

TRANSCRIPT

SCRC Series: Lewis Clarke Oral Histories Project – MC 00191

Field Notes: Patrick Horsbrugh (compiled February 6, 2009)

Interviewee: PATRICK HORSBRUGH, 30TH LAIRD OF HORSBRUGH

Interviewer: Yona R. Owens

Interview Date: Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Location: South Bend, Indiana

Length: Part 1 of 3: Approximately 79 minutes

This interview for the Lewis Clarke Oral Histories Project was conducted at Patrick Horsbrugh's home. Born in Great Britain, Horsbrugh started his career in London but soon gained international recognition for his work on High Paddington and the New Barbican. He ties into Clarke's life as a fellow student at Harvard in 1951 and as a guest lecturer at North Carolina State University's School (now College) of Design while Clarke was a faculty member. They kept up their correspondence for the rest of their lives. Horsbrugh, 89, never married, and has no children.

YO: This is an oral history with Patrick Horsbrugh at his home in South Bend, Indiana on Tuesday, January the thirteenth, 2009 and I'd like to start off by asking where are you from?

PH: Where am I from?

YO: Yes.

PH: Scotland, southern Scotland. The family is—the whole name is Horsbrugh of Horsbrugh of that ilk. I am the thirtieth laird and the lairdship is centered in Peeblesshire on the banks of the river Tweed and Horsbrugh. And Horsbrugh is a place and it takes its name from the family and the first recording of the family is at the making of the Charter of the Abbey of Melrose in 1203. And the name at that time was Sir Simon d' Horsbragh and the spelling of the name has varied throughout history. And the lands of Horsbrugh are no longer in the family now and the family is spread of course from Peeblesshire to Pfeiffershire and the Abbey of Saint Andrews, which is now Saint Andrews University and therefore we held at one time the landscape that forms the world's first golf course.

YO: Ah.

PH: But all that has disappeared into history and there were two castles that commanded the banks of the Tweed, which were abandoned as habitations before 1700 and a house was built called Pern House. The name Pern being taken from the hill behind the house also on the banks of the, of the thing, I've got sketches of those. And Pern House was built in 1700 and enlarged in 1734 with two magnificent rooms, one a dining room, which was paneled from floor to ceiling and then the ceiling was curved, coved and plaster worked and that was occupied until the 1930s. And in 1939 or 1940, it was commandeered as a military base and headquarters for Scottish and Polish regiments at the beginning of the War and served as a training ground during the War and

virtually destroyed so that it was never rebuilt and was demolished in 1950, 1948. I sketched it in 1948, I think, and it was demolished in 1950. And the gardens and the parks and the lawns down to the river were all over built as an extension of the local town village of Innerleithen and the park now is known as Horsbrugh Avenue. And it's an avenue of semi-detached council houses. The house itself was thought adaptable for a school, but it wasn't. So it was demolished in total and so that's the end of that story.

The house in, Pfeiff at Cooper, outside Cooper, was a smaller house but a house even older. It was 1650 was that and enlarged in 1850 and that had a medieval doocat because doves, pigeons were a winter food. So, most houses that size had their own winter food supply in a large building, an entirely separate building, for the housing of doves. And in Scotland it's referred to as a doocot not a dovecote.

YO: Oh, I didn't know that.

PH: That house is still alive and the last time I saw it is owned by a magnate, an oil magnate in the Scottish oil fields off in the North Sea. So that there's no Scottish properties anymore and I'm the last laird, in succession to my father who was the twenty ninth laird. So that's the story of, that's the background.

YO: And so, where were you born? Where were you born?

PH: Oh, I was born in Ireland because my father was in the Canadian forces and he was caught up in the Flanders War and thought that there was no money by that time because his elder brother, my uncle, came to restore the family fortunes in America and married a wealthy [cat interruption]. He came to America and married the only daughter of the leading banker of Philadelphia and she was a lady apparently of great beauty. She was a Gibson girl. Gibson was the great cartoonist of that day and I had in this room until somebody came and bought the things [cat interruption] and he took books without my knowing and they were four volumes of Gibson sketches. [cat interruption]

So he married her and took her off to live wild on the high veldt of South Africa. My father joined him there while they hunted big game and they got big game, looking for special big game specimens for British museums. And I met their postman when I was in South Africa. He came and introduced himself because my uncle wrote the definitive books on South African game birds and a man in his regiment was a nuisance, but a very good painter, and he commissioned him to do the paintings for these books. I gave the original paintings to the South African Museum as a gesture of confidence in the emerging South Africa. This was during Apartheid, which was some risky thing to do, but that's where those drawings are now. And that uncle was killed in the 14-18 War after he'd retired from Africa and all of his wife's money had bought a house with seven lakes in the south of England and decorated these lakes with South African ducks and birds and crown cranes and so on, on his lawns.

YO: Oh, wow, beautiful.

PH: But when he died, she saw to it that my grandmother was left comfortably in London and went back to America and remarried. And so far as I know there was no further connection

between the families because we had gone to Ireland to find peace and to live in quiet only to find ourselves in the thrall of the IRA. So that was another story, but I was born in Ireland.

And had there a large house and garden with orchards and my father reared exotic Chinese pheasants. I've got in the next room some examples of those pheasants. But they taught me a sense of pose, a sense of behavior, natural behavior because I simply as a child would watch these birds and you could just watch them, their behavior, long tails and beautiful plumage. I wore one of their crest feathers in my hat and so on. So it was a very happy time and the landlord of the village preferred to live in England so it left their estates in the village of which my father simply took over. And therefore I had my lessons in these wonderful parks, artificial eighteenth century landscape parks with avenues and artificial ruins and tempiettas and the house eventually became government house for the governor of Northern Ireland who my father knew and would shoot with. So that he virtually became squire of the village although we didn't own the village, but my mother was of such a nature the village people simply in the absence of the landlords—they lived in England, or at least they had another house in Ireland—but the village simply took to them and therefore our house became the focal point of the village.

And my mother opened a library in the house so it became a village library so the village people were in and out and my particular friend was the village idiot who pumped the organ in church and was my sole source of enjoyment or at least otherwise in church because we sat in a pew. My mother had curtains drawn and the only light in the pew was through the moth holes in the curtains. And I had to sit up straight and pay attention and above all don't fidget—

YO: Right.

PH: —on a stool while my father slept on a sort of sofa in the pew and I had to arrange the prayer books for any visitors that were there. But of course I couldn't see what, out of the pew curtains. So we sat in sepulchral seclusion in the pew, but periodically I knew—because the organ was pumped by hand, a magnificent Schmeltzer organ of 1775, '76, huge church like a cathedral, built by the last secretary of state for the colonies, the American Colonies. So it was all on a palatial scale and that was church, which we'd have to go to periodically. My mother would look up at breakfast and say I think we ought to attend the church. And so, that was a ceremonial and I would have to carry a leather package of a ivory bound prayer book to church.

YO: Oh, my.

PH: And this wonderful avenue up to the church with high lime trees buzzing with bees, so the whole avenue hummed up to the church and this terrific spire. Any how that was very enjoyable time, but it gave me sense of land, with landscape and absolute privacy because the parks were walled twelve foot high and I think one park had twelve miles wall around it and it contained another lake and that lake flowed through the village into that lake and so on. And my father would stock those lakes with exotic water fowl [inaudible] and the swans were a nuisance because the swans were hostile to any other breeding birds on the lake. So, swans on the lake and the pheasants in the gardens and so on, I had under my father's instruction because he also was his own taxidermist. He had to be because he led an expedition to Papua, New Guinea and Australia to bring back birds of paradise alive for the London Zoo in 1909, 1910, which he did with great difficulties. And these magnificent birds and you can see some of the illustrations of them in the next room, but those birds—since he was his own taxidermist—because he skinned

the birds that were killed that he was trying to capture alive and had to train the natives to bring them back alive because once they would capture a bird alive then tie it's legs together, put it on a stick, and haul it miles swinging on the end of a stick. And of course by the time they reached his camp they were dead. But that was a tragedy, but he skinned them you see and brought back trunks of bird's skins, which he and others later mounted. And many of these he mounted them in the house so the house was decorated with these exotic birds of paradise.

YO: So, that's what you grew up with were all the birds?

PH: All these birds, you see the halls and the staircase halls were family pictures and the entrance hall was on both sides—there were three tiers of antlers. They were specimen horns because they were shot specially to measure the distance between point and point of the antlers, different species, springbok, Thompson's gazelle and they went—lists of them three stories high and I had to climb on ladders to dust them and put moth balls in their ears.

YO: Oh, my.

PH: And they filled the house and then the rooms very often had cases, glass cases of these exotic birds of paradise many of them hanging upside down which allowed their plumage to flow over and display and when they—he sent them to some museums and so when the museum director said that they arrived damaged. They were hanging upside down. He said, yes, that's what they do. But the museum director didn't believe him so there was great laughter about that. But anyhow, the inside of the house, the big kitchen became his studio for all his work because he did small animals as well and therefore he would mount these cases or mount the animal with great attention to the base or the foliage of the case. And I can remember my governess or several governesses were used as a beast of burden. I would go out for walks, which meant walking for the whole afternoon in some magnificent landscape in which I would be looking for mosses or twigs or various things and I can remember bringing back a wonderful bough that did this and gave it to my father and saying, here is a perch for the hawk that you are now mounting. You see and he took it with great grace and said, yes, the shape he could mount it this way and that way, but it was something wrong. Well, what the hell is wrong with that? It's the right shape. It's not too big. It's not too heavy. It can be mounted thus and base and so on. He said, yes, but there's something wrong still. You see and finally I got of him what was wrong. He said, this bird and that stick could not possibly meet. That stick is a particular branch, which was growing and I got it on the ground. Yes. So, what's wrong with that? Well, that bird comes from Norway—

YO: Ah.

PH: —and that plant doesn't grow in Norway. I cannot unite them artificially.

YO: Oh, wow.

PH: Well, that's the kind of lesson that I was learning every day. And for instance another amusing breakfast table thing, my father complained to my mother at breakfast that there must be elephants or something in the lower park. Oh, and she sensed trouble and looked up at the

ceiling, and elephants? Yes, because I was carefully taught that in those days grass was cut by horses wearing leather shoes to prevent the damage to the grass. And I, of course, would choose a long grass place and the rugs would be spread in the long grass where we sat and lessons continue so long as it didn't rain. And then if it rained we'd have to skedaddle and go and take refuge in a tempietta or an artificial ruin or something that had the roof or a grotto, there was another favorite place. Because a grotto was filled with wonderful hexagonal stones, which were used as seats and we could sit on the stones instead of on the ground. Well, it was my instruction that having taken up the rugs, I would have to go around and what I call brisk up the grass with my hands and get the grass to stand up as though I had not, never been there.

YO: Right.

PH: You can't inhabit a landscape and leave traces of humanity. An animal doesn't do that and a human shouldn't. So that's the kind of lesson, landscape lesson that I learnt from a very early stage.

YO: Do you—

PH: Unless the grass had been cut and then it was dried, left on the ground to dry and then it was hay then I could do what I liked on the hay. That was marvelous because the hay would be gathered up for the stables.

YO: Right.

PH: So that the basis of my instinctive value about these things.

YO: Do you think—

PH: Because my father was a brilliant shot and therefore while this was going on he was traveling and staying at all kinds of places to draw in the local shoots. He was a wizard at snipe, which are birds that flies like that or woodcock which flies between the trees and he could bring these down. And then for his own enjoyment would mount them and send them to some museum or keep them in the house because the bedrooms and so on were devoted to one room for geese, one room for duck, one room for pheasants, one room for owls and reptiles.

YO: Do you think that you became interested in landscape architecture before you became interested in architecture?

PH: Oh, yes, because landscape was—I was in it all the time either around the house in which we lived or we went as curiosities to see the lakes. What was wild, what was going on in the lakes you see and then when the big house became government house and the Duke, the local Duke was made governor my father knew him of course because he went to their places for shooting. So that I as a child was accepted by the staff of that house and went anywhere I wanted, any time I wanted, and when we left out I went back on a sentimental visit you see and then the new governor, whom I did not know, he came to approach me as a stranger in his own park and we had this thing and he asked my advice about the cherry trees. I had been very critical about these

cherry trees until I realized he was the new governor. But any how, that was the kind of thing so that in that garden they had another very large walled garden, which was a center piece of that was a wonderful shell house of an eighteenth century shell house—

YO: Shell?

PH: —which was a summer house of which the interior walls and ceiling were covered with sea shells, which were mounted in a pattern and so it was with different varieties of sea shells, hence the name shell house and it was a thing of great fashion in the late eighteenth century that any large house had. One of the summer houses was decorated as a shell house or deliberately built as a shell house. Or a shell house was built as a grotto and then plastered and then decorated with all these shells. It was a thing of fashion and tea was served in it and so on. So that I read the centuries together and therefore I knew instinctively the eighteenth century and nineteenth century and so on and then that's why I became a patron of the Irish Georgian Society by an extraordinary man still alive called, Desmond Guinness. They've just sent me a fifty volume of the houses that he has been saving because at breakfast, I can remember distinctly, my father would read the paper, the newspaper, aloud and my mother would read letters that was her business at the other end of the table. And they would—she would break into his things with some words of distress, oh, here's a letter reporting that the so and sos had been burnt out mentioning a house in the south of Ireland—

YO: Right.

PH: —which had been burnt and they'd been lucky to escape with their lives. And one of the one such house was known to my father. He was the Ulster King of Arms. The system of arms is a medieval system. You can see my arms in the hallway there. England and Scotland and Ireland have their own arms organizations and this man was the Ulster King of Arms and lived in the south of Ireland and he was burnt out. In fact, he was shot while his house was burning in front of his wife.

YO: Is this when your family decided to leave?

PH: No, they didn't leave. They left only with regret because I couldn't be educated in Ireland anymore. If I was going to be an architect and by that time this had grown until at twelve I suddenly saw wonderful photographs of English cathedrals and that did it like that. I would have to be an architect. And there wasn't any school of architecture in Ireland so we had to go to London for that and that meant we couldn't, we couldn't sell the Irish house and we'd inherited another lovely house in Dorsett, which was my English home because I was partly educated in England. Again, in a wonderful estate and a river bank and my aunt in this house, is dated 1860, no 1654 and it had its ghost. I never saw the ghost, but the ghosts were seen by visitors and the staff and my aunt would have no nonsense with anybody let alone a ghost. So I don't know what she did with the ghost, but there was a cat and a dog that certainly saw the ghost. And the staff certainly saw the ghost frequently. And visitors would come upon the ghost—all was in one place by the chapel. The house had its own chapel and the chapel was at the corner of the house and therefore the corner of where there were two gardens came together and that's where the ghost seemed to be seen only. It was a child, a girl of twelve, and golden hair and everybody

thought the child was my sister and wondered what she was doing there and then she vanished. But why was she in such a funny dress? And all the reports reported this golden haired child wearing apparently a rich velvet dress of a plum color, but a very broad lace collar and very fat lace cuffs, long floor length dress in the garden at that corner. I looked for it every time I used the garden, it was a beautiful garden. It was near the town so it was always used for fêtes and village—

YO: And this is where you lived when you were going to school?

PH: That's when I lived in England because I was in school in England.

YO: Where in England were you in school?

PH: That was in Dorsett.

YO: Dorsett.

PH: South of England, south coast of England. So that was a very happy house, happy to me. My mother visited us as little as she could and I never knew why, but she wasn't happy there. And when we came to live in England she, my mother, inherited that house and we went there because we hadn't sold the Irish house, we had to sell this house, war clouds were gathering. I was already in uniform and my father—the house is in perfect order and we kept that staff while we were closing the house and my father said, we'll have the house inspected to make sure the structure was sound before selling it. And I knew the house personally upstairs and down and there was a loose brick in the chimney, one of the chimneys which went through the roof like that, the chimney there the bricks were loose and the roof was one of my playgrounds. So that I knew this brick was loose, but it never occurred to me to move it. When the builder came to see my father in the library he gave him a crumpled piece of parchment and reported that the house was in perfect order. There wasn't anything that needed doing except that in examining the roof he found a loose brick, scraped the, removed the brick chamber to cement it and put the brick back in order and scraped out this parchment. It is about a piece, when opened it was about that size. So, my father gives it to me and I see it's in Latin so I start off [recites a generic Latin exchange]. My father wouldn't stand for that nonsense. Don't be so silly: what does it say? And I—my Latin failed me and so I redeemed the situation by saying, I'll send it to the British Museum for translation and did. The translation came back and it was a confession to murder. It says, I, so and so, confess to murdering by smothering so and so, the daughter of the household.

YO: So there was the ghost?

PH: The twelve year old daughter. So the ghost was the, obviously the ghost of the murdered child because the parchment said twelve year old. I think mentioned her golden hair or something so there's no doubt about it. The servant and so on confirmed yes, that's a child. Well, luckily that was in the library. At lunch my father told my mother about this note. Luckily she was sitting down at the table. I thought she was going to faint and my mother was not the fainting kind. She went quite white and held onto the table and she said that's why I can't live in this house. I've never been able to sleep here. I've always had this terrible sensation of

smothering. And there was the parchment on the table, at the other end of the table saying murdered by smothering.

YO: Right.

PH: So my father said, well, this is a historic document it must go with the house. Whoever purchases the house must know and I had never seen such thing. He hadn't. My aunt had never mentioned it, I supposed in difference to myself, but anyhow that's a story, but foolishly I never had the wit to have the document photographed if we were not going to keep it. So this shock and my mother's response—she of course would not mention any ghost and that kind of thing and my father of course was well acquainted with ghost. Every place he stayed in Ireland had a ghost you see—

YO: Right.

PH: —so he had a dinner table joke. He asked how, if they wanted to get rid of it? And everybody said, yes. So he said, well, it's quite a simple way to do it. The next time you see it, ask it for a subscription and you'll never see that ghost again. Well, that made everybody laugh and he was invited to dine again. But the point is that that was his attitude. But it taught me something that I didn't realize for a long time I suppose that any place has atmospherics simply as a place. And this is why the atmosphere of this house, which I bought in a flash, has been so benign. All the students and the visitors and so on, have all taken to this house, everybody said how well they slept and you just confirmed that. I've had no difficulty here and it's been a happy house so that as you can see, there's no nonsense with that. [cat interruption] So—

YO: So let me—

PH: —this has given me another dimension of which I'm very much concerned particularly with people and your background for instance when you told me that you had a sense of Indian blood.

YO: Right.

PH: Well, that simply raises with me all sorts of questions that you may be sensitive to things which are not common currency in [inaudible] nowadays.

YO: Well, if, if you don't mind we can cover that when we're doing another session, if you don't mind?

PH: Yes.

YO: Let me get back to my list of questions.

PH: Of course, well, you, you asked a question and you see it dithers on, but it means that I have an endless debt to heritage, which is not fashionable now and so—but it has colored my thinking ever more deeply. This is why I'm not hostile to Notre Dame because when I resigned here I

stayed here not knowing why. Now I think I'm beginning to realize why, but I will not go into that topic.

YO: Let me go back to the war years, to World War II.

PH: Yes.

YO: Did you matriculate before you went into the service or did you matriculate after?

PH: No, both. I began the thing at the Architecture Association, which was the architectural center in those days—

YO: And that was located where?

PH: And that I did two years there and therefore was in uniform while there and was called up immediately on the day the war declared in fact. I heard about the Chamberlain speaking of course while I was walking in a pavement to my headquarters. The window was open because it was a September morning and that's where I heard it. I stopped on the pavement to listen. And then I was in the Army, then I was in the Air Force and then I was in the Navy. After my crew were killed, I was sent as an observer to the Canadian Navy on the first Canadian aircraft carrier. So, in fact, I had experienced and embraced all three services. And of course that, by the nature of the friends that I had in each of those services, that taught me such as I know of human kind and was an essential part of that education. Because I was in the services, in uniform for seven years. And of course traveled widely—Canada, Africa, Central Africa, the Sahara, Sudan, South Africa, India, and what is now Pakistan, and Burma.

YO: And you were sketching during all that, right?

PH: Only very rarely. I've got my Indian diary, which of course was illegal, but I did do some sketches in the diary and I did various sketches. I started to do camouflage in India, camouflaging the aircraft. But since moving about, I only did that as sort of a hobby, but it was a very interesting thing to do because it made me study the Indian vegetation that was the thing. And what I did was simply take tough cactus leaves and string them on a wire and hung them up. But the wire threw a shadow which disrupted the aircraft form and it was a very simple and very effective way—the photograph showed it the, the effectiveness of these cactus things. They didn't throw much of a shadow, but it was a disruptive shadow and since it was a line it disrupted the form of the aircraft from the photographs of the day, which of course were only black and white. And of course being in a different climate, seeing different vegetation and so on, it opened my eyes because my father knew about all this. My father and my mother were born in India and my mother went back to India. My father never went back to India. He went to Africa and then he went to Australia [inaudible] and then of course he ended up in Canada and that's why he was in the Canadian Army. He was an outdoorsman you see and a traveler and an explorer.

YO: He sounds like a fascinating person and a lot of influence on you.

PH: Oh, he was. Everywhere he went he just made friends and it's that kind of attitude to other people that I suppose I've inherited. But the villagers they absolutely adored them. They went everywhere. I was sent everywhere and the police and so on, he was head of the police simply by affection and he, if anybody of note came to the village he entertained them and had the police parade for them and he was in charge of the B specials, which was the civilian police because of the IRA and all that kind of thing.

YO: Right.

PH: So, there was always a to-do. They were on duty naturally if any villager, at least any visitor of importance came. So that I grew up in an atmosphere of nothing but happiness and good humor and both of them were brilliant humorist. I mean it was laughter from morning until night. And anyhow, it gave me a vision of, a prospect of life which I hope I've expanded wherever I've been. And I've certainly inherited that aptitude for friends of which you are the latest addition.

YO: Well, thank you very much. Let me go back to when you were, when the war was over and you were and you went back to school.

PH: After seven years I was gradually released, but I couldn't, I didn't have a crew at that time because my crew were killed at the end of war, hence my Canadian Navy experience. But when I was on land, I simply was not fully employed on campus. So, I went in uniform downtown and worked voluntarily in a planning office.

YO: And this is in London?

PH: No, this was in Middlesbrough, which was Britain's equivalent of Pittsburgh. Much damaged by war, so I had a great deal to do with the Middlesbrough Survey and Plan, which was unique because of the nature of the man in charge. He didn't just plan or re-planned. He surveyed on a house by house basis that entire town revealing terrible scenes of impoverishment, disruption and whatever because none of the nineteenth century houses built for the industrious had water attached to them. They had to go out into a yard for domestic water, out into the yard for domestic refuse. And this was only gradually being restored. Well, he redesigned the city on the basis as the name said, "survey and plan." It was re-planned because of the deficiencies revealed by the survey. Absolutely unique. Well, that gave me a jolt and I did the modeling of all that. I did the sketching of historic buildings to make sure that they were properly understood and surveyed. That is the churches and any historic buildings and the parks and all this other thing, all that fell to me. Then—

YO: And what kind of training did you have that prepared you for that?

PH: No training at all except two years of architectural training. So, this was on the street side, on the drawing board side of actually doing something, and trying to persuade people that were in fact trained, what should be done because they had just been trained to be trained. They didn't know what to do in practical terms. Max Locke, the planner in charge—now dead, realized what I was doing and left me to do it because there wasn't anybody else to do it and it had to be done and therefore I thought that plan, of which I've got the volumes of it here, has some of my

drawings in it, was a better plan and did Max Locke's pioneer service better because it involved history. It involved the nature. It was a river town and so on. It was a wonderful service for me and through that I met John Piper, the artist of some of these paintings. The finest painter in Europe at that time, John and I became friends until he died, his bronze that I had cast—a portrait—just before his death in that room. So everywhere I went it produced a crop of friends which remained. I was friends with Max Locke until he died. And then you see I then was out of uniform but couldn't get into the school because the school is absolutely jammed with the existing students that couldn't be thrown out and ex-war students like myself, which had the right to get in because it was a private school and a great fuss because the socialist government was governmentalizing all the private schools—but this private school was exceptional in so far that it was organized by students and remained under student control.

YO: And the name of the school is what?

PH: The Architectural Association and that's all. It was an association of students and they engaged their principal as a director who was of course the finest architect that they could find and notice in the times that somebody-somebody, the leading architect had been commissioned by the students of the Architectural Association to become their principal, their umpteenth principal—great celebrations and so on. Nine months later a smaller notice in *The Times* that so and so had been summarily dismissed [Laughs] at the pleasure of the students and he was thrown out on the street. Not good enough. And we would look again.

Well, no government would stand that kind of thing, but eventually the rows were so great and that they did and they still are a private organization. But there that's another story. Well, I worked liked a slave there and became the man—I was told by the faculty that I was the selected head of the school and was due to receive a French degree simply by that position. I had a parade because I thought that architecture is a third dimensional operation. That you begin to design something by modeling it and the model will show you its deficiencies. And you will start again and start again. Other people were taught to draw and do a design and then a hectic, hectic, hectic rush to model a design only to find the errors in it, which the model would reveal. So I had my last examination—was a parade of twenty nine friends carrying boxes which when opened became the base of a model inside the box of everything that I had done before the war and after the war. So I had a complete—it filled the entire library of twenty nine models of things that I had designed in model and made in model and then drew, which had won attention, which in those days was a red star and most of my works had that honor.

Well, they had got for that thing the prime minister to give the prizes. They had forgotten to consult with me on that matter to find out whether or not I had voted for that prime minister, which of course I had not.

YO: Oh, no. [Laughs]

PH: I took aircraft and was—at the ceremony—was flying to France escaping. So, I had a good excuse. I was abroad. [chuckles] If you were abroad, that covered everything, every sin, if you went abroad. That was, that was what you did. [Laughs]

YO: Well, that was good.

PH: Well, it meant that they made a communist head prize. I didn't get the French honor at all.

YO: Oh.

PH: But then you see I was dumped on the street as a qualified architect, no job, no prospect of a job. So I thought well, that's all very well, what do I do with architecture? And somebody said to me, architecture builds the town, didn't you know? And I didn't. So I then became the first student with another friend at the first school of architecture in London—school of planning in London where Bill Holford from South Africa came from Liverpool to establish this school at the College of—University College in the University of London. I and this other student were his first students. Instant friendship with Holford, a most marvelous man and I was at Holford's death bed at the end of his life [Sir William Holford]. I happened to be in London at that time, wanted to see him and some friend said, oh, you better go to that hospital quickly he's dying. So I went to the wrong hospital. They found where he was and there he was dying at the hospital of which he was the planning architect for it's restoration with all these great doctors and so on. And he'd been aging ill for a long time with these doctors, his own board members. And they're talking nonsense to him and he was in their office waiting for an interview, and an intern passed in front of him and looked at him, and he stopped to discuss his situation said, you are to come into my office, I want to examine you at once. And had him into his office, examined him carefully, and said, you've got a few weeks to live. Who's your doctor? And then he mentioned this, this head man and of course the student was petrified of that and said, well, you better see him at once. So he arranged this in a state of alarm and he died luckily a few days after I arrived in London.

YO: But he was your teacher when you were going to the planning school?

PH: He was the man who taught me planning. Well, by that time you see, I was then engaged at the Festival of Britain, which was the great festival to celebrate the 1851 Crystal Palace Festival as to try and show the world what Britain was recovering industrially from the War. And I was engaged there because I was also engaged on the coronation decorations in Oxford Street. You see by that time, I had come back from the scholarship of landscape in Harvard in disgust, Holford being one of my guarantors. Thomas Sharpe, the president of the Town Planning Institute, had been another and Geoffrey Jellicoe, whose name is known to you, was a third. You see, and I thought because of the distinction of those three people that's why I was chosen.

YO: To go to Harvard?

PH: To go to Harvard. Well, I wasn't surprised at that until I got to Harvard you see and realized that I was now with people that were already partly or totally qualified and trained in landscape architecture. Why didn't they get the scholarship first that was offered to me? Well, you know they, the Harvard story which lead to more friendships and this wonderful secretary that really [inaudible] condition. But you see I got to Harvard after a scholarship in Rome, which convinced me you see because of the Rome landscape, that I knew nothing about landscape and all this architecture and town planning and that kind of thing was worthless if I didn't know where to put it or how to handle what was already put so badly.

YO: So, you decided to go to Harvard?

PH: So you see I realized after Rome that I needed this Harvard landscape [inaudible] better. It wasn't any better and I'd got what was offered and what was marvelous. Well, it was marvelous, except that it turned out to be, I thought, a fake.

YO: Right. Well, let's get you over there first. You're on the Queen Mary going from Liverpool to, to Boston, right? And you're on the Queen Mary, or you're going to New York probably, but you meet Lewis Clarke on the Queen Mary, is that right?

PH: Yes, I knew him by the time we reached Harvard because there was several people on that ship that I knew that were a part of this thing. The Irish girl for instance, who is not mentioned in his letter [Clarke's letter to Horsbrugh] because she got ill you see and fainted in church so he didn't have a chance to get to know her. So I don't think she, she saw what I saw I presume and, and immediately seized her illness. She wasn't a scholarship holder, so her father was having to meet that bill and I suppose that was too much so that's what she chose to do. But she started legal proceedings in Dublin because I was called by her Dublin attorney when I was in London. She knew my name or probably was given it by Rosamund [the secretary at Harvard Graduate School of Design] and that's why her attorneys—I never met her except on the ship—that's why I gave her Dublin attorneys my story.

YO: Well, who were some of the professors at Harvard at that time?

PH: I simply can't recall their names except one whose picture, the artist man, I've got a picture of him hanging in the other room there. I can give you his name simply by referring to the picture to be correct. But I saw him after I went back to Harvard. He was there still when I went back on the faculty. You see, because after the Harvard expense, I came back, my father died, the King died and my father's funeral cortege left the flat under the gun fire, which you could hear of the royal salute on the King's death. So that was a coincidental thing and after I had got this extraordinary job designing High Paddington that lasted nine months. I was doing absolutely nothing else but sleeping at home and working night and day in the office. Because the drawings were so big, I couldn't take them home. It wouldn't be possible and in order to get some exercise I walked from the office in central London to my home overlooking Battersea Park, which was I suppose about two miles. That was four miles walking a day. It's the only exercise I got.

YO: Well, before we get to High Paddington can we go back to Harvard just a little bit and talk about some of the students?

PH: No, I did High Paddington, the coronation decorations, New Barbican and then High Leutin[?], which has never been made public—all in that office and the ministerial appeal, all while in that office in the space of three years. It was—I had no social life whatever and didn't want any in so far that I couldn't tell people what I was doing because by that time you see it was all illegal. It really was law-illegal because I was deliberately defying and denying the 1947 Planning Act. That's why I had to go to court by an appeal to the minister, which he received at once. Certain people had to know and I asked them don't [inaudible] and this is why there was no question of publicity except for one man—no, two editors who became great personal friends

of mine. They knew what I was doing and when it came time to publish, they published everything without my name, which wasn't necessary in any case because I wasn't the boss of the firm. I was his thing at a fee of ten pounds a week. Well, my stipend from the Air Force was two hundred and six pounds a year. So, there was none, there was no money to spend. I was simply working, but I have that capacity if I concentrate on something, it just flows through

YO: Right.

HP: And the other thing that was so extraordinary, I did not know what I was doing when I was doing it. I just followed the pencil and the thing with a limited geometry and that gave me the fresh shapes for High Paddington, repeated in New Barbican because there wasn't time to think for New Barbican, I simply had to expand what New Paddington was done on twice an acreage in the City of London. Both sites I had prepped, personally privately chosen and couldn't reveal the size of the sites until I had to reveal the acreage in court.

YO: Well, let's go back to Harvard for just a minute.

PH: Yes, yes.

YO: Who were some of the students that you were with at Harvard?

PH: Well, they're in this letter—

YO: Well, I want to hear you say them to me out, out loud.

PH: Yes, well, I, I can't remember their names.

YO: Jeffrey Smith, Jeffrey Smith?

PH: Jeffrey Smith, yes. Jeffrey, I knew only slightly and I remember his name, but he got employment in Harvard Yard somewhere and at any case, I saw him only for a few days.

YO: Martin Jones?

PH: No, I have no recollection of him.

YO: Kedar Bahl? Kedar Bahl? [Kedar Nath Bahl]

PH: Kedar Bahl, yes. Kedar Bahl and I remained friends until his death. He came to stay here and I was trying to get Kedar Bahl to write books on Indian landscape. There had been no books to my knowledge on that topic and he after all was employed as the head authority of landscape you see. And I stayed with Kedar Bahl in India and Kedar Bahl was my host at Chandigarh, the first new town in India.

YO: Now tell me about Chandigarh because isn't that where you said, "Site unsuitable. Sunset, sunrise spectacular?"

PH: Yes.

YO: And what was that project about?

PH: That was my condemnation of Chandigarh. They had originally wanted Frank Lloyd Wright to do Chandigarh. Frank Lloyd Wright very wisely said, I need to be paid in dollars, because Frank was always short of funds, notwithstanding his capabilities. And Britain had no dollars to pay obviously at that time. Therefore he was going to be paid in sterling and he objected to that and withdrew. Then it was—in order that the funding was in sterling, they employed an architect in Britain that I knew slightly but not personally that I didn't think—he was a modern architect with a small "M" and his [model] was Le Corbusier in France. And he organized the commission to contain Le Corbusier's name as consultant. Well, I could see through that. Le Corbusier accepted that position and Le Corbusier became the name of the designer for Chandigarh although the commission was given to an English firm of what the hell was his name? I can't remember now. He had an awful wife and she was an architect, too, and she dominated everything. Le Corbusier saw advantage of that and wasn't prepared to be dominated, so she lay at Le Corbusier's feet and the world knows Chandigarh as a Le Corbusier. I was taken to Chandigarh because Kedar Bahl was frantic as a landscape architect. The landscape for Chandigarh was—I condemned it once the moment I saw it. Notwithstanding the fact that the Le Corbusier buildings had started to grow up and the first building was the high court of the Punjab. There was a big building, a big commission and absolutely modern in the Le Corbusier sense and a disaster. I won't tell you the stories of disaster which I was personally involved because I was the guest of the high court judges of which there were six high court judges because this was the high court of that part of India, the Punjab. Kedar Bahl took me, he qualified not at Harvard, Kedar Bahl left and went to oh, another distinguished American university. I can't remember at the moment. You would recognize the name immediately and I don't doubt that Lewis Clarke has lectured there often. Good school of landscape.

YO: Penn State. Penn State?

PH: No, it's a private school in the north of this country in Vermont I think, lakes, near lakes, long lakes, north, south lakes.

YO: I don't know.

PH: Well, I'll remember it later. Well, he took me to Pinjur, a hill town, a small hill town. We had a wonderful time there. Historic antiquities, I said, this should have been the Punjab capital you see because the Punjab capital was now in Pakistan and the Pakistanis couldn't use it Lahore, their capital, a marvelous place. It was the Punjab was the capital in British times, but it was now thirty miles from the Indian border and within Indian gunshot range so that was no good. And I became involved in that too. The site selection of the new site for the capital of the new state of Pakistan—I condemned the first site immediately after spending a week or ten days on the site alone. I came and reported to London, I reported to the Parliament people in Karachi. I then went back for a second site they had chosen which was on the sea coast. I couldn't condemn that immediately although I did, but I started with another man, Sir William Whitfield now to design the Parliament Buildings. They had to have Parliament Buildings somewhere. So,

he—as I had condemned the site and told him—everybody knew that that site was no good either. You want a site in the center of where the people are. You can't bring the hill people down to the sweltering sea coast for Parliamentary debate. They don't debate in the first instance so there's no use having an English-like Parliament there. So I had to explain all of this. My brilliant friend designed a [chaja?] which is a great contemporary at least, Indian contemporary roof.

YO: How do you say that again?

PH: [Chaja?]. It's a huge tortoise shell like roof, but I won't go into the details of that because it's irrelevant. It was never built. And Field Marshall Muhammad Ayub Khan took me by the elbow. He was dictator then and said, I'm going to have, shaking my elbow, the dictate here for ten years until people quiet down and they get confidence and I said, well, I recommend you build a capital site. You choose a capital site in the center and not on the sea coast and so that it's central as the government facility. It's central like New Delhi is central to India, which the British brought back to Old Delhi.

YO: And you've gotten, you got this job basically through Kedar Bahl?

PH: No, I didn't. I don't know how I got that job. No, that's one of those mysteries. I don't know, but I suddenly found myself secretly of course on the plane to India and said, I'm not going to appear in public, no hotels, no [inaudible] and from the airport I had to put my foot down and say I want a Jeep, or an equivalent, and tents and an interrupter and two interrupters in fact, and a person to do cooking. I'm going to the site and I'm going to camp on the site and nobody is going to know that I'm there, which I did for ten days. I've got the sketches. I've got—

YO: This is sort of your trademark isn't it? To actually go to the site, I'm thinking back to when you were at Harvard—

PH: Yes.

YO: —and you went on the Block Island trip.

PH: Exactly. Exactly, thanks for reminding me of the same thing. But you can't design something for a place you don't know when it's a matter of bricks and mortar and building and placing this and that and here. How can you? It's so silly. And all this education going on in the confounds of a classroom now when we've got films and slides and Heaven knows what else. I mean it's so silly. I'm sorry to be [inaudible]. This is why you see here I wasn't going to be confined to a classroom. This is why I got modeled in the United Nations and the conference in Canada because we couldn't have the conference here in thing because the students, international students wouldn't come to America at war.

YO: Right.

PH: So, that's why it was held in Canada. And the letter which was sent to my student president dated September 195-- 1971, two pages of praise, I could have drafted the letter myself because it was accurate in every detail and it went on for two pages as to what this student had done and he'd been to Europe to help do it. He never got that letter. I was expecting the letter. If he'd got that letter he could have showed it to his director, showed it to the dean, showed it to the principal of the school here dealing with superior educational levels and to President Hesburgh [Theodore Martin Hesburgh, Notre Dame] who is an international figure and things would have in Environics would have been very different. You see this is why I started the Environics Foundation International outside this university. I went to the university, to the genius finance man, and he said to me quite frankly no, don't do it. Keep the, don't involve the university in this. It's too big. The university won't understand it even though Catholicism is an international religion, it's worldwide, etc. etc. I thought this might be just the place, but he said, no. So I did it privately and a very good thing that I did. He gave me absolutely the right advice. He's dead now, but he and I were close friends. I could see him and telephone him any time I wanted. The thing is if you don't have confidence in what you're attempting to do you don't, you can't inspire confidence in others that agree to let you do it. It's as simple as that and that's why the word "con" ...it's one of the great words of the Environic educational system.

YO: Well, when did you coin the phrase, coin the word Environics?

PH: I'll write it down for you. I didn't, yes, I suppose I did coin it because I didn't find it anywhere. I've never found it since. I've looked up in every dictionary as a new dictionary I get both Latin, Greek and French because you see the English language is as rich as it is because everywhere where the English have been they've absorbed words, Indian words, African words that describe some particularity of character, personal or equality. For instance if I said to you, if I referred to a "cud," a cud is a very deep ravine, which it is dangerous to go into because it's so, the sides are so steep, the rockery or ground is loose and a flood will make a landslide or an earthquake will make a slide there although it may not be a severe earthquake, but you inhabiting it or being there exploring will be in danger. My grandmother, in labor with my mother, was going up to the hill station in India of similar in a litter and a snake or something frightened the litter bearers and she was dropped to the side of the thing and the litter rolled down a cud. Well, she was obviously in great danger, but she survived and so did the baby, my mother. But the, that's how I knew what a cud was and use a cud to describe that kind of thing even if it happens in the west coast of California.

So that to me for those reasons, the world has been rather present in my background in education because by the nature of my family they knew people from abroad, they traveled as funds would permit, and so on so that dinner table conversation dealt with India, Canada, any place that they had been. Why I came to America, my first visit of exploration was a two month visit to New England arranged by my father's cousin who was a violinist. She was trained at the Court of Czar Nicholas the Second and knew Nicholas' English tutor. Nicholas had engaged an English tutor for the Czarevich and they were friends simply because the greatest violinist teacher in those days was employed at the Court in Petersburg. So of course my father's cousin naturally would have no other teacher but the principal violin teacher in thing. When, after the revolution he escaped and came to America and because she was multi-lingual, he asked her would [s]he come and be her, his interrupter of English in New York and set up a school of violin teaching. And since she was his principal pupil she taught the violin under his instruction

in New York and then was employed at the great women's school in Georgia, in Athens, Georgia—not Athens—Macon, Georgia. It was a great women's college there that was their principle social college and she spent her life there and she arranged for my first visit. It was a social visit to America.

YO: Well, in about 1952, Lewis started teaching at North Carolina State—

PH: Yes.

YO: —and you came down to visit as a visiting—

PH: At his invitation, yes.

YO: —and visited and you taught the students. What were some of the things that you taught the students?

PH: I taught them I attempted to teach because it was my second time teaching landscape particularly in America because you see by that time I had been invited back onto the faculty [at Harvard]. And that, when I had fulfilled that very successfully, the faculty asked me to remain and I said, I would be honored indeed, but you must know that I've been here before and when I was on the faculty I was aide to the then dean of the School of Architecture and so on. And he was a Spaniard. I don't speak Spanish and though wasn't needed. He was fluent. But the class was too big for the room so it was in two rooms—one upstairs, one down.

YO: This is at Harvard?

PH: At Harvard, and I gave instructions that every time the dean came to take a class I was to be summoned so that I would hear what the dean was saying and work in harmony with the dean whom I did not know but very quickly understood. And found that he was, I don't doubt a fine architect and a fine dean, but he was a tyrant and his behavior for the students I thought was abominable. And therefore every time he came I was sent for. I always knew that he went to a room, he'd come and see I was in one room and he'd go to the other room quite frankly, but I had to know what he was doing so that we would be in accord and I found that I was not in accord with him and as soon as he'd finish talking and instructing the students I would countermand what he'd just said in front of him. He ought to have dismissed me on the spot, no doubt about it whatever. I was doing it deliberately because I thought it was necessary. The students saw the game at once and agreed with me. He was teaching those students to do what he wanted them to do and that's not the way to teach. He, in Spain, had the authority to do that and did it and thought he could do it with the Americans. The American temperament won't stand for that very long and he ruined that class. I won't go into the details, which proved me right, but there were plenty of them and I had undoubtedly the sympathy with the students and their understanding.

The point is that when somebody arrives at Harvard they've got some justification I presume for being there other than money and they've got something to say and they've got some talent to develop. Lewis, you see, had that attitude of mind and understood that and it didn't need to be said. That's why his instantaneous effect on his colleagues was noticeable to

me at once, and that's why I had no hesitation in determining that the scholarship that I was relinquishing should be given to him without further ado and doubt. Because he could start teaching, which was natural to him to do, which he preferred to do rather than devote himself entirely to practice, and combine the two seemingly very effectively. I had nothing to do with that so that I'm simply quoting on the evidence now before me which you have experienced. Am I right?

YO: That's right.

PH: Well, the point is I've inherited a motto, a family motto, the origin of which I don't know, but it is *Aegre de tramite recto*.

YO: Which means?

PH: Right, *aegre* means—it's very difficult to translate. My father was never satisfied with the translation but it means "with difficulties passing through difficulties you reach the right conclusion." That's an elaboration, his elaboration. It didn't satisfy me and when I came to America, I got some Latin expert to translate it for me, re-translate it. And after much labor he finally came back with the answer—his answer—which was, "Almost always right." And my gad, I found it had been my experience, if I speak out or if I say some nonsense, which I'm horrified it turns out to be right, and therefore I've taken that motto very seriously, and it's given me some confidence to tell you what I'm saying now.

[Interruption by friend's arrival]

End of Part 1 of 3

Transcriber: Jennifer Curasi

Date: August 18, 2009