildings in American cities had windows that opened, and I can well remember and my friends can remember the soot that used to pour in these windows from coal-burning power plants. Your drawings would be filthy, and you'd be filthy. Air-conditioning began to come about. Lighting and air-conditioning went kind of hand in hand, and that meant that many older buildings could not be adapted to that type of technology. The demand of corporations for efficient

and clean and orderly space began to dictate that new commercial facilities would develop in the cities, and cities began to get many new buildings. Developers came into play, too, as a result of that.

Blum: When you joined SOM in New York in 1945, what kind of commissions did they have?

Hartmann: As I recall, there were just two or three commissions. One was staggering—the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati, which is worth an hour's tape all of its own. A Cincinnati leader, Jack Emery, was the owner of the existing major hotel. He wanted to help revive Cincinnati after the war, and he assembled this large parcel of land and decided to build this combination commercial building and hotel. Bill Brown was primarily responsible for that, and, in fact, it was designed basically before I joined the firm. It was designed as a basic structure and organization of space, but the execution of the hotel became a major project. Jack Emery was wide open for innovation and design of all the hotel, so we assembled a team of people to do interiors of all types. Dave Allen joined the firm then. There was a fellow, Ben Baldwin, who was Kitty Weese's brother. We designed everything from china and glassware to uniforms and menus and, of course, all the fabrics and the hotel rooms and all elements. It was a chance to really bring modern design or new ideas about design into a major American project. I don't believe that had ever been done before. I don't know that it's been done since in practically the same way.

Blum: This was one of the first multi-use buildings.

Hartmann: It was a multi-use building. The hotel began on the eighth floor and went up I don't know how many floors.

Blum: One of the things that was unique about this project is that artwork was part of the interior. There is a [Joan] Miró mural. Did you have anything to do with that?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. The modern architecture that we identified with eliminated decoration. Basically it was an evolution from a handicraft kind of building technology to an industrialized building technology. That was the key to it. When you gave up the handicraft part, you gave up the artisan and the craftsmen who would carve limestone and wood and these different materials that led to the expression of a building. In industrialized architecture, you were using components that were made by machine, and decoration wasn't appropriate for the machine. So, when you come to decorate an industrialized building, you decorate with an artist. The artist is brought into play to add that element of...

[Tape 4: Side 1]

Hartmann: We wanted to collaborate with the best artists. So, on the Terrace Plaza we had several artists. We had an artist named Saul Steinberg, who did drawings primarily of the Cincinnati scene in the main dining room in panels. We had Alexander Calder do a mobile in the main reception area. We had Ward Bennett design several things including lighting in some exotic spaces. And the most important was we had Miró paint this mural for a special dining room on the roof of the building. The selection of these artists was naturally something that involved extensive discussion. There were other artists considered, and there were debates as to which one would be the most desirable, and that took research and all before the final conclusion was reached. Miró was selected for that special mural.

Blum: What part did you play in this?

Hartmann: This is a little complicated. Bunshaft was still in the army when a lot of this was going on, and he finally returned. Bunshaft, as everybody knows, is a terrific designer and a very strong personality. He had extraordinary ability. I was there for the formation of all this effort when this particular building was underway. Bunshaft took it over about the time these artists were selected, and he carried forward with that.

Blum: Were you in on the discussions, the selection process?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. No question. Absolutely. Bunshaft agreed with the selections that we had proposed. The other projects that were going on in the office were a public school somewhere in New York, and other things began to appear. I assembled what I think was the greatest team of designers ever. Of course, Natalie de Blois, who was an extremely competent architect, designer was there. John Johansen came to join us. Bill Lyman oh, gosh Vincent Kling. It was kind of a select place for young architects who had been in my era in school developing attitudes and ideas about modern design. They were getting out of their war work and would gravitate to us. We built the finest groups of architects, I believe, that ever existed. Charlie Hughes.

Blum: One of the things that is said about Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and especially about Nat Owings is that he really had a talent for identifying talented young designers, employing them, and then allowing them to develop. Did he have any part in forming this team?

Hartmann: Through encouragement, probably yes. Actual involvement, no. He was in Chicago with plenty to do in Chicago. He only infrequently came to New York.

Blum: Who was responsible for hiring? Was it Louis Skidmore?

Hartmann: I was responsible for hiring all these people in New York.

Blum: What was your designated title if you can identify one? Or what role did you fill if you didn't have a title?

Hartmann: Well, yes, I don't know that there were titles, but in that brief period of a year or so, I suppose I was in charge of all the design and the hiring of the team that we had to assemble to do these projects.

Blum: You were not designing yourself?

Hartmann: I was not at a drafting board. No.

Blum: This was one of the first questions that came to me as I thought about doing an oral history with you. I realized you were a Rotch Fellowship winner and to win that coveted prize, you had to be a very good designer. You had to draw very well. And your first real job—I mean, long-term job in your career puts you in a position of administrating and not actually designing. Would you comment on that?

Hartmann: Yes. That's a very interesting subject. I think you have to try to experience it. In the first place, design is not the only thing that makes architecture. One designer is not the only person who makes an architectural office. If an office has a multitude of projects—and we soon had a multitude of projects—it takes people of many varied skills. The more complex a project, the more varied skills have to be brought to bear. There was not the luxury of being in your own cell and doing a design alone. This led to what I believed should be the framework for a SOM. I'm not saying that this should be the framework for all architects at all, but my concept is that there is room for a firm like ours that would be an assembly of the finest talents in every discipline naturally, architectural design and all those skills which lead to architecture and design. But, coming right along in parallel, structural design and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing design coming right behind that and a part of it. And interiors. And because buildings fit in some kind of an environmental setting, planning and landscape architecture, for sure. And we did resolve to establish that type of organization. With emphasis on quality of talents.

Blum: I know this is what actually happened, but is this the vision you had in 1945 when you spoke with Louis Skidmore?

Hartmann: I can't say that was true. At that time, I was bewildered to make a change in career. I don't know that I had solidified any ideas. There are many side channels to that then. How do you select people? What recognition do you

give them? What opportunity do you give them? How do you have a collaboration of all these different talents? How do you organize and have a collaboration of all these different talents for the benefit of the end product? I didn't do all this alone by any means. For example, when I came to Chicago, there was an engineer in the office named Andy Brown. Andy Brown was a Hungarian who had fled Hungary at some early time and come to the United States. He was a professor of engineering in Budapest. He was our chief structural engineer. Andy Brown had the intelligence and the perspective to find Fazlur Khan and bring him to the office. I and others had the perspective then of realizing that a Fazlur Khan should be a partner in SOM with stature equal to anybody else. We had a mechanical engineer named Frank Byrne. Frank Byrne was an electrical engineer, a university graduate, an older man who had done many of those big power plants and buildings around Chicago like the Palmolive Building and the Hilton Hotel. Mechanical and electrical engineers in offices were traditionally just about trade-school level technicians. Frank Byrne identified a fellow named Sam Sachs. Sam had a master's degree in mechanical engineering, and so finding these talents was not what one person did at all. A whole variety of people were finding them, identifying them, and helping to assemble them. I think my vision was of this organic organization that had all these skills. For a long time, interestingly enough, it was kind of agreed that we would all be anonymous, that nobody was a star. This was all anonymous, and great buildings came from this group. Later on, I began to see that was all right at that moment, but gradually it became more important, I think, to have each leader in these various areas become individually important in the world of architecture and engineering and be recognized nationally and internationally for their talent and the work they were doing. We changed that basic philosophy and encouraged people like Walter Netsch and Bruce Graham and Fazlur Khan to write and to participate in any public discussions of these kind of problems and become leaders in their own right.

Blum: Was this much later?

Hartmann: This was five years later.

- Blum: If the books published by SOM, who had hired an art historian to do the introductions, are any gauge—and I view them as sort of official firm policy because they had to be approved before they were printed, I presume it seems that it was quite a bit later when individual designers were identified in the literature.
- Hartmann: It didn't happen with the snap of a finger. There was some evolution in it. I would say it became evident certainly by 1955.
- Blum: That comes up again in 1956 in one of the first projects that Bruce makes a statement about in his book. Although this is sort of out of context, let me just read it because it seems relevant. It was the Kimberly-Clark project. This was out of Chicago. Bruce Graham was the designer, and it was a very Miesian kind of building. I don't know if you know that he's recently published a book of some of his major projects titled *Bruce Graham of SOM*. For each project, he has a personal statement and then a very objective report. His statement about Kimberly-Clark in part says, "Anonymity was a moral obligation. Buildings were thought to be the product of the cooperative rather than individual poetic statements."
- Hartmann: That's true.
- Blum: And that's what he says about this building in 1956.
- Hartmann: He might not have said that about the next building.
- Blum: No, he makes a point at this point.
- Hartmann: I think that was right. That building, after all, was probably underway for two or three years.
- Blum: That was a very Miesian building, as long as we're talking about it. It seems to me that in the first book that SOM published, the idea that I picked up was

that SOM was different and better, not only different. But better than Mies. Mies was the reigning architectural giant, not only in Chicago at the time, but certainly in the Western world. Is that too broad a statement?

Hartmann: Not about Mies, no.

Blum: Okay. And it seems to me what was happening in this SOM book is that at every opportunity the author said SOM is better. We are not frozen in a style. We go beyond Mies. We offer broader services. He's very limited. There was so much denial that it was obvious that SOM was having a hard time with Mies at the time.

Hartmann: Oh, no.

Blum: No. Not Mies personally.

Hartmann: Or philosophically. No. Absolutely not.

Blum: Maybe the author was having it.

Hartmann: The writer was having it probably with lack of understanding. There was no competition between Mies and SOM. No competition. Mies was a great architect, a great teacher, a great philosopher, who imprinted all the people of that era. Mies was not interested in having the kind of architectural practice that SOM had. That wasn't Mies's interest at all. I'm sure he would agree that the kind of work that SOM was undertaking wouldn't particularly interest him. Come back to Kimberly-Clark for a minute, as an example, as you described it as having undertones or overtones of Miesian thoughts. Kimberly-Clark was in a variety of old buildings in Neenah [Wisconsin]. When it became appropriate, Jack Kimberly decided to build a new headquarters for Kimberly-Clark. I don't know whether Bruce's comments covered this at all. Organizations frequently grow and mature in one setting, and you can imagine this at Kimberly-Clark being in several old buildings, the organization is partially shaped by the physical space available for it. You

can't add twenty people to a department if there is no more room, right? So one of the first things we did was work with Kimberly-Clark on virtually the reorganization of the company.

Blum: What I handed you was this sheet from Bruce's book on Kimberly-Clark, especially for his comment. It doesn't clearly explain what you're talking about.

Hartmann: It doesn't?

Blum: No.

Hartmann: This meant that Jack Kimberly set up a team, and we began to define the organization that he wanted to create when they were in the new space like changes in the responsibilities of departments and all this kind of business. We made organization charts identifying tables of organization and all that with them on this. Well, this is not architectural design necessarily, but it is a part of the process of designing buildings for complex organizations. I don't think Mies would have been interested in that kind of a problem at all. This was just one small example of the kinds of things that SOM was prepared to do and felt was necessary to offer our clients. I don't think there is any question about this. You mentioned Jim Hammond earlier. Jim Hammond and a girl named Ruth Allen developed techniques for programming in Chicago that, particularly in regard to hospitals and similar projects, became unique and the idea of doing research on the client's needs in designing a one-of-a-kind building for that client's needs. We did become the leaders in that. The dimensions of it carried on in one of the last great projects that Bruce and I were involved with, this tobacco factory in England. We analyzed every operation of that tobacco factory before there was any architecture at all.

Blum: Was that made possible or was that process expanded through the use of computers?

Hartmann: No. I would say the computer came in at the tail end of that kind of thing. I think SOM were the leaders in doing research as a distinct first phase of any project.

Blum: And you're saying that Mies would not have done that?

Hartmann: Mies would want to understand. This takes, again, an assembly of a large staff of different kinds of people. Mies was interested in space and his buildings and his philosophy of design. Every one of us had an enormous respect and affection for him.

Blum: Did you know him?

Hartmann: Oh, yes.

Blum: How do you remember him?

Hartmann: That's highly personal, but I persuaded him to be involved with the Graham Foundation.

Blum: As an advisor?

Hartmann: An advisor. He came to many of the meetings.

Blum: Was he difficult to persuade?

Hartmann: Well, we included some people that he knew, and it was wonderfully warm and great. He was a fantastic person, of which there are very few in the world that you can see and participate with.

Blum: You know, as you talk about this multifaceted organization of SOM, I can't help but think that your military experience in getting things done, using the skills of so many other people, had some connection. What do you think?

Hartmann: Oh, I'm sure so. I'm sure of the notion that you can do anything if you set yourself to it and research it and organize for it, you can do darn near anything. Another metaphor, another simile, whatever. At one point, I thought we were like an old guild because in the early days the guilds were pretty anonymous. Hard to find the name of the architect of Chartres and some of those places.

Blum: Because there wasn't just one.

Hartmann: No, I disagree. There was, not completely, but there was one inspiring leader behind each one of those cathedrals. There was a man with a big idea behind it—Abbot Suger at St. Denis. I have my own theories about Gothic architecture. We'll go into that sometime.

Blum: Before we leave New York, can we go back for one minute to the Terrace Plaza. Did you have any connection with Miró or Calder or Steinberg at the time? Or did your connection to that project lead into that phase of actually contacting the artists?

Hartmann: They were selected, and SOM got an unusual opportunity abroad. I don't know whether you know about this or not. There was an oil company headquartered in New York. It was owned jointly by Standard Oil of New Jersey and Mobil, and it was called the Standard Vacuum Oil Company. It was the powerful oil organization in the Far East. Standard Vacuum was the original oil for the Lamps of China Company, a very old company. Had connections with the Dutch. They bought the Petrolia Maatchpi, which was a Dutch oil company. They were producing oil and refining it in Indonesia when the war broke out, and the Japanese captured the whole business and ran it into the ground. So after the war, Standard Vacuum wanted to revive this, and it was obviously a major thing to do. So they had hired the Kellogg Company, as I recall, and other technical experts to restore the refinery. They asked if SOM could send somebody there to restore the things other than the refinery—the housing, the schools, the hospital and offices, and all those kind of things.

Blum: Where was this located?

Hartmann: This was located in Palembang, Sumatra. Never heard of it?

Blum: No, I haven't. Go back to the atlas.

Hartmann: You have to go back to the atlas and Jack London. You have to read Jack London. So, because I was familiar with the Far East, I was asked to go. My memory is a little sloppy on this. I went over to Holland and met with them in their company offices in The Hague and went all around Holland seeing what shape they were in. The orientation was heavily Dutch. There are many Dutch people still working for this American oil company, both in Holland and Indonesia. So, we wanted to see what building materials and equipment we could get in Holland that could be useful and help Holland. Dutch things would be useful. I looked into industry in Holland, then went on out to Indonesia, and it was a mess. This was fantastic. Palembang was a little city—not so little—in southwestern Sumatra surrounded with jungle. There is a river and two refineries. One was at Pladju and the other one was at Songei Gerong, and one was owned by Shell and the other one was by Standard Vacuum. They were neighboring, separated by a tributary of this river. There were only rough men there this first visit. Men who were poring over this refinery. There were no women at all. It was like a camp, you know, with plenty of booze and other things. It was a remarkable experience to be there for, I suppose, two or three months trying to figure out what to do for them, working with them figuring out how many people they would have to house and what kind of housing they would have to have and what kind of other facilities should there be in terms of recreation, education, medical.

Blum: So you were there doing research, planning?

Hartmann: Planning. If you want to design in that remote jungle, what materials do you design for? What skills are there to put them together? This is very remote. There are monkeys in the trees.

Blum: Did SOM proceed with this?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. There's a Skidmore village there to this day.

Blum: Were you in charge of that?

Hartmann: Oh, yes.

Blum: Did you use people that were there or did you bring people in from the States? How did this all work?

Hartmann: The first thing was to establish priorities. We've got to get families here. We've got to get women. Can't have a bachelor kind of a camp all the time.

Blum: You mean, families for the men that were already there?

Hartmann: Yes. Bring their families and all that kind of thing. So, we figured out that we ought to prefabricate a certain number of units. They were to be shipped in, and the refinery could provide the manpower if the prefabrication was simple enough. They could provide the people to set up these things. They could pour concrete and do all kinds of ordinary construction. They had highly technical people at the refinery. You know, welders and all kinds. We designed a house appropriate for—this is just about on the equator—the climate there. It had a servant's quarters and a kitchen that were separate because everybody had plenty of native servants, people wanting to work. We made the first fifty of those in San Francisco out of redwood because the termites are horrendous in that climate. This, again, was the result of research. There are only two woods that resist those termites. One was redwood and the other was teak. So, we made those first houses and shipped them over complete with lighting and basic equipment but one does not need air-conditioning there. But lighting and everything was all done, and they were taken there and installed and built. After the initial ones, we decided to build them out of teak. And by that time Singapore was back in shape. We

had them made over in Singapore and built a lot more of them.

Blum: You were there for the planning, and did you supervise all of this?

Hartmann: No. They took other people over for the supervision.

Blum: Now, this was out of the New York office?

Hartmann: Yes. This was really fantastic this oil company, as I said, was very big in China, and China was suffering from inflation at a horrendous rate. The inflation changed every day. They said, "We get this Chinese money for our products, and if we leave it in the bank in just a short time, it's worthless." Would we come over and help them with this because one of the things we could do is to invest in real estate and build buildings. I went over and took another fellow, Freddie Gans. We went over to Shanghai, and our objective was to spend money as quickly as we possibly could with an unlimited budget.

Blum: What an opportunity!

Hartmann: But with no sites or anything, you know. Nothing to build and no knowledge or anything. Working quickly, this company would send their scouts to buy any kind of parcel of land in various cities in China.

Blum: This was a Chinese company?

Hartmann: No, this was Standard Vacuum Oil. So, they would identify a site, and they'd buy it quick, and we'd be there the next day and try to figure out what to put on it. All right, we're going to build an apartment house. Or we're going to build a commercial building.

Blum: That sounds wild.

Hartmann: And, of course, we're not Chinese architects. So, we get a group of Chinese

architects in these various cities. I don't know how many we had twenty or thirty Chinese architectural firms, most of whom had been trained in the United States.

Blum: That was very interesting.

Hartmann: It was fascinating. We would say, "All right, this is your project. We want to build an apartment house with this many units on this site. Start making some plans." So, we began to see you need building materials to build these things, and so why don't you start to buy building materials? So they bought building materials of all kinds. You know, pipe and hardware and glass, cement, everything that you could think of. They began to assemble all that in enormous warehouses in Shanghai and other places. One thing they wanted to do was design an office building for their headquarters in Shanghai. A thirty-story office building.

[Tape 4: Side 2]

Hartmann: They identified the piece of property. Shanghai is worse than Chicago. There's no bottom to Shanghai.

Blum: Soggy ground?

Hartmann: Delta and clay and sand and whatnot. We had engineers who were practicing there. We got many systems for that building, including the elevators. We bought them and paid for them before we broke ground. I had the building more or less designed by then. We didn't actually finish the design, however, because we could hear the cannons outside of Shanghai, Mao Tse-tung coming to overcome Chiang Kai-shek. That brought it down. There was always hope that Chiang Kai-shek would survive somehow. He wasn't the kind of person to do that. He was a warlord, too, and there was too much faith in him and not in other people.

Blum: For a thirty-story building, did you have to bring in Americans to do it, or

did you work with Chinese architects?

Hartmann: All Chinese.

Blum: With the engineering that that required?

Hartmann: But we actually didn't get to that.

Blum: It never got built?

Hartmann: No.

Blum: But you had the elevators.

Hartmann: Oh, we bought lots of things, absolutely.

Blum: It sounds like a wild scheme.

Hartmann: It was a wild period—absolutely wild. They gave us an apartment, and we had a staff for the apartment. For example, they said, "Don't pay for anything in cash. You go out for dinner at night and you pay by check. You don't have any money in your checking account, but you come in in the morning and tell us how much you spent, and we'll put money in there to cover it." I can remember—I don't know—\$20 million for dinner.

Blum: Twenty million?

Hartmann: Absolutely. It was horrendous inflation.

Blum: That's an incredible story! How long were you there?

Hartmann: Oh, six months or so.

Blum: Then you came back to New York?

Hartmann: Came back to New York, and then I was asked to go to Chicago.

Blum: Did you want to leave New York?

Hartmann: Oh, I think so. I think I wanted to go to Chicago. I can't remember exactly. There's one thing we haven't mentioned at all my family life. I don't know to what extent anything like that should be part of this, but my wife was from Chicago and had been in Chicago. All during the war she was in Chicago. Our first child was born in Chicago. With all this traveling and everything, it wasn't a very nice life for her.

Blum: Was she in New York with you?

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: Was she in Shanghai with you?

Hartmann: No. So there were personal as well as, I like to think, intellectual reasons to want to be in Chicago. I was always an observer of New York so far as architecture goes. New York is a special place. I really think Chicago is much more real. New York is much bigger. You cannot participate in the variety of things that you can in Chicago.

Blum: You mean, within the office or within the city?

Hartmann: Within the community. It's too big. In Chicago, we worked at least six days a week in one way or another, and we were involved with everybody who's doing anything. New York is much more nine to five. That doesn't say they don't do some things, but everybody is much less personally involved.

Blum: Something occurred to me as I thought about the fact that you moved from New York to Chicago at an early date. A good deal has been written about "Skid's boys," and they talk about Gordon Bunshaft, Bob Cutler, William

Brown, and Walter Severinghaus. It seemed that that was a very tightly knit foursome. As I thought about you in that office, I wondered, first of all, where you fit in, what your role was, and how you managed this? Were you able to break into this tightly knit group? They all seem to be partners, in a sense, long before they were actual partners in the firm.

Hartmann: Yes, that's true. They had been with Skid right from the beginning just about. They were darn good people and highly professional, and each one had a slightly different place in the firm. The amazing thing is, I think I would put it another way that for me personally, I was accepted by them early. You could imagine another scenario where they closed up, and there was no penetration at all. Right? They could have closed up and had their own little club, and that was it and nobody could penetrate it. You could imagine that very easily could happen.

Blum: I think that's what the literature suggests to me.

Hartmann: That they did do that? No, that's not true.

Blum: Well, not knowing. I'm saying the way it's phrased, it strikes me like that.

Hartmann: It's mostly because of their early associations from 1938 to 1945. Bill Brown and Bob Cutler were there all the time. Walt Severinghaus was out for a brief period when he was in the U.S. Army Air Force, I think, doing some kind of construction. And, of course, Bunshaft. I don't really know how long Severinghaus and Bunshaft were in military service. Maybe a couple of years.

Blum: I think they went in late.

Hartmann: Yes, that's what I'm saying.

Blum: I don't know about Walter.

Hartmann: My impression is it's somewhat the same. But there's nothing wrong with

that. But anyway, they had had 1938 to 1943—five years, right? All of them were older than I was, for sure at least five years older or more. So, it was natural, it was automatic, they had a much longer period of involvement and so forth. Skid was entirely supportive. I used to have lunch with Skid and George Ferris on Saturdays in New York. I think my acceptance and whatever I earned in performance were easy. I never had any regrets about it, I know.

Blum: Whose idea was it for you to go from New York to Chicago?

Hartmann: I can't answer that. I do know that Chicago was a volatile kind of situation and needed some support. I knew, of course, that these engineers that I mentioned before were already in place.

Blum: In Chicago?

Hartmann: In Chicago. I thought that was a great idea that they would be there. As I said, for personal and professional reasons, I thought it was a good thing to do.

Blum: Was Chicago a larger office than New York when you came to Chicago?

Hartmann: It was because of Oak Ridge. There were still a substantial number of people in Oak Ridge.

Blum: But did they remain permanently on the staff?

Hartmann: No. Some did.

Blum: How would you compare the New York office to what you found in Chicago?

Hartmann: Well, New York was very, very strong. I mean Brown, Cutler, Severinghaus, Bunshaft, and Skidmore—that was an unmatched strength. In Chicago were

Owings and John Merrill, whom I haven't mentioned but should be mentioned more completely. John Merrill's concentration mostly was on Oak Ridge. So, there wasn't the depth, and also Chicago was behind New York in terms of economic revival, I would say, postwar.

Blum: You mean the city itself?

Hartmann: Postwar. Yes, I think the corporations and the banks in New York were soon to become the sources of major projects. I think that started earlier in New York than it did in Chicago by two or three, four years.

Blum: Do you think that was because of New York's innate readiness because it's a coastal city or do you think SOM, in some way, encouraged that?

Hartmann: No. It was economics entirely.

Blum: So here was this sleepy little town, Chicago.

Hartmann: No, it wasn't so sleepy. I don't know whether I agree with that or not. I don't think it was sleepy. The thing that really was wonderful about Chicago that I alluded to is that the community there was very quick to accept anybody. You were accepted, and if you didn't perform, then you might be rejected. But you were accepted and, "Go to it! We'll help you all we can." This is inherent in Chicago, and all the business people are really identified with the city, much more than ever in New York. And still to this day. Including the political leaders. Adlai Stevenson was governor some of that time, and, of course, Dick Daley, the mayor, and all these people you knew and could talk to easily as well as the leaders of the banks. I'm talking about great men. Edward Eagle Brown was the chairman of the First National, a great banker. And people in business, Walter Paepcke in Container Corporation, and Clarence Randall was the chairman of Inland Steel, Holman Pettibone, the chairman of Chicago Title and Trust, Willis Gale, the chairman of Commonwealth Edison. These were all fellows who knew one another and there was Henry Crown.

Blum: It sounds like a powerhouse of very important names.

Hartmann: They were part of the city, and it wasn't easy to become acquainted with them. Edward Eagle Brown and Gilbert Scribner, the father, and I used to have lunch in the Midday Club on Saturdays. We were about the only ones that showed up regularly. Occasionally a few others would show up. The club was in the First National, and they used to open it, I think, just because Mr. Brown was going to be there. He was a very large man and would sit in the bar, and Gus the bartender would come with martinis. He always had a cigarette in his mouth and his shirt all covered with ashes, gold chain. We talked about all kinds of things.

Blum: Did you find this openness right away when you came?

Hartmann: I think so. Very quickly.

Blum: Or was it just as you proceeded in SOM and the projects got more important, you became more prominent?

Hartmann: By the way, Owings, of course, knew all these people. Owings was well known, absolutely well known.

Blum: Did he introduce you?

Hartmann: Certainly. Oh, yes. I think he knew that my success would be the success of the Chicago office, too, and that he was not going to be there always or there sufficiently anyway to manage all this in a hands-on way.

Blum: Do you think you were, in fact, his handpicked successor to run Chicago?

Hartmann: I don't know. That's hard to say. You'd have to ask him.

Blum: Too late. I have to ask you.

Hartmann: I don't know.

Blum: It seems to me that from what I know of what he did, what I know your career was all about, it seems that you really sort of stepped into his shoes somehow.

Hartmann: That's actually what happened, but how much premeditation there was, I don't know.

Blum: Well, on his part perhaps. Was SOM in Chicago involved with the planning or actual construction, perhaps, of Lake Meadows when you arrived?

Hartmann: Yes, yes.

Blum: Now, Nat Owings was chairman of the Chicago Plan Commission and Lake Meadows was this large housing project.

Hartmann: Lake Meadows was a tremendously important project. It was the first urban renewal project in the United States where a city would condemn land, take it over and clear it, move all the people out, and build new housing hopefully for the people who were displaced and spark the revival of cities. The urban renewal legislation was really written around that project.

Blum: Chicago's legislation or national?

Hartmann: No, national. The objective was to find a developer, which became New York Life, who would be willing to spend money to buy this land at a written-down value and to develop the kind of buildings that were wanted by the government apartment buildings, and in this case along with some shops. Not commercial or industrial buildings. There were some primary characters involved in that. I mentioned Holman Pettibone, who was chairman of the Chicago Title and Trust. He was a socially minded banker, financier. Earl Kribben was at that time assigned by Marshall Field and Company as their

person to be involved in a variety of important civic activities. Not social activities, but real civic activities. Ferd Kramer was involved, and, of course, Nat Owings was very, very much involved. There was a major road going through the site. It was called Cottage Grove Avenue, and it became a major question of whether the property could be treated as a complete project without this bifurcation or not. It was a very big political argument. From the planning point of view, there was no reason for Cottage Grove Avenue to exist, and it would be a much better, cohesive project if it could be done as a unity. This became a big issue, and Owings and New York Life were successful, but shortly thereafter, as I recall, Owings resigned from the Chicago Plan Commission.

Blum: Weren't there charges then against Owings of conflict of interest, being the head of that commission and doing the work?

Hartmann: Sure, sure.

Blum: Do you think the charges were legitimate?

Hartmann: Probably. That kind of a thing became very interesting because the question is, if you're going to be a successful professional and be involved in a wide range of things, you're inevitably going to be in that kind of conflict of interest position. The question is can you deal with it without harm and help bring about a better result? At that time, you could do that. I was on the boards of many institutions for which we provided professional services.

Blum: Well, that question comes up regularly today as well.

Hartmann: Yes. At MIT, at the Art Institute, at IIT, all over the place, you know. Sure, you have a conflict of interest, but can you do what is needed better than anybody else? And these were values that you had to make. This was Owings's situation. I think it was right.

Blum: Well, he got so angry he resigned from the Plan Commission.

Hartmann: Oh, yes. He had to do that. He began about that time to become more involved out West than in Chicago. That also began about that time.

Blum: It seems this is about the same time as Great Lakes.

Hartmann: Oh, no.

Blum: No? Lake Meadows began in the late 1940s and extended into the 1950s, because it was a long-term project. Great Lakes was also in the early 1950s. Is it Gunners Mates Service School and Service School barracks?

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: What participation did you have in Lake Meadows, if any?

Hartmann: Well, let's see. Ambrose Richardson was the primary designer of Lake Meadows, as I recall. He'll tell you that. I'm sure he was. He had an initial design, which as I recall, only had two very long and large buildings for the whole solution. That discussion, debate was going on when I arrived, as I recall. New York Life and their real estate advisors said it would be imprudent to build such buildings. As you perhaps know, this was one of the worst slums in America at the time. To get people to move back into this area would be not easy. New York Life's real estate advisors decided that they had to have a step-by-step approach rather than one complete project, that it would be a disaster to have a large building empty, nobody willing to move in it. It would be much better to build smaller buildings and get that building completed and go on to the next. Maybe the scale could become bigger as you began to have success with it. And that, in fact, was the basic evolution of Lake Meadows. At the same time we were doing work for the Federal Housing Authority. The Housing Authority's work became a disastrous pattern of architectural work. You weren't architects anymore you're just draftsmen for the federal government.

Blum: As far as the Lake Meadows project goes, were you in on the planning sessions with Owings, were you on the drafting board with Ambrose, where were you?

Hartmann: I wasn't on the drafting board. Fred Kraft ought to be mentioned, too. Fred Kraft was a planner, a landscape architect, very good man, very quiet, loyal, industrious with considerable talent. As I recall, he and John Merrill were kind of managing Lake Meadows. But John Merrill, at that time, was also beginning to write the building code.

Blum: That was rewritten in 1947, 1948.

Hartmann: Yes. John Merrill was devoted to that. One of Nat Owings's ideas that I always remembered was you ought to divide your life into three parts. You had your professional life and then you had your community life and then you had your family life. And those ought to be about equal. He lived by that. He really did, and it's not bad. John Merrill and the building code was SOM doing its community life. John Merrill concentrated on that and suffered attacks it really was almost a movie scenario. You know, the plasterers hated John Merrill. Big ads in the paper and all kinds of agitation against him, because there was something called plasterboard that had just been invented. All the plasterers said, "By gosh, you're not going to take away our livelihood! We're a strong group of men who do plaster work all over. A great organization. And here you're going to put up plasterboard?" Oh, this was a *cause célèbre*. John Merrill prevailed, and this was the first performance code in the United States, I believe. It was a very important step in the building process.

Blum: You said something about Lake Meadows—that this was the first large urban renewal project, and it was designed to provide decent housing or good housing for the people it had displaced. It is my understanding that Lake Meadows didn't do that.

Hartmann: That wasn't that way. The first essence is that it would be a partnership of

government acquiring the land and clearing the land, and then private industry coming and developing the land. I think I said something to the effect that it wasn't to be a site for a large, commercial development or industrial development. It was to be a site basically for residential because the government desired that this part of the city be residential. It was hoped that former residents in the area, if they desired, would come back to live there. Private industry was going to build it. It had to be done with a reasonable rate of return for private industry. It was unsubsidized housing after writing down the land.

Blum: I thought there were government funds available at very low rates.

Hartmann: I don't think there was much. I could be wrong about that. I think New York Life used its own money to build the project. The land write-down was the subsidy, so New York Life doubtless got the land for very low cost, but they risked investment in this new housing in an area where it wasn't known whether anybody would want to come back and live. You know, there was one building there that was said to be one of the worst buildings in the world.

Blum: This was before the land clearance?

Hartmann: Yes. It was really the worst slum in America, I believe. At that time that was advanced thinking. I don't say that that would be advanced thinking today at all. It isn't. The attitudes have quite changed, but Lake Meadows was an extraordinary project. The desire was that it would be mixed occupancy, black and white. The first buildings in Lake Meadows were 100 percent black. Then gradually it achieved a goal of, I don't know, maybe up to 10 percent white, and finally the last building, as I recall when I last knew about this many years ago, was about 50 percent black and white. So, there were deliberate understandings of this and effort to try to make it fit social objectives.

Blum: Well, it was one of many across the country that came out of that mold of

thinking. They were large-scale projects and done for probably many of the same reasons.

Hartmann: Exactly. They were, right.

Blum: So, private people developed this large-scale project. Were you involved with Great Lakes? Were you the person who dealt with the government as a client?

Hartmann: Exactly.

Blum: What is it like to deal with the government as a client?

Hartmann: I wasn't an admiral or anything. It was no problem, and they were good men. Bruce was the designer and architect, for sure. But the navy was quick to recognize with our presentations that our proposals although radical were the way to go. There was another SOM person involved—Bill Dunlap, a Mies graduate and an energetic and good person, who died when he was much too young.

Blum: So, Bruce Graham was the designer. What were you?

Hartmann: I never cared about titles. It didn't matter.

Blum: Did you work between people on the design team, or between the designer and the client?

Hartmann: Yes. That's correct. But this isn't typical. But here, again, with a large office—I don't know whether Bruce was even a partner then.

Blum: I don't know when he became a partner although I know he joined early on in 1949, and this was in the early 1950s.

Hartmann: I can't remember. It is not easy, even now, for me to define a title and

describe a responsibility in any articulate way. It's very difficult. It wasn't important then to me ever to have any titles and never was.

Blum: Well, were you not the administrative head of the office? Am I giving you a title that you don't give yourself?

Hartmann: I think that's a very narrow definition. Anybody can be administrative head. Oh, I think so, in my terms. So, I don't know really. I was involved in many aspects. I think the fact that Bruce and Walter Netsch and Myron Goldsmith and all were encouraged to flourish at SOM and given the conditions to flourish. I had something to do with that.

Blum: You're too modest.

Hartmann: I'm not being modest either. I don't know how else to define it, you know. I can't do it. I won't do it.

Blum: Okay, then I'll just have to accept that. I'm afraid I'm looking for something that's easy to slot, and it doesn't slot easily.

Hartmann: It doesn't slot. Certainly, you know, among some of the things that one can describe, SOM became even more respected and highly regarded in the political and business communities. We became highly respected, and we were privileged to have extraordinary assignments. For example, from government, the Crosstown Expressway, the Air Force Academy. For the business community...

[Tape 5: Side 1]

Hartmann: The financing for some of the planning that we did was from the Commercial Club, combining that with government funds. That was the local scene, and then there were also the national and international scenes. San Francisco was much earlier, but then we opened offices in Portland and Houston and Denver and Boston and Washington. Most of the leaders in those offices

came from Chicago.

Blum: This happened as the years went on. Let's just go back for one moment, and then we'll move on. Nineteen fifty was the first year you joined the AIA [American Institute of Architects], and you had been with SOM for five years, and you were sponsored by Nat Owings and John Merrill?

Hartmann: I guess so.

Blum: That was also the year you were made an associate partner in SOM. Where were you licensed?

Hartmann: I was licensed in New Jersey and in New York and in the NCARB [National Council of Architectural Registration Board].

Blum: Not in Chicago?

Hartmann: No, not Chicago.

Blum: In 1951, you became a general partner? So, it was 1950 when you joined the AIA.

Hartmann: I suppose, yes.

Blum: What is the value of the AIA for the profession?

Hartmann: I don't know. I haven't thought about that question, although it is a question that comes up all the time, I'm sure. I think the AIA performs useful functions. Although I didn't participate very much in it, I encouraged others to. There always has been, I think, a problem between the large organizations who have members and the smaller ones. Believe me, I always have said that architecture is such a diverse subject and such a diverse profession that there is room for a thousand different types of organizations from large to small, from those that concentrate in different areas, and that there's absolutely

nothing wrong in being an individual practitioner—in fact, I envy them—or being part of SOM.

Blum: You mean and not belonging to the AIA?

Hartmann: No, and the AIA contrives to combine all these groups in one organization, and the majority of the members are in relatively small organizations.

Blum: I have heard architects complain about the AIA saying that they feel it's a do-nothing organization and have resigned for that reason because when there were issues, the AIA never seemed to take a stand in support of one side or the other, especially of their members. And that's why I just question its value.

Hartmann: I don't think that it could have made much difference.

Blum: It didn't have legislative power.

Hartmann: No, but I don't know that taking a position in any of those issues would have been conclusive or carried the day in some other direction. I think the main contribution has been in bringing an order to some of the administrative details of practicing architecture, like contracts and these kind of things, documents. I think that's a useful service—to bring order and to have some legal talent overlooking that and making it evolve as life goes on. I think improving the quality of specifications and things of that type has been useful. By the way, we started the first computerization of specifications. The fellow we had working on that, a good man by the name of John Schruben, who we got from Standard Oil, worked on that for a number of years and finally left us to do that at the AIA. I don't know whether you knew that or not. Those kinds of things to increase the professionalism and organize administration have been useful programs. I think marketing and all that kind of stuff is bunk.

Blum: I think this particular person whose comments I recall wanted some

standards along with the contracts.

Hartmann: Oh, to be like a bar association.

Blum: To have some standards maintained and addressed when necessary.

Hartmann: You could do that in a bar association. I think it would be very difficult to do it for architecture. Architecture ought to have minimum limitations. I really do. There are so many different kinds of architects. Bruce Goff, Craig Ellwood—I'm not talking about some of those that are luminaries like Frank Lloyd Wright, but include them. I'm talking more importantly about individuals who just love some aspect of architecture. George Nakashima and his furniture. There should be very few limitations and their acceptance by such few individuals maybe just one, maybe more. George Nakashima is now highly revered all over the country or the world.

Blum: Was he trained as an architect?

Hartmann: He studied architecture at MIT but makes furniture. So, there shouldn't be limitations. The marketplace and society will take care of imposing its own limitations.

Blum: Can we talk about a project in Chicago that is somewhat confused in literature, somewhat confused among those of us who are interested in architecture and SOM, and that's the Inland Steel Building.

Hartmann: Sure.

Blum: As the literature records it, Inland Steel was designed in 1954, 1955 but not built until 1956 through 1958. Walter Netsch has given the Art Institute a model, and yet Bruce Graham claims design authority in his book. It is a very big confusion among those of us in Chicago now as to whose building it is. You were there. What do you remember? You know, there is one thing that is, perhaps, the side issue, that maybe you had a hand in sort of keeping

everything level. But Bruce Graham has said, not in his book, but in other publications, that, "Walter and I could never work together." Then this article goes on to say that Bruce Graham has a pragmatic, formal approach, where Walter has a very poetic one, and their personalities, their ways of working, the products they produced were all so different. But they worked in the same office. What was Inland Steel all about because they both claim it? Did they work together?

Hartmann: No.

Blum: Did they work on the project at different times? What happened?

Hartmann: Well, what happened? Naturally, I'm a little fuzzy on dates. Leigh Block came to Nat and me and said they were thinking about a building. I don't recall what different people were working on at that time, and I don't recall in any concrete way the input of Leigh about that, although Leigh was the responsible officer of the Inland Steel Company for that building. Walter did do the early conceptual design, and that model that you speak of was made for that purpose. I know the articulation of the preliminary shape is very similar to what now exists. Further, I can't remember exactly how the structure and all that was conceived. Probably it wasn't worked out very far.

Blum: You mean by Walter?

Hartmann: Yes. That property was owned by the school board, the Chicago Board of Education. There was delay in Inland getting control of the property, so the project didn't go forward in a continuous line. I was involved right from the first day in making economic analyses to help Inland figure out whether it was a sensible building to build and what their costs would be in terms of their equivalent rent or whatever. Clarence Randall was the chairman then, and Joe Block was the president. One little story I tell is that Clarence Randall told me, "Bill, I want a building that looks like an old tweed suit." This was before it was designed. But after it was finished he said, "Bill, that's exactly what I always had in mind."

Blum: The old tweed suit in stainless.

Hartmann: The building that came out.

Blum: It still is one of Chicago's outstanding buildings.

Hartmann: Oh, absolutely. I was heavily involved in all aspects of that building.

Blum: Did the design actually pass from Walter to Bruce or did they collaborate?

Hartmann: They never collaborated. By the time Inland was ready to go ahead, as I recall, the Air Force Academy had started or something else had started maybe it was the Naval School at Monterey. Someone would have to research that or ask Walter. He'll tell you. Inland wanted to go ahead, and Bruce then was the obvious choice. This isn't designed to build anyone up or put anyone down at all. These are just the exigencies of such a practice as ours. So, Bruce became the designer.

Blum: That's how they can both somehow claim a hand in it.

Hartmann: Yes. You know it was a developmental project. The Prudential Building was built just before Inland by Murphy. Inland Steel would be the first new office building in downtown Chicago. It would reach out and touch many more people than the Prudential, which would be a monument on the lakefront. As I recall, it was the first building to be over 144 feet high downtown. It would be a steel building. Inland was in the steel business. It wouldn't be a concrete building, it would be a steel building. All the piles are steel piles. H-beams were relatively new then. The long spans were a demonstration of the capability of steel to have columnless structures. There was something called a cellular floor. That had been developed earlier and used primarily when you wanted to have telephone or electric wires under the floor. You could run them through these cells and come up at any desk. We developed a way of using the cellular floors for the air-conditioning. It was out of research

with other steel companies like Allegheny Ludlum that we used stainless steel with its finish, stainless as a cladding material, the extensive use of glass and glass that would be dual glazed. It was all relatively new. All these were part of the technology evolution that I mentioned much earlier. So, this wasn't just somebody sitting down and making a sketch of a building, and that's it. This was a development process going on with an owner who had full-time people working on these problems, doing their own research and leading the investigation and making trial runs and mock-ups and all these kind of things.

Blum: Sounds like this was a collaboration between SOM and Inland Steel.

Hartmann: Oh, no question about it! Because many of these systems were untried and, as architects, there was no way that we could be sure unless Inland would experiment, try it out down at the mill or whatever.

Blum: The one thing that was built at Inland Steel was the windowless service tower, which I understand could never be built today because of zoning or whatever regulations govern those things.

Hartmann: Yes, that is correct.

Blum: But it did permit the floors without the service facilities to be completely flexible space.

Hartmann: Exactly. I think it was and is a great building.

Blum: There is a very beautiful sculpture by Richard Lippold in the lobby at the street level. How did that come about?

Hartmann: As I said, Leigh Block was a leader of Inland and also of the project. Tremendous recognition and credit should go to him and his participation in it all the way through. Leigh and his wife, Mary, were very important. They had a great interest in art and interiors. Great, great interest in art. I should

digress for a minute. There was only one thing that we weren't able to accomplish in the building. In the concept that we had, the whole ground floor was very high, and it would be wide open. Well, nobody would rent it so we put in a mezzanine. That mezzanine could still be taken out someday. Anyway, Leigh undertook the responsibility for a company art program and all interiors, but particularly an art program.

Blum: Was this his idea?

Hartmann: To have an art program? It was normal, I mean, this was accepted. I was very close to him, and we talked about this all the way through the project.

Blum: You said normal. Was this normal because there was, say, a tax advantage to doing it?

Hartmann: No.

Blum: Was it just his own interest as a collector? The First National Bank did it. Many corporations did that to make their surroundings pleasant, and also it would appreciate considerably.

Hartmann: Later on. I mean, they all followed Inland Steel by a number of years. Leigh understood the industrial building that I'm talking about, industrialized building techniques. There is very little opportunity for hand craftsmanship in a piece of flat stainless steel. You cut that with a machine, so there are little or no decorative materials in Inland. There's one marble wall. Maybe that could be called decorative. Everything else is quite machinelike—the metal acoustic ceiling and everything. There was an opportunity for Leigh to get involved in modern art to a degree that his own collection didn't. I hadn't thought of that, but I think so. There's something in that. He wanted this art to be in this building because he thought art was appropriate. There was no grandiose attempt to introduce art. It wasn't for show purposes. I don't think one has that impression. As for Lippold, he was working in metal. It was very appropriate to have metal sculpture. There was another sculptor that

used to be a dentist—I forget his name now. His work was also metal. Then there were paintings, and many of the paintings were of industry. The only place Leigh had any of his own personal things was down in Mary's office. They had a little office down below. They had a Léger there and some other things that were wonderful. Most of the paintings were modest.

Blum: Were you involved in any way helping him with the selection of the artists?

Hartmann: Leigh and I went to New York weekends dozens of times and went to all the galleries or to the artists' studios. I was his confidante or advisor or consultant or whatever. I was there with him in selecting all those things.

Blum: Were you a collector at the time?

Hartmann: That's another whole tape because that relates to economics. I was a collector within the framework of my economic realities.

Blum: It seems to have grown according to what I'm looking at in this room. They're beautiful. Richard Lippold, was that a deliberate choice?

Hartmann: Oh, definitely.

Blum: Because he worked in steel?

Hartmann: In metal, yes, and he had done a very beautiful piece I think it's called *The Moon* in The Museum of Modern Art. He did *The Sun* then for the Metropolitan later. But he had done *The Moon*. It was shiny silver in this black space. Leigh and I thought that was terrific, and it would be a challenge to do something that would be in this open space that had a lot of daylight. I think he did quite well.

Blum: It's lovely the way it reflects in the pool of water beneath it. Seems very sympathetic to the building.

Hartmann: I think so. Dick Lippold's been a friend ever since. It was a good experience.

Blum: You know, another important event occurred in the 1950s and this was that Robie House was threatened in 1957. It's my understanding that you were actively involved in saving it.

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: Why did its survival interest you??

Hartmann: Well, that was interesting. The Robie House was owned by the Chicago Theological Seminary. I forget exactly how it came to my attention. The Chicago Theological Seminary had used it as a dormitory. I remember going down there, and it was really appalling. Here were double-deck bunks and all this jammed all through the building, and everything was a mess. The seminary wanted to tear it down and combine it with another piece of property and build a dormitory for their people. It was very legitimate. They owned a lot of the adjacent property, and this was in their backyard. Nobody thought very much of the Robie House at all. They'd put it out of their minds. I talked with them. Then I don't know whether I initiated it or he did, but I got together with Lowell Coggeshal, who was an officer at the University of Chicago. He had a title I suppose, but I don't know that it was important. He could speak for the university anyway. We would see what we could do to block the demolition at the Robie House. I know I felt, and I wasn't alone in this, that it was a very important building in America. Frank Lloyd Wright was still alive. Could we do anything about it? So, he and I went to the seminary, met with the officers of the seminary, and asked them to delay their plans. We got a breathing spell. Then we began to see what else could be done. The university wasn't about to help out the situation very much because they didn't have unlimited money, and they didn't figure they were in the business of saving architectural landmarks. That wasn't their business. I'm not saying who spoke with that attitude, but it was a normal attitude at that time. They might become involved if someone else would take the lead and provide the money and all that kind of thing, but they weren't in the

position to make sacrifices for this purpose because they never had any relation with the Robie House. We got this delay, and somehow or other I don't know who talked to Pei about it but somebody did. I.M. Pei, who was working for [William] Zeckendorf, convinced Zeckendorf to buy it and give it to the university. The purchase price was enough for the theological seminary to proceed with an alternative plan. It had to be that kind of a combination. So that took place thanks to I.M. Pei.

Blum: Now, did you and this man from the university, Mr. Coggeshal, manage this single-handedly or was there community support for this cause? Did it become a cause?

Hartmann: No. We did a lot of talking around. As I say, our primary hope was that we could get a delay and stop them from proceeding, because they were ready to start the next month to demolish the building.

Blum: But you found it worthwhile to get involved to preserve this historic house?

Hartmann: Sure. And, incidentally, about that time, in the course of all that, I went up to see Frank Lloyd Wright and got to know him to some extent. That was through a very nice character, a fellow named Bill Deknatel. Bill Deknatel was an architect in Chicago he and his wife both. Well, first of all, Bill, I think, was born and raised in Hull House. They were the first students of Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin. He was a very nice fellow. I used to drive up and take Bill with me, and we'd go up and see Frank Lloyd Wright and talk to him about the Robie House.

Blum: What was his reaction to the idea that something that he had built was now to be demolished and people were rallying around to save it?

Hartmann: He thought it would be a darn good thing to preserve the building. He was all for it and wanted to have a commission to restore it. He wanted to take charge, if someone would provide the money. Nobody was about to do that.

Blum: As you came to know Frank Lloyd Wright, was he as acerbic as he's reputed to be?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. Sure. I had some other experiences with him, but these kinds of personal visits at Taliesin, Wisconsin, were marvelous. We would get there and my memories are that we would sit around, he and Bill Deknatel and I. They would be doing a lot of reminiscing, and we'd be talking about different things and drinking Old Bushmills Irish whiskey. After several hours of this maybe at midnight or one o'clock in the morning—this black-haired, black-dressed woman would stalk in with two Dobermans, one on each side, and say, "Frank, don't you think it's time to go to bed?"

Blum: This was his wife Olgivanna?

Hartmann: That's right. She took care of him. But they were very interesting experiences. As a result, when we were finally in a position to have a weekend retreat, while living in the Hancock Center, we found a piece of property just five miles from Taliesin and built a house there.

Blum: You personally?

Hartmann: Yes. Still exists. Great house. We don't own it anymore. We sold it when we came here.

Blum: Well, during the decade of the 1950s, it seems that you became like an octopus in public service. You were involved with the Robie House for the cause of preserving it. You were on the Mayor's Commission for Chicago Architectural Landmarks. You were a consultant preparing the Central Area Plan, and you gave a speech in front of the Public Buildings Commission about the Ft. Dearborn project in which you highly recommended that the city core be revitalized, that a new government center be built. And at the Art Institute you were on the Twentieth-Century Committee for Painting and Sculpture. So you were starting to spread your wings in so many different areas.

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: And at the same time in 1955, you were called in as a consultant to develop a concept and put into motion a foundation with the money that Ernest Graham had left. I'm talking about the decade of the 1950s primarily from 1955 to 1960. You had new projects underway but you were also going off in other directions.

Hartmann: Oh, sure. Now, first of all, at this point, SOM in Chicago and elsewhere was relatively strong. We have in place the kinds of talent that projects we're asked to do, demand. We have fine architects and engineers and city planners and landscape and interior people and all that. Their system of communications with one another and interchange of ideas and their philosophic understanding, all important means to have this, are in place. Now, we're talking about ten years after the end of World War II when the latent demands have been satisfied more or less, and now the evolution or trends for future development are beginning to be evident. In so far as development of cities is concerned, now you begin to see the start of the developer. Prior to that you had Inland Steel acting as its own developer, Prudential acting as its own developer, whatever. Hartford Fire Insurance Company was one of the first companies to act as a developer and build what they call investment buildings. That's what a developer does, builds investment buildings. For some reason, they came to Chicago, and they built the Hartford Building on Monroe Street and Wacker. We were privileged to do that. They had a man named Irwin Wolfson, who was a New York builder, as an advisor. Irwin Wolfson had a fellow named Carl Morse as his number two man. Irwin Wolfson died all of a sudden. He used to do such things as commute by water ski down the Hudson River. He was a strange fellow. Anyway, Carl Morse was a New York builder. He was the advisor, and he thought initially that there was no sense having a firm like SOM involved in these investment buildings. No sense in it. Just had to pay extra fees and all that stuff. He had a stable of people who could turn out plans much cheaper.

[Tape 5: Side 2]

Hartmann: With Carl Morse, the idea was that you had to give him a piece of property that could stand such-and-such amount of development by code and so forth, zoning laws, and that there was a market to rent such space for X dollars a square foot over a period of years, and you had to design the building so that the costs would be related to that economic chain of logic. If we could make a well-designed building, maybe we'll pay a little more for it because we ought to be able to get a little more rent for the space. I mean, this is all highly pragmatic. In other words, they were not building monuments. Inland Steel isn't exactly a monument, but it is not a development building. I mean, it's a demonstration, and it is a wonderful building. And other buildings like the Tribune Tower is not a pragmatic building.

Blum: But didn't the developer kind of building put constraints on the architectural firm? The bottom-line type of constraints that limited free expression of materials and decorations.

Hartmann: Oh, sure. No question. That's where we became highly successful. Bruce Graham is one of the people who could comprehend and understand that and work with it. The Hartford Building was a flat slab, concrete building, which was the most economical structure you could build at that time. But it's covered in granite, and the granite is hung on the building as cladding in an entirely open and positive way. This could be economy, it could be beauty in terms of proportions and setting back walls and all these different things and materials, it could be efficient, it could be very good for a tenant. Wonderful air-conditioning, wonderful lighting, all these things. That is what architecture is really all about in the philosophy that I come from, being able to do all those things.

Blum: But making it work for a price?

Hartmann: Uneconomic buildings end up in disasters. There are thousands of them in existence. I mean, an architect is building for a function in [Louis] Sullivan's

words or whatever. One of those functions is economics. There's utilization, but economics is certainly a function. I think SOM recognized that in Chicago and I'm sure there are other people who will tell you that they thought we were making a mistake in doing buildings for developers, and that it's much better to do the one-of-a-kind special projects for clients.

Blum: Some time later in your career, I think in the early 1970s, you delivered an address to the Junior Board of Realtors, or to real estate people, in which you talked about this great potential for development that had been explored in other parts of the country but not yet in Chicago.

Hartmann: Exactly. New York had lots of these buildings by Carl Morse that were architectural bombs. That's what really helped kill modern architecture. You know, the crummy examples of cheap, lousy buildings in New York, I think. Absolutely.

Blum: Could we go back for a minute, and would you talk about your tenure as first consultant and then director and organizer of the Graham Foundation?

Hartmann: Oh, that was wonderful.

Blum: It was in 1955.

Hartmann: A most pleasant experience. Was it 1955?

Blum: 1955 was when the trustees were charged with the responsibility of doing something with the money.

Hartmann: Exactly. I had a friend, Charlie Rummel. Charlie Rummel was a part of Shaw, Naess and Murphy, then Naess and Murphy, and then C.F. Murphy and Associates. He was a part of that, and he was a University of Illinois graduate. I enjoyed visiting with him from time to time. Charlie came to me one day and said that Mr. Murphy had talked to him, and he described this foundation that Ernest Graham had established in his will, and it was very

interesting. When Ernest Graham established it, he was worth a great deal of money in the order of twenty, thirty, forty, fifty million dollars. The crash wiped it all out. He died, I think, about 1933. He left Charles F. Murphy as his executor. Mr. Murphy was a very honorable man, and so he undertook this responsibility seriously and kept whatever assets there were intact. They went down to practically nothing and then began slowly to rebuild and finally on the date that you mentioned, they had enough income to think of using it for the purposes for which it was intended. Mr. Graham had in mind—and this was my observation only and not substantiated in any way Mr. Graham was an architect who came up through masonry and all that, and he appreciated the art of architecture and built a very distinguished library and hired people who were very proficient in the orders and European styles. He wanted to build an Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Chicago, and he thought he would use his money for that. It was a staggering concept at its time. However, with the funds that we were talking about now, we were not in a position to undertake anything like that. So what could be done? And that was what Charlie Rummel was asking me. So, after some thought, I said, "Well, what we ought to do is go back to my old friend, John Burchard." If he wished, I would try to start that. So, for some reason, I met with John somewhere or he came to Chicago or something. We chatted about this, and he thought it was interesting. We thought, well, as a first step, why don't we convene a group for the intellectual pleasure, as well as what might be the outcome, of conversing with this group on the subject of architecture and education and how an architect is trained. So, we set about making a list of the people who would be asked, and we decided to meet in Aspen, Colorado. You probably have the list. I don't want to leave anyone out through ignorance but there was Aline and Eero Saarinen. There was Pietro Belluschi and Rudolph Arnheim. And Charlie Rummel and John Reid.

Blum: Who was John Reid?

Hartmann: John Reid was a man who had been my teacher at MIT in freehand drawing, and he left MIT and was then in California. He was one of the leading architects in the school design program in California. A very fine gentleman.

Catherine Bauer was there. Who else?

Blum: And her husband.

Hartmann: Yes, Bill Wurster was there.

Blum: And what came out of that conference?

Hartmann: Well, there were so many different ideas. It was how are architects trained. I knew Eero felt that apprentice training was important because in his own life, apprentice training was important. Others felt more classical means and foreign travel were important and all these other different ideas about how architects are developed and trained. I would say there weren't any of them who said we ought to do A, B, C, D, and E. It wasn't anything like that at all. It was freewheeling, mostly to give us all a chance to interchange and stimulate our respective thinking about it. Then after that, John Burchard and I met several times and ironed out what we thought was the right program. We would have something called a foundation. There's no way you're going to start a normal educational institution. It was recognized, by the way, that the money we had available annually was limited, but there was every expectation if everything went well that it would grow in future years. But we wanted to make a start in something, and how to do that was the problem. We decided that underlying Mr. Graham's notions were art and architecture, not just architecture in the small sense, and that what we might do is offer grants to people from any part of the world that would give them a year of freedom. Hopefully these people would be at a crossroads, and they would be afraid to go down that crossroad because of risk. They've got to have bread and butter on the table for their wife and baby, and so they'll take the safe road and go down this one that guarantees that, and maybe we can identify people like that. We would give them a year of economic freedom, and their only obligation was to come and be with us in Chicago as a group for, I think it was a month. That would be the program. Now, how to go about identifying them. We didn't want to waste any money on a staff and all that. Absolutely didn't spend any money at all. We weren't going to have any

applications. You couldn't apply for these things at all, because that procedure is very cumbersome. What we would do is assemble a group of advisors and tell each advisor that you have the opportunity and responsibility to come up with somebody. Once a year we would come together we came together more than once and you will present the person that you would like to recommend for such a grant. The chances are, because we're doing it deliberately this way, you can practically be guaranteed that your person will receive a grant. So we selected this group of advisors, who were the greatest in the country and wonderful, just marvelous people. I have a photograph here of them all.

Blum: Was this the advisory group which you encouraged Mies to join?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. Sure. There were Sigfried Giedion, Grace [McCann] Morley and Daniel Catton Rich and José Luis Sert, James Johnson Sweeney and Mies van der Rohe. Of course, John Burchard participated also. So, they embraced history and art and architecture—Mies architecture, Sweeney all the arts, Sert architecture, Dan Rich was the director of the Art Institute, Grace Morley, arts, and Giedion, certainly architecture with a strong reference to the arts. That was a pretty damn good group, right?

Blum: Pretty high powered, yes.

Hartmann: They were marvelous. It was a pleasure for them. We paid them a very small honorarium. I think we paid them a thousand dollars plus their travel to and from Chicago. I felt strongly that I wanted these people to come to Chicago and know Chicago, and our grantees to come to Chicago and know Chicago. This would be a benefit to Chicago and maybe to them. First of all, I'd be talking to these people during the year, and Jim Sweeney would say, "What about artist A or artist C, and so forth. I'd like to think about those." I was close enough to each one of them that I would be talking with them, and in many cases I would go and see those artists to see what they were working on, what their circumstances were, whether they were at crossroads, to what degree this kind of grant would be helpful. They'd all love to just have the

money, but we wanted to do more than that.

Blum: So, it was an opportunity for you, too, to meet all of the prospective grantees.

Hartmann: Oh, no question. Every one of these adventures in my life has been an opportunity for me. And this was a great one, a lovely one.

Blum: Well, not only to meet the people on the advisory committee and the conference people, but also to meet people who were practicing in the arts.

Hartmann: Oh, for sure. For sure!

Blum: How many architects received the fellowship?

Hartmann: There were a fair number. I'm trying to think of the Japanese architect who's one of the prominent architects of Japan now. Fumihiko Maki, isn't it? And Balkrishna Doshi, an Indian. Gosh, he'll be on your list somewhere.

Blum: Well, I don't have a list, but what I have is a set of photographs from the Graham Foundation archives. No one is identified but maybe you will recognize them. These are people that you obviously entertained or the Arnold Maremonts entertained, and you were instrumental at arranging that invitation.

Hartmann: Oh, yes. They were all interested in what we were doing.

Blum: You made it very nice for the people who were here by arranging invitations like that.

Hartmann: Exactly. One of the fellows we gave a grant to was Freddie Kiesler. That probably came from Mies, I expect. A wonderful character, marvelous character!

Blum: You were the director at the Graham Foundation?

Hartmann: Yes. As I said, I forget what their income was, and we fixed up a little office on Superior Street, and it had a lot of books from Ernest Graham's library, and that's where we had our meetings. I had a secretary who was there all the time. I suppose I spent 20 percent of my time there in active periods.

Blum: So, you were part-time.

Hartmann: Oh, yes. Part-time for sure. This was extracurricular.

Blum: Were you paid?

Hartmann: I wasn't compensated. I wouldn't take compensation.

Blum: So, this was public service again.

Hartmann: This was public service. No question. I didn't want compensation. When we brought these people to Chicago, I wanted not to just have them come here and sit on their fannies. I wanted to stimulate them, so we organized programs. One of the best ones was Reuel Denney, who helped write *The Lonely Crowd* with David Riesman. Reuel was at the university, and I forget who told me about him. I got in touch with Reuel, and he got interested. This was quite a while ago when Elaine May and Mike Nichols were practically unknown. They worked at the Compass down at the university, and he had them come up and do a scene. We did things like that and brought in visitors as catalysts and had these people all participate in their various languages and all. It was marvelous. I still think it's a wonderful idea. Our administrative part of it was absolutely minor. Everything went to the recipients, and we tried to stimulate them. And I think some of them would say that the Graham period was a good experience. I know [Eduardo] Chillida would say that and so would Harry Callahan. Gosh, they're wonderful fellows. Joe Goto had a terrible time because his wife didn't want him to accept it. I could go on and on.

Blum: Oh, why she want him to accept a grant?

Hartmann: Joe Goto was poor. He lived for sculpture. He did welding, and she instinctively knew that all of a sudden getting this amount of money would not be easy. I don't think it was easy. But he became a teacher. He taught at the Rhode Island School of Design. I think he's probably still there. But Joe was a fine young man. I don't know whether it was the right thing or not, but there are all kinds of experiences.

Blum: Each fellow received \$10,000?

Hartmann: Yes. That was the amount. I think we paid for their travel to Chicago and put them up in Chicago while they were here and that sort of thing. But they came a long way. Doshi came from India. Maki was at Harvard and then he went to Japan. And Kiesler came from Europe, lived in New York a lot, too. And Harry Bertoina well, you can get the list of who we gave grants to. José Guerrero.

Blum: The way you talk about this and as I watch you I sense a similarity in the way you describe the atmosphere you were attempting to create for these fellows and the way you describe your own experience in traveling on the Rotch Fellowship. It was sort of mind-expanding, it was increasing your perception, your awareness. Was there any conscious connection in your mind between what you did and what you were trying to do for others?

Hartmann: No, I don't think so. I'm not that introspective. I had some notions and good advice. Wonderful people to talk things over with. All these things ought to be fun, and very few people have an opportunity to do something like it. Right? How lucky I am!

Blum: Then, why did you resign in 1960?

Hartmann: By that time, they began to accumulate more money. Right from the word go, this was not to be something permanent, this was to be temporary and I

helped get it started. Who knew what the evolution might be? After those few years, they began to commit more money, and they ought to have a full-time paid director. They were very fortunate to get John Entenza. There couldn't have been a better person in the whole world than John. Absolutely a marvelous, understanding, intelligent, beautiful man.

Blum: Under John the Graham Foundation took just a little different direction. How do you feel about that?

Hartmann: I feel that's absolutely fine. I wouldn't say anything but that. Once again, if you begin to have more money, more people full-time, probably not very many even now.

Blum: I think they have a director and a secretary.

Hartmann: All right, but Carter Manny works at it. It's his full-time occupation more or less as it was with John Entenza. If you have that, then you can turn to other kinds of programs because you're able to have some continuity and pay attention to it minute by minute.

Blum: Are you proud of the child you helped give birth to?

Hartmann: Oh, sure. Absolutely. All the participants, both advisors and recipients who are still alive, I still hear from and know very well.

Blum: And probably many of the books you have on your bookshelves here, in introductions or prefaces, thank the Graham Foundation for their support.

Hartmann: That's it. There's a lot of that.

Blum: It's a nice legacy.

Hartmann: Yes, don't you think? I think it's darn nice.

Blum: Finishing the decade of the 1950s, beginning in 1960 and 1961, you gave speeches to various groups about your vision of the city, about what it could become, what kind of opportunities there were, how the center of the city should be improved to encourage residents back, how State Street should be changed to invite people to stay and not flee to the suburbs either to buy or to live. Where did that vision come from?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. It had been evident for a long time, and Chicago is the perfect example of the movement to the suburbs out of the central city. Except for the political boundaries, it doesn't mean much at all. It's kind of one city anyway or megalopolis, whatever they call those things. But it's evident that the movement of people from the central city to the outskirts had certain effects on the character of the city. Certainly Chicago is a wonderful example. The quality of education declined very, very noticeably. All kinds of businesses followed not only shopping centers but suburban office developments. Companies built their headquarters out of the city. If the chief executive lived a long way out, they built their corporate headquarters out near where he lived, and he could commute easily and not be involved in the city really at all. So all the institutions suffered. Although they continued some kind of participation, it wasn't with the intensity of a Mrs. Potter Palmer or a Charles L. Hutchinson and a lot of the early leaders of the Art Institute, the Swifts and all these people who lived in the city and were devoted to it. That was a reason. And, of course, as one traveled, the most wonderful cities in the world in terms of interaction with the people were cities like London or Paris or Rome where the people continued to live right in the heart of the city, and the cities remained completely vibrant without the tensions of suburbs and city.

Blum: But we've always had the tradition of separating where we live and where we work, which is not true in European cities.

Hartmann: Oh, I don't know that we always have. What is always?

Blum: In an urban setting.

Hartmann: In 1900, for example, consider the people who lived on the South Side the most distinguished families.

Blum: Lived and worked in the same place?

Hartmann: Lived on the South Side of Chicago, Prairie Avenue.

Blum: But they didn't work in their homes.

Hartmann: No, they didn't work in their homes. I didn't mean that. In Paris, for example, commerce was on the ground floor and all kinds of people lived above it and still do. That was one example. But they were intimately involved with the concerns and interests of the city, whether it be art and those things or whether it be social matters. Hull House was in the city. It's that kind of a perspective. I think the decline of the urban center has been going on now for a fairly long time. Certainly the condition that you find in an urban center like New York and maybe to a lesser extent in Chicago but still, Chicago did have a major renaissance of people who wanted to live in the city, the whole Near North Side.

Blum: After the war?

Hartmann: Well, after 1960, really. There was an attempt before then but when North Michigan Avenue was developed, the Near North Side became one of the most desirable places to live in the Midwest.

Blum: Was this your vision that it was possible to do something realistic and change it?

Hartmann: Well, I spoke up for it and contributed whatever ideas and thoughts there might be. Some of the problems are so big and go beyond what is accomplishable in terms of the need to eliminate racism, the need to have great schools. All those things are monumental problems that involve more

than planning and more than anything. They involve a whole attitude and strength of will of a whole society. I mean, they're not easy things to deal with.

Blum: You were on the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council. You were on the Board of Governors. It has been said that your council stimulated and educated civic leadership on behalf of a more functional and attractive city. Is that a fair assessment of what you did?

Hartmann: I don't pretend to claim any credits for any of those things and certainly I wasn't a lone voice. There were some wonderful people on the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council. I forget the name of the lady who ran it. She was a good person, a very good person. She was the executive director or whatever you call it.

Blum: Was that Elizabeth Wood?

Hartmann: No. Elizabeth Wood was the head of United States Housing Authority in Chicago. She was, I believe, a federal employee. She was a remarkable woman. She had a lot of insight that I regret I didn't pay more attention to. I didn't support her enough. She was opposed to the whole South Side development of public housing, and correctly so.

Blum: And she left the area.

Hartmann: She left. That was sad.

Blum: It was in 1963 that you became a Fellow, you were nominated for a Fellowship in the AIA by the entire board of directors of the Chicago chapter. You were nominated for your public service.

Hartmann: It was a wonderful time in that sense. The spirit of Chicago was pretty good. We were losing industry.

Blum: Losing industry?

Hartmann: Chicago was losing industry, basically. Chicago was a heavy industry kind of a place, and it was changing that to a lighter industry. It was changing to more service-oriented industries. But still, it was a successful center. Some mention should be made of Mayor Richard J. Daley, who was first elected in 1955. So, now he's been reelected a time or two more, and he is comfortable.

[Tape 6: Side 1]

Hartmann: I don't speak of anything about the politics of the matter and some of his policies that maybe are now considered to be not good. I only can speak of where he came into contact with the things that I was interested in.

Blum: Was he involved in the Metropolitan Planning Council?

Hartmann: No.

Blum: Was that under his wing?

Hartmann: No. That had nothing to do with him.

Blum: Can we hold Mayor Daley for one minute because he may come up in a big way in just a few minutes?

Hartmann: All right. In the Housing Council, Sam Lichtman, who was an architect, was head of the local chapter, and he was always interested in the Housing Council and all that. The city had no housing code.

Blum: What was it that John Merrill did?

Hartmann: That was the building code. The housing code tells a tenant what he can demand of a landlord. In other words, it would say you had to have one bathroom per dwelling unit. You couldn't share bathrooms when you had

more than a certain number of units; you know, as if a rooming house said they were apartments. Also kitchens, fire precautions for safety and whatnot. So Sam Lichtman and I wrote that code with the leadership and guidance of a lawyer at the University of Chicago, Allison Dunham. That was accepted. It took about a year to write up the housing code, all under the auspices of the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council. That was their contribution.

Blum: And you were on the board of governors?

Hartmann: Well, we took that on as a task. The Housing Council was a very active organization and highly critical of government. It was very liberal. It was a lot of fun.

Blum: You know, as you were talking about the formation of the Graham Foundation and the election of the advisory committee and that Mies was on it, I somehow didn't connect the years with what I now would like to ask. Mies resigned from IIT in 1957, and the following year the campus commission was taken away from him, and it was given to SOM. Franz Schulze writes in his book on Mies, "In 1958, after Mies's retirement, IIT relieved him of the campus commission, turning it over to SOM. An indignant reaction to the shift from Mies to SOM was expressed nationwide. The Skidmore people were uneasy in their inheritance." How did you feel? How did you feel and yet maintain connections with Mies for another reason through the Graham Foundation? Franz also reports something I didn't know before I read it again more carefully that Gordon Bunshaft wrote a letter to Mies at that time and offered him an advisory capacity for any work that SOM did on campus, but Mies refused.

Hartmann: It was even more than that.

Blum: How did you feel about all this as you had continued contact with Mies?

Hartmann: I was in the center of it and this is so far as I can recall and we're talking a few years ago, but anyway I think it's fairly accurate—for whatever reason, and I

don't know the reasons, IIT told me that they were going to change architects for the campus.

Blum: Did John Rettaliata tell you?

Hartmann: Yes. I deplored it and all that, and they asked that we become the architects. I deplored it and argued against it, and IIT said they were adamant about it, and if we weren't going to do it, somebody else was going to do it. They would get somebody else. Frankly, it wasn't a job that anyone such as ourselves would want to have very much at all.

Blum: But SOM wanted it?

Hartmann: We didn't really want it. However, the line of thought that went through my mind, and I think I can say our minds, was that I felt that we had more Miesian disciples than anyone in our office. A great number of them, and that if any group could undertake to carry out Mies's design philosophy that SOM could and that it was in the best interest of the campus for us to do so. I discussed this with Mies, and I discussed it with all my partners including Bunshaft. Bunshaft volunteered and I asked him to write such a letter to Mies. Go outside of Chicago and write it from that point. In fact, as I recall, we offered to do something we've never done with anyone else. We offered to just do working drawings from Mies's designs. We offered that, and Mies said, no, he thought it would be best if he was not involved. There was absolutely no problem between us about this whole subject at all. I think he was grateful that we took over—I really think we could do better Miesian buildings and follow his precepts and ideas and objectives better than anybody else.

Blum: I think it's popular opinion that after this happened, Walter Netsch did two buildings, and Walter Netsch, as creative a designer as he is, did not fully understand Mies and the buildings are not successful on that campus. However, Myron's buildings were much more successful.

Hartmann: Myron wasn't there at the time and Walter was there and Walter did try, and it would be almost impossible not to have that kind of criticism. Almost impossible.

Blum: Was Bruce there?

Hartmann: Yes, but this wasn't really his area. I don't think it was ever contemplated that he might be involved. I think Myron was on the West Coast at that time.

Blum: During the time when Mies was retiring and all of this was happening, Bill Dunlap organized a party at the Chicago Athletic Club that ended in a disaster for many people at IIT. Were you there? It was the night that I think Hilberseimer had a few strong words with some of the SOM people, and Alfred Caldwell wound up resigning.

Hartmann: Oh, really? I don't think I was there. I don't think so. It must have been for the IIT family.

Blum: It was to honor Mies, honor in quotes.

Hartmann: Not by SOM.

Blum: But Bill Dunlap organized it. Maybe it was for people who came out of IIT, I'm not sure.

Hartmann: The people at SOM who were from IIT?

Blum: Well, Bruce supposedly was there.

Hartmann: Oh, was he? You'll have to ask him. I might have been, but I know that Caldwell and others were outspoken, and I don't blame them. But I really don't know what would have happened to the campus design if we hadn't been willing to do it. I think the institution was adamant, and I think Mies was as convinced of that as we were.

Blum: Well, I know also that SOM had a history with IIT. They had done some residence halls earlier, so it was not a new association.

Hartmann: Oh, no. Not at all. And it was the last thing that we wanted to have happen for sure. It was no prize because we knew no matter what was done, it was going to be subject to severe criticism.

Blum: It certainly put SOM in a position of conflict.

Hartmann: Exactly. Who wants that, who needs that? We didn't need that.

Blum: May we move on to 1963 through 1967, when the Civic Center [now Richard J. Daley Civic Center and Plaza] was being planned, designed, built? This was the collaboration between your firm, Murphy, and Loeb Schlossman. One of the things that maybe I mentioned when we first began to talk was that you are perhaps best remembered in Chicago for bringing the Picasso to Chicago. Whose idea was it?

Hartmann: I'm going to go back a minute. Willis Gale and Henry Crown were members of the Public Building Commission, and I think they were as responsible as anybody for bringing SOM into the picture for the Civic Center. I think the other two firms were fairly automatic.

Blum: Why Loeb Schlossman? I can understand Murphy.

Hartmann: Well, there are connections to Loeb Schlossman in that area with Phil Klutznick and others. Murphy and Loeb Schlossman would be natural.

Blum: Was it because Loeb Schlossman was primarily a Jewish firm?

Hartmann: Yes. I think that was part of it. That might have been. I don't know, and Daley isn't alive to tell us. But anyway, we were asked to join, and this is something we hated. We didn't believe in having a divided responsibility of

architectural associations. We didn't believe in that, and I still don't believe in it. You have to have somebody who truly feels responsible for what's being done. We were asked to join this, and after a lot of discussion of the pros and cons because it was a very important project for Chicago, we decided to go along for the obvious political reasons. Daley insisted on designating Murphy as the supervising architect. We had to accept that. I think it's important that somebody sets the record a little straight on the whole matter. It was agreed, in order to have agreement, that the design work would be done in one place, and all the design work would be done together, and then various components would be done separately. We assumed responsibility, for example, for all the mechanical work air-conditioning, lighting, and all those kind of things. We had responsibility for that. Murphy had the structure steel and whatnot and I guess Loeb had architectural work. I can't remember exactly. But anyway, that's the way the thing was conceived. Now then, we all supplied people to the design staff. And we supplied a fellow named Art Takeuchi.

Blum: I'm just surprised to hear you say that, because in Bruce's book he includes that among his projects.

Hartmann: That's all right.

Blum: And it was always my understanding that Jack Brownson of Murphy supplied the design.

Hartmann: All right. That's why I want to set the record straight.

Blum: Please do. It's getting very confusing.

Hartmann: I'm talking about full-time effort in an office with people at drafting tables and all. Jack Brownson was selected by Murphy. He was a Miesian product, for sure. Art Takeuchi also. Jack Brownson was head of the design office of that group. That is true. It is my opinion that the inspiration for that design came from Art Takeuchi to Bruce Graham. Bruce Graham, being a partner,

was assigned to go there and be there whenever he could and all that. He wasn't there full-time. Bruce supported the idea of the concept, and that's how it evolved. I was responsible for presentation of this to the authorities to the mayor, to the Public Building Commission, responsible for seeing that we had the proper information and the designs were ready and all that. I presented it to the authorities, and they approved it. Jack Brownson coordinated the execution that came about through this. You can check that with Bruce and ask him if my concept of that time isn't correct. I'm positive it is.

Blum: Then it can't be any other way.

Hartmann: No, no, no.

Blum: You see, the literature records such fragments of information that it's really hard for the layman to really know what goes on when more than one person is involved.

Hartmann: Oh, of course. It's impossible. Also, various individuals have human notions that may or may not be accurate, and mine may not be accurate. But this is the way that I see what happened in that, just the way I see what happened with the Inland Steel Building Walter's role and then Bruce's role. Either one of them wouldn't see it exactly the way I would see it.

Blum: But you see, it's the value of everyone's perception coming together that a researcher can benefit from.

Hartmann: Maybe. It can raise questions in their minds anyway. It doesn't matter anyway, does it?

Blum: When you presented the plan, the building, the design to the mayor, what was his response?

Hartmann: And to the Public Building Commission. This wasn't just done once. This was

done over several different episodes. First we had to change their minds as to what they wanted to build. Ira Bach was very helpful in this.

Blum: What did they think they wanted?

Hartmann: They wanted two buildings, as I recall, and much lower. I remember working on our solution very carefully. You know, I felt very strongly about government. You have to go back a long way to when government had symbolic importance as the major structure of a city a town hall somewhere or something like that. In most cities, government buildings are getting smaller and smaller and less and less important. A symbol of government, I thought, was something worth talking about. I was able to say that for a brief moment of time, the Civic Center would be the tallest building in Chicago, the major structure of a city.

Blum: And it was.

Hartmann: And it was. It was the tallest for a while until Hancock came along, Standard Oil and Sears. It was the tallest building in Chicago. It stood for the strength of the central city, and I thought that terribly important for just that moment of time. It wasn't going to last forever, but for that moment of time, and they agreed to build it. I think it is still one of the outstanding buildings of that period. Absolutely. I think we worked like the devil on that, and it's an outstanding building. I'll be pontifical about it maybe when we sum up a little later. Of course, as you can appreciate, we put the building on the north side of the property of the block and left the square open. I remember saying that we don't have such a square in our city at all. This will be a terrific open space. That ultimately may be the location of some sculpture or who knows what, but that we weren't going to concern ourselves with what that is or should be at this time. We're going to let that be.

Blum: Was this when the building was being sited?

Hartmann: Yes. Being sited. Right. So, they agreed with that. That's fine, we'll have this

open plaza. Then somebody said we ought to put a few trees in and a little fountain. Well, those were minor. Okay. That could go in. But as the building began to take shape and form, there were more and more questions about shouldn't there be a monument, shouldn't there be a sculpture or something like that. I really tried to put that off.

Blum: Why?

Hartmann: We had enough to do. We had enough to do to get a great building, and I didn't want to be rushed into some sculptural project that would be not at least equal in quality to the building. You can foresee that selection of artists to do public works is a very risky business. You know, you don't know who you're going to end up with for political reasons. Right? Don't know. I would have no confidence of that anywhere. You know, we were darn fortunate in having the Vietnam Memorial, a great memorial more or less by accident.

Blum: A competition?

Hartmann: Yes, by competition which is risky. Other people insisting on putting other monuments around it and all this kind of business, you know. You have a mess, right? Public art is difficult. Unless you do it right.

Blum: In spite of these pitfalls, Picasso was selected and the monument turned out beautifully. What has been reported in the papers is that "we," which I presume were the three firms, "We decided to ask the foremost artist in the world if he was interested in designing a monumental sculpture. We wanted the sculpture to be the work of the greatest master alive." Is that accurate?

Hartmann: Well, some of those words were mine.

Blum: Well, they must be accurate.

Hartmann: I think, because the pressure kept growing and artists were writing and saying they wanted to do it and public groups were speaking out. Finally the

mayor said, "We've got to try to do something." I don't know what the others did, but I had conversations with a number of people like James Johnson Sweeney and Edgar Kaufmann and some others about the possibility of getting someone who would come close to what you were reading a moment or so ago.

Blum: The greatest master alive?

Hartmann: Yes, the outstanding artist of the world. Well, it was evident that this was Picasso. We had a meeting of the Civic Center architects and I forget how many of us were there. I think John Entenza was there, too, and some others, and we said, "Well, let's have a vote." And so we took a vote, and after the vote we agreed it was unanimous Picasso.

Blum: Was Mayor Daley there?

Hartmann: No. I don't know how it happened, whether we all went or I went to see Mayor Daley and told him that this was what we wanted to do, that the Civic Center architects were in agreement that we ought to see if we can interest Pablo Picasso in doing a sculpture for the Civic Center. And it was then he said, "Well, I don't know Mr. Picasso, but if he's the best person in the world, why don't you go ahead and try."

Blum: Did he have any idea what you might bring as an example of Picasso's work?

Hartmann: No. I don't know whether I had some photographs, some of his sculptural ideas or not. I don't think so. I don't think I had any visual materials. It was just a bold fact that he was known as being the outstanding artist of the world, and we would try to see if he would do it. As I said, he said, "Well, if he's the best in the world, go ahead and try it." This is that part of Mayor Daley, which I came into contact with and appreciated. In the relations that I had with him, dealing with projects and about the Civic Center, this event and other things, if it's the best thing for Chicago and you are sure of it, in effect he says, "I trust you, go ahead and try it."

Blum: Don't you think that what was critical to his responding that way was because he trusted you?

Hartmann: Oh, absolutely. Well, for whatever reason, I think he did. But, as I said, I was not involved in anything political with him that I know of at all, ever. I was doing these kind of things that related to the physical city, so to speak, and in a way, the spiritual city, too. You want me to go through the whole story? Oh, God. You should have brought more tapes. Anyway, it was very interesting. How do you go about this? Partly this reflects on my previous experiences this is a new experience, like some of the others were new experiences, and you have to sit down and figure out how you're going to approach it. I didn't know Picasso, but I did find that there was a fellow by the name of Allan McNab at the Art Institute. Allan McNab was an Englishman, and he knew Roland Penrose, who was a biographer of Picasso in England. I think he said, "Well, I'll drop a note to Penrose and tell him you're going to get in touch with him." I think it was something like that. So, I did get in touch with Penrose, wrote him a long letter. I forget whether I said I was going to be in England for some reason or another and we'd get together. So we started off with Penrose. I described the project to Penrose and the significance of it and so forth, and why I thought it might interest Picasso. Picasso had done these studies for large scale sculptures on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice in the 1920s. He'd done a great deal of sculpture and maybe he'd be interested. So, Penrose said, "I'll tell Picasso what this is all about, and you write him also." I think I wrote Picasso. He would let Picasso know that this is the subject and that he, Penrose, thinks Picasso might be interested and that sometime soon we're going to be in the south of France and would like to drop in and see him. Penrose said that is the way to do it. You don't make an appointment with Picasso. You don't make an appointment at all.

Blum: You just say you're coming?

Hartmann: No, you can't make an appointment two weeks from now. You telephone and

say you happen to be nearby, and he'll say come up today or come up tomorrow, and beyond that you can't get an appointment. That was true. So, those things were accomplished. We decided that we will meet in the south of France on such and such a date. Believe me, I never wanted this whole enterprise to be mine alone, ever. I never did, and Charlie Murphy, who has died, would confirm that and Norm Schlossman, too. I never wanted this to be my sole project. Jerrold Loeb was away in Israel or somewhere and couldn't come, so Norm Schlossman and Charlie Murphy and I went. Penrose and his wife were present, too. Penrose's wife was a wonderful woman named Lee Miller. Lee Miller you know of but you may not recognize the name.

Blum: Wasn't she a photographer?

Hartmann: She was a photographer for Vogue, and she had been in Jean Cocteau's *Blood of a Poet*. She was the naked girl cased in silver. She was, when young, a very beautiful woman and was still energetic and a very intelligent woman.

Blum: Had she been married to Man Ray?

Hartmann: Yes, that's right. She came from Poughkeepsie [New York], and we had a great affinity Lee and I. Her father was an inventor, an odd type inventor in Poughkeepsie, and Lee Miller was unorthodox from the day she was born. Anyway, we met and Penrose called up Picasso and said we're here and wondered if we could come see him. "Sure, come on up." Just the way Penrose had predicted. I had brought a lot of materials including a small model and lots of photographs. Photographs of Chicagoans and photographs of Chicago and historical photographs a whole collection of things to stimulate and things to show the importance of the site, of course, and what surrounds it and what it meant to the city.

Blum: How far along was the building? Was it completely finished?

Hartmann: Oh, no. The building was not finished at all. It was going up. It was coming

out of the ground, I suppose, by that time. Anyway, we spent a wonderful afternoon there. Picasso looked at it and looked at it and talked about it and talked about it. I explained to him that we wanted to commission him to make a study of what he would propose to do. We three architects couldn't guarantee that if he proposed something it would be accepted. We don't have that kind of authority. But we do have the authority and we take it upon ourselves to commission you to make some studies, because this was kind of the traditional way many artists work, and we had experience with that kind of a system. Make a study of what you propose, and we wish to pay you for this, so financial arrangements would be all clear right from the word go.

Blum: Did you state a price?

Hartmann: No. Whatever he reasonably wanted was fine with us, you know. He said, "I'm not going to agree to that now but I'll think about it." And we went through the photographs, and they included people like Abraham Lincoln and all kinds of people that had something to do with Chicago. When we flashed the picture of Ernest Hemingway, this was a friend, and he had taught Hemingway everything he knew about bullfighting. We were trying to find linkages of some sort. We took photographs of many of Picasso's works owned by the museum and collections from Chicago and all that to show there was a recognition and appreciation of him. All those kind of things we took along quite deliberately. Now, my memory train is going to suffer in the interval, and I should remember every date and everything else, but I don't. Anyway, as I said, we left, very pleased but with no commitment. We'll just have to wait and see. He examined everything in considerable detail, and we had things that showed the color of Chicago and all kinds of things. There was quite a big collection of things.

Blum: Who was speaking what language?

Hartmann: Well, Penrose and I were doing most of the talking.

Blum: In French?

Hartmann: In French, yes. I was speaking in broken French, and Penrose spoke beautiful French. So, that was a very happy time for Charlie Murphy and Norm Schlossman. They were thrilled to be in Picasso's house and meet him and his wife and all that. I know they were.

Blum: This was in the south of France?

Hartmann: The south of France in Mougins. Then we went home or wherever we went. We went away. Well, nothing happened for quite a long time. I had reason to go to Europe from time to time on other projects, and I made a point of going down to see Picasso every time I could and take him progress photographs of the building, take him souvenirs, take him this, any excuse that you could imagine to stimulate his interest and curiosity and so forth. Took a message from the mayor, you know, and things like that.

Blum: Now, there are a few things that you took to him that were reported in the papers that were very creative such as a baseball cap.

Hartmann: They weren't creative. Anybody who knew Picasso would appreciate this. Picasso had been a man of the world and very active in the world and enjoyed spectacles and things. But in recent years he had stayed more at home to work than he used to when he was a younger person. Didn't travel around like that anymore. His friends all, I don't mean they all brought hats every time they came, but usually they brought some thing of strange interest just to stimulate his enthusiasm and curiosity. So, I was no genius about this.

Blum: But you did pick up on that idea?

Hartmann: Oh, I did. Oh, yes. And so I took him lots of things including a war bonnet of an American Indian. I got in touch with the Indians up in Wisconsin, and they had a Sioux Indian war bonnet that was going to go to a museum, and I induced them to sell it to me and they would get another one.

[Tape 6: Side 2]

Blum: Did you ask Picasso what he had in mind for the sculpture?

Hartmann: Picasso would, of course, say, yes, he's still thinking about it. He didn't have any conclusion in his mind, thinking about it and so forth. In that kind of a situation, you can only pry to a certain extent. You can't say, "Listen, what have you got?"

Blum: Or here's the deadline?

Hartmann: Here's the deadline? You don't do that, right? I forget the dates, but finally I did hear, and I knew something was happening from these different visits. Finally I got word—and I'm trying to remember exactly from whom. I think the first word I got was from [Carl] Nesjar.

Blum: Who is Carl Nesjar?

Hartmann: He is a Swede. He did one at Princeton and he did one out in Rolling Meadows for the Gould Center.

Blum: It's big and in concrete?

Hartmann: Concrete, right. He would take works that Picasso had already done and ask Picasso's permission to blow them up in concrete. Picasso was a very curious man. He thought there was nothing wrong with that. If this fellow wants to do that, let him go ahead. It's just like taking a photograph or something and blowing the photograph up, and they were very skillful at it, I must say, and they did a very good job. He did one for [Daniel-Henry] Kahnweiler, I think, in Kahnweiler's garden. But they weren't in any sense commissioned works for Picasso to do a sculpture for such and such a place and all. These were already objects, and so it was different. And it was interesting. Anyway, I knew Nesjar quite well. I think Nesjar sent me a cable saying Pablo has something to show or something like that. Then I heard from Penrose, I

expect. We quickly organized another major visit by the whole group. This time Charlie Murphy came and Dick Bennett came and I think Norm Schlossman came again and Bob Christiansen came and one of the contractor's men came. It was a whole delegation, and I wanted it that way. I didn't relish the idea of being alone to go down there and see this and say, "Isn't that great!" It would be much better to have this broad representation and have the whole group participate, which they were entitled to do. I thought that was appropriate. We all met down there, and it was funny. We all arrived full of glorious expectations. You don't know how we could be. There were all these men and maybe even some wives with them. Call up and Penrose calls. "He's not here." Well, we'll call tomorrow. Okay, we'll call tomorrow. Picasso at that time had a kind of a factotum named Michel who was his secretary who answered the phone. So we called the next day. He's not there. Well, that's strange. We called the next day. Not there. We asked questions around town of other people who knew him, and they said they can't understand what's happened. Maybe he's ill or something. For some reason or other we would never expect he'd go away and we wouldn't know about it. And this went on for a week.

Blum: He knew you were coming?

Hartmann: Yes.

Blum: With your grand entourage?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. He knew we were coming. We met other people who had come to see him, too, during that period, and they were all bewildered. So, one by one, people began to disappear, leaving just Penrose and me. Penrose had to go off to Paris for some meetings or something he had arranged, and I had to go over to Majorca to meet with Miró on a project. We agreed that we would come back. This was, say, on a Friday, and we would come back the following Tuesday and make one last effort, just the two of us. And so we had to return to business and he had other things to do, too. And so, we were due to meet back there on this hypothetical Tuesday, and we called up and

got the same answer. And then we go to the airport in Nice to get on the airplane, and just before we check our baggage, we say, "Well, why don't we try one last time before we check our baggage." Well, we called one last time and Picasso said, "Oh, how are you? Where have you been? Come up immediately."

Blum: Where was he?

Hartmann: He was there all the time, but he was going through a difficult time, and it related to Francoise Gilot and her book. It was published in America first, I believe, then in England. It wasn't published in France. In the American edition it was dedicated to Pablo. It turned out that *Paris Match* magazine was going to publish the book in France. This is as I understand it. I could have been misinformed about this, but this is what I understand. Picasso was upset about this and couldn't permit it to be published in France with that dedication without raising some objection to it. So, the problem was there were lawyers involved and this kind of a stressful scene, and everybody was upset about it and he wasn't going to see anybody at that time. That's what I was told, and I think it is quite accurate. Anyway, we had a wonderful time then for the next two days and going over his first beginnings. It wasn't final yet by any means.

Blum: Was in it in maquette form or drawing form?

Hartmann: Maquette and drawing form. So, finally I was able to report that progress was being made. Incidentally, once again, I told him, "We want to commission you for the studies and end up with a study I can take back to Chicago." No, well, he wouldn't talk business. He said, "You know, I may not produce anything. I may produce something that you don't like. It's better that we do this quietly and perceptively. It wouldn't be good for me to have you turn down something, and it wouldn't be good for you to turn down something that I've done. So, its best that we keep this low-key all the way through, keep it calm and relatively confidential." And we did.

Blum: How close were his first studies that he showed you to the final version?

Hartmann: Oh, very close. Well, the next few months he worked on various examples and studies including something much more vertical than exists. Finally, after several months, it was mostly between Jacqueline [Roque Picasso] and Pablo and myself. I was going there frequently, and Penrose was no longer an essential part of it. They liked me and I liked them, and there was an easy relationship.

Blum: Was she helpful to you?

Hartmann: Oh, she was most helpful. So, she appreciated—and this is my own interpretation—that this was a stimulating interest. Picasso himself said, "It's curious. Marseilles wants me to do a civic sculpture and that's a gangster city and Chicago wants me to do a civic sculpture and it's a gangster city. Isn't it strange?" It didn't have to be the greatest thing in the world necessarily, but it gave him pleasure to have a challenge that was real and by my frequent attention, he had demonstrated it. I would take all kinds of things from various people to him. It was a continuous kind of a project of sending progress photographs and all this kind of business. Anyway, Jacqueline and I in our conversations felt that he was coming pretty much settled as to what he had in mind and what it would be. We prepared ourselves. We said, "We think it's going to be tomorrow." I was there for maybe three or four days and, "We think he's going to say that's it tomorrow." It's very difficult for an artist to say that a piece of work is finished.

Blum: Until it is?

Hartmann: Picasso never signed a painting. Never signed a painting until it was going to be taken away and go to the dealer or the gallery or whatever. Then he signed it and then it was finished. So, you know, he never signed anything. Many people are this way. Sure, if you are writing a book, you'd anguish over whether you really carried out your ideas on page ninety-five or whatever. Shouldn't I go back and change this or that. And so, to get an artist

to say, "All right, that's it." So we came to that moment, and he said, "That's it." I had a truck up there with a cabinet already made and had this all organized to put the object in this truck and take it to the airport within thirty minutes.

Blum: Was this the little maquette that is now at the Art Institute?

Hartmann: Well, it's not so little. It's about forty-two inches high.

Blum: Well, little compared to the one in the plaza.

Hartmann: Yes, that's that maquette. He made two maquettes, naturally one much heavier than the other. I remember we put them out on the terrace and examined them, so that we could see each of them and so that he could be convinced which one he wanted us to execute. So, as I say, once he said okay, we didn't leave any stone unturned. I took it immediately and flew from Nice to New York to Chicago with the sculpture.

Blum: How did you like it?

Hartmann: Oh, I loved it. I had been following it, and I liked it. No question. Had a great time getting it through the customs both in France and in Chicago.

Blum: Did they question it as a work of art?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. I took it to the Art Institute, and we put it in the top floor space where we could keep it secret. See, this is a long story.

Blum: When did you show it to Mayor Daley?

Hartmann: We arranged a showing of it fairly quickly to the Public Building Commission, because they knew what I was doing. We took a gallery at the Art Institute and closed it off and set it up in the gallery with nice lighting and had the Public Building Commission come in. They came in first and

Daley was the last one there, and they were kind of muttering.

Blum: Who are the people on the Public Building Commission? Were they city officials?

Hartmann: Some of them are city officials, and some of them are businessmen. I can't remember who they were at that time. But, I remember talking to Daley about it sometime previously, and he said he hoped the sculpture would say something about blind justice and the wings of an eagle. I told Picasso that, and I told Picasso that this building in France would have been called the Palais de Justice because it's full of wall-to-wall courts and that sort of stuff. Of course, I had been in communication with Daley about it. He came in and said, "Hmm, I like it!"

Blum: He said that?

Hartmann: He said that. "I like it!" Of course, everybody fell into line, and that's the way it had to be.

Blum: Here I thought you would have had a real task persuading him to accept it.

Hartmann: I think he was conditioned by that time. He was conditioned.

Blum: Were you keeping him as informed as you were keeping Picasso informed?

Hartmann: Absolutely, absolutely.

Blum: So each one was really a little prepared for the way the project was going?

Hartmann: No question. Every visit I would report to Daley. Oh, every visit. Otherwise he could say, "Listen, forget that so-and-so. Go get Joe Blow and let him do it." He might have said that, right? But he didn't.

Blum: How is it that Picasso gave the sculpture to Chicago a gift?

Hartmann: Well, one could say that's the second side to the story. We got the maquette. We analyzed the maquette and figured out how to build it. In my earlier discussions with Picasso, he expressed great interest in working with architects and engineers, and he recognized that this was a maquette and in making this into a proper sixty-five-foot-high sculpture, it would have to be a collaboration of architects and engineers. He didn't want it to be something that attempted to duplicate every thumbprint that might be on the maquette. He didn't want that. This was a maquette, a model to be followed, but to be engineered. We had it tested in a wind tunnel and all this kind of business.

Blum: Was the maquette that you brought home in bronze?

Hartmann: No, it's in metal. It's in sheet iron, I would say.

Blum: Now, is that the one at the Art Institute?

Hartmann: At the Art Institute.

Blum: It looks like bronze.

Hartmann: Well, they may have lacquered it or something, but it isn't bronze by any means. It's not done in precious metal at all. It was done by a tinsmith who lived nearby. He lived maybe a couple miles from where Picasso lived, a Mr. Tiola. Anyway, so we had to analyze how to build it, how thick the members would be, and then examine the materials. We went through an exercise to see what would be involved in building it in bronze and how thick it would have to be. Then in steel. It was obvious that it ought to be steel, and it ought to be like the building itself. I mean, this was an integrated project—one of the few times a sculpture had been done that way, I think, where it is one project. Isn't something separated by fifty years, and you have another material that's popular fifty years after the building's built. So, it was obvious that it ought to be done in steel, and, you know, some of the steel is six inches thick. The little plates that Picasso used are about a sixteenth of an inch or so,

and some of these plates are six inches, four inches thick, two inches. This was all done keeping the whole thing as quiet as we could, because we weren't out of the woods yet. We had to see how much money it would cost to build it. I determined that with the assistance of U.S. Steel, and it was in the order of some \$300,000 at that time, plus some foundation work and whatnot. I went to the mayor, and told him we would need \$300,000 to build it. He said, "Well, it would be much better if the taxpayers didn't have to pay for this, if it was supported somehow by the public."

Blum: Do you think he said it because of the nature of the sculpture?

Hartmann: No, I think he was astute. It would be best if public-spirited people come forward with the money, so that the taxpayers don't have to pay for it. It broadened the responsibility for it and made it much more palatable if we could raise the money privately.

Blum: Well, do you think if it was a traditional sculpture that Mayor Daley would have said the same thing?

Hartmann: I don't know the answer to that. I think you could possibly be right. I don't know because we didn't have to deal with that.

Blum: Well, maybe this is where he was so smart.

Hartmann: Yes. Quite right. And so, I set about to find the \$300,000. Providence had been right by my side all through this. There was a fellow who was the head of the Chicago Community Trust, Jim Brown. He has died since then. But he was head for many years. I talked to him because he, I felt, was the most knowledgeable man in Chicago as to conceive where I might find that kind of money. He became very interested to be taken into confidence about this and thought about it and came back to me and said, "I think I've got an idea." He said, why don't we approach the Field Foundation, the Frank Woods Foundation [Woods Charitable Fund, Inc.], and Brooks McCormick's Deering Foundation, as I recall. So, we did. We got them together, and I went through

the whole concept with them. Frank Woods was a wonderful chap. He was head of the Art Institute for a while, a person that you had to love. He said, "Well, I think we're prepared to give a hundred thousand," and I blinked at that. Then, Brooks said, "Well, I guess we can go along with that, too." Dutch Smith was in charge of the Field Foundation of Illinois. He said, "Well, I'll talk to Marshall, and I think we could possibly go along too." So the three of them agreed to supply the money. What could be nicer? Distinguished old, old families of Illinois agreeing to undertake this kind of a project. So, of course, I reported back to the mayor, and now we're coming to the question that you raised some time ago. I told the mayor, "This pays for the sculpture, but I have never been able to get Mr. Picasso to talk business. I've asked him countless times, so we could get this on a businesslike basis, and he has always declined to do that. You know, his works are selling for \$500,000 or more. I don't know what he might expect for this. I don't know. Why don't you give me a check for \$100,000, and I'll go and see if he'll accept a check for \$100,000. I think it would be easier for me rather than to try to negotiate this." And he said, "Okay," so he gave me a check for \$100,000.

Blum: And the city was prepared to pay for that?

Hartmann: Oh, it was a city check. It was a Public Building Commission check.

Blum: That's very cooperative.

Hartmann: It was cooperative. I thought so. So I went back to Picasso and said, "Look, we're all set. We have agreed how to build it." I think, in fact, I took a model over there, and I took the drawings and things to show how it would be changed in scale. Showed him details and all those kind of things to see if he'd approve, and he thought that was all fine. Now I said, "We've got one last thing, our business problem."

Blum: Now, by this time you were friends?

Hartmann: Since before then. We had become friends before this. Oh, for sure. I said,

"We couldn't begin to pay you for what this work represents and all this, but everybody is so appreciative and loves it so much, and I have this check which is a token from the people of Chicago and I hope you'll accept it." He took it—just Jacqueline and he and I are sitting there and he looks at the check and passes it over to Jacqueline, and she looks at the check and passes it back to him. And he said, "No."

Blum: What did you think he was saying to you?

Hartmann: He said, "No."

Blum: No, I won't accept it or no, it's not enough?

Hartmann: I fell through the floor, you know. Here I'm going to get a bill for a million dollars or God knows what, right? Back to square one. He says, "No." Then there was this dramatic little pause, and then he said, "I want this to be my gift to you and the people of Chicago," and he passed the check back.

Blum: How generous!

Hartmann: I really still get tears in my eyes thinking about it, but I hit the ceiling with that. Jacqueline said, "Yes, he wants this to be a gift." I never asked for it or never expected it or never would have expected it. You know, I didn't believe doing things like that was right anyway. I believe artists ought to be paid for what they do. But this made the whole thing absolutely perfect. It wasn't a question of an artist making money from Chicago for a public sculpture. He was contributing it, you know. And it was full of love and all this kind of business.

Blum: Well, wasn't it curious he wouldn't talk business right from the beginning?

Hartmann: No, I don't think he had in mind doing it this way right from the beginning, but the whole episode worked out so that it was a rewarding experience for him. He enjoyed it and the fruits were from that enjoyment, and that is

Picasso. I mean, he lived fully. This was him.

Blum: Well, how fortunate you were to know him in such an intimate way.

Hartmann: So extraordinary. Truly extraordinary. Yes. That was certainly some adventure.

Blum: Now, you brought that sculpture back. Was it cast in bronze?

Hartmann: No, no. It was built in Cor-ten steel.

Blum: Built in Cor-ten, installed, and I was so amused when I read some contemporary comments of 1967, especially from people in City Hall. One man, Alderman John Hoellen said, "If it's an animal it belongs in the zoo, if it's art it belongs in the art museum, but get it out of our parade ground!" He didn't want it there. It was called a baboon, it was called a dodo bird, a rusting piece of iron or steel. It was just called every name under the sun, and it has become the symbol of Chicago. They decorate it with Bears' hats and Cubs' caps. It's a treasured item in the city.

Hartmann: Absolutely.

Blum: How does that make you feel?

Hartmann: If it had been so bland that nobody had any reaction, that would have been not so good. Certainly Picasso's work frequently, if not always, has been the center of some controversy. So it all fit into that pattern beautifully. I felt those remarks were wonderful. I didn't mind those for a minute.

Blum: Did you expect remarks like that?

Hartmann: Oh, sure. And as I say, I would have been disappointed if they hadn't taken place. You know, you're not going to find universal approval of anything, especially if people have political axes to grind or constituents they have to

please or whatever. None of that was disturbing to anybody. Believe me. Not for one second.

Blum: Well, you were certainly keyed to that effort for which Mayor Daley gave you a medal of honor. What was it called? Medal of Merit.

Hartmann: Yes. I don't know where it is. It's somewhere around.

Blum: You organized the dedication program.

Hartmann: Oh, yes. We had a wonderful time when we had it dedicated. I hired the symphony personally to be there. We had a very limited budget. We invited the president and the governor and all kinds of people, and it was wonderful.

Blum: That's a copy of the program.

Hartmann: Oh, yes. I paid for the symphony, and we had Gwendolyn Brooks, but Governor Otto Kerner couldn't be there. He sent Sam Shapiro, who was the lieutenant governor, and this big committee and all that. We had flowers, you know, and I asked the city if we couldn't close the streets around it because I thought there would be a few people there, and they said, "Oh, we're not going to have that many people. We've got to keep the streets open." The streets were closed by the mob of people. I have pictures I'll show you. It was absolutely jammed with people, out of the windows and on rooftops and filling Clark Street and Dearborn Street.

Blum: Do you think people were just curious?

Hartmann: Oh, they wanted to participate. And they were curious, I suppose.

Blum: Well, that must have been a very triumphant day for you.

Hartmann: Yes, for sure. Not triumphant, but, you know, that's the wonderful thing about being an architect. You do accomplish something whether it's good or

bad or whatever, but you do and it does get finished, right? And then on to something else.

Blum: And you can see the fruit of your work?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. Exactly. I mean, that is inherent in architecture.

Blum: You know, while you were talking about Picasso and traveling to France, you said that you had to go to Majorca to see Miró about something. Was it about the Miró sculpture, which did not materialize at the time but subsequently did?

Hartmann: That's right. I was going to meet the head of Brunswick Corporation, Peter Bensinger. I was to meet him and his wife in Majorca and take him to see Miró.

Blum: How had you met Miró?

Hartmann: I had met Miró several times before that, probably in Paris or somewhere here or there, to see if he would undertake this sculpture for the court of the Brunswick Building. He agreed to that, and that's a whole other story. He agreed. By the time he came with his model, Picasso's was finished, as I recall, but he knew what Picasso was doing because we kept Miró informed about it, too.

Blum: Did they know that the two sculptures were going to be placed across the square from the other?

Hartmann: That's why Miró wanted to do it. Oh, for sure. Absolutely. That's why it's designed the way it is. But the Brunswick people fell into financial difficulties, and they couldn't afford to build it.

Blum: Well, didn't they even sell the building?

Hartmann: I think they sold the building, yes. So, it took a long time before another mayor came along who was willing to see that it got done, and that was Jane Byrne.

Blum: Oh, I didn't realize that the city administration was involved in it.

Hartmann: Yes. Oh, yes. We made a not-for-profit organization that could own sculpture that could be on private property and be designed especially for this. So, the mayor contributed \$250,000, I think, to this purpose. I think the sculpture is owned by something with some abstract title. It's on private property so it could be removed if the owners of the Brunswick Building no longer wanted to have such a sculpture there or if the building was torn down or something else.

Blum: Is this the program called Art in the Center?

Hartmann: Yes, that's what it was, Art in the Center.

Blum: Now, was this the same design that Miró was working on in the late 1950s that then materialized about ten years later?

Hartmann: Yes. The model that he made for that he gave to me, and it is at the Art Institute, too.

Blum: I see. Bruce has said and I quote, "The Brunswick Building and the sculpture were instigated by you."

Hartmann: By me?

Blum: By you. Is that a surprise?

Hartmann: Well, I don't know what that means exactly—instigated.

Blum: I don't either. That's why I asked.

Hartmann: No, I had a lot to do with both of them and he did. I should digress for a minute and say something about Bruce. I think I was responsible more than any other person for bringing Bruce into the firm and along in the firm and into the partnership, among others, but Bruce particularly, because I recognized a very unusual character. A man of very quick intellect, perception, determination with a Spanish kind of attitude about moral principles.

Blum: What do you mean?

Hartmann: Well, Picasso was Spanish, Miró was Spanish, Don Quixote was Spanish, right? These all have some kind of resemblance. I think we worked together very well and understood each other's roles and various things. I had the pleasure of going down to Peru and meeting his family and ancestors.

[Tape 7: Side 1]

Blum: You spoke about Bruce Graham, how you admired his work and understood him, and I know that he became the head of the Chicago office. Much has been written about the "Darwinian pressure cooker" of the SOM offices where only the fittest survive. Further it's been written that SOM's politics are the most vicious in the architectural world. How does one survive in that atmosphere? How did you survive?

Hartmann: I would say, first of all, that's totally ridiculous. That's journalism, and it is ridiculous.

Blum: Well, it is true there are people who left because they couldn't handle it.

Hartmann: For whatever reason. As a matter of fact, in talking to young people who would come into the firm, I would give my perspective of what their lives might be in SOM and say flatly that many, many, many bright and talented young people are not going to stay for the rest of their professional lives with

SOM. And there's nothing wrong with that. SOM ought to be a wonderful place to work and develop one's personal skills and understandings about architecture and the whole profession. But their own goals should be paramount, and many of them will leave maybe to start their own practice, maybe to join somebody else or whatever. This is absolutely normal. If you do ever leave, you'll leave with the best wishes of all of us. Absolutely. Yes, it was hard work, and we had standards to meet and we had deadlines to meet and we had a tremendous responsibility for our clients, and those were the paramount things. I don't think vicious politics entered into it at all. It was performance and the quality of performance that controlled everyone's development in the firm.

Blum: Nat Owings has written that the way in which he produced the best quality designs was by maintaining an atmosphere of creative tension. He went on to explain that when he had a project, he'd give the same project to two teams and then pick the best of what that produced. How did the office—say from 1945 through 1980, and that's a very long time, I'm sure it changed somewhat—how did it function in terms of its structure? Were there teams, were there studios? When a project came to the office, how did it get assigned?

Hartmann: Well, let me comment first upon Nat Owings comment. I don't know whether it's accurate or not. In principle I don't think it was accurate. There were one or two cases when we did have internal competitions. They were not major projects. They were important projects, but not major projects. They were stimulating and fun, but this was not a general pattern whatsoever. It was not a general pattern because projects aren't done that way. A simple project might be done that way, but most of our projects were complex and involved a long period of research and analysis with the client. I would always say that we really got married to the client. I should digress for just a second. SOM was very fortunate to have terrific clients. The great success of some projects was partially due to the quality of the client. The most successful projects were when the leadership of the client's organization was personally heavily involved in the project. That goes for Jack Kimberly, Frazar Wilde, Jim Oates. You could go on and on and this was true including foreign projects as well.

The chairman of Boots Pure Drug Company, the chairman of Imperial Tobacco the quality of the project was heavily influenced by the direct participation of the chief operating officer or the chairman of the board or whatever of the particular company.

Blum: Generally what was SOM's approach to working with a client? Did they reserve the right to make the final decision or did they feel it was the client's choice and they should do what the client insisted on?

Hartmann: In the best of the projects, the evolution from day one to the day of completion, that route was continuous. The final solution flowed out of every previous step of the way, with the client involved at each step. No sudden surprises. The client knew generally what was going on periodically all through the project, and there wasn't a question of a choice. We analyzed our own alternatives and, in some cases, reviewed alternatives with the owner. I remember, for example, on the Wills Tobacco project, we presented various industrial systems to the owner that were very important for the solution. And, yes, after discussion back and forth and all, decided on one of three different alternative solutions for the industrial process that influenced the design of the building. So, yes, review of alternatives. Absolutely. In some projects you might review whether the building was going to be a steel building or a concrete building, and you would make analyses and analyses and test it economically and functionally, and, with the owner, decide this is the one for this solution. I don't ever recall any great problem with any owners. Maybe there were some, but none spring to my mind as classic examples.

Blum: Does anyone spring to mind as the best client you've ever had?

Hartmann: Oh, gosh. Each partner would have a different response to that, I'm sure, because they had worked with this particular client more than I had or some other partner had.

Blum: Who would you select from your experience?

Hartmann: Oh, gosh! I think Leigh Block was a great client. think Jim Oates, who was the chairman of Equitable, was a great client. I think Dick Daley was a great client.

Blum: You don't have one best, it seems. We were talking about your Picasso statue—and I call it yours—but it is really Chicago's Picasso statue. In the Vandenberg Center in 1968 in Grand Rapids there was a Calder stabile. Is that there because of you?

Hartmann: Oh, no, no. That's a thousand percent wrong. Partly, I think, as a result of the Picasso, the federal government allocated or had a program of contributing some money for public art in connection with various government projects. The Vandenberg Center was one of the first recipients of a grant in that connection. The people of the town were very much involved. I can't remember their names now. You'll have to go back in the correspondence and get the names. But there were a passionate group of Grand Rapidians who wanted a distinguished sculpture for the Vandenberg Center. A committee was established that had a couple of artists not from Grand Rapids a couple of artists, a couple of people from Grand Rapids and myself, and we discussed it, and I know I proposed Calder. There was a vote and Calder was selected. Some of the Grand Rapidians were avid Calder enthusiasts from way before that time. They were very strong about it, too. Because I had some experience in these areas, was going to be in Europe, knew Calder, it was kind of automatic that I would be the one to ask Calder if he would be interested in doing a sculpture. So, I went to see him and he said yes. So, that is really exactly how it happened, and I didn't bring that to bear or anything like that. I did work continuously with Calder. We were the architects for the buildings.

Blum: Was this the city hall?

Hartmann: It was a city and state building, as I recall. Two buildings, I think. I helped to see the whole thing through to be sure that it was going to be a fine building,

a fine sculpture, and Sandy was a very good friend. It was a very pleasant experience for everybody. The result, I think, is one of the best Calders anywhere. And I think it is so regarded.

Blum: And it's become the symbol of the city. Apparently they have that as a logo on their stationery.

Hartmann: Yes. They are absolutely enthusiastic Calderites.

Blum: Well, I told you before this moment, that when I saw the title of the sculpture as *La Grande Vitesse*, I looked it up in the dictionary, and it looked like the translation literally was "the great speed." Please explain how it got the name.

Hartmann: Calder loved to play with words, and he had a fine sense of humor and *La Grande Vitesse* is Grand Rapids. That's Grand Rapids in Calderized French.

Blum: He named it?

Hartmann: Those words just came out of his mouth when we were talking one day.

Blum: How did the edition of the lithographs evolve?

Hartmann: The people in Grand Rapids were wonderful, indeed. They had to raise a matching grant of some sort, and they got Calder to make a lithograph and some of them are signed and some of them aren't. They sold those, and they did other projects to raise money, and it was very much a community effort. Calder appreciated it enormously because this was not New York. This was a relatively small city that wanted his work in a most affectionate manner. It was great.

Blum: 1968 was the same year you were involved in the Boots Pure Drug project. That was in England. And, further, there was in 1973 another project in England, Wills Tobacco Company. I think the designer of both was Bruce Graham. Will you speak a bit about those?

Hartmann: Yes. As I related previously, I was involved abroad in various activities either travel or military or SOM, and I always felt that foreign work would be a stimulant and that we could perform services abroad in a responsive manner to clients' needs and it would be professionally good in all respects. Anyway, the chairman of Boots was a curious fellow. He's still living, I believe. His name is now Lord Caufield. Boots is in Nottingham in England, and they owned literally several thousand drugstores around England and perhaps some in foreign countries by now. Their main industrial estate was in Nottingham, and they had one of the most distinguished buildings of pre-World War II architecture by a man named Owen Williams, as I recall. It was a great industrial building but their offices were in 1850 brick houses and things that were all mixed up and full of small offices, rabbit warrens, and Lord Caufield determined that they would move the headquarters from Nottingham out to Beaston, where their industrial estate was near this great industrial building. Some years previous to that, I'd been visited by a British architect named Kay Yorke. Kay Yorke was writing a book, as I recall, on apartment houses or something like that, and he happened to come to Chicago and mentioned he was writing that book. He was in partnership with a British architect named Eugene Rosenberg. Anyway, Caufield sent his people to the United States to see what office buildings were and so forth. In connection with that research, they came to see us. They liked what they saw, and we were invited to come over. So, we went to Nottingham and met with them and decided to do the building. I think it was obvious that we ought to associate with British architects, so we associated with Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall, which was the firm name by that time. We had in addition to our own engineers, British engineers. Felix Samueli and Partners were structural engineers and a fellow named Frank. He was a great fellow, a good friend of ours.

Blum: Was he British or an American?

Hartmann: No, he was a British engineer. It was a delightful experience, and we made a great building. Bruce was responsible for design. We had to convince the

employees that this kind of a building of great openness and no private offices would be acceptable. They'd all enjoy the luxury of not having little rabbit warrens. This was a major turnaround for their style of occupying offices. We designed all the furniture. The furniture was made by the Boots shop-fitting department, as they called it. They're used to doing fixtures for their drugstores, and we got them to work in making all this furniture out of English oak. It was a marvelous project.

Blum: Sounds like a very complete kind of project.

Hartmann: Yes, it was very complete, and it was quite a large one. Boots was probably one of the major industrial companies of Britain. We used to go there and they would put us up—Bruce and I. First of all, a limousine would come meet us at the train, and we'd go down to Lenton House I think it was called, Lord Boots's old residence, and we'd spend the night there. They'd pick us up, and so we were living in kind of a manor house whenever we visited. It was a guest house for the company. So that was a good experience. Then, almost the same kind of a pattern except it was more complex, with the tobacco company, a fabulous company at that time, W.D. and H.O. Wills. I don't know what it's like now but they were the largest tobacco company. I think the factory complex we designed was maybe one of the largest in the world, if not the largest. The chairman of the board wanted to examine every step in the process and see if it couldn't be done better, see if there wasn't another way to do it, a better way to do it. And sure enough, it's completely different from what they ever had before. We became very close to all the Wills people, and the research phase took a very long time. In fact, we analyzed all the facilities that were in that factory. We also analyzed cigar production, and I remember sitting with the chairman and talking about cigar production and discussing with him that the machines used in cigar production were designed probably back at the turn of the century, and they looked just like human beings. They had arms that came around and hands and whatnot, just like a human being making a cigar. He said, "Yes, it doesn't make any sense to build a new factory with that kind of equipment. We better not have that in the facility we're designing now. We'll add that to it

when we get around to redesigning the equipment to make cigars." They recognized that tobacco was becoming a less acceptable product, I guess is the way to put it. The building was designed so that it could be converted to some other manufacturing process. They didn't know whether in ten or twenty years time they would even be making cigarettes, so it was designed to accommodate probably some other food production, canning or cereal production, or you name it. It could be converted to any of those things.

Blum: That was very forward thinking.

Hartmann: Well, yes. They were brilliant people. They were one of the best companies certainly in Britain.

Blum: These two projects, the Boots Pure Drug project and the Wills tobacco manufacturing plant that Bruce designed call to mind several projects by Gordon Bunshaft. They were similar in that there was so much land, like for the drug company project, and the low, flat building design on the land. This is similar to several other Bunshaft projects. How much exchange at partners meetings was there between architects, and how much comment did one feel comfortable to offer on another's project? And do you think it likely that, Bruce and Gordon Bunshaft fed off one another in that way?

Hartmann: There was some of that. Not an enormous amount. First of all, each office by and large had autonomy for the projects that they were involved in. There was an occasional interchange of a person if it was particularly relevant to move a person to another place to work on a project. Myron Goldsmith went to California to work on the Oakland sports facilities. And there were a few of those things, but by and large, no. The partners' meetings themselves—because everybody was pretty busy really only occurred for all the partnership once or twice a year. Usually once, anyway. In later years, anyway, we'd frequently go to some foreign country. We went to Egypt and to England and to Japan and Mexico some place where there was something visual to see and share it with the partners. But we'd also take the wives to those because the wives put up with a great deal. That's a whole other part of

this that we haven't commented upon. But, you know, to be the wife of an SOM partner was not the easiest thing in the world and in fact it was very difficult. So, we'd take the wives along believing that they deserved at least this one chance to go all together. As time went on, frequently we'd have meetings with the associate partners, too, and we would have a presentation or projects by each office, and they would describe and say what they were doing and so there would be familiarity with the practice. And, believe me, as normal human beings in the same firm, each project as it developed in another office, if it was of any scale at all, would be closely examined by everybody else. There would be discussion about it but never structured discussions. Just for the fun of it.

Blum: So it is possible that an exchange in this way could help someone resolve problems or change a solution slightly or greatly?

Hartmann: No question. Yes, I mean, there was certainly interchange. We tried to work on that kind of communication. For a long time we had a publication that tried to do this called *SOM News*.

Blum: Between the offices?

Hartmann: Oh, yes. It was sent to all the offices. But it's not easy, especially when you're heavily involved. You don't have the luxury of sitting back and reflecting for long periods of time. Once a thing gets in the production mode, it's pretty continuous. We haven't talked at all about the basic shape of SOM. I think, it goes without saying that everybody recognizes that Chicago was a kind of a central office, partly because Gross Sampsell, who I mentioned before, was there and our accountants were there. Arthur Andersen and Company were our accountants, and I should pay respects to Leonard Spacek, who was the head of Arthur Andersen and a good friend of SOM. As the firm became larger and a more complex organism, the lawyers and the accountants grew in their roles as well. Phil Purcell became Gross Sampsell's assistant at Isham, Lincoln and Beale, and finally he went over to Kirkland and Ellis after Gross Sampsell died and our lawyers became Kirkland and Ellis. For many of the

years we've been talking about, the responsibility for dealing with the lawyers and the accountants and the banks and financing the firm and all those kind of things was generally mine. I don't want to miss saying that in New York, Walt Severinghaus—I'm speaking after Owings had passed and Skidmore had passed—was a tower of strength and as one of the oldest partners in the firm was a very important figure in all of its managerial aspects. We used to consult and confer all the time. It just wasn't a one-man show by any means. Sometime in the 1960s, I suppose, we were very fortunate to have Tom Eyerman come into the firm and he became a partner. Tom Eyerman concentrated on those things completely and that was all. He could spend one hundred percent of his time worrying about these administrative matters. I think, SOM was very fortunate to have such a person to do that. I haven't mentioned lots of other partners.

Blum: As long as we're talking about the basic shape of the firm, your tenure with the firm was thirty-six years. And when you joined in 1945, there were three partners, two offices, and I don't know how many employees. I have not been able to find that figure. But in 1981 when you retired, there were 34 partners, 9 offices and 2,000 employees.

Hartmann: Absolutely.

Blum: The Chicago office alone at that time, had 800 employees and 14 partners. That was reported as of 1981.

Hartmann: Is that so? I suppose, that could be.

Blum: I realize it's hard to capsule thirty-six years in two minutes, but would you comment on the changes or perhaps what you consider the most significant changes that occurred during that time?

Hartmann: I think the kernel of it goes back to, I'm sure, something that Owings said to the effect that he saw an architectural firm growing in America and its services extending in parallel to corporate development in America. In other

words, a personification of that is that the Heinz Company decided to build a factory in Tracy, California. I don't know whether this was their first such factory or not, but they decided to do it. SOM convinced them that SOM should design it and supervise it. As a result, the San Francisco office was established. In a certain sense, you can see that as the United States developed, there was a call for our kind of services. The leaders of industry would be familiar with us, because they had ties in cities where we were. As the economy expanded, SOM, I think, just about kept pace with it. This is certainly true, I think, as the foreign developments began to intertwine, our foreign participation began to grow also. One of the last things I worked on was getting the project in Korea and going over to Korea to meet with the heads of the company to undertake that project. That was one of the last ones. Probably in 1981 or so. I think it was just finished last year.

Blum: Nat Owings, in one of his last published statements or books—I'm not sure where I read this, perhaps it was in a magazine article—somehow expressed dissatisfaction with the way the firm had grown. What he said was, "We began as an anonymous group dedicated to producing a better society. Now we're order takers. As we grew larger, we became more rigid. We're not designers anymore, we're promoters, we're expeditors and all those other things." How do you respond to his comment?

Hartmann: There's an element of truth probably in everything. I don't want to comment on what's happened since I left SOM, because I don't know whether Bunshaft commented on that or not. Did he comment on the present architecture that's coming out?

Blum: I don't remember whether or not he did.

Hartmann: In the fervor of the period of my so-called tenure, I don't think Nat was talking about that. I think the things that we did in city planning and other community projects, he would approve of.

[Tape 7: Side 2]

Hartmann: The developments in the cities like Denver are an example. Outside developers saw the opportunity, they would come in and seek to build because they had skills all right. It was a skilled business. They would build an office building. They wouldn't be a part of Denver. They wouldn't have any roots there. They'd just come there and build their building. We, as architects, would perceive that this was an area of growing importance, and we'd establish an office there. We'd have some people from Denver, but certainly the leadership would come from already established offices. Most of them came from Chicago. So these offices didn't have the long continuity of thirty-six years that I had in Chicago to live with all the problems, civic problems primarily. So, there's an element of truth in some of the things that Owings said. That was shaped by the demands of the changing society that we have had recently.

Blum: Something you just said tempts me to ask a question you said you'd rather not comment on. But let me ask it and see how you respond. You gave me an article yesterday that appeared in Sunday's *New York Times*, that not only asserted that Chicago developers are using New York architects and New York architects are bringing their aesthetic into the city, but I think the crux of the article was that Chicago designers from SOM are now designing in a romantic style unlike the architectural heritage of Chicago, which was more a structural style. Would you comment?

Hartmann: Well. I don't know whether it belongs in this or not, and that's why I was curious whether anybody else had made any comments about it. As you can guess, I feel I've had a terrific life. Just a wonderful life. It hasn't all been easy, but it has been stimulating and I've done things that have been fantastic. I was also very, very fortunate to live in the architectural period from 1938 to 1988 or 1978 or whatever. One could have an architectural attitude that was strong with a high sense of principle. You only have to look at that Barcelona chair or that Brno chair over there. These are kind of the epitome of modern architecture in a certain way; proper use of materials and yet elegance and

beauty. So I'm privileged to have lived and worked in that period. Architecture does kind of mirror the civilization, and I think that period was related to what Owings said a few minutes ago. That was a period where there were strong beliefs, and we didn't work for power or money. We never made a lot of money at all ever. But we worked because that was our destiny to do so. So architecture mirrors its society, and I think the society that Owings was talking about is the society we have today, which is not as strong and motivated as it was then. I don't want this to be quoted without my permission, but I think that there is evidence that there's more decadence in society. On reflection, the war was very unfortunate, in that the orderly evolution of modern architecture in America was interrupted from 1938 to 1945. Then it began to jump in almost full-blown, and there was never time for a gradual understanding of what this was all about. It wasn't gradual at all. It had to be sudden, and people were unprepared for it. That's why the distressing interiors of American residential architecture. I mean, what you see in department stores and all that stuff today is all rubbish, you know. It never had a chance to develop in a normal, easy way. I would feel very unfortunate to have to participate in architecture with that going on today. I wouldn't enjoy it.

Blum: It's not clear as it was at one time I suppose.

Hartmann: That's right. Its principles are different. I could be wrong about it, and I am wrong about it because civilization does determine these things anyway. I don't mean that it should be a static design-continuous effort, but there should be a nice steady progression, and we didn't give modern architecture a chance. Lots of glass boxes are lousy and crummy but some of them aren't. Lever House isn't.

Blum: They certainly had come in for their share of criticism.

Hartmann: Sure, Lever House isn't bad. Inland Steel isn't bad. The Federal Center in Chicago isn't bad. The Civic Center isn't bad. Those aren't bad buildings.

Blum: But you know the pendulum swings, and the very people who are criticizing modern architecture are now being criticized.

Hartmann: The pendulum doesn't swing. The architecture changes, so it's a constant progression. You did have decadence in the Renaissance. At the end of the Renaissance was decadence, and I think there's decadence now.

Blum: You talked about the Korean project. In the 1970s the American economy turned down, inflation rose, the oil embargo, Watergate, various other national and international events lessened the demand in the United States for architecture and SOM looked overseas for commissions. Would you comment on that?

Hartmann: I don't know that it was as clearly related to the turndown of business as you suggest. Foreign work had been a small component postwar in Sumatra and in China. I'm not sure exactly the chronology of this, but the hotel in Istanbul was a great project with Bunshaft and Bill Brown. There were the consulate and America House programs in Germany. That must have been in the late 1940s, early 1950s. There was the Heinz laboratories in England that were about the same time as Boots as I recall. There were some projects in France and a project in Hawaii. It wasn't a foreign country exactly, but it was offshore. There were several projects in Australia.

Blum: You're talking about SOM's involvement overseas with all the offices?

Hartmann: Overseas from all the offices. That was going on. This was not completely a determination of, "Well, things are going bad here. We better get over there and send our scouts out and get some work." It wasn't anything like that at all.

Blum: Was there an acceleration of overseas work the 1970s?

Hartmann: Oh, yes.

Blum: And you say it was not directly related to a U.S. turndown?

Hartmann: First of all, there was a demand in the Middle East. For a variety of reasons, we would respond or would be asked to respond, would be asked to do projects. We never had any salesman that went out and said, "We're ready. Have you got a project for us?" We never had anything like that. For example, the Iranian affair, which is worth a book all by itself. There was an Iranian architect named Nader Ardalan who worked in the San Francisco office and went back to Iran and opened an office there. He got a staggering commission, absolutely staggering.

Blum: In Iran?

Hartmann: In Iran. He asked us to help him with it. I think he asked Marc Goldstein, who he liked as a friend in California. We undertook probably the biggest project in the world. It was a new town. The Japanese and the Iranians were building a petrochemical complex at Bandar-Shahpur, and they had to build a town to provide places for workers to live. This is probably one of the worst places in the world to live. I mean it's absolutely terrible. So, we set about designing a city there and actually built a few houses, I think. But, it's a long story. Ardalan got other projects, but he didn't have the capability of turning out the design documents. He was an interesting fellow but he didn't have the ability to turn out documents to build from. So, we designed several universities and other projects. We established an office in Teheran. I used to go over quite frequently to establish that office. Finally Jim de Stefano was there with twenty or thirty people. And then, of course, the Shah was kicked out, and that was the melodrama of all melodramas. We were very, very fortunate. It was nip-and-tuck, cloak-and-dagger when our fellows escaped out of Iran. Escaped! I mean, escaped. It was touch and go. Didn't sleep those nights waiting to hear.

Blum: Were you there?

Hartmann: No, I was in Chicago. That was wild. And then, of course, we worked in

Egypt, and I used to go to Egypt many times in connection with that project for the Arab International Bank. And then in Saudi, the New York office became involved with this jet airport which was also a fantastic, enormous project. The Chicago office helped on that. Faz Khan collaborated with Bunshaft on the design of the Haj terminal. We provided some services from Chicago in connection with that project. And a most interesting project, Faz Kahn was a Moslem, and we designed a new university for Mecca, which is fantastic. Not built, as far as I know, but just the effort was a charge to us. I mean, it was a stimulus.

Blum: Did each project in different countries present a whole new set of variables that had to be studied and incorporated and brought into the design and the engineering?

Hartmann: Oh, for sure. You have no idea. SOM with its basic attitude about doing research in connection with projects of all kinds, the research that went into the University of Mecca bringing Moslem scholars of all kinds to Chicago and talking. We did the same thing for a university in Malaysia. One of the reasons I liked foreign work was the stimulus that it would bring into the office: the visitors, these foreign influences and customs or whatever that would help shape the projects. All these would be a stimulus, and they always were. To see Saudi Arabian robes walking through the office was wonderful.

Blum: I think it's the theater about all this that appeals to you.

Hartmann: It's a living place just a terrific office in Chicago. We spoke, I think, more than forty languages in the office. It was just amazing, just amazing.

Blum: How involved were you with any of these? Was there one overseas project that you were involved with more than any other?

Hartmann: I was heavily involved in work in England and the work in Iran and the work in Egypt, and to some extent in Saudi Arabia. I went to Saudi Arabia several

times in connection with the University of Mecca. We were talking with Saudi architects and engineers on a wide variety of projects all the time.

Blum: Did you feel they were as adequately trained as American architects and engineers were?

Hartmann: Believe me, you can have all the training, education in the world, and you can't do anything. It's the experience of doing work, of doing real projects that is the only real training. That's why coming back to the early, early discussion we had, Eero was convinced that apprentice training is the best training for architects and in a certain sense, absolutely. Education is fine, but the apprentice training once you start to work is the real training to build buildings.

Blum: Were you convinced of that as you moved through the years in the Chicago office?

Hartmann: Oh, sure. No question. When I was there and responsible there, computers began to be introduced and you had to have an attitude about computers. I used to insist that we would digest every development, every step of the way before we would rush in and flood the office with computers. But the computer and computer training working at SOM is second to none. There's nothing like it in the world. Absolutely. At least that's the way it was anyway.

Blum: I don't know if we're going back or just moving laterally, but there were a few important planning projects that you were involved with beginning as early as 1959 with the Illinois Central Railroad air rights project for which SOM was involved in a study. In the 1960s there was the Lawndale project. In the same year, there was the Crosstown Expressway. Maybe you could comment on each of these separately, but I know that you said in your retirement speech to the office regarding the Crosstown Expressway that Daley had asked you to take on the responsibility for the urban expressway and do the best you could to have the expressway make a contribution to the

area it was to go through, and not to be a detractor. You had a lot of flack about displacing people and the looks of it. There was also some comment that what he really had in mind but did not clearly state was that he was trying to bail out the Skyway, which was apparently a disaster, by connecting the two. So, SOM was called in to develop a plan, and it was the AIA Chicago office that had come out against what had been originally proposed as a raised highway.

Hartmann: I can't remember that. I'm not going to comment on all the points you raised, but the mayor asked if we would be involved in Crosstown. As I recall, he wanted the Civic Center architects to be involved.

Blum: All three firms?

Hartmann: All three firms and there was another firm of highway engineers that were involved with us. I think we were accepted as the leaders. The Crosstown was not our idea. It had been in highway planning minds as something that would have to be done sometime, and that was the time to do it. Basically it would take traffic that wanted to go from the northwest of Chicago to the south of Chicago or vice versa, and let them go around Chicago instead of going down through the center of the city. Makes obvious sense. I think I gave Mayor Daley the idea that the reason we would be interested is if we could make the highway do more than just move cars and trucks. We could contribute to the environment rather than harm the environment and that we would study it from that point of view. I should go back just a minute. The Crosstown was a staggering project and I'm not saying it was the greatest in the world or anything like that, but we did do the best we could. It would have been a billion-dollar project. Here's the real reason it didn't go ahead, in my judgment. I mentioned Lake Meadows as being the first urban renewal project, and it involved land clearance. Quote and unquote, land clearance, right? And moving all the people off the land and reclaiming the land and doing something else with it. The next episode that we were involved in relating to that problem was the University of Illinois Chicago Circle where, again, they moved people off the land and built the university, and it caused

a tremendous outcry. Some outcry in Lake Meadows, a growing outcry in the University of Illinois that picking people up and kicking them out of their buildings and tearing them down and moving them out is a bad thing. In some cases, there's some justification for that. Then when it came to Crosstown, the biggest problem and the flack really came from the necessity of moving some people out to make room for a highway. You were taking the highway right down through a fairly densely populated section of the city along Cicero Avenue. No matter how hard you tried, you just couldn't take down stores. You were going to take down buildings. The opposition was led by people who were skilled at opposing things from that point of view. We worked like the devil. I would go to the public hearings with Liz McLean or Milton Pikarsky, and sometimes we'd be there until one or two o'clock in the morning engaging conversations. These were required public hearings, having conflicting conversations with people. These would be in schools or whatever up and down the highway. We designed an innovative highway, a very innovative highway.

Blum: You mean SOM's plan for the highway?

Hartmann: That's right. We did town planning all along on each side. We had a wide range of town planning activities. It was very innovative. There hasn't been a satisfactory urban expressway built in the United States, and I doubt that there will be. The problems that we had with that one were so big that I don't think anybody wants to tackle another one.

Blum: Well, I read the solution that SOM came up with was, in fact, a very good one. There were two traffic corridors separated by a middle that, in fact, became an industrial corridor. And to most people, at least in contemporary accounts, that looked like a very fine solution.

Hartmann: That's right. I think I can claim some credit for it being my concept. We reversed the lanes so that the northbound lane would be to the west and the southbound lane to the east, so that all right-hand turnoffs to lead to the industrialized corridor would be to the right, so no trucks or vehicles would

go out into the neighborhoods on either side. I remember having meetings with the Bureau of Public Roads and all of that. They would come to Chicago, and we had to convince them that that would work before they'd approve it.

Blum: How long before it was approved?

Hartmann: It took some time, and it was done. They accepted it and thought it was great. And it would have been a most unusual urban expressway.

Blum: Well, was it neighborhood and local opposition to displacement and destruction of neighborhoods, or was it actually something that happened between the city and state funding that forced this project to be abandoned?

Hartmann: I am relatively positive that it was the local opposition, the local opposition that was organized. Local opposition that politically made it unacceptable.

Blum: Something else that's been reported or published was that it was Daley's sensitivity to votes that this opposition represented. Was that a big factor?

Hartmann: That had something to do with it. It became a more political matter. It certainly wasn't an engineering matter. While it was expensive, that wasn't bewildering. There was money in the trust fund, earmarked for it. It could have been done.

Blum: One of the projects that you were involved with on a planning level was the Illinois Central Railroad air rights project. Now, that has been constructed, perhaps not in total as it was conceived, but it's been partially constructed. How far from the planning solution is the actuality of that area?

Hartmann: Really, it isn't a big deal. At the time it was. Bruce and I thought that the goals of the people who were going to develop those air rights wouldn't result in good planning.

Blum: You are talking about the developers?

Hartmann: Yes. The groups that were going to develop it. We wouldn't accept what they wanted to do and so, by agreement, we withdrew.

Blum: Oh. I thought SOM was called in to develop a plan after there had been a legal case where the judgment came out for Illinois Central to be able to sell off the air rights to enable developers to build taller buildings in that area on air rights. And because Mayor Daley had said he didn't want a skyscraper jungle out there, everyone agreed to allow a study to be done, and that's when SOM produced a solution.

Hartmann: Well, I'd have to refresh my mind, because I remember an episode in that connection where the developers wanted a certain density of buildings developed at a certain volume and all that, and we just couldn't accept it. It was just too dense and we withdrew. I remember that.

Blum: Was Metropolitan Structures the developer and someone else?

Hartmann: Yes. It was important, but more important from the planning point of view was the Chicago 21 Plan.

Blum: Could you speak a little bit about that? Chicago 21 was done in 1973, and it was sponsored by the Central Area Committee, with which you were very much involved.

Hartmann: The Chicago Plan Commission had divided up the city into various relatively small regions and had made plans for each of these regions except the central city region. They didn't make one for there because it was not an easy job to do, and for a variety of reasons, the Central Area Committee agreed to undertake it. SOM agreed to undertake it for the Central Area Committee, and that was agreed to with the mayor and the Plan Commission. I said, "We want to make this a plan, Mr. Mayor, that will be your plan. So we want to have you and the city government full participants in the planning," with the

objective of having the plan adopted as the plan for the Central Area. So, we worked on that very hard, and I think we did a bang-up job. Roger Seitz was in charge of our planning effort. Bruce was involved. Have you seen the book?

Blum: Not recently, but I have seen it.

Hartmann: It was very complete and well done. I think everybody approved it. It was approved up and down the line. I'm minimizing the amount of effort, but it was an enormous effort. SOM didn't make any money from it, I'm sure. It wasn't very financially sound to SOM, but it was very important for the kind of excitement that it contributed to the office, and it was our responsibility as the leading planners to do this. Just like it was our responsibility to do Sears and Hancock, you know.

Blum: That plan had something in it that I had not noticed in any of the other previous plans as before, and it was preservation.

Hartmann: Oh, yes.

Blum: It was preservation of some of the areas. Some of the spirit of preservation came into play there where it had never actually been present. You gave an address to the "Know Your Chicago" series at the University of Chicago, based on the Chicago 21 Plan, but entitled "Making Preservation Part of Progress," so as you built you also saved.

Hartmann: Sounded pretty good, didn't it?

Blum: Yes. It does. But this occurred in 1973, and you personally had been involved in preservation as far back as 1957 in saving Robie House. Were you involved with saving the Auditorium in the 1960s?

Hartmann: Yes. Well, not in exactly a happy way.

Blum: Do you want to talk about it?

Hartmann: It really isn't worth talking about.

Blum: Okay. You witnessed the Auditorium saved and rehabilitated into a viable working structure in Chicago. However, you witnessed the destruction during the 1960s of the Schiller Building, the Michigan Square Building when the wonderful Diana Court had come down. The Stock Exchange in 1972 could not be saved. So you witnessed both saving as well as the destruction of some of our most important monuments. Now, in 1972, you became the chairman of a committee with a very long name, and that is the Mayor's Committee for the Preservation of Historic Architecture with sixty-five members.

Hartmann: Was I the chairman of that?

Blum: Yes. It was reported in the papers more than once. The object of that committee was to identify certain landmarks and make them economically viable, and that was what no one could really do to save the Stock Exchange, which was a tragedy. What did the Mayor's Committee for the Preservation of Historic Architecture do?

Hartmann: Well, there was the Schiller Building with the Garrick Theatre. We were losing important buildings. We were not alone, it was happening across the country and there was growing interest in seeing if some of these could be preserved. In all candor, there were no means. This was at the beginnings of this kind of drive and interest. After the Robie House, which was successful, then the next major one was the Schiller Building and the Garrick Theatre.

[Tape 8: Side 1]

Hartmann: Well, first of all, this building was practically unused and the owner wanted to tear it down and, I think, build a parking garage or something.

Blum: A garage exists on that site today.

Hartmann: Yes, he wanted to tear it down and build a parking garage. Of course, this upset a lot of people. I remember going to the mayor and saying, "We ought to save this building" and so forth. He said, "Well, there's was no way that the government can step in and buy an old building to save it. That is not the function of government. If the people want to save it, you better get the people together and save it. I'll do everything I can to help." We then met with the owner and got him to delay his plans. He was ready to proceed forthwith, and we convinced him, you know, a lot of people think this is terribly important. We think it's important. Why don't you wait and let us see what we can do. As I said, this was in the beginning of these kinds of preservation efforts. We got it delayed for one month, then another month, another month. I forget how many months, but I know the owner told me we cost him a tremendous amount of money by delaying. He still had that building. He paid taxes and all these kind of things. As I said, we did cost him money. The only thing is that at that stage of preservation, this was kind of a necessary step to go through. Here was a building that was of some importance going to be torn down, and we'll try to fight to save it. We aren't successful, but that helps us move to the next level on the next building. I always think that out of those kind of things there is some kind of progress made anyway. It was torn down. It was terrible. This lousy parking garage was built, and that's just too bad.

Blum: And that was in the 1960s. Well, what about Sullivan's Stock Exchange in 1972, the year of the creation of the mayor's committee. I remember that there was a last minute hope by those of us who marched that maybe the city could buy it. I think the price for the building was \$8 million, six or eight, I'm not sure, but there was that hope. And, of course, that didn't happen, and the building went down. But then the committee was created.

Hartmann: That's right. The committee was created and we did this and made landmark buildings. We designated landmarks and got plaques put on landmark buildings and that sort of thing to increase the public awareness. The

preservation movement requires serious consideration of the shape of the city, and you just can't have a blanket wish to save everything if you have our kind of civilization. I think some buildings that people would like to save are going to be destroyed. I think others are going to be saved. I would hope all the buildings designated as landmarks, as top priority, would be saved. I think there's another list or there certainly should be. You're not going to save one hundred percent of all the buildings that one hundred percent of the people want, I don't believe.

Blum: Well, I think in the mandate that was given this committee that you chaired, were the words "to make these structures economically viable." Maybe, as you're suggesting, if that's not possible, the building will come down.

Hartmann: In some cases it isn't possible, and in those cases, if the society wants to save them, they might require the government to save them and through taxation pay for it. So the people make up the subsidy to save that building. That's been done, I'm sure. There's nothing wrong with that. But that's the kind of perspective, I think, that is necessary about the whole matter. Fortunately, preservation is not a bad word.

Blum: Not anymore.

Hartmann: Not anymore. For a while it was. I think that is part of this evolution that we all contributed to. Now preservation is a very honorable and respected and necessary idea thanks to all the efforts of so many people in the past to bring it to this stage.

Blum: Is it possible that something like the Stock Exchange had to come down before the thinking could change?

Hartmann: That's what I'm suggesting. That's what I'm suggesting. Too darn bad. It cost Richard Nickel, his life, too, which is terrible.

Blum: Another large and prestigious project that SOM was involved in, at least

from my point of view, was the Art Institute. Now, you personally by 1970 were on seven committees.

Hartmann: Was I?

Blum: You were trustee, you were on seven individual department committees and that was the year, 1970, when the first phase of their additions was done and that was the second floor of McKinlock Court around the garden area. Would you comment on the idea of having such connections at the Art Institute and SOM getting this project?

Hartmann: We talked about this to some extent earlier on about IIT, I think. Outside of my family and SOM, I suppose I loved the Art Institute more than any place. I was very fortunate in being able to be involved with the Art Institute. Some great friends, wonderful people. Leigh Block was chairman for a while. Bill Blair was chairman. We made more than the usual type of friendships that one makes. These were friendships with roots around a cause, roots around an institution, so I was really involved a great deal in many aspects. When the subject of the expansion came up, I didn't say, "SOM ought to do this, please give us the job" or anything like that. I did not say anything like that. I remember Leigh Block coming to me and saying that he would like to see that Walter Netsch was the design person for this expansion. I quickly decided, after some discussion with Gross Sampsell and others, that I wouldn't say that we wouldn't, but I would not participate in any decision the Art Institute made in this, and I wouldn't participate in the projects at all in any way. And I didn't.

Blum: You weren't there even after everything had been decided? You know, who was going to do the designing and SOM was going to do the project.

Hartmann: I suppose that I couldn't help but have reports about it, just the way reports about all kinds of projects would come to me. I knew that conflict of interest was bound to be an aspect to be considered, and I did everything I could to remove myself from the project and never voted for SOM.

Blum: But you wanted to.

Hartmann: I knew we were the ones to do it. No question, no question. We were the firm that could do it best.

Blum: Why do you think Leigh Block said to you he wants Walter Netsch to do this?

Hartmann: Oh, I think he respected Walter and liked him. Oh, I'm sure of that. You know, Walter went to MIT. I may have met him, but I don't think he was there when I was a student. He followed along behind, I think. I had enormous regard for Walter and still do. He has a certain great ability. Anything he worked on he worked on with tremendous intensity and complete absorption. Never knew what the clock was, and, I think, in some cases ruined people by making intensive demands. His understanding of how to plan a university and educational programming was amazing. I always felt that SOM in Chicago having Walter Netsch and Bruce Graham, Myron Goldsmith and later on some others coming along, was the greatest thing in the world. This was my idea of that group practice that I talked about earlier. Yes, in some situations, one or the other of these people might have devoured the others or they would have quit and gone somewhere else or something. I think I was successful in preserving their autonomy. Granted, there was a basic kind of friction, but it was the same kind of friction that would occur in many kinds of enterprises. I didn't feel bad about that at all.

Blum: Well, maybe that's the creative tension that Nat Owings talked about.

Hartmann: No question. I mean, in that respect, I agreed with it. That's fine, and that is normal and not unhealthy.

Blum: You know, in 1977 the Columbus Drive buildings were done. I know that the stairs going down to the lower level were pretty scary and they had to be redone. How would an office who did so much planning and research be able to account for what was clearly a mistake?

Hartmann: Mistakes do happen, absolutely. I don't know. Somebody wasn't paying proper attention and raising questions about it and examining it beforehand and all that, and so it got designed and it had to be changed. Happily it doesn't happen terribly often, but I wouldn't say it never happens. It does happen.

Blum: In the book, *Skidmore, Owings & Merrill: Architecture and Urbanism 1973 to 1983*, Albert Bush-Brown says, especially about the Art Institute project, "Between the classical Art Institute of Chicago building and the new SOM additions lies the story of Chicago's growing pride encouraged by William Hartmann, Walter Netsch and Bruce Graham, who won the confidence of the civic leaders."

Hartmann: There's something to that.

Blum: Well, your career certainly verifies that. In 1972, Bruce Graham designed the John Hancock Center and that was a project for which you were the spokesman. The idea of this growing scale was very evident in the scale and size and scope of that building. Paul Gapp says, "As the big drives out the small in a city, we lose many amenities and qualities of the urban fabric, the very reasons why people wish to live in a city." How would you respond to that with Hancock, let alone the Sears Tower, but with the Hancock in mind?

Hartmann: Well, that's marvelous because we lived in the Hancock. We had the best apartment in the Hancock. I selected it while it was being designed and built, and we were very fortunate to live there for almost twenty years, I guess. Every city is different. I wouldn't like to see Chicago superimposed on the Place de la Concorde in Paris. Chicago is a marvelous form of a city, a half a circle permitting this open influence of the lake to cut right from the outskirts down through the center and out to the outskirts again. Most cities don't have such wonderful forms. This is almost a pure and classic idea. The center has no natural features particularly. There's the Chicago River, but that isn't a dominant feature. It has no other feature. The excitement and identification

of a center is the ever-increasing density as you come down to the center. It comes from Park Forest or Lake Forest and gradually builds up and finally comes up to the Hancock and Sears. It just goes like that. So, I think if there were no tall buildings downtown, Chicago would not be as vibrant a city as it is. I'm not for all tall buildings at all, don't get me wrong, but I think in some cities such as Chicago, there is a place for some tall buildings. They do make a contribution in increasing this density and the interaction of people going to and fro and coming in their various systems of rail and transit and buses and airplanes, all seeking to get into this mixture of a city. I'm sure that Franz Schulze would agree that Chicago without Sears and Hancock at the moment would not be as interesting a city as it is.

Blum: I think his comment was more about the price we pay for that in terms of context and the loss of small things that our city has.

Hartmann: Yes. I don't know. Yes, no doubt. I mean, the city is a small shop of artisans and all this that, you know, I happen to love the *suks*. Have you ever been to a *suk*?

Blum: I haven't but I know the word means market.

Hartmann: The *suks* of Cairo and Istanbul, in various, marvelous cities in Iran, these are wonderful. Wonderful little stalls and people are banging on copper or selling spices and all this kind of thing. I love those places. It's a great tragedy that America doesn't have much of that anymore.

Blum: Not in big cities anymore.

Hartmann: Listen, we go to Bangor and in almost every store you buy the same thing in that store as you'll buy in Woodfield Mall or wherever you go in Chicago. It's the same stuff. There's very little individualism in any of these stores. In Maine we do have more crafts. We have a fair number of crafts, I mean, not very many. Not very good ones.

Blum: In 1979, SOM created the SOM Foundation. Did you have a hand in that?

Hartmann: No. I really think the creator of that foundation is Bruce Graham.

Blum: Well, he certainly is the spearhead for what it has become.

Hartmann: That's true. He talked about it, and it involved conversation over a long period of years before it kind of flowered. But that was at the end of my career. Bruce Graham was supported by Tom Eyerman, because Tom had a lot to do with the economics of the whole thing. It's wonderful the way it's flowered and taken shape.

Blum: Well, they certainly bought an important house, the Charnley House. The title has changed to the Chicago Institute for Architecture and Urbanism, but that really is the SOM Foundation that was founded in 1979.

Hartmann: Right. I really don't claim any credit for that at all. Bruce Graham deserves one hundred and ninety-nine percent of the credit.

Blum: When you retired in 1981, I understand there was a project you had in mind that you began briefly to gather information about the history of SOM and write a history? What was that about?

Hartmann: I don't know. I can't remember that.

Blum: Well, the project was abandoned after a short time.

Hartmann: Is that right? I don't know. It couldn't have been terribly important. Did I think it was important?

Blum: You must have. You had someone gathering information for you. Do you think a history of SOM should be written?

Hartmann: No, I don't. I think that everything in the world shouldn't be saved. Every

letter of every architect in the United States should not be saved. Every letter of every president should not necessarily be saved either. I do think that enough should be saved so that some future historians could find the answers to questions that will come up through historical perspective. I do want to make a couple of comments that relate to this. Libraries. Nat Owings had a very interesting notion. We never had any library in the beginning of SOM.

Blum: In the office?

Hartmann: In the office. Because he felt looking in libraries interfered with creative design, and there's some justification in that. But also he was remembering that the major offices of a previous generation were noted for their libraries, the Graham library, for example. Everybody would go to these libraries and take the books out, and they'd copy these details and then they put them on the office buildings they were building and things like that. Maybe they're doing that now. I don't know. But, anyway, that was just one aside. I do think there would be some merit that someone maybe a hundred years from now or five hundred years from now might be interested in how a firm like ours operated. And, frankly, we never did care about any archives. I don't know where stuff disappeared to, but I know we just don't have it.

Blum: There are archives.

Hartmann: There are now, yes. But there weren't in 1950. There were no archives at all. Nobody thought about anything like that. I'm sure there were tons of materials on Oak Ridge and all that.

Blum: When did they begin to be saved?

Hartmann: I don't know. I was not terribly interested in it. You can get preoccupied with all that stuff, too.

Blum: Some person with an archivist's mind must have come along at this point

because the Chicago office does indeed have an archivist and an archive, which is used all the time. It's used all the time because it is useful. Maybe not for copying details, as in the Beaux-Arts system, but for other reasons.

Hartmann: That's good. Fine.

Blum: As you look back over the years of your career, what was your greatest opportunity in architecture?

Hartmann: I can't say that there was any one greatest opportunity. I think you could have a sense that my life has had these distinct steps of evolution, and each one has just been wonderful. We haven't commented, for example, on what I did after retirement. Well, we went and lived in Denmark for a year, and we had a boat built in Finland, and we sailed the boat back from Finland across the ocean and had it here in Castine last year, a little sailboat. That just comes into the matter because each one of these is a different period in terms of length of time, but each one has been a special experience. I've been fortunate to be alive in this era, and I've been fortunate in having the opportunities as they came along. I never dreaded waking up in the morning. Never dreaded that. I don't mean everything was milk and honey and a bed of roses and all that kind of stuff, but it was a real world. You had a responsibility to do what you could in it. My life is so full of highlights that I couldn't pick out one.

Blum: You are a very, very fortunate man.

Hartmann: I think I am. I think I'm the most fortunate man that I know of. Don't you think so?

Blum: Yes, I do. The way you express your joy about your experiences in your life, indeed it's true. You know, one thing you did mention along the way and it's true, we didn't talk about it, and if you care to would be just fine. What impact did your career in architecture have on your family?

Hartmann: I'll just make this brief just because it ought to be in the record, I think. I was

married in 1941 to a very fine person whom I'd known while I was at MIT. We were married for three months and the war broke out and within another six months I was gone to Europe for three years. Well, I wasn't alone, but it was tough on any marriage. Everybody isn't exactly the same person after three years of that kind of experience. Then the intensity of work at SOM and all that, and the marriage just didn't work out. We had three children, and they are fine children. My first wife was a fine person, excellent person, still is. I have a second wife, and we are very happy with one son.

Blum: I've been in your home for three days now, and it shows. Are any of your children interested in architecture? Did they become architects?

Hartmann: I have not encouraged or discouraged them, and none have proclivities in that direction.

Blum: For what would you like best to be remembered?

Hartmann: I don't believe in that kind of stuff. Truly. I don't have large sentiments so far as I am concerned personally. I don't want to be remembered at all. I don't care. I really don't mind not being remembered.

Blum: I don't think you have any control over that.

Hartmann: People don't have to clutter up their minds with me. What do I remember of anybody? Hope some of it's pleasant and kind of nice. That's all.

Blum: If you had an opportunity to speak to a group of young architects, based on your experience, your life, your career, what would you tell them?

Hartmann: I still do. I had a call from a student at Berkeley just the other day on the telephone, wanting some advice about something or other. First of all, in architecture there are a thousand careers possible. Tom Eyerman's an architect. Bruce Graham's an architect. Somebody else who does individual houses is an architect. A preservation worker is an architect. So there are a

thousand possible careers, but you have to have determination and a strong sense of commitment. Curiosity and all these things to subject yourself to entering this profession. While today you don't have to have the same attitude about design that we had in our period, you've got to have some attitude. It really is a wonderful profession because you really can't think of success so much because you're too darn busy. You're just too darn busy to think of it. Financially it is not a great profession at all. It's a terrible profession financially compared to the responsibility and the work that's done. It is not a lucrative profession.

Blum: Well, you seem to have enjoyed it.

Hartmann: A baseball player can make over \$2 million a year if he's good.

Blum: Well, that's a glaring inequity in our society. That's true.

Hartmann: In one year. It would take us a lifetime to make \$2 million.

Blum: We've talked about so many things. I think we've not only done a representative sampling of your career, but maybe even beyond that. Is there something that you would like to talk about that I haven't thought to include?

Hartmann: I'm exhausted.

Blum: You're entitled to be exhausted.

Hartmann: We never did talk about John Merrill, Sr., very much. Never did talk about problems, and there have been problems. No, I think we've done enough.

Blum: Mr. Hartmann, thank you very much. You've said your success or whatever you call it is due to your good luck. In my opinion, you made some of that good luck. You made the most out of some of the good luck.

Hartmann: Well, Betty, thank you very much for coming to this beautiful, little village of Castine and helping me share these ideas and thoughts.

Blum: This has been a treat for me. Thank you.

Hartmann: Okay. You bet!

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WILLIAM HARTMANN

Born: Springfield, New Jersey, 6 May 1916
Died: Castine, Maine, 4 March 2003

Education: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, B.A. Architecture, 1938

Work
Experience: Hogg & Campbell, Boston, 1938
Stone & Webster, Boston, 1938-1939
Donald des Granges, Boston, 1939
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1945-1981

Teaching
Experience: Boston Architectural Club, 1938

Professional
Associations
and Service: American Committee to Improve Our Neighborhoods, Board of Directors
and Executive Committee
The Art Institute of Chicago, Board of Trustees
Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Director, 1956-
1960
Illinois Institute of Technology, Board of Trustees
Mayor's Commission on Chicago Architectural Landmarks
Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council, Board of Governors

Honors: Fellow, American Institute of Architects, 1963
Medal of Merit, City of Chicago, 1967
Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, Lake Forest College, Lake Forest,
Illinois, 1968

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