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The Monongalia County Court House Mural: Blanche Lazzell and the Public Works of Art Project in Morgantown, West Virginia

Kendall Joy Martin

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The Monongalia County Courthouse Mural: Blanche Lazzell and the Public Works of Art Project in Morgantown, West Virginia.

Kendall Joy Martin

**Thesis Submitted to the
College of Creative Arts
at West Virginia University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

**Master of Arts
in
Art History**

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**Morgantown, West Virginia
2012**

Keywords: Blanche Lazzell, Public Works of Art Project, PWAP, Monongalia County, courthouse mural, American Modernism

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ABSTRACT

Monongalia County Courthouse Mural: Blanche Lazzell and the Public Works of Art Project in Morgantown, West Virginia.

Kendall Joy Martin

Blanche Lazzell (1878-1956), a native of West Virginia and graduate of West Virginia University, was an early practitioner of Modern art in America. Lazzell was employed by the government-sponsored Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) in 1934 in Morgantown, West Virginia. During her time with the program, Lazzell completed three wood-block prints and painted *Justice*, a mural for the Monongalia County Courthouse. This thesis examines Lazzell's courthouse mural and discusses Lazzell's selection of three themes, education, religion, and industry, and why they are significant to the Morgantown area. This thesis demonstrates that although the PWAP stipulated that there was to be no European modernist characteristics evident in work produced for the project, Lazzell's courthouse mural exhibits traits of European modernist aesthetics.

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INTRODUCTION

Blanche Lazzell (1878-1956), a native of West Virginia and graduate of West Virginia University, was an early practitioner of Modern art styles, such as cubism, in America. Lazzell was educated in the fine arts in the United States and also expanded her artistic knowledge by working with notable teachers, including Albert Gleizes (1881-1953), in Paris from 1923-1924. As part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, plan the Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) were created to employ the nation's artisans. Lazzell was among those employed by the government during 1934 when she worked for the PWAP in Morgantown, West Virginia. At the start of her contractual period with the PWAP, from January 20, 1934 to February 15, 1934, Lazzell worked in a medium very familiar to her wood-block printing using the technique of the white line print. Though impressive in regard to Lazzell's craftsmanship and technique these prints were not her only contribution to the PWAP. During an extension with the PWAP, from March 1, 1934 to April 15, 1934, Lazzell painted *Justice*, a mural for the Monongalia County Courthouse. This thesis examines Lazzell's courthouse mural discussing its subject matter and aesthetic properties, explaining her selection of three themes found in the mural – education, religion, and industry in Morgantown – and indicating how Lazzell's European modernist training is evident in the finished mural.

Although the PWAP stipulated that there was to be no European modernism evident in the work produced for the project, Lazzell's courthouse mural exhibits traits of European modernist aesthetics, utilizing elements of cubist form that reveal her training in France. In order to illuminate the European influence in Lazzell's mural, this thesis

examines her life and career, the influence of her studies in Europe prior to 1934, and the government's commission of mural art. This thesis concentrates on the form and subject matter of Lazzell's mural particularly images of Morgantown and themes of education, religion, and industry. An examination of historical and art historical significance, as well as form and content, will aid in the discussion of Lazzell's work and provide a deeper analysis of her time with the PWAP. Along with the examination of Lazzell's mural, attention is paid to the three color white line wood-block prints Lazzell printed during her first contractual period with the PWAP, January to February 1934, and preliminary sketches of the mural.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand Lazzell's finished mural and its connection to European Modernism, her ties to Morgantown, West Virginia, and the PWAP, there are several resources that provide a wealth of information. The information in these sources can be broken down into four categories: (1) Lazzell's life and art, (2) the creation of the PWAP and mural projects during the 1930s, (3) Morgantown's history, and (4) European and American modernism.

Primary sources that were consulted include archival information from several sources in and around Morgantown. The Art Museum of West Virginia University provided original letters written by Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor (a former student and distant cousin) discussing Lazzell's personal feeling towards the PWAP and the Morgantown commission. The Art Museum of West Virginia University Art Collection houses Lazzell's preliminary sketches. The Morgantown History Museum has information on Morgantown glass companies operating when Lazzell was working for the PWAP in Morgantown. Wesley Methodist Church Library and Archive provided information on church architecture. The West Virginia University Regional History Collection houses Lazzell's letters, photographs, and her wood carving tools.

The main source on Lazzell's life and artistic career is the anthology *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist* (2004), edited by Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson and Janet Snyder. This book provides information on Lazzell's life in West Virginia, her education in the arts in the United States and in Europe, information on the different mediums she worked in, and Lazzell's employment with the PWAP and WPA programs. Peter Brooke's chapter, "Study with Albert Gleizes in 1924" provides

information pertaining to Lazzell's study with Gleizes while on her second trip to Europe along with an examination of Gleizes' practice of using translation and rotation together in his compositions to portray movement in his works. Lazzell's adoption of Gleizes' theories is first evident in her series of related and numbered non-objective paintings composed during and after her study with Gleizes (Figures 1.1 and 1.2). Marlene Park's chapter, "The Federal Art Project, 1934-1939" provides information on Lazzell's time in Morgantown working for the PWAP and her work for the WPA in Massachusetts. When writing her study, Park did not have access to the mural. My contribution to the study of Lazzell's life and work remedies this for my analysis of her PWAP mural, *Justice*, is based on direct study of the work.

Francis V. O'Connor's *Art for the Millions: Essays from the 1930s by Artists and Administrators of the WPA Federal Arts Project* (1973) provides information on the PWAP and the WPA. This book thoroughly examines the creation of both programs, the important officials in charge of overseeing each program, and the goals each program hoped to achieve. This book also discusses the establishment of community art centers, which were instrumental in getting art to the people and educating society on art.

Erica Beckh examines Roosevelt's New Deal plan and the establishment of the PWAP in her article "Government Art in the Roosevelt Era: An Appraisal of Federal Art Patronage in the Light of Present Needs" (1960). Jane De Hart Mathews' article "Arts and the People: The New Deal Quest for a Cultural Democracy" (1975) provides statistical information on how much work was produced by the artists employed with these programs, along with the estimated pay scale. Information on key figures in these programs' conception is provided by this source.

In “The Canvas Mirror: Painting as Politics in the New Deal” (2001), Jarad A. Fogel discusses Edward Bruce’s leadership of the PWAP and The Section and Bruce’s guidelines for what art produced for the program would illustrate. *Wall to Wall America: A Cultural History of Post-Office Murals in the Great Depression* (1982) by Karal Ann Marling provides details on post-office murals and the rate of pay for the artists involved with the program. It also discusses Bruce’s rejection of modernist aesthetics in the PWAP and the idea that creativity had to be reined in by the artists employed with the program.

Heather Becker’s *Art for the People: the Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive-and WPA-Era Murals in the Chicago Public Schools, 1904-1943* (2002) provides information pertaining to the Progressive Era murals and the Mexican mural movement that influenced the PWAP and WPA mural project. Becker provides information on what led to the creation of the United States mural project within the PWAP and the WPA. She also examines the Progressive Era murals that provided themes carried over into the murals created during the PWAP and the WPA.

H.L. Grant’s *Greater Morgantown and Its Environments* (1902) provides information on Morgantown’s history and its geographical landscape prior to Lazzell’s PWAP commission. It also features photographs that suggest the landscape of Morgantown had not changed a great deal from 1902, when the photographs were taken, to 1934, when Lazzell was employed in Morgantown by the PWAP. This text provides the key photographs that helped this author to decipher and identify the structures in Morgantown for the representations of education, religion, and industry that Lazzell selected to illustrate in her 1934 Monongalia County Courthouse Mural.

Abraham A. Davidson's article "Cubism and the Early American Modernist" (1966-1967) provides an in-depth analysis of the difference between American Cubism versus European Cubism, referencing the different stylistic and aesthetic properties of each. David Cottingham's *Cubism and Its Histories* (2004) discusses in detail the emergence of Cubism, its trajectory, and its history and examines Paul Cézanne's work along with cubists such as Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, and Albert Gleizes. Lastly, Peter Brooke's *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century* (2001) discusses Gleizes' life and career as a cubist painter, specifically examining his influences, including the Dadaists and other Cubists such as Picasso and Braque, and the influences that had an impact on the work Gleizes produced.

CHAPTER 1: Lazzell and European Modernism

“One must cut themselves off from the world and commune with the muses in order to do creative work” – Blanche Lazzell.¹

Nettie Blanche Lazzell was born October 10, 1878 and grew up in the hills of Maidsville, West Virginia, near the Monongahela River just north of Morgantown.² Her humble beginnings on her family’s farm and her close relationship with her siblings, especially her older brother Rufus and her younger sister Bessie, would leave a lasting impression on her personality and play a vital role in her artistic career.

Education and Influence of European Modernism

Lazzell was a well-educated woman. She attended college at the West Virginia Conference Seminary in Buckhannon, now known as West Virginia Wesleyan, South Carolina Co-educational Institute, and later West Virginia University.³ Lazzell traveled to Paris, New York City and Provincetown, Massachusetts and expanded her artistic studies in each city.

Lazzell traveled to Europe twice, first in 1912-1913 and once more in 1923-1924.⁴ Lazzell’s artistic studies in Europe ultimately would mark her work with a strong European Modernist aesthetic, focusing on the principles of cubism. While in Europe, Lazzell was exposed to several modern artistic styles including Fauvism, Expressionism (likely viewing works by members of der Blaue Reiter, such as Wassily Kandinsky), and Futurism. Lazzell also saw cubist works by Albert Gleizes, Fernand Léger, and André

¹ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 10 March 1935, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

² Susan M. Doll, “Blanche Lazzell Biography,” in *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist*, Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004), 2.

³ Doll, “Blanche Lazzell Biography,” 8.

⁴ Michael Slaven, “A Modernist’s Grand Tour,” in *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist*, Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004), 118.

Lhote, which would have the most profound influence on her work.⁵ During her first trip to Europe, Lazzell not only continued her arts education by attending classes, but also visited venues where cubist artists such as Albert Gleizes exhibited such as the *Section d'Or* (1912) and the *Salon d'Automne* (1912).⁶ Lazzell immersed herself in the latest art movements going so far as to say after visiting galleries in Munich that she found these new modern artists “very, very interesting.”⁷ Lazzell studied the works of several influential modernists including Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Kazimir Malevich, and Jean Arp, and also works of her future teachers; Albert Gleizes, Fernand Léger, and André Lhote.⁸

On her second trip, from 1923-1924, she worked with Gleizes as his pupil and continued to cultivate her understanding of Cubism.⁹ According to Michael Slaven, Gleizes’ teaching of Cubism and abstraction interested Lazzell for it “offered a clear and unadulterated modernist vision.”¹⁰ Gleizes’ works illustrate the idea of multiple perspectives that not only unify the composition, but also the subject was presented with lines and colors that create openness and unifies the entire surface of the work.¹¹ Gleizes also unifies his works with lines that divide the composition. These dividing lines are used as a framing technique to allow for better clarification of an area within the composition and to add to the unification of the composition.¹² Gleizes also works with the concept of using translation, movement of one element in accordance to another, and

⁵ Slaven, “A Modernist’s Grand Tour,” 124, 132.

⁶ Blanche Lazzell to Bessie Ridgway, 15 June 1913, The Archive of American Art [reels 2988-2991].

⁷ Blanche Lazzell Travel Dairy, 26 March 1913, The Archive of American Art [reels 2988-2991].

⁸ Slaven, “A Modernist’s Grand Tour,” 132-133.

⁹ Slaven, “A Modernist’s Grand Tour,” 137.

¹⁰ Slaven, “A Modernist’s Grand Tour,” 137.

¹¹ Peter Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2001), 36.

¹² Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century*, 38.

rotation, movement of one element in accordance to itself, in one composition to convey two forms of movement. Throughout the rest of Lazzell's career it is evident that Gleizes' methods were used in the creation of her works. It is from her instruction with Gleizes that Lazzell was prompted to make her most abstract works, such as her *Painting VII* (Figure 1.1, 1927) and *Painting VIII* (Figure 1.2, 1927) that show her understanding and application of Gleizes' teaching, here specifically working with translation and rotation theory showing elements that move in relation to other elements and elements that move in relation to itself.¹³ Lazzell also progressed and developed her own modernist style but she never fully left behind the basic principles of Cubism and European Modernism.¹⁴

Though Lazzell never stopped learning, she never studied longer than six months to a year with any one teacher.¹⁵ Lazzell wanted to produce art that was of her own mind and hand.¹⁶ Lazzell was one of the first American Modernist artists to bring abstraction and cubist form to the United States.

Prior to her time with the PWAP in Morgantown Lazzell had been creating highly abstracted prints that show not only her debt to her study with Gleizes, but also her interest in Paul Cézanne and his pre-cubist aesthetics. An example of this can be seen in *Provincetown Church Tower* (Figure 1.3, 1922). In this print Lazzell shows a developed understanding of pre-Cubism and Cubism, using forms abstracted and simplified and employing the concept of shifting perspective in this image. Though abstract, it is still

¹³ More information on the Golden Section can be found in Peter Brooke's "Studying with Albert Gleizes in 1924" in *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist*, Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004), 207-225.

¹⁴ This is further discussed in Chapter Four.

¹⁵ Bernard Schultz and Kari Graham Reckart, "Art Studies in America," in *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist*, Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004), 81.

¹⁶ Schultz and Reckart, "Art Studies in America," 81. In a letter to Frances Reed Sellers Lazzell stated, "It will be my own or nothing" taken from Doll, "Blanche Lazzell Biography," 57.

recognizable as a church. *Provincetown Church Tower*, like the three prints Lazzell did for the PWAP, was done in the technique she is most famous for; the white line print. However, in this case Lazzell over-printed the white lines with black ink.¹⁷

Another example of Lazzell's early work is *The Monongahela* (Figure 1.4, 1919). As in *Provincetown Church Tower*, Lazzell used saturated hues of both warm and cool colors, such as navy blue, deep purple, brown, and scarlet, with heavy white outlines that define each form. Lazzell depicted the hilly terrain of Morgantown, which is accented against the curve of the Monongahela River. On the shore of the river are a row of homes with a leafless tree in the left corner of the foreground used to divide the work. Lazzell's color palette and her interpretation of the Morgantown landscape are two elements that are similar to her prints for the PWAP yet *The Monongahela* print is still more abstract. The *Provincetown Church Tower* print is in contrast to the work Lazzell did for the PWAP and shows she toned down her cubist tendencies and provided a more literal, less adventurous representation of Morgantown (Figures 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9). Though Lazzell's PWAP prints show a level of abstraction, they are not as abstract as her work prior to her employment with the program in 1934, nor as abstract as her later work.

In 1915 Lazzell began visiting Provincetown, Massachusetts in the summers in hopes of finding a community that would value her talents as an artist more than that in Morgantown. Artists and other creative individuals in Provincetown provided her the opportunity to be around those who understood the rewards and challenges of being in the arts. Lazzell made Provincetown her permanent home in 1918. In 1934, during her

¹⁷ David Acton, "The Provincetown Prints," in *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist*, Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004), 188.

annual winter visit to Morgantown, Lazzell was employed by the government-sponsored PWAP.

CHAPTER 2: Government Patronage of the Arts

“The artists are having an awful struggle and the best ones suffer most for they cannot consciously put rotten stuff on the market. . . .” – Blanche Lazzell.¹⁸

The Public Works of Art Project and the Works Progress Administration

As Jane De Hart Mathews states in “Arts and the People: The New Deal Quest for a Cultural Democracy,” in the 1930s a question commonly posed was “Were artists important enough to use the power of the federal government to shield them from a depression which, without federal interference, would surely force them into nonartistic activities?”¹⁹ During the first one hundred days after Roosevelt took office in 1932, America saw the creation of federal agencies and legislative acts that were designed to provide relief and engineer a way to bring optimism back to a nation that was feeling helpless and hopeless.²⁰ During this time Roosevelt sought the help, guidance, and assistance of Harry Hopkins (1890-1946), Edward Bruce (1879-1943), and Holger Cahill (1887-1960) to aid in the employment of those in the arts.

Harry Hopkins began funding unemployed artists, actors, and musicians with funds from the Federal Emergency Relief Agency in 1933.²¹ It has been estimated that during that year roughly a quarter of the entire workforce in America was unemployed.²² In the year to follow Edward Bruce was given the task of running the Section of Fine Arts, a directive given to Bruce and authorized by Henry Morgenthau, the Secretary of the Treasury.²³ Bruce established the Public Works of Art Project, the PWAP in a six-

¹⁸ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, May 1935, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

¹⁹ Jane De Hart Mathews, “Arts and the People: The New Deal Quest for a Cultural Democracy,” *The Journal of American History* 62, no. 2 (1975): 318.

²⁰ Jonathan Harris, *Federal Art and National Culture: The Politics of Identity in New Deal America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 19.

²¹ Mathews, “Arts and the People,” 318-319.

²² Harris, *Federal Art and National Culture*, 18.

²³ Mathews, “Arts and the People,” 318-319.

hour meeting conducted at his home on December 8, 1933. Within six hours of the meeting, sixteen regional committees were created throughout the country and four days after the initial meeting artists were being employed and placed on the government's payroll.²⁴ To get word quickly to artists who would be affected by the new program the sixteen regional committees were led by a local art authority in each region that knew the artists in their given area.²⁵ The PWAP was created as a way to distribute monetary relief to artists. However, it also had other ambitious aims:

First to establish democratic methods of government art patronage; to decentralize artistic activity throughout the entire nation; to encourage the emergence of young, unknown talent; to increase the general public appreciation of the arts; and lastly, to promote a closer interrelation of the artist with his social environment.²⁶

It has been estimated that the PWAP employed a total of 3,749 artists who worked for various lengths of time ranging from one month to six months.²⁷ However, the program provided inadequate relief to the unemployed.²⁸ The rate of pay for artists was established by the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and was dependent on skill and craftsmanship; it varied from \$26.50 to \$42.50 per week.²⁹ It is important to note that, "nearly half of those who served with the agency were not eligible for relief on the

²⁴ Erica Beckh, "Government Art in the Roosevelt Era: An Appraisal of Federal Art Patronage in the Light of Present Needs," *Art Journal* 20, no. 1 (1960): 2.

²⁵ Karal Ann Marling, *Wall-to-Wall America: A Cultural History of Post-Office Murals in the Great Depression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 45. Marling notes that the art authorities "were most often museum directors," Marling, 45.

²⁶ Beckh, "Government Art in the Roosevelt Era," 3.

²⁷ Harris, *Federal Art and National Culture*, 24.

²⁸ Francis V. O'Connor, *Art for the Millions; Essays from the 1930s by Artists and Administrators of the WPA Federal Arts Project* (Greenwich: New York Graphics Society, 1973), 17.

²⁹ Helen A. Harrison, "American Art and the New Deal," *Journal of American Studies* 6, no. 3 (1972): 290. Also, it was the regional headquarters that distributed the paychecks to the artists. Marling, *Wall-to-Wall*, 45.

basis of economic hardship.”³⁰ Artists who had a high level of talent were enticed to work for the program and given the highest level of pay.³¹

Bruce reported a total of 15,663 works of art had been created under his leadership. A majority of the works produced were oil paintings, watercolors, and prints. Also included in this count were murals, mural sketches, sculptures, drawings, and poster paintings.³² The PWAP was disbanded in 1934 and in 1935 the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was founded and led by Holger Cahill.

The Mural Project

It was the Mexican mural program that gave rise to the United States organizing a program and served as the model for funded mural projects in the United States in 1933.³³ In the early 1920s, Alvaro Obregon, Mexico’s president, started a nationalist cultural program where Mexican government commissioned artists to create public murals.³⁴ Like the Progressive Era Murals (1904 – 1933) in the United States, Mexican mural art dealt with social issues, working in a Social Realist style, often embracing labor issues, inequality, and cultural subjects.³⁵

³⁰ Marling, *Wall-to-Wall American*, 43.

³¹ Marling, *Wall-to-Wall American*, 43.

³² Mathews, “Arts and the People,” 335.

³³ Heather Becker, “The Tradition of Murals in the United States: 1750 to 1933,” in *Art for the People: The Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive-and WPA-Era Murals in the Chicago Public School, 1904-1943* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002), 51.

³⁴ Heather Becker, “Introduction: Art for the People,” in *Art for the People: The Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive-and WPA-Era Murals in the Chicago Public Schools, 1904-1943* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002), 3, 5.

³⁵ Becker, “The Tradition of Murals in the United States: 1750 to 1933,” in *Art for the People: The Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive-and WPA-Era Murals in the Chicago Public School, 1904-1943*, 51. The PWAP and the WPA were not the first projects for which mural art was created. Before these two projects there were the Progressive Era murals that date from 1904 to 1933. The subject matter of these murals often focused on mechanical inventions, specifically on the effects they had on industry and on society. Becker, “The Tradition of Murals,” 31. Progressive Era murals reflected concern with social issues portraying images of laborers, the rights of women, the poor, and the natural environment. Francis V. O’Connor, “Mural Themes from the Progressive Era to the WPA Federal Art Project 1904 to 1933 and After,” in *Art for the People: The Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive-and WPA-Era Murals in the Chicago Public School, 1904-1943* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002), 53. Only

At the demise of the PWAP in June 1934, but before the start of the WPA in 1935, the Treasury Section of Fine Art and Sculpture, often referred to as “The Section,” was created in October 1934³⁶ with Bruce at the helm. The focus of The Section was on mural creation in public buildings, especially in post offices. Often what is referred to as “WPA art” is actually Section art.³⁷ The Section and The Project (The Federal Art Project which would later also be referred to as the WPA) existed simultaneously and often artists working during the 1930s received financial compensation from both organizations.³⁸

The Roosevelt administration knew that it needed visual media to show a strong, recovering impression of America to the American people. One way was to create murals representing specific regions. Regionalism represented local everyday life, usually rural. The regionalists’ subject matter consisted of themes such as small towns, farms, local traditions, and workers.³⁹ They also depicted an optimistic view of America giving the American people a mural that would resonate with a hope.⁴⁰ Elements depicted were to be specific to the location of the mural, and emphasize characteristics of the region and the local community.⁴¹

Bruce had strong opinions about what art should be and disliked anything avant-garde. At the time, he was not fond of the ideas of the conservative National Academy of

some artists who later worked on WPA murals for public buildings would look back on Progressive Era murals and create works inspired by these murals themes. Francis O’Connor, “Mural Themes,” 58.

Another source of inspiration for some artists working for the WPA came from Mexican muralists working prior to the PWAP and the WPA. Francis O’Connor, “Mural Themes,” 51.

³⁶ Jarad A. Fogel and Robert L. Stevens, “The Canvas Mirror: Painting as Politics in the New Deal,” *OAH Magazine of History* 16, no. 1 (2001): 17.

³⁷ Fogel, “The Canvas Mirror,” 17.

³⁸ Fogel, “The Canvas Mirror,” 17.

³⁹ Heather Becker, “Styles and Themes of the Chicago Mural School,” in *Art for the People: The Rediscovery and Preservation of Progressive-and WPA-Era Murals in the Chicago Public Schools, 1904-1943* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2002), 96.

⁴⁰ Fogel, “The Canvas Mirror,” 17.

⁴¹ Fogel, “The Canvas Mirror,” 22.

Design and the idealized art that its artists produced. Bruce especially disliked the modernist attitude of the School of Paris.⁴² He felt neither school portrayed American reality.⁴³ At the head of the PWAP and The Section, Bruce could regulate the work that was produced. He approved works that displayed local history, topography or livelihood, and that had absolute authenticity and were naturalistic.⁴⁴ PWAP works showed, but were not limited to, representations of an area's historically important sites. The object of the art was to focus on the American scene rather than on individual artistic expression. The ideal American scene "excluded radical types of abstract art because the artist was required to limit his or her creative activity."⁴⁵

Along with Regionalist artists there were artists who represented Social Realism. These murals' subject focused on those who had political power and prowess as well as those who had little say or power in society, rather than an optimistic American scene centered on a specific region. This difference is evident in murals at the time by Thomas Hart Benton (Figure 2.4), whose work focused on American regionalist scenes and showed different themes from those of Diego Rivera (Figure 2.5), one of the main artists of the Mexican mural program whose works carried an overt political tone and message, specifically that of communist ideology.⁴⁶ However, there was one more type of mural, a hybrid of Regionalism and Social Realism: American Idealism. This style of mural art represented an American scene paired with images of progressive technology that

⁴² Marling, *Wall-to-Wall American*, 44.

⁴³ Marling, *Wall-to-Wall American*, 44.

⁴⁴ Fogel, "The Canvas Mirror," 22.

⁴⁵ Marling, *Wall-to-Wall American*, 44-45.

⁴⁶ To read more on Thomas Hart Benton and Diego Rivera consult, Matthew Baigell, *Thomas Hart Benton* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1974). And, Bertram D. Wolfe, *The Fabulous Life of Diego Rivera* (New York: Stein and Day, 1963).

showed America advancing and rebuilding with the help of a strong working class and technological advancements.⁴⁷

In the PWAP and WPA efforts were made to define what the American art style for public works should reflect and display, which meant there was to be “no suggestion of Cubism or any indication of European-based modern style.”⁴⁸ Some artists abandoned European modernism and painted American scene subject matter.⁴⁹ Though requested by their committees to avoid using European modernist techniques, some artists did so anyway. According to Patricia Phagan, only a small minority of the total murals produced were made by artists who were inspired by European modernist movements like Surrealism and Cubism.⁵⁰ Lazzell is among that minority; her prints and mural for the PWAP demonstrate that European modernism, specifically Cubism, played a role in the work she produced for the program.

⁴⁷ Fogel, “The Canvas Mirror,” 22.

⁴⁸ Patricia E. Phagan, *For the People: American Mural Drawings of the 1930s and 1940* (New York: Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, 2007), 3.

⁴⁹ Steven M. Gelber, “Working to Prosperity: California’s New Deal Murals,” *California History* 58, no. 2 (1979): 101. Gelber argues “... the federal government did not originate and impose the American Scene on its artists, but rather commissioned the style and subject from a pre-existing trend (before Roosevelt took office),” Gelber, 101.

⁵⁰ Phagan, *For the People*, 5, 10. The statement regarding the small minority of artist who were inspired by European modern movements such as Surrealism and Cubism pertaining to mural art produced is in reference to the selection of exhibited works that were discussed in the *For the People* catalog.

CHAPTER 3: Lazzell and the Monongalia County Courthouse Mural

“. . . I have volunteered to do the decoration back of the judge’s seat in the courthouse here [Morgantown] as skilled labor. Will know tomorrow if it is possible now, if not, I will surely write to Washington.” – Blanche Lazzell.⁵¹

Lazzell’s employment with the PWAP lasted roughly four months but within that time she accomplished a great deal; she produced three white line wood-block prints during her first contractual period with the program, from January 20, 1934 to February 15, 1934, and a mural for the Monongalia County Courthouse during her extension from March to April.⁵² In a letter to Grace Martin Taylor, her former student and a distant cousin, Lazzell discussed her responsibilities with the program:

I was invited and was given a job of doing prints of Morgantown’s historical buildings and scenes. Starts January 20, which was late but my engagement ended the 15 of February. But from what I heard it was extended. My job came via Pittsburgh Carnegie Institute. I fear they kept the job for the Pittsburghers. I saw an editorial in the *Dominion News* about West Virginia not being represented like other states so I wonder why.⁵³

Lazzell’s weekly PWAP salary was \$26.50, which would later be reduced to \$23.85.⁵⁴ After her first contractual period, Lazzell was given an extension with the understanding that she would print more white line prints. However, this extension was not used for producing more prints but for painting the mural for the Monongalia County Courthouse. In a letter dated March 6, 1934, John O’Connor, Jr., the Secretary of the

⁵¹ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 4 March 1934, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

⁵² It is unclear how Lazzell found out about the PWAP. In the local Morgantown paper, *The Dominion News*, there were no advertisements or call for artists from December 1933 thru January 1934.

⁵³ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 4 March 1934, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

⁵⁴ Marlene Park, “The Federal Art Project, 1934-39,” in *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist*, Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004), 231. More information regarding the reduction in Lazzell’s salary can be found in Appendix I, correspondence letter dated February 9, 1934.

Regional Committee, and person responsible for keeping track of Lazzell's progress with the program wrote:

The Regional Art Project Committee authorizes the renewal of your employment from March 1st to April 15th at the rate of \$23.85 per week. Since this notice will not reach you until March 7th, you will be expected to work a week longer than April 15th. For that week you will receive no compensation.⁵⁵

Charles Baker, a Judge for the State of West Virginia Seventeenth Judicial Circuit Court in Morgantown, wrote to Homer Saint Gaudens, Regional Director Public Works of Art on March 6, 1934. Judge Baker's letter explained to Saint Gaudens that the Monongalia County Courthouse had undergone redecorating in accordance with a grant they had received to refurbish the courthouse and that he wanted Lazzell to be given permission to paint a mural for a blank portion of wall located behind the Judge's bench.⁵⁶ He informed Saint Gaudens that Lazzell had presented him with a few illustrations of her ideas and the members of the courthouse had selected one to decorate the newly renovated building. Judge Baker asked Saint Gaudens, "Will you please advise us how we can secure the services of Miss Lazzell through your project for the purpose of having this panel painted?"⁵⁷

O'Connor sent a letter to Lazzell the following day, March 7, 1934, informing her that this was the second letter of inquiry Judge Baker had written to the committee requesting her assistance. He wrote, "If you feel that you can complete the decoration which Judge Baker desires, that is, within the six weeks period of your employment, I

⁵⁵ O'Connor, Jr. to Blanche Lazzell, 6 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990]. All of O'Connor's letters to Lazzell can be found in Appendix I.

⁵⁶ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 4 March 1934 and Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 28 March 1934, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

⁵⁷ Judge Charles Baker to Homer Saint Gaudens, 6 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

authorize you to confer with Judge Baker and to proceed with the decoration.”⁵⁸

O’Connor asked Lazzell to send word back to him as soon as possible that she agreed to take on this task as part of her extended contract. Lazzell had already completed the three wood-block prints she had committed to during the first (January to February) portion of her contract. Though her extension period was to have been used to continue creating more prints, it would instead be consumed with the creation of the mural.⁵⁹

By the time of his letter to Saint Gaudens, Judge Baker already asked Lazzell to present him with some sketches of what might work best for the space.⁶⁰ In her sketches, themes of education, religion, and industry are illustrated and denoted as such in Figure 5.1.⁶¹ Her submission was in accordance with some popular themes that were represented in public murals for the PWAP and WPA such as “religious, patriotic, cultural, and or industrial themes.”⁶² The mural evidences what Edward Bruce had stipulated as one of the goals of the art produced under the PWAP: that work display daily living in the region the art was created.⁶³ At the left side of the mural, it is clear that Lazzell represented education with an image of Stewart Hall (Figure 3.4) a building located on West Virginia University’s Campus.⁶⁴ Reference to religion was depicted with the church Lazzell attended while living in Morgantown, the First Methodist Episcopal Church

⁵⁸ O’Connor, Jr. to Blanche Lazzell, 7 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

⁵⁹ O’Connor received word back from Lazzell agreeing to the mural project and wrote in a letter dated 13 March 1934 she should keep in touch with him on her work’s progress, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

⁶⁰ Phagan states: “American muralists in this era generally followed an academic model of preparation, making a series of different kinds of drawings, including sketches of individual figures, compositional studies in black and white, and also in color, studies squared for transfer to a large composition, and full-scale drawings or cartoons.” Phagan, *For the People*, 3.

⁶¹ Blanche Lazzell *Untitled*, 1934 pencil on paper, Art Museum of West Virginia University; Gift of James C. and Janet G. Reed, 1995.004.010.

⁶² Edward Laning, “Memoirs of a WPA Painter,” *American Heritage* 21, no. 6 (1970): 45.

⁶³ Fogel, “The Canvas Mirror,” 22.

⁶⁴ Today West Virginia University is divided into three campuses, the Downtown Campus, the Evansdale Campus, and the Health Science Campus. Stewart Hall is located on the Downtown Campus. At the time Lazzell was painting the mural in 1934 Stewart Hall was the University’s Library.

(Figure 3.5), located roughly a city block away from Stewart Hall at the top of High Street.⁶⁵ Local industry was represented by an illustration of Morgantown Glass Works and Morgantown Brick Company (Figure 3.8) located on the banks of the Monongahela River minutes from both Stewart Hall and the First Methodist Episcopal Church.⁶⁶

The Mural

The task of painting a mural was more labor intensive and required more planning than Lazzell's print project. Lazzell is not considered a mural artist for in her career she only painted this one.⁶⁷ She completed all three prints in roughly a six week time span and was asked to paint a mural (Figure 3.1) measuring 95" x 146" x 1" within the same time parameters. Finding herself the only one in the courthouse, working after hours in the solitude of the courtroom where there were no defendants or prosecutors, no jury of peers, and no judge handing down a final verdict, Lazzell was left to her own contemplation. In solitude Lazzell assessed her feelings toward the mural and composed a poem that describes her time spent working in the stillness of the empty courtroom. During this time Lazzell wrote a poem that allows us to understand her connection to Morgantown and her artistic interest for the mural.

The courtroom is cleared
The judge the jury gone
The prisoner has returned to his cell

⁶⁵ Park, "The Federal Art Project, 1934-39," 235. The church was built in 1903 and at the time of Lazzell's mural was known as the First Methodist Episcopal Church. It is located at 503 North High Street in downtown Morgantown. Today the church is called Wesley Methodist Church.

⁶⁶ Neither the Morgantown Glass Works nor the Morgantown Brick Company exists today.

⁶⁷ Albert Gleizes completed "large scale murals" during the time Lazzell was working on the mural in Morgantown, 1933 to 1934. *Albert Gleizes et les Cubisme und der Kubismus and Cubism* (Basel: Basilius Presse AG, 1962), 26 stating, "The mural has nothing in common with pictures of bodies, flowers, or landscapes. The technique of mural painting is something precise. Mural painting takes as its starting point a simple idea – a painted wall. This immediately determines the role to be played by colours. The colours will strive towards the light. And that is the definition of all mural painting: a human act performed on the wall between colour and light." In the re-printed front matter of the following book is a time timeline that provided this information on Gleizes' work with mural art.

The artist alone remains.
 Silence silence every where.
 Even the street traffic has
 ceased to rumble!
 The sky is clouded
 A storm approaches
 after days of heat.
 The tender leaves that
 have never felt the touch of rain.
 Nor heard the crash of thunder
 nor seen the flash of lightning—
 Tremble and wait.
 Their first approaching cloud.
 The artist alone in the
 silent hall.
 Slowly wields her brush
 upon a giant canvas.
 Slowly and silently emerges
 her sense of justice.
 Science, religion, work—
 united in harmonious form and color
 And the river
 Flowing between the green hills beyond,
 expresses peace—
 Above all hangs the
 balance—Justice.⁶⁸

Lazzell did not compose a poem for the prints but found it necessary to do so for the mural. One reason for this may have been that the mural reflected Lazzell's personal connection to the region more than the prints. The prints delivered what her committee members wanted to see and presented two themes later reiterated in Lazzell's mural: education, seen in *The Campus, W.Va. University, Morgantown* (Figure 4.8), and industry, seen in *Monongahela at Morgantown* (Figure 4.7).⁶⁹ The mural has symbolism that not only met Bruce's objective for the program by showing the unique characteristics

⁶⁸ Park "The Federal Art Project, 1934-39," 237.

⁶⁹ Lazzell completed three prints for the PWAP. Although Lazzell's third print, the *Waitman T. Willey House* does not display education, religion, and or industry in the region, it is significant to note its place in Lazzell's body of work created for the PWAP in Morgantown (Figure 4.9). The Waitman T. Willey House still stands today near downtown Morgantown.

of a region in which the artist is working, but also had personal symbolism for Lazzell. Lazzell's mural displays specific themes that are in accord with her poem which furthers the concepts of science, religion, and work in Monongalia County.

Lazzell made aesthetic choices in response to program stipulations that are evident not only in her work but also in other government-sponsored artists' works during Roosevelt's administration which tended to have a bias against abstraction in American art.⁷⁰ This is most likely why Lazzell was told by her committee in Pittsburgh to create works that showed elements that would reflect Monongalia County and would be recognizable to the people who lived there. The program's leaders and regional committees were "suspicious of anything experimental, unconventional, or possibly titillating."⁷¹

The canvas mural Lazzell created was arched on the top and right-angled on the bottom to accommodate the wall space behind the judge's bench (Figure 3.1).⁷² In preliminary sketches Lazzell documented the measurements of the space and sketched the existing columns that flanked it (Figure 3.2 and 3.3).⁷³

The mural can be divided into three thematic parts when viewed from left to right. The scene on the far left side of the mural shows a frontal, but not parallel to the picture plane, depiction of Stewart Hall (Figure 3.4). Stewart Hall is situated on an elevated plot of grassy land with small bushes nestled against the building. A set of stairs leads to the front door from the sidewalk. The Richardsonian Romanesque architectural style of

⁷⁰ Harris, *Federal Art and National Culture*, 25.

⁷¹ Harris, *Federal Art and National Culture*, 25.

⁷² Blanche Lazzell *Justice*, 1934 oil on canvas, Art Museum of West Virginia University, 2011.19.

⁷³ Preliminary sketches of the measurements for the mural and space behind the judge's bench were obtained from the West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.

Stewart Hall is juxtaposed with the English Gothic revival style of the church next to it, the First Methodist Episcopal Church. The church is in the center of the composition (Figure 3.5). In actuality, the church is not situated that close to Stewart Hall, since it is roughly a city block away (Figure 3.6).⁷⁴ Lazzell depicts Willey Street in front of the church's entrance and North High Street along the right side of the church.⁷⁵

In the right third of the composition Lazzell incorporates the Morgantown Glass Works and the Morgantown Brick Company on the bottom right of the canvas (Figure 3.8).⁷⁶ Lazzell is accurately showing proper placement of the factory adjacent to the river, however, in reality the glass factory is nowhere near the church. The Morgantown Glass Works was roughly a mile away from Stewart Hall and the church (Figure 3.9).⁷⁷ Though

⁷⁴ Figure 3.6 is a current city map of downtown Morgantown that shows the streets where Stewart Hall and the First Methodist Episcopal Church are located on. Morgantown City Street [map], scale not given, in: North Central West Virginia Cities and Counties Street Map, USA: G.M. Johnson and Associates Ltd, date not given.

⁷⁵ The First Methodist Episcopal Church is today called Wesley Methodist Church and has had some renovation work done. In the mid to late 1940s the church renovated their sanctuary. Lazzell's completed mural in 1934 shows the church before renovation (Figure 3.7). At the time Lazzell painted the mural the church had a stained glass front which, when the sanctuary was re-oriented, was enclosed in with stone. The photographic post card shows the church similar to how it appears in Lazzell's mural. This information about the church's history was obtained on 11 January 2012, through a conversation while looking through the church archives with Mrs. Heather Nailler, a life long resident of Morgantown and member of the church and the Building and Grounds Superintendent of the church. Heather Nailler, interview by author, Morgantown, West Virginia, 11 January 2012.

⁷⁶ Morgantown Glass Works was in production from 1899 to 1903. In 1903 the company changed its name to Economy Tumbler Company (1903-1923). In 1923 the company changed its name again to Economy Glass Company (1923-1929). After this change its name returned again to that of Morgantown Glass Works and remained under that name until 1937. This means that while Lazzell was working on the mural the company was called Morgantown Glass Works. The Morgantown Glass Works closed in 1937 only to re-open in 1939 as Morgantown Glassware Guild (1939-1941). The company experienced one more name change in 1941, and was named Morgantown Glassware Guild, Inc. until production ended in 1972. This information is courtesy of Dr. Michael V. Mackert, Assistant Coordinator at the Morgantown History Museum in downtown Morgantown, obtained 10 January 2012. Jim Wiley, "The World of Morgantown Area Glass;" (lecture, Morgantown History Museum, Morgantown, West Virginia, 20 December 2011).

⁷⁷ See Figure 3.10. This photograph taken in the 1950s to 1960s and shows the placement of Seneca Glass Company in the bottom right corner, Morgantown Glass works in the center of the photo, and The Beaumont Glass Company in the upper right corner. These companies were situated along the Monongahela River. Morgantown Brick Company is not featured in this image but would have been before the image of Seneca Glass when viewed from bottom to top. See Figure 3.11 dated 1902 to see the placement of all four companies.

not in its historically accurate location, the glass factory is represented with its pronounced smoke stack the way Lazzell would have seen it in 1934.⁷⁸ In Lazzell's mural, due to the thick, dark, two-toned stripes of smoke that bellow out from its smoke stacks, the glass factory appears to be in production. Next to the glass company is a representation of the Morgantown Brick Company beehive kilns (Figure 3.13). The reference to glass and brick factories were two of three examples of industry Lazzell chose to represent Monongalia County.⁷⁹

Though Lazzell did not depict a known coal mine in the region she made a general reference to coal in Morgantown. Located behind the Morgantown Glass Works' smoke stack and to the left of the brick kilns are three black, slender smoke stacks, two of the same height located side by side and one just right of them that is somewhat taller. These smoke stacks are not affiliated with glass manufacturing, but more likely associated with mining.⁸⁰ This would mean that in Lazzell's mural she references three different types of industry found in and around Monongalia County: glass, brick, and coal production.

In the center of the painting, behind Stewart Hall, the hilly terrain across from Morgantown found along the Monongahela River and in other areas of town is visible. A

⁷⁸ The glass factory has been identified with the help of a historic photograph and is also confirmed by a preliminary sketch of the glass factory by Lazzell (Figure 3.12). In the bottom left corner of the sketch Lazzell wrote, "Glass Factory Morgantown 1934." This sketch was obtained through the West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.

⁷⁹ Though the glass factory and the brick company are no longer operational, their buildings still stand as a reminder of what once was the industry in the region.

⁸⁰ Through historic photograph in documentation it was determined that Lazzell represented coal production in the Morgantown area, courtesy of the West Virginia Regional History Office at West Virginia University. In Earl L. Core's *The Monongalia Story: A Bicentennial History: IV Industrialization*, (West Virginia University and Morgantown Public Library, Morgantown, West Virginia: McClain Printing Company, 1982), 456-457 stated that due to the United States entering World War I the demand for coal was significant. "Monongalia County became the largest producer with Scott's Run, in the Cass District, becoming one of West Virginia's greatest industrial districts in 1917." Not only did Scott's Run produce coal but in 1917 and 1918 "dozens of coal tipples were erected along the first two miles of Scott's Run and near Granville and Madsville."

road is seen leading to a small farm house situated among a few sporadically placed trees (Figure 3.14). This road leads to Lazzell's miniature image of Madsville where her family home was located.⁸¹ A historic photograph of Lazzell's family home in Madsville (Figure 3.15) and a preliminary sketch showing this same farm house (Figure 3.16) confirms that Lazzell did paint a representation of Madsville in the mural. Written on the bottom left corner of the sketch is, "C.C. Lazzell's Place." C.C. stands for Cornelius Carhart Lazzell who was Blanche Lazzell's father. Madsville is not located correctly geographically because, in fact, it is situated just north of Morgantown on the opposite end of town compared to where it is placed in the mural.⁸² This is due to Lazzell's use of shifting perspectives in the mural. However, when physically in Morgantown Madsville can be interpreted as being in the correct location in relation to the direction one views each building. The placement of the buildings and of the farm house shows that Lazzell was not concerned with geographical accuracy, for the town of Westover is directly across the river from downtown Morgantown, not Madsville. Though Lazzell's depiction of Madsville may reflect her family home it can also signify the outlying or rural areas of Monongalia County. Lazzell's mural was painted for the county courthouse not just the city of Morgantown thus speaks to the entire county.

At the top center of the composition is the hanging scale of justice held by a hand (Figure 3.17). The scale hovers over Monongalia County as though a symbol of protection for these institutions. Justice prevails and protects the educational system, religion, and thriving industry in the region. The scale is flatly painted and stark in its darkness against the background of the mural. Lazzell may have wanted to make an

⁸¹ As of the writing of this thesis Lazzell's family home in Madsville, West Virginia is still owned by the Lazzell family.

⁸² Madsville is a small rural area with a post office and an active coal mining plant.

important point. The scale is not tipped in either direction but stays balanced. Also, Lazzell may have wanted to show that all three of her themes, education, religion, and industry, carry the same weight and no one area of society is more important than another. Lazzell gave the mural the title, *Justice*, as denoted on the back of a few of her sketches (Figure 5.6), in a letter to Grace Martin Taylor, and in the poem she wrote concerning her feeling towards the mural.

Lazzell often signed her works. On the lower left corner on the front of the mural is her signature in black which reads “Blanche Lazzell 1934” (Figure 3.18). In the very center, just above the supporting beam on the back of the frame, is a white painted rectangle with yet another way Lazzell signed this work (Figure 3.19). Lettering in blue reads, “Composed and Painted by Blanche Lazzell Daughter of Cornelius Carhart and Mary Pope Lazzell 1934.” Though the inscription is on the back of the mural, it would become evident if the mural was ever taken down from the wall. To aid in her recognition she elected to state her lineage on the back. Those who knew her mother and father would be able to associate the mural with Lazzell.

Lazzell, working within the rules and guidelines set by the PWAP and her committee, painted a work that reflects elements not only historically significant to Morgantown, but also relevant to her own life in Monongalia County. Lazzell painted the school that helped to educate her, the church that she and others of her family attended, and the quaint farmhouse in Madsville where she was raised.⁸³ Though adhering to the regulations of the program, Lazzell displays her personality and her roots in Monongalia County in the mural.

⁸³ Information pertaining to Lazzell’s connection to the First Methodist Episcopal church is discussed further in Footnote 86.

CHAPTER 4: The Mural's Form

Lazzell's trips to Europe coincide with two different phases of Cubism. During her first trip 1912-1913, she saw works by cubist artists that displayed defining elements of the style such as shifting perspectives, implied movement, and receding planes. This first-hand experience, along with her training with Albert Gleizes, Fernand Léger, and André Lhote during her second trip (1923-1924), is visible in both her work prior to 1934 (Figure 1.1, 1.2, and 1.4) and her PWAP prints and mural.

Lazzell's European training in Cubism is evident in the mural. It is important to look at the mural from the standpoint of its formal properties and note how its aesthetic qualities relate to Lazzell's European modernist training. Along with her understanding of Cubism, Lazzell also employs the philosophy of an artist who was influential for the cubists: Cézanne. Cézanne's reduction of forms to their essential elements, use of "flat depth" (composed with overlapping planes and relying on color theory) and development of shifting perspectives can all be found in Lazzell's work.⁸⁴ An example of the use of "flat depth" is evident in Cézanne's *L'Estaque* (Figure 4.1, 1882-1885) while *House and Farm at Jas de Bouffan* shows an example of shifting perspective (Figure 4.6, 1885-1887).⁸⁵ In *L'Estaque* the use of overlapping forms and lack of detail aids to the notion of depth within the composition while saturated colors aids in the flatness. In *House and Farm at Jas de Bouffan* planes that construct the house are shifted and not rigid to the construction of the buildings but move as if one's eyes are moving across the buildings.

⁸⁴ Richard W. Murphy, *The World of Cézanne 1839-1906* (New York: Time-Life Books, 1968), 80. The use of overlapping planes and the idea that warm colors advance and cool colors receded aid in the creation of depth.

⁸⁵ Hajo Duchtig, *Paul Cézanne 1839-1906: Nature into Art* (Koln: Taschen, 2003), 102, 90.

In Lazzell's mural, what stands out the most is Cézanne's concept of shifting perspectives. Cézanne's awareness that a person does not stand in one position, but moves thus experiences multiple view points is an attribute that Lazzell employs in her finished mural. This is evident upon viewing her representation of Midsville where it may be geographically correct depending on what vantage point one is looking in. For example from the vantage point of Stewart Hall, Midsville is in the wrong position just as it is when viewed from the representation of industry. However, when viewed from the angle of the church Midsville is geographically correct. When looking at a map (Figure 4.2) of the location of the church in relation to Midsville Lazzell has shown Midsville on the correct bank of the river if one were looking towards Midsville from Morgantown.⁸⁶ This further reinforces that Lazzell is combining multiple viewpoints in this mural.

Lazzell uses her understanding of Cézanne's shifting perspective and color theory with portions of her mural coming into the foreground and receding into the background with the use of warm colors, used in the rooftops of each building, and cool colors, used in the hilly terrain and the sky, to show areas that are advancing and receding in the mural. Lazzell also incorporated this theory in her prints composed six weeks prior showing careful consideration of warm and cool colors in *The Monongahela at Morgantown*, evident in the warm color palette of the town against the cool coloration of the hilly terrain and river, *The Campus, W. Va. University, Morgantown*, showing the

⁸⁶ In a Google Earth map of the location of the First Methodist Episcopal Church in downtown Morgantown and extending towards Midsville the red line that has been drawn is in the direction in which one is viewing the church. The green line maps the direction Lazzell has placed Midsville from the church. The yellow line shows the actual direction of Midsville from the church. Morgantown, West Virginia [map], 2012, scale undetermined; generated by Dr. Kristen Harkness; using "GoogleEarth.com," www.google.com/earth/index.html (9 July 2012).

campus brick buildings in warm tones with the sidewalk composed of pale colors, and the *Waitman T. Willey* print, where Lazzell has used warm earth-tones in the façade of the home and a pastel color palette for the sky. Each print shows an understanding of the blend of warm and cool colors to give the impression of depth. Lazzell also changes the compositional perspective when considering placement of each building; Stewart Hall, the First Methodist Episcopal Church, the representation of industry, and the farm house situated just above Stewart Hall's spire.

Lazzell also demonstrates knowledge of Albert Gleizes' teaching of Cubism. Gleizes was interested in using multiple perspectives, arrangement of lines, and color, to open up the composition and unify the work, evident in *Le Dépiquage des moissons* (Figure 4.3, 1912).⁸⁷ Later in Gleizes' work, around 1922 to 1923 when he started to take in pupils, he modified his philosophy. Gleizes was producing works that show his technique of translation and rotation.⁸⁸ Translations and rotations suggest both space and time and create one unified form when implemented together.⁸⁹ Figure 4.4 shows both translation and rotation being used at the same time in one composition to create the concept of movement.⁹⁰ Lazzell is indebted to Gleizes' cubist training for she used some of his techniques in her earlier works (Figures 1.1 and 1.2) and also in her work for the PWAP in Morgantown.

In line twenty-four of the poem she composed while painting the mural Lazzell states the composition is, "united in harmonious form and color." All the elements that

⁸⁷ Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century*, 36.

⁸⁸ Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century*, 97.

⁸⁹ Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century*, 97. Further explanation of translation and rotation and illustrations of this concept can be found in Brooke's *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century* and also in Brooke's "Studying with Albert Gleizes in 1924" in *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist*.

⁹⁰ Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century*, 97.

represent the three themes in the mural, the depiction of Maidsville, and the hanging scales are unified by reduced forms. The buildings in the foreground bring the viewer's eyes to the surface of the work. The representation of Maidsville pulls the viewer's eyes further into the composition. The hanging scale returns one's focus to the surface. This emphasizes the idea that surfaces either recede or project within the composition. The overlapping of planes is essential in conveying depth. This concept not only is evident in Lazzell's mural but was a primary philosophy of Cézanne's.⁹¹

When examining Lazzell's mural as a whole it is evident that the reduction of form and unification of color, meaning that certain colors are repeated through out the mural such as bright red, have a large role in the aesthetics of the mural. The placement and arrangement of each building complements the one beside it so when viewing from left to right the composition completes a narrative of Morgantown, depicting recognizable buildings and subject matter.

Stewart Hall on the left side of the mural (Figure 3.4) is not adorned with elaborate detailing as it actually is, (Figure 4.5) but is instead shown with a surface simplified to the bare essentials needed to make one aware of the building's identity. Lazzell omits the decorative stonework that runs along its roofline and the intricate carvings that frame the windows and main doors of the building. By simplifying the form, Lazzell eliminated details that clutter the façade. Lazzell also used a similar color palette to Cézanne's works with hues and shades of tan, bright reds, grays and mossy greens like those found in his architectural paintings, for example *House and Farm at Jas de Bouffan* (Figure 4.6, 1885-1887).⁹² For Cézanne, the use of warm and cool colors

⁹¹ Murphy, *The World of Cézanne*, 80.

⁹² Duchting, *Paul Cézanne 1839-1906: Nature into Art*, 90.

aided in displaying depth of field since warm colors appear to advance and cool colors recede.⁹³ This too is a practice Lazzell used in her mural using warm colors for the structures and cool colors for the landscape.

Lazzell's representation of education in the mural echoes elements that are found in the prints she did only six weeks prior. In her print *The Campus, W. Va. University, Morgantown* (Figure 4.8) a portion of West Virginia University's downtown campus is represented; it includes three buildings on campus, starting on the left are E. Moore, Woodburn, and Martin Halls, whose architecture differs from that of Stewart Hall. Lazzell used her knowledge of the campus and applied it to the mural, only this time she elected to paint the building across the street from these three.

Lazzell continued to reduce forms to simplified shapes, evident in the representation of the church (Figure 3.5) in the center of the mural. This is clear when looking at the lack of detailing on the stone façade and the omission of the church's ornate decorative architectural elements, and most importantly, the deletion of the spire on top of the tower. Each wall of the church is painted to appear very flat and lacks the grid-like pattern that its stone-work actually provides. The windows of the church almost recede into the walls and are nearly impossible to see. Lazzell also constructed the church using very straight lines that show a strong, sturdy structure.

Comparing this work to an example of Lazzell's earlier more extreme cubist compositions, for example *Painting VIII* (Figure 1.2) from her series of related and numbered non-objective paintings, composed while working with Gleizes and after her study with him, reveals similarities in line structure. Lazzell continued to use her knowledge from Gleizes in regard to strong vertical lines and dividing techniques to

⁹³ Murphy, *The World of Cézanne*, 80.

compose this work. Evident in *Painting VIII*, Lazzell used vertical lines and forms to show stability and division between shapes along with a slight rotation of forms to show movement. The use of vertical lines and movement, in terms of translation movement where an elements moves in relations to another, are both evident in the mural where vertical lines are used to construct each building and movement is employed to move the viewer's eyes across the composition with each building being in the foreground yet some what staggered to increase the flow.

Lazzell angles the church so that the main doors are not in the center of the composition, in a frontal view, not only adds compositional interest, but also serves as a device to open the composition up and divide the layout. One finds Lazzell employing this same angle in one of her earlier prints for the PWAP the *Waitman T. Willey House* (Figure 4.9). For the print Lazzell does not present the home in a frontal view but from a three-quarter view. Lazzell angles it so that the composition opens up in two different directions. From the front protruding corner of the home two paths are created, one that is directed down the side of the home and one that is angled along the front. This angle is also found in the center of the mural adjacent to the First Episcopal Methodist Church. Here, as in Lazzell's print, two recessional paths are created to open the space and create depth in the work. This causes one's eyes to follow each path separately. The first path leads along the front of the church where the main doors are located and the other is angled to the right of the church so to lead in the direction of Lazzell's representation of the river. Lazzell provides the composition with more interest by painting both the Waitman T. Willey House and the church in this manner, showing them both turned.

Though Lazzell reduced her structural forms of Stewart Hall and the church down to their essential framework, it is in her depiction of industry that she drastically minimized (Figure 3.8). Lazzell's depiction is so minimal that a viewer not from Morgantown or familiar with the architectural landscape of a similar industrial area, they would find it difficult to identify the objects. In Lazzell's depiction of the glass factory she omits windows and leaves only the furnace smoke stack.

In historic photographs, the brick company beehive kilns are evident as well (Figure 3.13). At first glance these kilns almost appear to be mounds of sand, such as those used in the production of glass. Here too, Lazzell is not interested in being historically accurate in portraying the kilns. Here Lazzell is looking closely at form and experimenting with filling voids, or empty space, and repeating forms in her composition. Lazzell mixes and matches elements of objects to make one cohesive representation of industry. As with most cubists there is the idea of artistic license where manipulating or breaking apart a form can lead to a cohesive image.⁹⁴ Lazzell is piecing together attributes of three types of industry and forms one unified concept of industry in Morgantown to make her finished representation.

Having already re-used elements from two PWAP prints to aid in the representation of education and the compositional layout, Lazzell also uses the concept of industry as already featured in another PWAP print. In *The Monongahela at Morgantown* (Figure 4.7) the Monongahela River and a portion of downtown Morgantown display the stacked, elevated quality of the landscape with rows of homes and buildings juxtaposed with the rolling hills across the river. Lazzell also represents local industry by including a smoke stack of one of the local glass companies found along the river. Lazzell

⁹⁴ Judkins, "Toward a Reinterpretation of Cubism," 270.

appropriates from this print the landscape's hilly terrain and the representation of Morgantown's local industry, the smoke stack of one of the glass companies along the river. Not only does she re-use elements from *The Monongahela at Morgantown* print, but Lazzell also returns to her print from 1919, *The Monongahela* (Figure 1.4). In *The Monongahela* she has again looked at the curve of the landscape around the river and the curve of the horizon, which is similar to the curve of the mural's canvas. Lazzell re-used the rolling hills of the terrain, the row of homes, and curve of the river in her PWAP prints for the mural.

Looking past the three buildings in the foreground of the mural and focusing on the landscape behind them, the viewer sees that Lazzell painted the mountainous terrain with little perspective and used the landscape to reinforce the shape of her canvas's arched edge, which is mirrored in the scale's beam and reversed in its pans. This lack of detail and the flatness in the depiction of the landscape's abstract forms is more evident in Lazzell's preliminary sketches for the mural. Lastly, Lazzell's illustration of the scale of justice is painted flat with no modeling attempted. Lazzell also abstracted the hand holding the scale of justice. The hand is depicted with the knuckles of the clenched fist facing forward and there is little attempt to make the hand appear realistic or natural. It is abstracted to the point that it almost looks as if it was rope supporting the scale. The scale is part of the canvas but rests on the composition's surface. Though the canvas was made to fit the empty arched space behind the judge's bench, Lazzell incorporates this shape in the form of the mountainous terrain and the beam of the scale.

There is one compositional element yet to be discussed: the decision to not include human forms. Lazzell did not paint the sidewalk in front of Stewart Hall

populated with students, nor parishioners at the church, nor make any reference to the workers in those factories. The only human representations in Lazzell's body of work are found in sketches and a very few early paintings. The majority of the murals for the PWAP and WPA, along with murals completed before and after this time, do incorporate images of people. A good example of the differences in mural art can be seen by comparing Lazzell's mural to those of Thomas Hart Benton or those created by the Mexican muralists, such as Diego Rivera (Figures 2.1 and 2.2).

Lazzell's main artistic concern is the form of objects. This is evident not only in the work she produced for the PWAP, but also in her earlier and later works. She produced few images of the human figure. Lazzell's art focuses on her preference for complete abstraction, landscapes, or still-life themes with few images of human form. Her forms are simple with little detailing, a characteristic of modern abstraction.

CHAPTER 5: Lazzell and the Preliminary Sketches for the Mural

“Find out all you can about the PWA there [in Charleston, WV] and let me know as soon as you can. And if it still is in operation. Maybe I would have a chance from there.” – Blanche Lazzell.⁹⁵

In Marlene Park’s essay, “The Federal Art Project, 1934-39,” written for *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist*, she suggests that the sketch marked “This One” (Figure 5.1) in the lower left corner was possibly the sketch that was chosen for the Morgantown mural.⁹⁶ This sketch is one of fifteen in the art collection at West Virginia University; there may have been others. In some of these other sketches, Lazzell’s process as she refined her idea for the finished mural (Figure 5.2 and 5.3) is visible. The themes of education, religion, and industry, as noted on the sketch by Lazzell in Figure 5.1, are consistent with the finished mural, but the placement and overall construction of the composition’s layout differs from Lazzell’s end result.

The sketch marked “This One,” hereafter Figure 5.1, is drawn in heavy graphite. In this sketch Lazzell positions Stewart Hall on the left of the composition at an angle. The left corner of the building is angled and turned slightly counter-clockwise and recedes towards a vanishing point. In this sketch, unlike the finished mural, a vanishing point was used, which created the recession of space. This not only created depth but also a foreground, middle ground, and background to the image, unlike the finished mural, which shows little depth of field and no division between the different grounds. Directly in the middle-ground of the composition is an image of a church which faces the viewer and is nestled in the background among a depiction of Morgantown’s hilly terrain. The

⁹⁵ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 4 March 1934, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

⁹⁶ Blanche Lazzell *Untitled*, 1934 pencil on paper, Art Museum of West Virginia University; Gift of James C. and Janet G. Reed, 1995.004.010.

church's representation in this sketch does not resemble the actual appearance of the First Methodist Episcopal Church and is in fact a completely different church. Lazzell substituted the church she attended as her example of religion in the area. The First Methodist Episcopal Church was well-known in Morgantown, because its Women's Guild established the Scott's Run settlement house. Along with this, one of Lazzell's family members, I.G. Lazzelle, was a member on the 1904 church board.⁹⁷ The church in Figure 5.1 is reminiscent of the mid-eighteenth-century churches found in New England. Because Lazzell resided in Provincetown prior to her commission in Morgantown in 1934, she may have seen churches that looked like the one portrayed in this sketch. Knowing that the regulations of the PWAP stated work should reflect the community for which it was being created, Lazzell may have decided to paint a local church in the finished mural.

In Figure 5.1, there are more buildings included than the ones that are in the finished mural. There are two buildings that flank either side of the church and one found behind Stewart Hall. It is unclear what iconographical purpose these buildings serve in this sketch for Lazzell does not include any description. Also, in a departure from the finished mural, Maidsville was not included in this sketch. It is evident that as Lazzell sketched her plan for the mural she contemplated different ways of interpreting her themes and ultimately decided that less might be more for this mural.

⁹⁷ Isaac Grant Lazzelle was a lawyer and judge for the Monongalia County Circuit Court from 1921 to 1929 and was also a life-long member of the First Episcopal Methodist Church and served as a trustee. Obituary of Isaac Grant Lazzelle, *The Morgantown Post*, n.d., local edition. The reason for the slight last name variation is due to a land dispute between the Lazzell family members. Some elected to keep the additional "e" on the end of their last name while others dropped it, such as Blanche Lazzell and her immediate family members. Robert Bridges, conversation with author, 14 March 2011.

Positioned awkwardly, hovering above the steeple of the church, the hanging scale of justice is held in place by a floating image of a hand. This image of the scales mimics the curves of the hilly terrain, and in fact extends as if the beam that holds the scales is simply an extension of the land. The image of the hanging scales appears again in the finished mural, though the lines of the scales are not as one with the land as in this sketch.

On the far right of the composition the Morgantown Glass Works and the Morgantown Brick Company are depicted. The conical furnace stack of the glass company emits thick clouds of dark smoke. The furnace smoke stack for a glass factory is chunky at its base and becomes slender as it rises away from the building's structure. The glass factory is situated in the foreground on the right side adding weight to that portion of the composition.

Some more examples of Lazzell's sketches are seen in Figures 5.2 and 5.3. Figure 5.2 is a depiction of all three buildings but positioned in a different arrangement than in Figure 5.1.⁹⁸ Stewart Hall is shown frontally with a small portion of the left side cropped. It is elevated slightly above street level due to the terrain. A narrow set of stairs ascends from street level up the slightly inclined hill to the main doors of the hall.

The church (Figure 5.2) is rotated to three-quarters view from the frontal view in Figure 5.1 and is shifted to left of center of the composition. In Figure 5.1 the church is very symmetrical whereas in Figure 5.2 Lazzell sketched the First Methodist Episcopal Church asymmetrically. This asymmetrical representation is also found in the finished mural. In this sketch, as in the others Lazzell made for the PWAP mural, all other

⁹⁸ Blanche Lazzell *Untitled*, 1934, pencil on tracing paper, Art Museum of West Virginia University; Gift of James C. and Janet G. Reed, 1995.004.004.

academic buildings found on West Virginia University's campus have been omitted. The church is turned toward the viewer and though using artistic license, Lazzell attempts to show the correct roads pulling attention to the bottom portion of the composition. Lazzell chooses to omit what she thought were unnecessary details, such as architectural features and ornate detailing. Lazzell sketched spires on both Stewart Hall and the church. In Figure 5.2, as compared to Figure 5.1, the hanging scale of justice no longer dominates the composition, but is nestled above the church and is seen as a secondary image to not distract from the three buildings.

The road depicted parallel to the right side of the church is used as a dividing tactic to guide the viewer's eyes away from the left and towards the bottom right portion of the composition which illustrates industry. This creates two recessionary spaces in the work. In this sketch the glass factory is shown with more volume and weight than Stewart Hall and the church. The plume of smoke emitted from the chunky smoke stack is thick and goes higher than the spires on Stewart Hall and the church.

Figure 5.2 was not the only sketch Lazzell completed with this compositional layout. Figure 5.3⁹⁹ shows the same subject matter and layout as Figure 5.2 but has a slight difference in perspective. It is composed with a heavy hand and dark graphite marks. Though these sketches represent the final layout of the finished mural, Figure 5.2 and 5.3 do not represent the stylistic changes Lazzell made that led to the finished mural. Figure 5.4 shows no changes to the compositional layout but does possess one element not seen in the previous two sketches that marks a significant difference in the aesthetics of

⁹⁹ Blanche Lazzell *Untitled*, 1934, pencil on paper, Art Museum of West Virginia University; Gift of James C. and Janet G. Reed, 1995.004.013.

the finished mural.¹⁰⁰ The difference seen in Figure 5.4 is found in the spire on the church that Lazzell eventually eliminated. Having a work containing two spires that are strikingly similar would distract from the overall composition causing the focus to be pulled toward the overall message of the work and away from the aesthetic judgment and form of the piece. In Figure 5.4 the hanging scale of justice is also significantly reduced and the landscape is different, for the mountains are steeper than those in Figure 5.3, where they are not as pronounced. Lazzell continues mimicking the shape of the beam that holds the scale in the roundness of the mountain tops.

Lazzell also created at least three color studies (Figure 5.5).¹⁰¹ Following these color sketches, Lazzell created a final color study (Figure 5.7).¹⁰² Though it has some discrepancies from the finished mural, it may provide a representation of what the true colors of the mural are since the colors have deteriorated.¹⁰³ The study marked No. 4, Figure 5.6, shows a preliminary concept of how the mural would look against the dark wood architectural features of the courthouse. In Figure 5.5 Lazzell paints what is possibly the blank wall behind the judge's bench showing the position of the mural framed between a columned structure. Though this color study provides some insight into what this space for the mural would have looked like, what is significant about its design is how the top portion of the frame mimics the beam of the hanging scale. Lazzell painted Figure 5.6 to resemble the graphite sketch (Figure 5.4) of the church without its spire and

¹⁰⁰ Blanche Lazzell *Untitled*, 1934, pencil on tracing paper, Art Museum of West Virginia University; Gift of James C. and Janet G. Reed, 1995.004.003.

¹⁰¹ Blanche Lazzell *Untitled*, 1934, paint on board, Art Museum of West Virginia University; Gift of James C. and Janet G. Reed, 1995.004.019.

¹⁰² The final color study currently hangs in Stewart Hall on West Virginia University's downtown campus.

¹⁰³ Because the actual mural had been in storage at the time of Park's essay it is from this study that Park assessed Lazzell's mural in "The Federal Art Project, 1934-39." Further explanation as to where the mural has been housed over the years and the damage it has sustained is discussed in the epilogue of this thesis.

all the buildings positioned in the same location. On the back of this color sketch Lazzell wrote down the working title, *Justice* (Figure 5.6).¹⁰⁴

By experimenting with different compositional layouts and levels of abstraction in each sketch, Lazzell made aesthetic choices as to how the finished mural should be composed. Upon analyzing her preliminary sketches it is evident that for the mural Lazzell has reduced forms to their essential identifiable elements uses vertical lines as both a way to show stability and division, emphasizes the unification color by re-using red in each building, and displays an attitude that is informed by her understanding of cubism.

¹⁰⁴ On the back of Figure 4.5 Lazzell wrote: No. 4, Study for Mural “Justice” in Courthouse at Morgantown, W Va., By Blanche Lazzell, 1934 P.W.A.P.

CHAPTER 6: The Close of the PWAP Project in Morgantown

“. . . I realize more all the time that I will have to live another life to do all I want to do toward painting my masterpiece. Yes I do feel it deeper all the time that I do have something to say in my work that has not yet been said”– Blanche Lazzell.¹⁰⁵

Lazzell, agitated by the little recognition she received during her lifetime from the people of West Virginia, found praise for her work with the PWAP in the state in several forms. First area high schools’ art departments contacted Lazzell, expressing a desire for her to create more wood-block prints of Morgantown. Then there was praise from Judge Baker, who wrote multiple times to inquire about having her work on a mural for the courthouse. Several months after the mural had been completed, Lazzell also received praise from the local paper.¹⁰⁶ In the article Gilbert Miller wrote on November 9, 1934, he stated,

Monongalia County has a genuine art treasure in the mural painted by Miss Blanche Lazzell in the recess behind the bench in the Circuit Court room. This conviction will grow on any one who will take the time to look at the painting from the western side of the room, when the light is good and from a point not too close. And it will take hold of anyone no matter how deficient he may be in knowledge of painting. Look at the painting, look away, and look again at the painting, and it grows more satisfying, affords more pleasure, with each succeeding study. The work is sanely modernistic. Changing tastes of future generations, the rising dominance of new “schools,” or return of older cults will never obscure its essential beauty.¹⁰⁷

Miller makes an interesting point in his write up of Lazzell’s mural. He states that the mural is *sanely modernistic*. There is a level of recognition that the mural is not like other works, but has characteristics of modernism. Miller’s report of the mural indicates that

¹⁰⁵ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 1 July 1937, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

¹⁰⁶ Lazzell commented on the press she had received for her PWAP contribution in Morgantown stating: “They have given me some very nice press notices. Reproduced my mural in Post but got the write up sadly mixed. So the one of Gilbert Miller is the more exact.” In a letter Lazzell wrote to Grace Martin Taylor from Morgantown dated 20 November 1934, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

¹⁰⁷ Gilbert Miller, “It May Interest You,” *The Morgantown Post*, 9 November 1934.

though it references structures that are seen daily in Morgantown that they are rendered differently than how they appear in real life.

Lazzell's four month period of working in Morgantown proved fruitful with the completion of three white line wood-block prints and a mural. Though she did receive praise for her work while there, it was not enough to keep her in Morgantown. Lazzell, who only come back to Morgantown for annual visits, and in this case also a paycheck, was leaving again. At the close of her time with the PWAP, Lazzell traveled back to Provincetown, where she worked for the Works Progress Administration in 1935.

Though Lazzell changed her aesthetic approach in order to accommodate the requirements imposed by the PWAP, her work still shows a level of abstraction, though not as pronounced as it was prior to and after her time with the PWAP. Lazzell, aware of her audience and her committee's agenda, toned down her abstraction, but continued to reference what she had learned from her studies in Europe; from Cézanne's philosophy regarding the compositional plane, reduction of forms, and shifting perspective to Gleizes' cubist form consisting of movement, rotation, and dividing lines.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Peter Brooke, "Studying with Albert Gleizes in 1924," 208.

EPILOGUE

During the 1970s the Monongalia County Courthouse was renovated. At that time the mural was removed from behind the judge's bench. Lazzell's mural was not the only PWAP mural to meet the fate of being considered out of fashion. Murals were painted over sketches and prints were destroyed, and statues removed. Some works, if lucky, were crated up in storage units and eventually forgotten about, while others were simply lost forever. Lazzell's work for the PWAP in Morgantown met a different fate. Two of Lazzell's prints, *The Campus, W. Va University, Morgantown* and the *Waitman T. Willey House* are part of the Art Museum of West Virginia University Collection. Lazzell's mural also stayed in Morgantown and ended up at West Virginia University where it remains today.¹⁰⁹ Robert Bridges, the current curator of the Art Museum of West Virginia University, took the mural out of storage in December 2010.

The mural has suffered water damage. In particular, in the bottom left corner where Lazzell's name is the water-saturated wood frame has slowly been deteriorating and the canvas has lost pigment. Not only has water damaged the bottom left corner but a water line also runs the entire length of the canvas about four inches from the bottom of work. Along with water damage the mural has a few scratch marks and areas of chipping paint with the worst area in the far right corner near the section depicting the church closest to the Monongahela River. Other areas of the canvas have similar damage, for example near the front door of the church, but not as severe.

¹⁰⁹While under renovation in the 1970s, the courthouse removed the mural from its wall and placed it in the basement for storage. The courthouse moved the mural later to the basement of the county library a few blocks away. Robert Bridges, interview by author, Morgantown, West Virginia, 14 March 2011. West Virginia University took possession of it after that. The mural was later stored behind a false wall in one of the galleries at the Creative Arts Center. In 1994, the West Virginia Regional History curator John Cuthbert at West Virginia University crated the mural and placed it in storage before the Creative Arts Center galleries were renovated.

The coloration of the mural has suffered from years of grime. Lazzell's colors, once vivid and similar to that of her three white line wood-block prints, have lost their luster and character. After recent preliminary conservation work, it has been determined that the coloration of the mural is similar to that of Lazzell's prints (Figure E.1 and E.2) showing evidence of saturated areas of bright reds, deep greens, and shades of brown. Once conservation work is completed the mural might be restored to the coloration similar to that of the color study that hangs currently in Stewart Hall.

One potential reason for the mural's lack of upkeep and preservation is that the mural is not under federal jurisdiction. Lazzell's prints are federally owned and the West Virginia University Art Collection possesses two of the three PWPA prints, *The Campus, W. Va. University, Morgantown* (Figure 4.8) and the *Waitman T. Willey House* (Figure 4.9). Unfortunately the mural was not under federal protection. Since the mural was created for a county courthouse the federal government had no authority over its well-being, unlike Lazzell's prints.

APPENDIX I:

Lazzell's PWAP Letters

Employment in Hard Times

Below are the letters that chronicle the four months Lazzell worked in Morgantown, West Virginia for the PWAP. These letters provide information on how long Lazzell worked for the program, her pay scale, her print project, and her mural commission from Judge Charles Baker.

In a letter to Grace Martin Taylor in October of 1933 Lazzell stated how difficult it was to maintain a steady income prior to her employment with the PWAP. Lazzell wrote:

They had an auction at the Art Market. They sold a number of things for me but did not average two dollars a piece by the time the commission was taken out. The summer was better than last year but nothing to brag about. Am still struggling for existence. Am terribly behind as most of people are. Provincetown does not feel the times as other places as it has always led a normal life, and is now about on an even keel as far as I know. The banks have kept going. Fishing business poor. I think the liquor traffic has helped some. Any how we don't have that awful panic feeling one finds in many places. Of course the town is poor enough as its normal times. I hope poor ole West Virginia will some how pull out of her labor pains. I can't realize and I do not want to realize the situation. Is Charleston as bad off as Morgantown?¹¹⁰

The PWAP Letters

Bessie, Lazzell's younger sister, acted as the family historian. Bessie saved ten letters pertaining to Lazzell's PWAP work.¹¹¹ These ten letters consist of correspondence from John O'Connor, Jr., along with a letter from Wm. N. Beehler, and one from an E. F.

¹¹⁰ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 10 October 1933, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

¹¹¹ These letters were saved at Blanche Lazzell's directive for she felt in time these letters may be vital in her artistic history. Lazzell felt it was important to document everything from letters of correspondence to documentation of when her works were sold and for how much. Two letters dated 6 March 1934 from John O'Connor, Jr. and from Judge Charles Baker can be found in Chapter Three.

Hagan, all of which deal in some way with Lazzell and her work in Morgantown. There is a copy of a handwritten letter that Lazzell sent to O'Connor. Though correspondence from Lazzell to O'Connor is sparse, the context of the letters Lazzell received from O'Connor help to clarify their written conversations pertaining to the program. O'Connor's first letter to Lazzell is dated January 19, 1934¹¹² and in it he stated:

Your application for work under the Art Project was approved by the Regional Committee. You are engaged at the rate of \$26.50 per week from the time you take the Oath of Office until approximately February 15, 1934. Your project is to do a series of wood block prints of historical buildings and scenes in and about Morgantown. You should plan your work so that the series will be completed on February 15. The number in the series is to be determined by you, on the basis of the time allowed. You should report your progress from week to week to the Regional Committee, in my care, at the Department of Fine Arts, Carnegie Institute, Forbes Street, Pittsburgh, Pa. Mr. Brennan will send you the Oath of Office, which you will please execute before a Notary Public and return to him immediately.¹¹³

On February 9, 1934 Lazzell received a letter from the Chief Clerk at the Treasury Department: Public Works of Art Project, in regard to her pay reduction. It stated:

Referring to your letter of February 2nd to Mr. O'Connor. Wish to advise that on January 21st, all artists were subject to a reduction of 10%. You were therefore paid one day at the rate of \$26.50 per week, and four days at the rate of \$23.85 per week, on the basis of seven days per week. Trust this explanation is satisfactory.¹¹⁴

On February 16, 1934 O'Connor wrote to Lazzell:

This is to notify you on behalf of the Regional Art Committee of the Art Project for Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia that your period of employment ended as of February 15, 1934. The Committee wishes to thank you for your cooperation and the fine spirit which you showed in the work which you have been doing.¹¹⁵

¹¹² The letterhead that appears on the first letter O'Connor sent to Lazzell reads, "Treasury Department Washington Public Works of Art Project."

¹¹³ John O'Connor, Jr. to Blanche Lazzell, 19 January 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

¹¹⁴ Chief Clerk to Blanche Lazzell, 9 February 1934, Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

¹¹⁵ O'Connor, Jr. to Blanche Lazzell, 16 February 1934, Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

Lazzell informed O'Connor on February 23, 1934 that she would like to have her contract with the program extended.¹¹⁶ Lazzell's reason for the request was the interest the community had shown for her prints and she desired to complete more prints for the area high schools, as well as for West Virginia University.¹¹⁷ However, Lazzell did not use this extension to create more prints, but, with permission, designed and painted the courthouse mural.¹¹⁸ In a letter dated March 6, 1934 O'Connor wrote:

Thanks for the three prints which arrived today. They are very interesting and I am glad to have them. The Regional Art Project Committee authorizes the renewal of your employment from March 1st to April 15th at the rate of \$23.85 per week. Since this notice will not reach you until March 7th, you will be expected to work a week longer than April 15th. For that week you will receive no compensation. Please send me three additional prints mounted in the same manner as the others. I wish to hold one set here and send the other set immediately to Washington.¹¹⁹

Charles Baker, a Judge for the State of West Virginia Seventeenth Judicial Circuit Court in Morgantown, wrote to Homer Saint Gaudens, Regional Director Public Works of Art, on March 6, 1934. He told Saint Gaudens:

We have just finished redecorating our Court Room with RFC, and later, CWA funds. Back of the bench there is a panel about seven by twelve feet in which we would like to have painted a symbolical picture. Miss Blanche Lazzell has drawn up some sketches for our Bar Committee, one of which has been approved and which we desire the use. Will you please advise us how we can secure the services of Miss Lazzell through your project for the purpose of having this panel painted?¹²⁰

O'Connor sent a letter the following day, March 7, 1934. He told Lazzell:

¹¹⁶ Lazzell, letter of correspondence to O'Connor, 23 February 23, 1934. This is stated in the only letter that was kept by Lazzell to O'Connor, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

¹¹⁷ The area high schools may have expressed interest in her prints to Lazzell's involvement in their art program. A former student of Lazzell's, Lily Hagans who studied with her in 1914, introduced an art program in the Morgantown high schools where art students were asked to study a specific work of art at great depth. Beginning in 1933 Lazzell loaned some of her prints to the program and also visited the students to discuss her work. Doll, "Blanche Lazzell Biography," 44-45.

¹¹⁸ Discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

¹¹⁹ O'Connor, Jr. to Blanche Lazzell, 6 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

¹²⁰ Judge Charles Baker to Homer Saint Gaudens, 6 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

I am attaching a copy of the letter which came today from Judge Baker. This is the second time that Judge Backer has written about this decoration. As I wrote you yesterday, The Regional Art Project Committee authorized the renewal of you employment from March 1 to April 15. The idea was that you were to continue to make wood-block prints. I take it that you have made four by this time, three of which you have sent to Pittsburgh. If you feel that you can complete the decoration which Judge Baker desires, that is, within the six weeks period of your employment, I authorize you to confer with Judge Baker and to proceed with the decoration. I am writing to Judge Baker today telling him that you will confer with him. Please let me know your decision at your earliest convenience.¹²¹

On March 13, 1934 Lazzell received another letter from O'Connor, this time discussing her prints. It states:

The color wood-block print, "The Monongahela at Morgantown, West Virginia" came today. Your three other wood-block prints "The Campus, West Virginia University," "The Monongahela" and "Waitman T. Willey House, Morgantown, West Virginia" were sent to the Art Project, Washington, D.C. I am unable to decide whether the print entitled, "The Monongahela" is another copy of the print entitled "The Monongahela at Morgantown, West Virginia" or your fourth print. Will you please clear this point for me by return mail. I am glad to know that you are going ahead with the decoration at the courthouse. Please keep in touch with the progress of your work.¹²²

Lazzell received a letter from Wm. N. Beehler, Administrator of the Federal Civil Works Administration and West Virginia Unemployment Relief Administration in Charleston, West Virginia, dated March 17, 1934. The letter said:

We received, to adorn the walls of our office, from the Carnegie Institute of Art, a wood-block print entitled "The Monongahela at Morgantown, W. Va." which we are informed was made by you. We are writing this to tell you of our appreciation of your most beautiful and artistic work, and we hope we can secure another such picture to fit in with the scheme of outfitting our offices, which we are planning to do with handicraft furniture, hand made rugs and draperies. Please accept our thanks. (Figure 3.15)¹²³

¹²¹ O'Connor, Jr. to Blanche Lazzell, 7 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

¹²² O'Connor, Jr. to Blanche Lazzell, 13 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

¹²³ Wm. N. Beelher to Blanche Lazzell, 17 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

Lazzell not only found praise for her wood-block prints from Beehler but also from someone who was extremely important to the PWAP and its creation, Edward Bruce, the leader of the PWAP and the Fine Arts Section. On March 27, 1934 O'Connor wrote to Lazzell and informed her that Bruce was interested in her work.

Mr. Edward Bruce, the Secretary of the Public Works of Art Project, was very much interested in your color wood-block prints and wanted to secure more of them. I wrote Washington explaining that we assigned you to another project. If by any chance you should have extra copies of the three original wood-blocks, will you send them to me so that I can forward them to Mr. Bruce. I trust all goes well with your decoration.¹²⁴

O'Connor wrote again on April 4, 1934 stating:

In order that you may finish your decoration and furnish us with additional prints, your time has been extended from April 15th to May 1st.

There is some confusion in regard to a letter sent to Lazzell by E. F. Hagan while she was in Morgantown working for the PWAP. Hagan was the Project Officer at the Monongalia Relief Administration in Morgantown who wrote on May 29, 1934 that:

I am handing you herewith assignment card for work on decoration in the County Courthouse. Your work is to start May 31, 1934 and to end on August 15, 1934. The total number of hours allocated to his project is 150 at 85 cents per hour. The time can be turned in for a maximum of 24 hours or \$20.40 per week.¹²⁵

It is unclear if Lazzell actually used this extension and if so how much of it. In a letter written to Grace Martin Taylor in March of 1934 Lazzell stated, "I am still doing PWA work on a decoration behind the judge's seat at courthouse and will have to work long after it closes April 15."¹²⁶ In June of 1934 the PWAP came to a close. Lazzell was reassigned from her Pittsburgh committee to the Monongalia County Relief

¹²⁴ O'Connor, Jr. to Blanche Lazzell, 27 March 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

¹²⁵ E. F. Hagan to Blanche Lazzell, 29 May 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

¹²⁶ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 28 March 1934, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

Administration. There is speculation that she may have worked an additional six weeks, part time, for the Relief Administration, though that is unclear.¹²⁷ Lazzell concluded her time with the PWAP in Morgantown in April 1934 and petitioned in 1935 to be part of the newly formed WPA in Massachusetts to gain employment and income.¹²⁸ On Lazzell's behalf O'Connor wrote on January 2, 1935 to T.R. Hinckley, the District Supervisor of the Professional and Service Projects Federal Works Progress Administration, which states:

This is in reply to your similar letters of December 30, 1934, addressed to Homer Saint-Gaudens and to John O'Connor, Jr. to which you attached a letter of December 28 from the Works Progress Administration of Massachusetts, signed by Mabelle V. Farr, Assistant Supervisor, Division of Certification and Intake, concerning Miss Blanche Lazzell. Blanche Lazzell was employed on the Public Works of Art Project from January 20, 1934, to February 15, 1934, and again from March 1, 1934 to April 28, 1934. Her address was then 338 Watts Street, Morgantown, West Virginia. I am attaching herewith a copy of the application which she made for work under the Public Works of Art Project on January 16, 1934. On the Public Miss Lazzell made three color wood-block prints which were sent to the Washington head-quarters of Art Project, and she also did a mural decoration in the Court House at Morgantown, West Virginia. Miss Lazzell's services on the Art Project were very satisfactory. We have no hesitation in recommending her to the Works Project Administration of Massachusetts.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Park, Bibliography "The Federal Art Projects, 1934-39," 231.

¹²⁸ O'Connor, Jr. wrote to T. R. Hickley, the District Supervisor Professional and Service Projects of the Federal Works Progress Administration, on 2 January 1935, recommending Lazzell for a position under the WPA.

¹²⁹ O'Connor, Jr. to T. R. Hickley, 2 January 1934, The Archive of American Art [reel 2990].

APPENDIX II:

Lazzell's Wood Block Tools

“Make people understand that these prints are not ordinary prints but more like paintings.” – Blanche Lazzell.¹³⁰

The development of the printing process that Lazzell used, the single-block white line printing technique, was cultivated in Provincetown. David Acton states in “The Provincetown Print” that several Provincetown artists combined their artistic experiences. Acton writes,

....the synthesis of Arthur Wesley Dow’s experiments via Edna Boies Hopkins, Kandinsky’s manner via Ethel Mars, that artist’s own considerable experience with the medium, and the principle of a la poupee [French for with the puppet] was what resulted in the “Provincetown Print.”¹³¹

However, though these artist’s experiences played a role, some consider B.J.O. Nordfeldt developed the final version of the technique.¹³² Nordfeldt’s works depict life in Provincetown from images of the coast line to everyday activities of the town’s residents. Lazzell was in the company of all the artists mentioned above, but actually learned the technique from Oliver Newberry Chaffee, Jr.¹³³

To fully understand the importance of Lazzell’s prints for the PWAP one has to understand how they were created. In a letter written to Grace Martin Taylor, a former student, fellow printmaker, and distant cousin, Lazzell discussed her technique and process:

Be sure to make them understand that it is printed one shape at a time and not all at one impression as so many people think. Some people think it is

¹³⁰ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 10 March 1935, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

¹³¹ Acton, “The Provincetown Print,” 175.

¹³² Acton, “The Provincetown Print,” 175.

¹³³ Acton, “The Provincetown Print,” 177.

done like a news paper is printed. Some people ask “do you color the whole block each time?” meaning that a number of prints can be made with one coloring of the whole block. Which is of course an ignorant question. These prints are worth as much as the modern water colors which are priced at one hundred and fifty or two hundred and we can get that much for them when people I mean when they are better understood and appreciated So many people this summer have come in and nosed so closely trying to find out all they could for nothing. It made me wish to keep it a secret. It is not necessary to mention any particular wood. I say let the student experiment on different kinds of wood The red gum was mentioned to me by some one in Morgantown, at the planning mill. So I tried it. I don’t show the block here much. Don’t give them a lesson. Show one block but not the tools. How would that do?¹³⁴

Lazzell’s prints start with a simple piece of wood, often either birch or cherry. Lazzell would then sketch her design on to the surface of the wood to display areas of white lines and areas of color. Carved out areas of the wood-block would not receive ink but would yield the off-white hue of the paper. These white lines are generally outlines and used to frame the composition. Lazzell was passionate about the blocks she created for she stated in another letter to Taylor, “I consider them my most valuable possession. . . .”¹³⁵ Not only did the composition receive a great deal of contemplation, but thought also goes into what tools would yield the desired results.¹³⁶ Lines in the prints that are seen thinly carved would be the result of a knife. Lines that are thicker and more defined would be done with the help of the v-gauge because it could carve more regular, uniform lines.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 2 October 1932, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

¹³⁵ Blanche Lazzell to Grace Martin Taylor, 11 September 1940, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.

¹³⁶ West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia, has the tools that Lazzell used for her three color white line wood-block prints done for the PWAP (Figure aii.1 and aii.2). The collection possesses Lazzell’s wood carving tools and a small wooden box that contains a sampling of her dry pigments. Upon examining her wood carving tools and consulting with Mr. Joseph Lupo, a Professor of printmaking at West Virginia University, it was determined that Lazzell favored two tools in particular, a knife and a v-gauge. Her tools have been sharpened, evident in the ground tips that show shiny metal and the swirl pattern made from a grinding stone.

¹³⁷ Some of the lines present in these prints appear more embossed, thus showing Lazzell used much pressure to print.

Along with her tools, there is also a small wooden box that contains several pads of dry watercolor pigments that Lazzell used for printing. Lazzell did not print in ink or oil/acrylic paints. Found with the watercolor pads is a metal spoon and a small stone disk with a sunken center (Figure aii.3). The small sunken stone may have been used to mix the pigment with a binding agent, most likely water. The spoon was used to grind up the dry pigments into a powder and scoop them onto the stone. It is likely the spoon was used to burnish the surface of the paper while printing. Lazzell would tack her paper to one end of the wood-block to hold it in place and lift the opposite end of the paper each time she printed. Once the block had been carved with the desirable design Lazzell would paint watercolors on to the surface of the wood-block. Once the surface had been painted Lazzell would then place her paper over the surface and print. The watercolors would soak into the paper and either her fingers or the spoon would have provided enough pressure for the paint to be made visible on the paper. It does not appear that Lazzell applied watercolors to the actual paper but just printed over and over until the print yielded the coloration she wanted, whether it was an area of light color or of saturated coloring. Printmaking Professor Joseph Lupo, of West Virginia University, has concluded that Lazzell printed on rice paper or newsprint paper, a paper that is thinner and maintains its strength not from a binding agent, but from paper fibers. Lazzell created new wood-blocks for this project.¹³⁸ She numbered them 98, 99, and 100 as stipulated in

¹³⁸ During the summer of 2011 Professor Lupo and I worked to reconstruct a print similar to that of Lazzell's. For the project it was important to stay in a similar vein as Lazzell's work for the PWAP and create an image of Morgantown. However, the decision was made not to attempt to reproduce any subject material that Lazzell had already done. The theme chosen was from an area of West Virginia University's campus Lazzell did not print, that of the Creative Arts Center on West Virginia University's Evansdale campus. The wood-block was carved out of birch plywood with a knife and v-gauge tool (Figure aii.1 and aii.2). At first the printing was done with lithography inks however, it was determined by Robert Bridges, the curator of the Art Museum at West Virginia University, that Lazzell had printed

the detailed record-keeping journals she used to document her work throughout her career.¹³⁹

in watercolors. Though a more difficult process compared to the litho inks, watercolors were used to create this print.

¹³⁹ Park, "The Federal Art Project, 1934-39," 233.



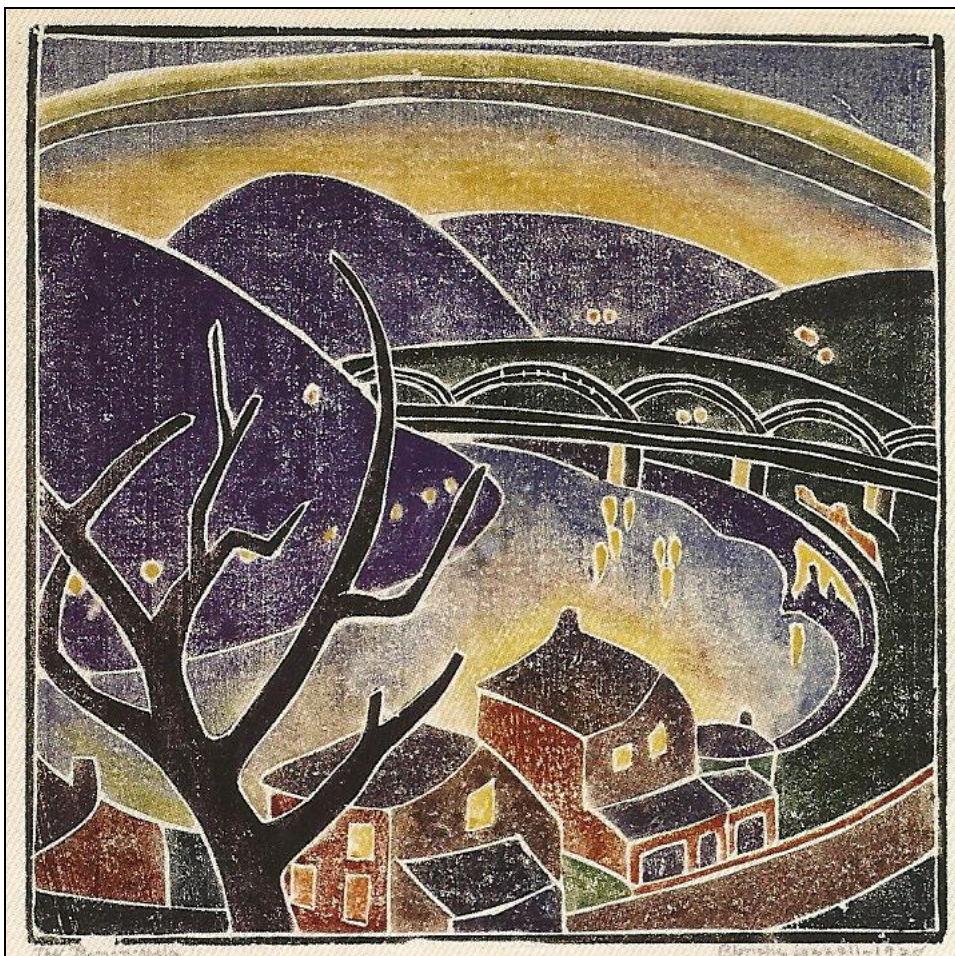
(Figure 1.1): *Painting VII*, 1927, oil on canvas, 40x27 7/8 inches. Reprinted from Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004).



(Figure 1.2): *Painting VIII*, 1927, oil on canvas, 36 1/4x28 inches. Reprinted from Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004).



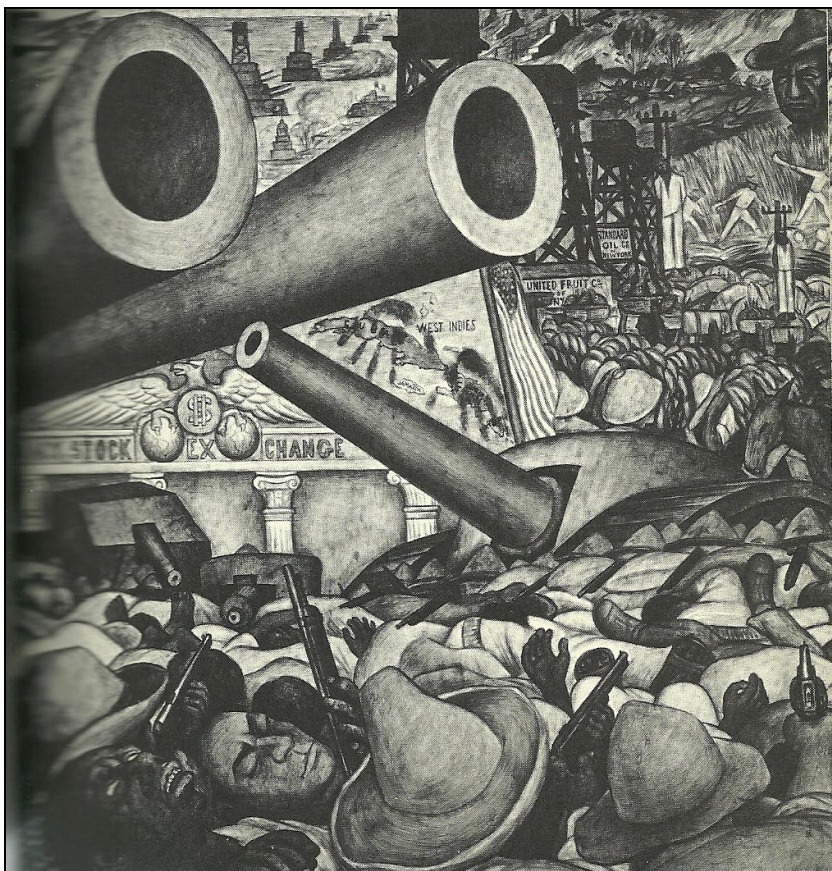
(Figure 1.3): *Provincetown Church Tower*, 1922, color wood-block, 14x11 3/4 inches. Reprinted from Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004).



(Figure 1.4): *The Monongahela*, 1919, color wood-block, 12 1/4 x 12 1/8 inches. Reprinted from Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004).



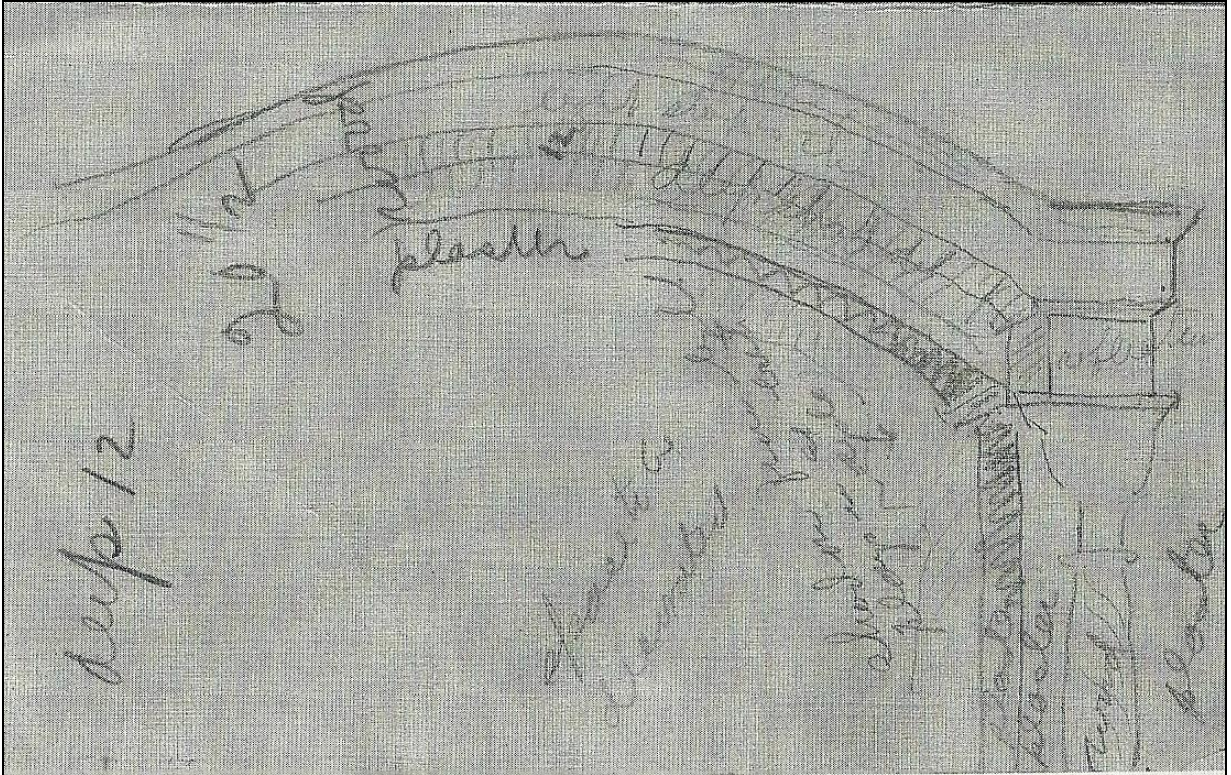
(Figure 2.1): Thomas Hart Benton, *Art of the West*, 1932, tempera with oil glaze on linen mounted on panel. Reprinted from Matthew Baigell, *Thomas Hart Benton* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1974).



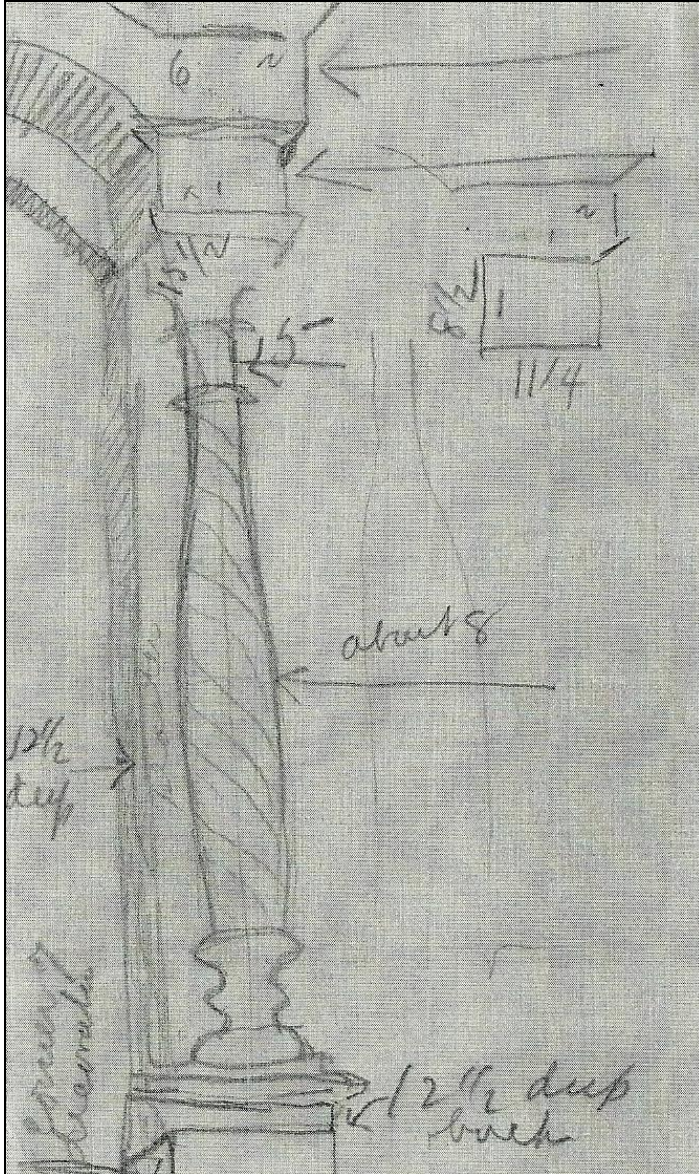
(Figure 2.2): Diego Rivera, *Imperialism*, 1933, panel for the New Workers School in New York City. Reprinted from Bertram D. Wolfe, *The Fabulous Life of Diego Rivera* (New York: Stein and Day, 1963).



(Figure 3.1): Lazzell's Finished Mural for the Monongalia County Courthouse, *Justice*, 1934, oil on canvas, 95"x146"x1". Photograph courtesy of Robert Bridges, Curator, Art Museum of West Virginia University.



(Figure 3.2): Preliminary sketch showing dimensions of the space behind the judge's bench where the mural was to be painted. Photography courtesy of the West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.



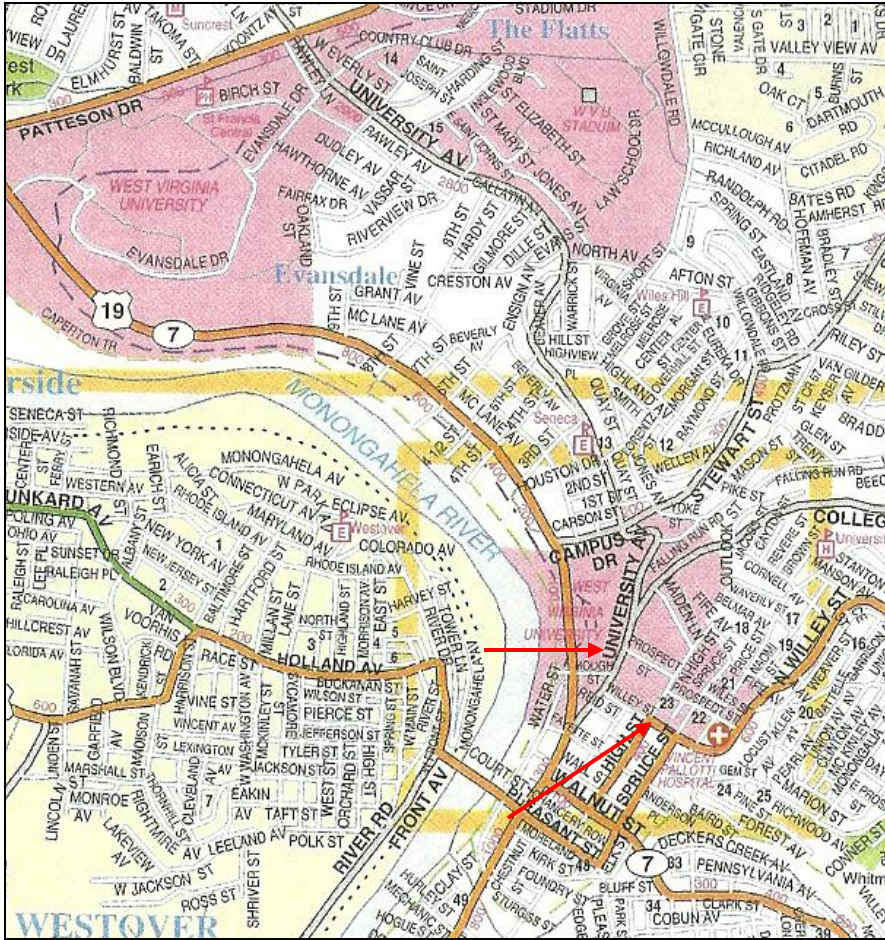
(Figure 3.3): Preliminary sketch showing measurements of the columns on either side of the space where the mural was to be painted. Photography courtesy of the West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.



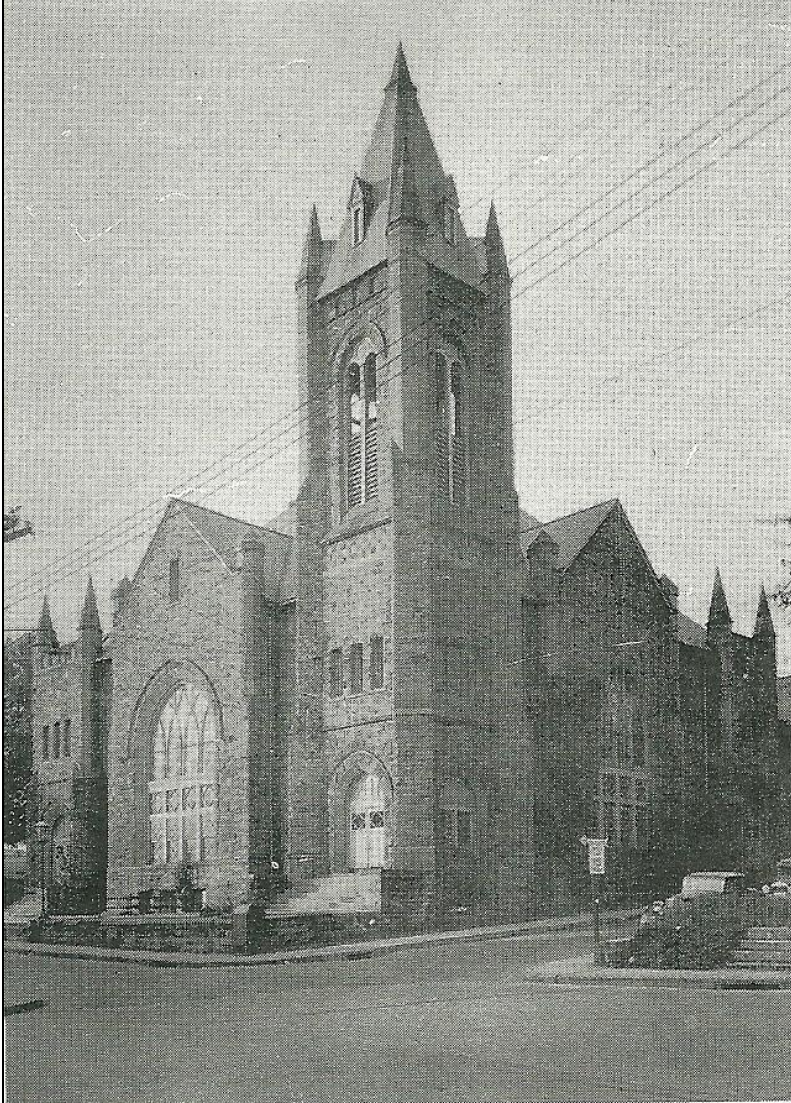
(Figure 3.4): Left side portion of Courthouse Mural featuring Stewart Hall, 1934, oil on canvas.
Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



(Figure 3.5): Middle section of Courthouse Mural featuring the First Methodist Episcopal Church, 1934, oil on canvas. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



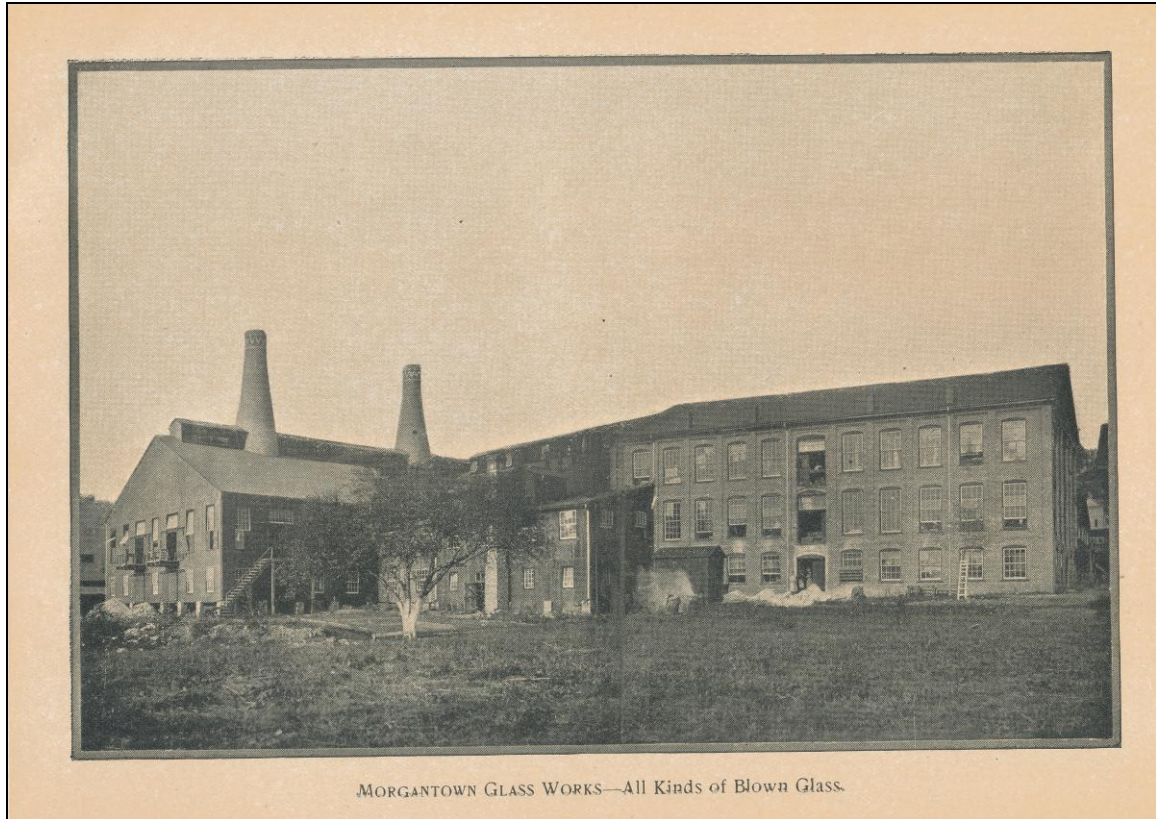
(Figure 3.6): City map of Downtown Morgantown that shows Stewart Hall located on University Avenue and the First Methodist Episcopal Church located on the corner of Willey Street and High Street. Reprinted from Morgantown City Street [map], scale not given, in: North Central West Virginia Cities and Counties Street Map, USA: G.M. Johnson and Associates Ltd, date not given.



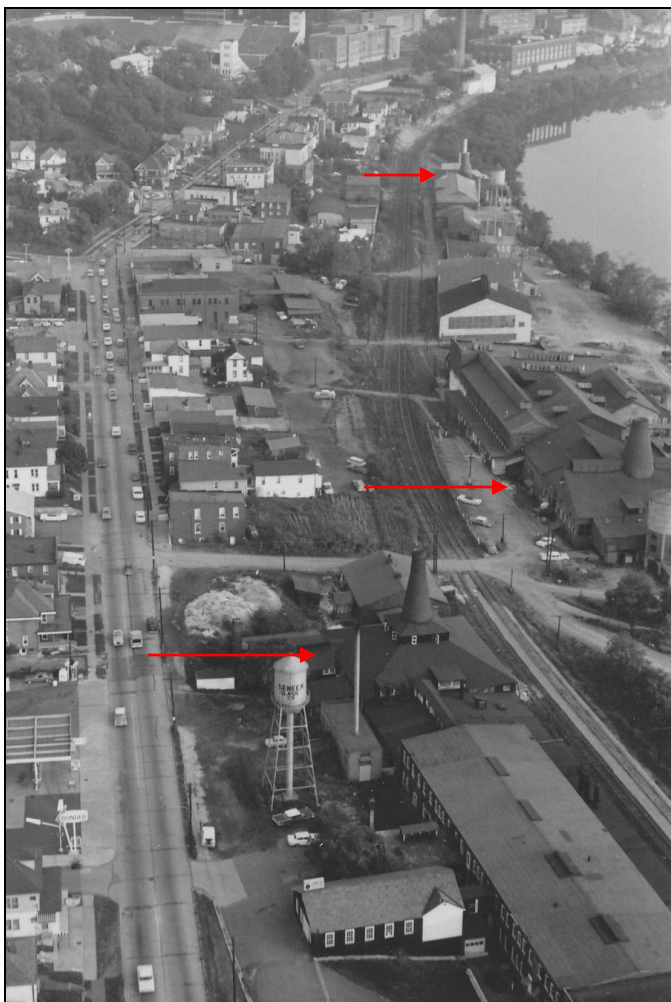
(Figure 3.7): This photograph post card was taken prior to the mid 1940s and shows the church prior to renovation. The stained glass front façade along with the angle of the church in the photograph are exactly the same as how Lazzell painted it in the mural. Photograph courtesy of Heather Nailler, Building and Grounds Superintendent, at Wesley Methodist Church, Morgantown, West Virginia.



(Figure 3.8): Right side of Courthouse Mural featuring Morgantown Glass Works, 1934, oil on canvas.
Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



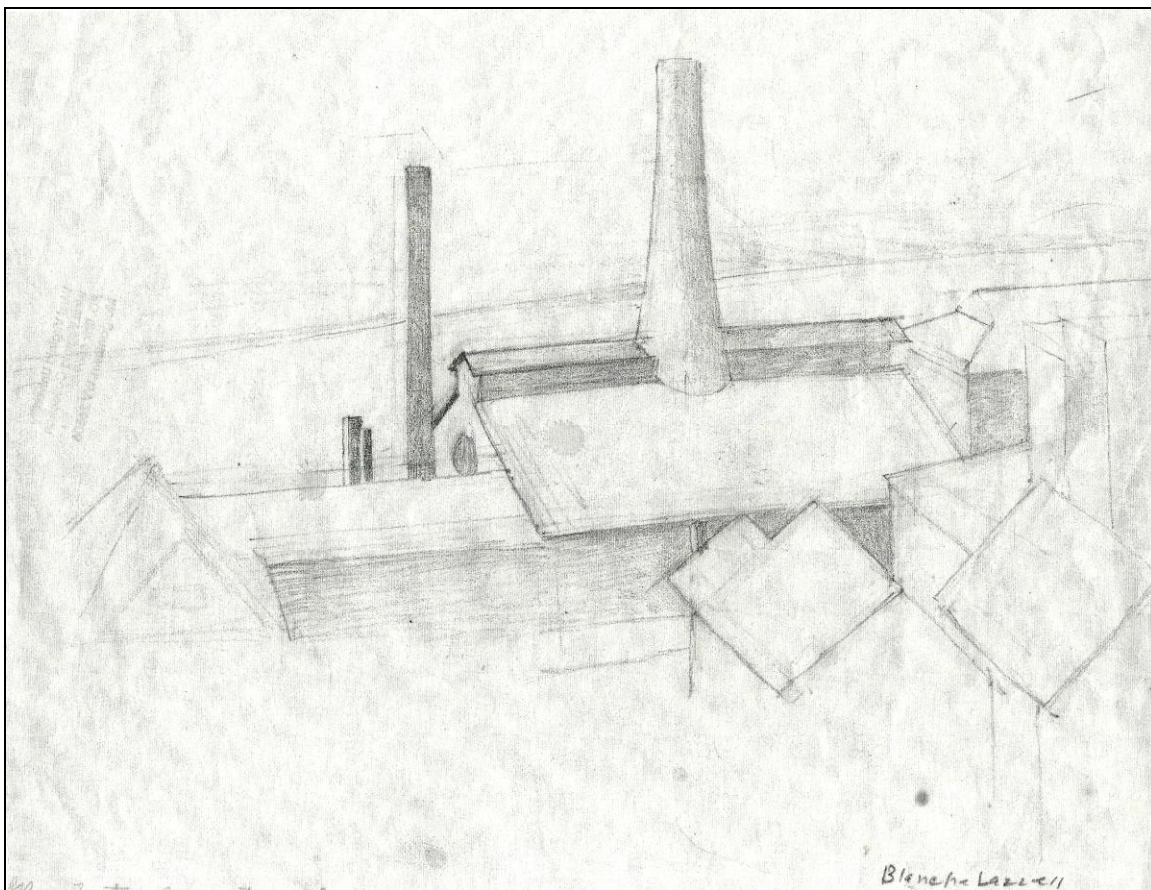
(Figure 3.9): Photograph of the Morgantown Glass Works taken in 1902. Reprinted from H.L. Grant, *Greater Morgantown and Its Environments* (Grafton, West Virginia, Grafton Printing Company, 1902).



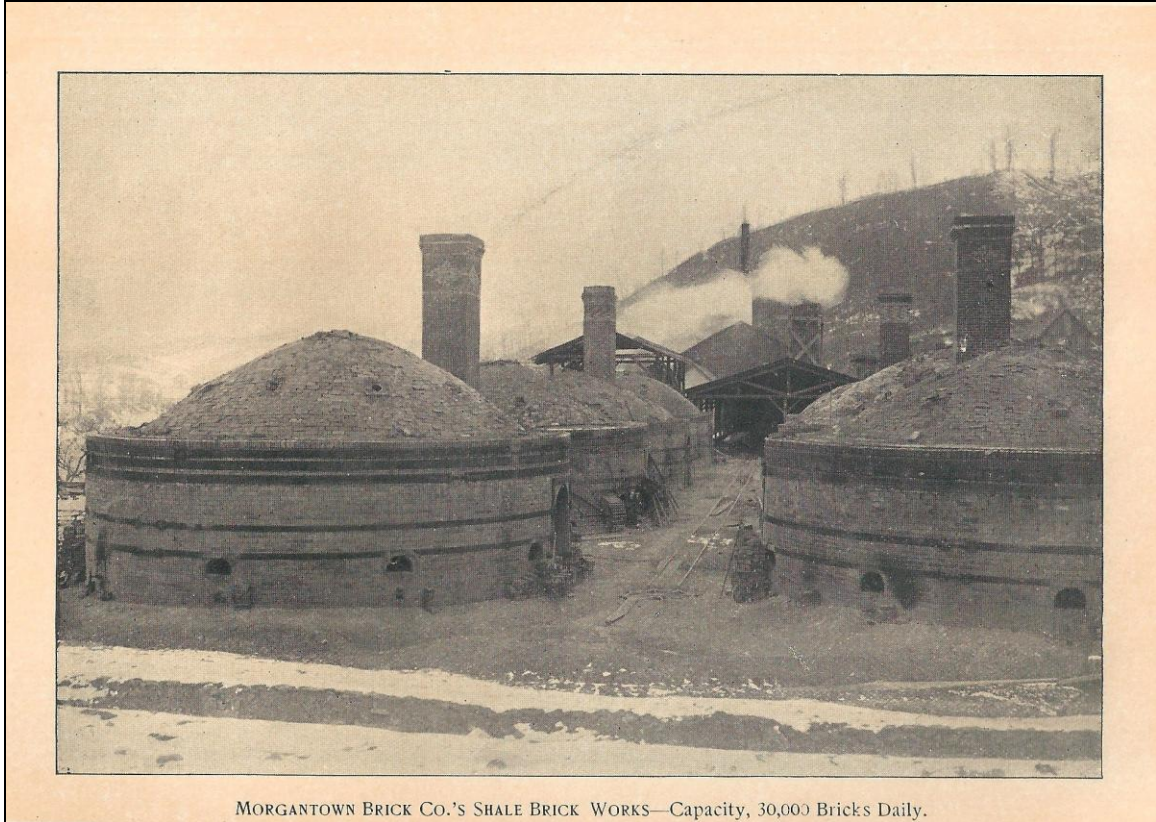
(Figure 3.10): Photograph from the 1950s to 1960s with Seneca Glass Company at the bottom right, Morgantown Glass Works in the center, and The Beaumont Glass Company in the upper right corner. Not featured is the Morgantown Brick Company which would have been located below Seneca Glass Company (out of the photograph). Photograph courtesy of Dr. Michael V. Mackert at the Morgantown History Museum.



(Figure 3.11): This photograph from 1902 with the Morgantown Brick Company far left, Seneca Glass Company right of center, and Morgantown Glass Works on the far right. Reprinted from H.L. Grant, *Greater Morgantown and Its Environments* (Grafton, West Virginia, Grafton Printing Company, 1902).



(Figure 3.12): Preliminary sketch of the glass factory for the mural. Photography courtesy of the West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.



(Figure 3.13): Photograph of The Morgantown Brick Company in 1902. Reprinted from H.L. Grant, *Greater Morgantown and Its Environments* (Grafton, West Virginia, Grafton Printing Company, 1902).



(Figure 3.14): Madsville located above the spire of Stewart Hall in Courthouse Mural, 1934, oil on canvas. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



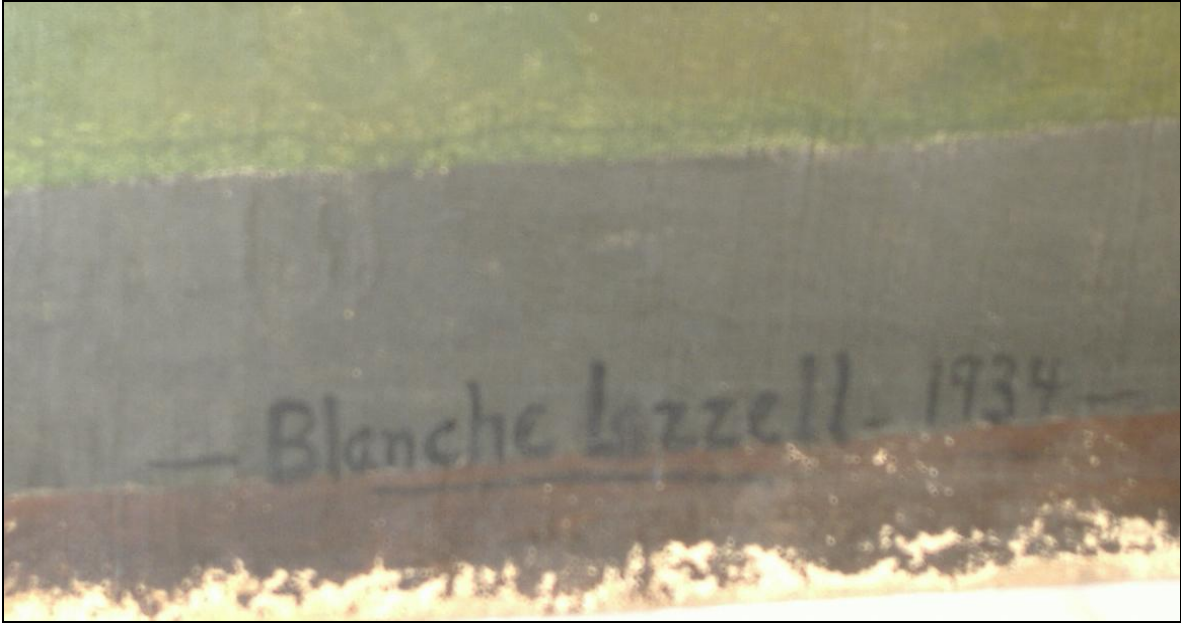
(Figure 3.15): Photograph of Lazzell's family home in Maidsville. Photography courtesy of the West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.



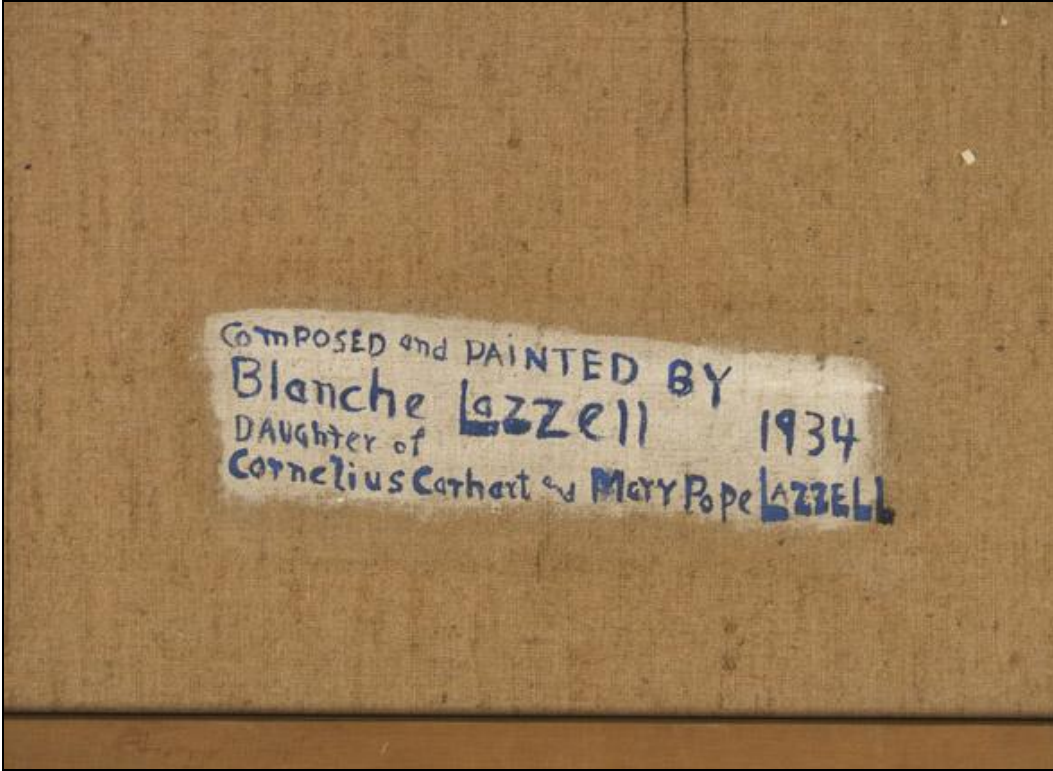
(Figure 3.16): Preliminary sketch of Lazzell's home in Maidsville. Photography courtesy of the West Virginia Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.



(Figure 3.17): Hanging scale of justice seen in the top center portion of the Courthouse Mural, 1934, oil on canvas. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



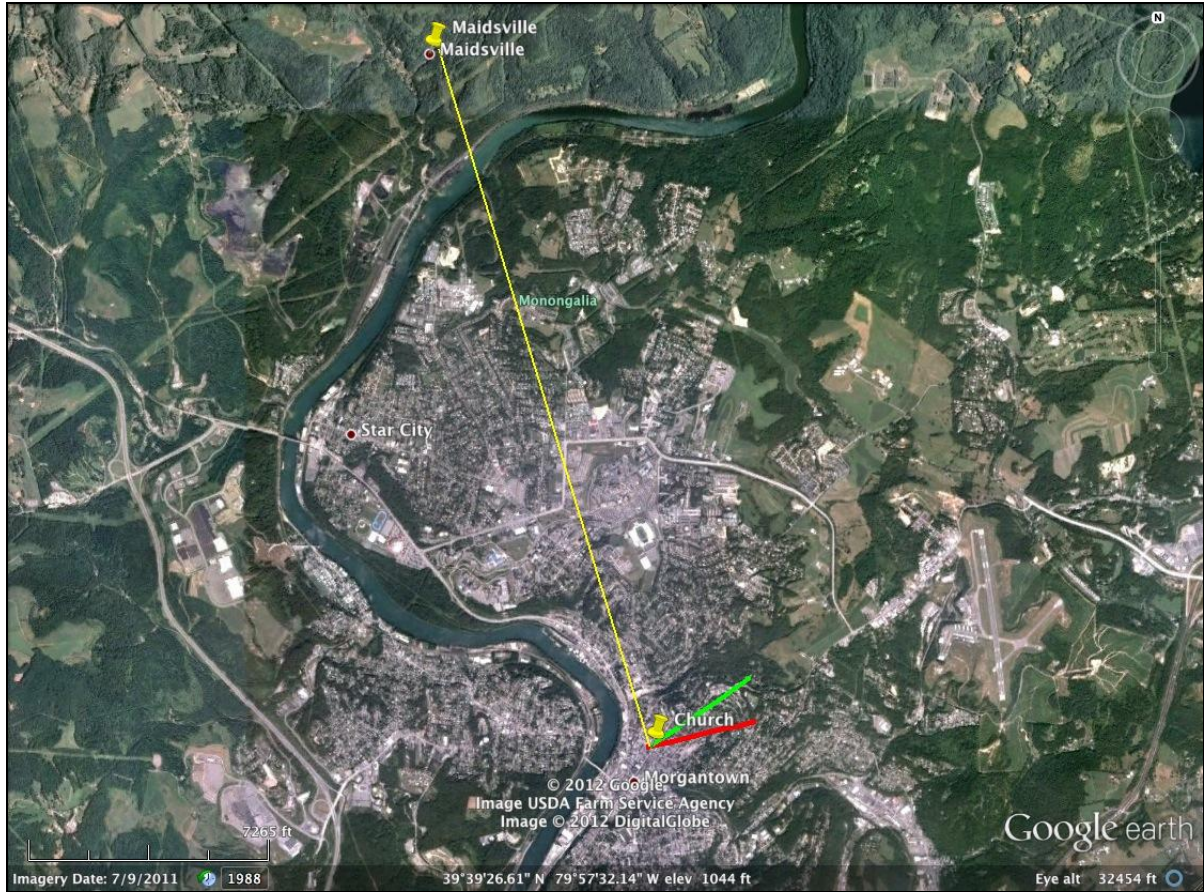
(Figure 3.18): Lazzell's name in lower left corner of Courthouse Mural, 1934, oil on canvas. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



(Figure 3.19): Lazzell's name in the center back side of the Courthouse Mural, 1934, oil on canvas.
Photograph courtesy of Robert Bridges, Curator, Art Museum of West Virginia University.



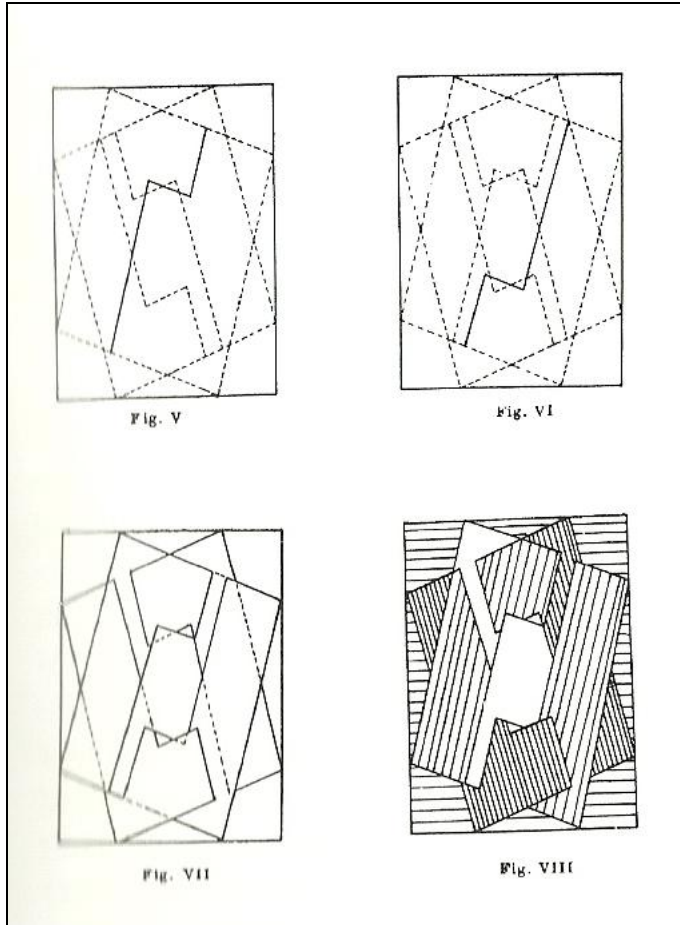
(Figure 4.1) Paul Cézanne, *L'Estaque*, 1882-1885, oil on canvas. Reprinted from Hajo Duchting, *Paul Cézanne 1839-1906: Nature into Art* (Köln: Taschen, 2003).



(Figure 4.2): This Google Earth map shows that Lazzell does show Midsville on the correct bank of the river if one were looking towards it from Morgantown in relation to the First Methodist Episcopal Church. The red line indicates the direction in which one is viewing the church. The green line indicates the direction Lazzell has placed Midsville from the church. The yellow line shows the actual direction of Midsville from the church. This reinforces that Lazzell combined multiple viewpoints in her mural. Morgantown, West Virginia [map], 2012, scale undetermined; generated by Dr. Kristen Harkness; using “GoogleEarth.com,” www.google.com/earth/index.html (9 July 2012).



(Figure 4.3) Albert Gleizes, *Le Dépiquage des moissons*, 1912, oil on canvas. Reprinted from Peter Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2001).



(Figure 4.4): Diagram showing Gleizes' use of translation and rotation in one composition. Reprinted from Peter Brooke, *Albert Gleizes: For and Against the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2001).



(Figure 4.5): Stewart Hall, 2012. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



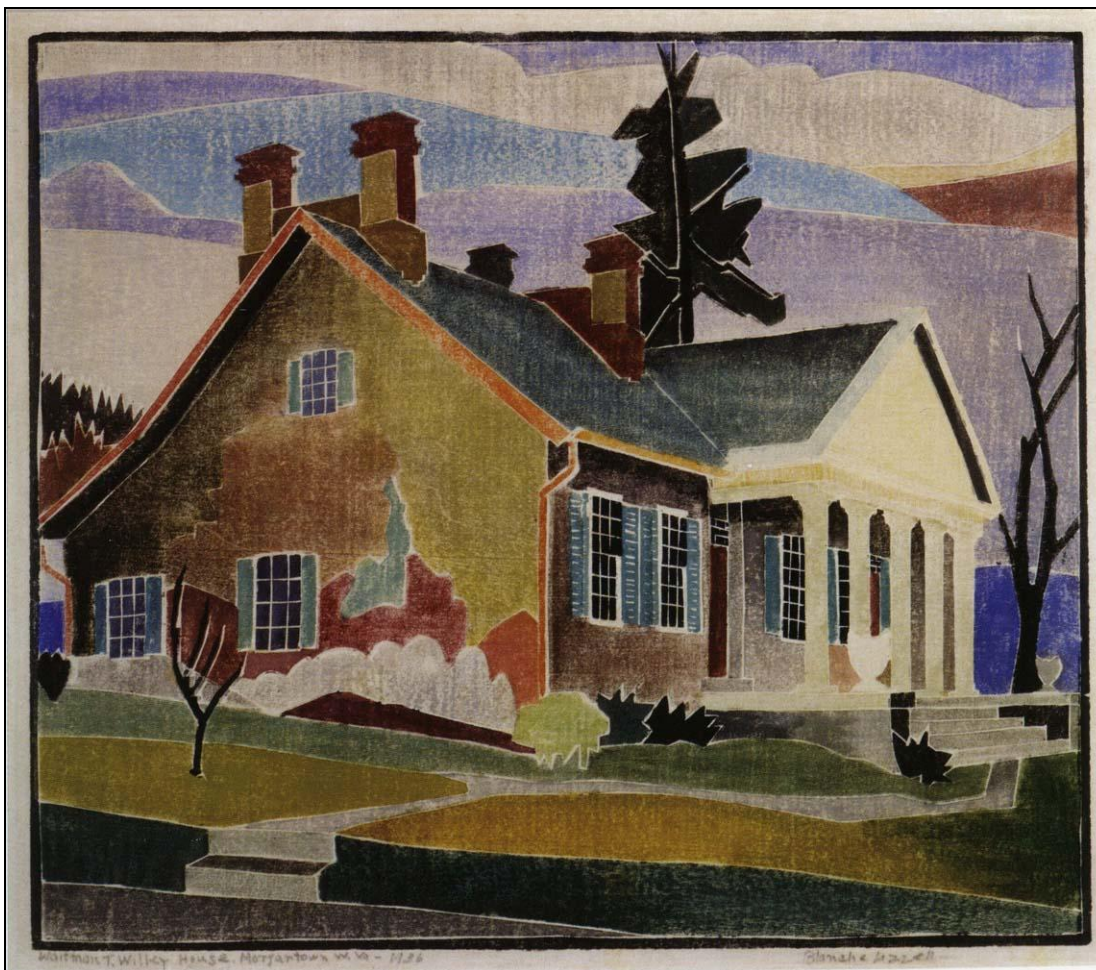
(Figure 4.6): Paul Cézanne, *House and Farm at Jas de Bouffan*, 1885-1887, oil on canvas. Reprinted from Hajo Duchting, *Paul Cézanne 1839-1906: Nature into Art* (Köln: Taschen, 2003).



(Figure 4.7): *The Monongahela at Morgantown*, 1934, color wood block print, 12x14 inches.
Reprinted from Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004).



(Figure 4.8): *The Campus, W. Va University, Morgantown, 1934*, color wood block print, 12x14 inches. Reprinted from Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004).



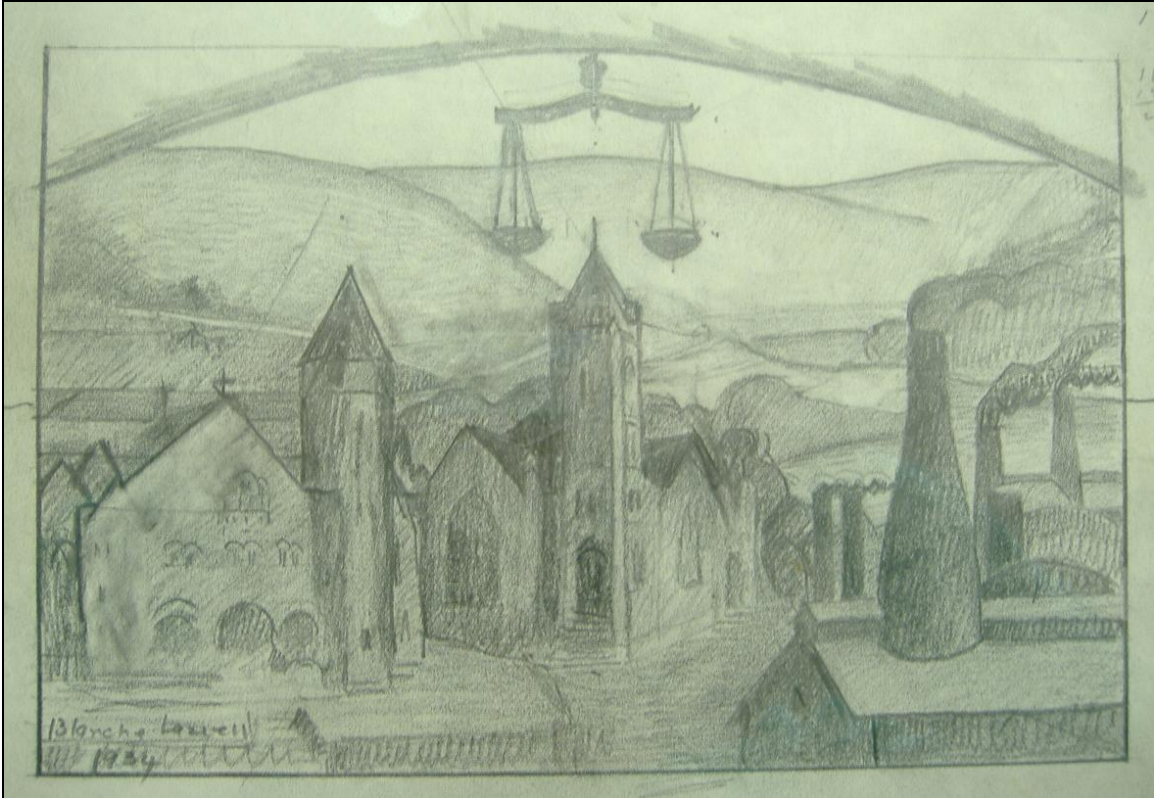
(Figure 4.9): *Waitman T. Willey House*, 1934, color wood block print, 12x13 7/8 inches. Reprinted from Robert Bridges, Kristina Olson, and Janet Snyder, eds. *Blanche Lazzell: The Life and Work of an American Modernist* (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2004).



(Figure 5.1): Lazzell's Preliminary Sketch for the Monongalia County Courthouse Mural entitled *This One*, 1934, graphite pencil on paper. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



(Figure 5.2): Lazzell's Preliminary Sketch for the Monongalia County Courthouse Mural, 1934, light graphite pencil on tracing paper. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



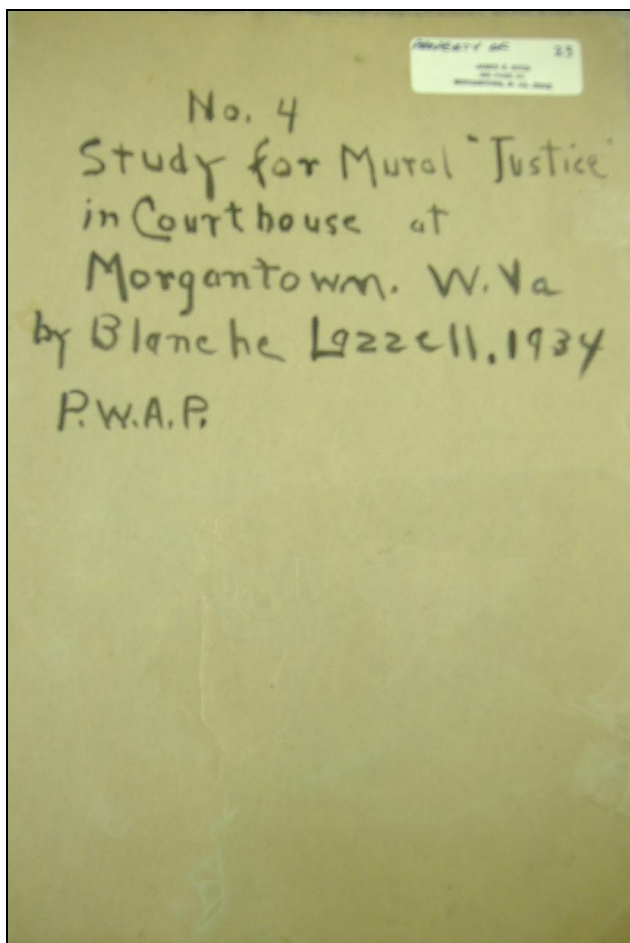
(Figure 5.3): Lazzell's Preliminary Sketch for the Monongalia County Courthouse Mural, 1934, heavy graphite pencil on paper. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



(Figure 5.4): Lazzell's Preliminary Sketch for the Monongalia County Courthouse Mural, 1934, graphite pencil on tracing paper. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



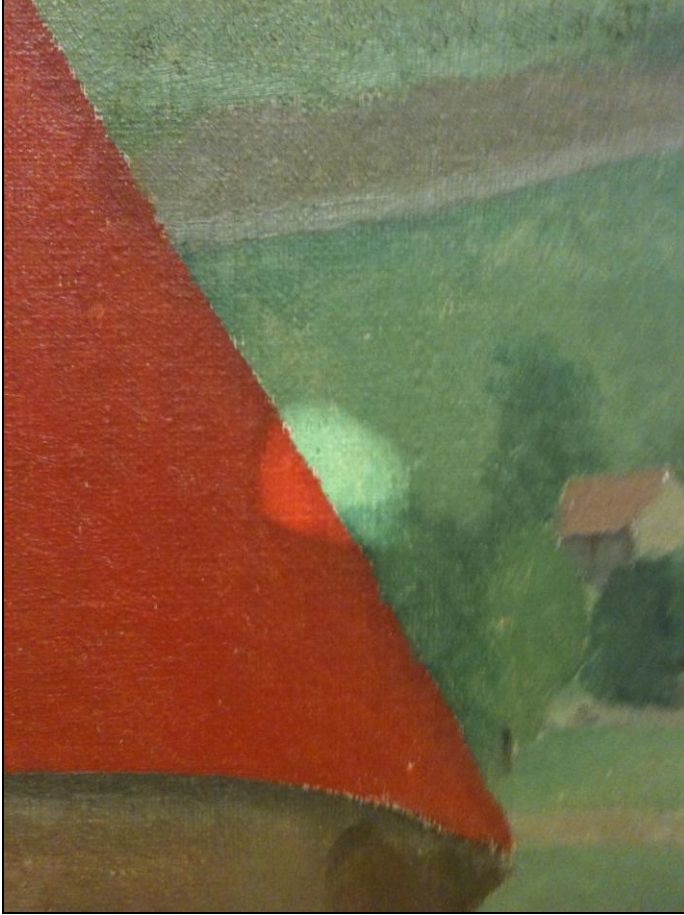
(Figure 5.5): Lazzell's Preliminary Color Study Sketch for the Monongalia County Courthouse Mural, 1934, paint on board. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



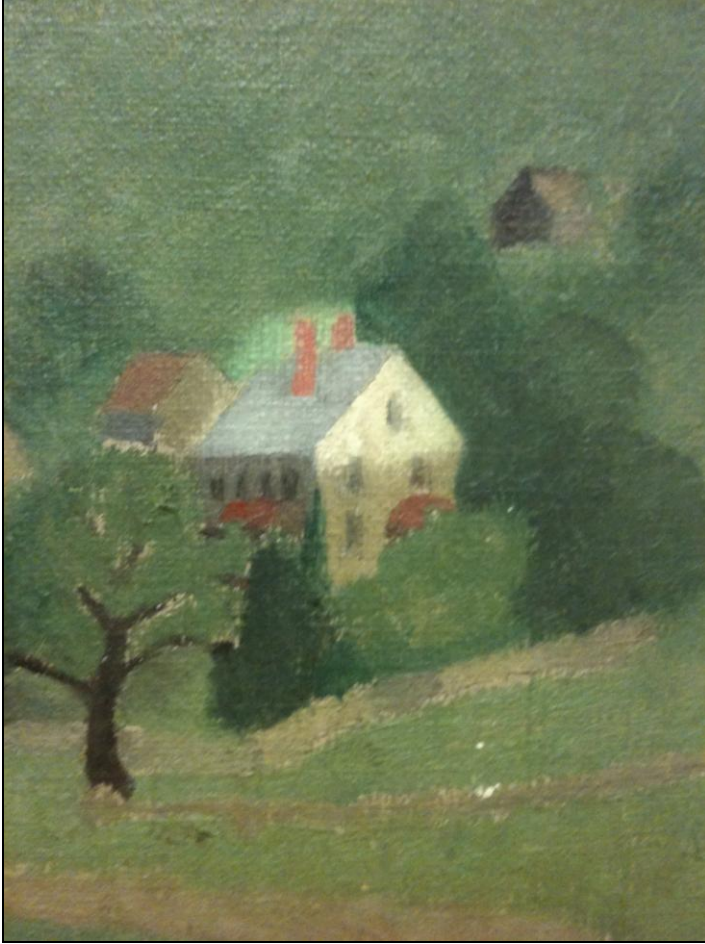
(Figure 5.6): Back of Lazzell's Preliminary Color Study Sketch for the Monongalia County Courthouse Mural, 1934, pen on board. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



(Figure 5.7): Lazzell's Final Preliminary Color Study for the Monongalia County Courthouse Mural, 1934, oil on paper. This final color study currently hangs in Stewart Hall on West Virginia University's Campus. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



(Figure E.1): December 2011 conservation work on the mural indicates that Lazzell's color palette for the mural was similar to that of her 1934 PWAP prints. This image shows a small area conserved on the Stewart Hall spire. Photograph courtesy of Robert Bridges, Curator, Art Museum of West Virginia University.



(Figure E.2): December 2011 conservation work on the mural indicates that Lazzell's color palette for the mural was similar to that of her 1934 PWAP prints. Seen here is the Madsville representation. Photograph courtesy of Robert Bridges, Curator, Art Museum of West Virginia University.



(Figure aii.1): Lazzell's box of wood carving tools used to carve her three PWAP white line wood-block prints. In a letter to Grace Martin Taylor Lazzell tell her fellow print maker who to contact for wood carving tools. Lazzell provided the following address: Hammacher Schlemmer and Co., 57th Street at Lexington Avenue, New York City.¹⁴⁰ Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.

¹⁴⁰ Grace Martin Taylor, letter from Blanche Lazzell, October 10, 1933, Art Museum of West Virginia University Archive.



(Figure aii.2): Lazzell's wood carving tools with metal spoon used for burnishing. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.



(Figure aii.3): Lazzell's small wooden box of dry pigments used to print her three PWAP white line woodblock prints. Photograph by Kendall Joy Martin.

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