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Thomas Kuhn

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ORAL HISTORY

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DATE: 8/13/90

Thomas C Kuhn
(Signature - Interviewee)

125 Iroquois Tr.
(Address)

DATE: 8/13/90

Ona, WV 25545
Shin Chang
(Signature - Witness)

WEST VIRGINIA ARCHAEOLOGY

WVA.01

AN INTERVIEW WITH: THOMAS KUHN

CONDUCTED BY: SHIN CHANG

DATE: AUGUST 13, 1990

TRANSCRIBED BY: CLINT HAMMONS

TYPED BY: GINA KATES

Chang: Today is August the 13th, 1990. This is Shin Chang. I'm at Thomas Kuhn's house. The purpose of the visit to Mr. Kuhn is to get him to give us some information. My understanding is that Mr. Kuhn understands and uh...knows Mr. Adams very well, and uh...that Mr. Kuhn was instrumental in bringing the Adams collection to the museum, the Huntington Museum of Art. Tom has intimate knowledge about the collection and was a good friend of Mr. Adams. We appreciate Mr. Kuhn agreeing to share his information with us. I'm going to hand the microphone to Kuhn and let him tell us about Adams Collection and Mr. Adams.

Kuhn: Okay. The noise you hear is I'm in my workshop. I'm chipping little flint, which is kind of appropriate for talking about the Adams Collection, because it had so much flint with it, and it's my own special interest, it's how I kind of got interested in it. I was working at Marshall in, I guess it was 1980-81 with a teaching part time, I had a grant in the state of West Virginia. It was a pioneer program with the federal government for a regional preservation offices where we would record to do sight surveys, and I had a 7-county area including primary area. Uh...to work it was supposed to be a model based on the state of Ohio for other regional preservation offices in Ohio to record as many of the rapidly disappearing sights as we could. I'd done some work for the museum prior to this off and on for several years, including working on another relatively uh...good collection called the Pitt/Stark collection. I was working at Marshall with some people down there on flint. I got, I believe, I believe I got a call from the galleries at the museum at the time, asking if I ever heard of Mr. Adams, and having been at that time, the secretary treasurer of the WV Archaeology Society I was of course familiar, as he was one of the founders. Like a lot of other people, he was not active, and I had assumed that he was no longer with us, that he had passed away some time ago because I knew of his relative age and I was somewhat surprised to hear that he was still living in Huntington and it turns out that he had wanted to donate his collection to the museum in order to keep it in tact in the state of West Virginia and I believe it was Eason who asked...said, do you think this collection is worth acquiring. Of course, I immediately said if ya' know it's probably the best collection available in the state of West Virginia, and probably one of the best in the central Ohio Valley, based on the fact that it came from the clover site, CB...46CB40, which was even...uh...had been recognized as one of the more important late prehistoric sites, in the mid-Ohio valley because of the unusual nature of the...uh...artifacts and the type of recovery that had gone on there over the years it was felt to be more than just, you know, an average village site of which there are an abundant number but I didn't know anything about the Adams Collection. I didn't know anything about Adams except that he had been active in the pioneer days in the early 1950's of forming the WV Archaeology Society and was, had published several articles along with Sig Ulafson and S.F. Durrett and several other people. In fact, he was most noted as having been one of the people who rediscovered the so-called Salt Rock petroglyphs back in the 50's which created kind of a stir at the time and a couple of articles were

published. And in the terms of flint he was important because he had been one of the first persons to recognize the significance of what we call the bifurcate type of projectile point which now as a result of the St. Albans site...um...has been given the early, fairly early archaic dates prior to 6000-7000 B.C. At that time, he was one of the first people to describe the point which became a type named the LeCroy point and uh, he uh, unfortunately didn't publish the description, hence it didn't get a West Virginia name but all the subsequent discoveries of LeCroy points type or bifurcate type points at the St. Albans site all developed local typologies and would have been nice at the time if we could have got the LaCroix point so named, but Adams was one of the first people to recognize it as a distinctive type in this area. So, he had a history even though he was an amateur archaeologist you have to recognize that at that time and really up into the 70's and probably to some extent still to this day, West Virginia is unusual in that the amateur archaeologists tend to be a little...oh, you can't say professional, but a little more aware of what they're doing in their approach to collecting. That is the older guys, the Youses and the Olafsons and even Adams and subsequently people like Dietric later on realized that they have an important role to play as they were collecting and they did something most other states no one did as they in the absence of any professional archaeology they were the ones who described and actually did semi-controlled excavations and did some very important things. I mean, they did labeling of artifacts, the site integrity, that is keeping their artifacts from one site together rather than what you frequently see is someone with a whole frame of arrow heads in the shape of an Indian's head or something, and uh...it doesn't happen that way in this area. In fact, if you go to Ohio or Indiana and these places you have a lot of buying and selling and that just doesn't go on around here, fortunately. And I think these guys kinda set the tone for preservation and carried the ball, really, up until the late 60's when some professional work started at the St. Albans site and some other areas and the few professionals that came into this area, usually there were never more than two working at any one time, had a nucleus of fairly good people to work with, but as a result of these old guys who started. So, their collections, Adams Collection was the only one built really on this area. Durett was dead and his collection was broken up and some of it was passed on to the Sunrise Museum in Charleston. So, when I got the chance, I said sure, I'll go get in contact with him and see what could be done because I felt that it was part of the job I was doing working for the state as preservation officer. So, uh, I went up to see him and he told me what he wanted to do since he lived in Huntington. I had no idea what I was getting into as far as the size of the collection. I was flabbergasted the first time I saw it, he started showing me all the bone artifacts and all of what we call type artifacts. And that the Clover site had been, he really had a lot of pottery of unusual type connected to the probably connected to the...at that time what's called the southern cult. Kattlesnake effigy material, lizard things that were peculiar more to Virginia, North Carolina area, rather than traditionally the late prehistoric sites in this area are

connected to the...from the north. That is they're connected with things in Ohio, primarily with the Muskingum River Valley and the Scioto River Valley and on down to typesite Fort Ancient near Cincinnati and on down river. So, it was unusual to see things on the Ohio River connected with, more with things from the southern area. Traditionally, once you got out of the Kanawha Valley you didn't get that many types of artifacts coming up from the North and the East. Although I've subsequently learned that this area is pretty much an interface area for the whole eastern United States. That is, there are types described here from Alabama and other places as well. So, the Ohio Valley was probably a real mixing bowl and the Clover site was probably one of the more important trade center and or religious centers. So having collected this site as I learned from him in the 1930's, when prior to a lot of it having been reduced by flooding by the Ohio River probably no more than 40% of the site if that much was still remaining. So he had access to the site not only when there was more of it, but he also had when he knew the landowner at that time was more akin to having people on the site than the recent landowners in the past 20 years have done a diligent job of keeping people off the site until just ah, the last few years when Marshall got some permission to do some limited excavation there. But prior to that, in the last 20 years there was very little collecting other than people walking the riverbank, as there was no plowing. It was a pastureland, but environmentally it's probably the most unique site, of course, it's there in the Greenbottom preservation area, the wetlands area. It's right on the edge of a major wetlands, so it was environmentally a unique site as well as probably culturally. Looking at the collection right away it was immediately apparent that there was Paleo Indian material on to the present. There was one, we had one fluted point and one or more Plano points of the late

_____ transitioned as well as a lot of other, well, just about virtually every type that had been identified for this area was evident in his collection. And primarily, as he claimed, most of it came from 46CB40. So, obviously it was well worthwhile getting as much of it to the museum as possible. So, I assigned myself a week and uh...alright, back to the...interrupted there for a second. But uh, so I started cataloging it and realized that uh, I went up there in the mornings and began talking with him and like any older person, at this time I believe he was 98 going on 99, he had a lot of stories to tell and he enjoyed telling. I was surprised at the fact that here was a guy his age who still lived by himself in a three-story house and basically cut his own grass, did you know, everything he was very active for his age, he was active for any age and still very clear on a lot of the details involving the artifacts. It was obvious that he was very close to them, although unlike a lot of collectors in this area he was not obsessed by them, that is he enjoyed collecting other things. He was a philatelist of some renown. His stamp collection was probably of greater overall value than his artifact collection. And uh, glassware and other things he was just a collector, an accumulator. But uh, he enjoyed I think the artifact collecting more than the artifacts themselves over the years. But he had the good sense to take good care of his

material. He cased everything that he felt was important in glass cases. In fact, that was the keystone of his collection. The bone artifacts of the Clover Site because he did have permission to dig from the landowners he was able to dig although unlike a lot of current relics, so-called relic collectors he dug I think not just to look for burials and tear up the ground to get uh...fancy artifacts. He dug very selectively and accumulated virtually everything. So from that standpoint he did a good job with his collection. Some of it was labeled, probably from the later years, I suspect. He had some records of the sites. He primarily collected Clover, but there were probably a half a dozen there sites that are still active in the area that he managed to collect at some point, and the artifacts were there. And they were probably, his memory I suspect failed him on some occasions asking him questions about the flint. But uh, as long as he had the county right or the area right, I suspect that there's not that big a difference because having collected that area between Huntington and Point Pleasant fairly extensively myself over the years, and looked at the land forms, the sites are very much related. It's hard to divide one site up and say, "this is where it ends," just because another corn field or fence line or some modern cultural feature is on the land. I think archaeologists tend to do too much of that sometimes, dividing up sites based on modern perceptions rather than probably the way things were a long time ago. But anyway, uh, most of it if not all of it did come from that general area so it was worth taking his word on it for nothing else. So we began, I...I saw that I was kind of in over my head as far fast as work goes so I got someone I could trust to help me, Carol, at that time her name was Carol Batton, now it's Carol Carter of Lesage, who is I guess the modern equivalent of Adams in this area. Her...she and her husband's collection probably will someday rival his if they keep at it, and I knew I could trust her to handle the artifacts because she would know what she was doing, take good care of them. And, didn't have to worry about something ending up in somebody's pocket instead of up at the museum, and she's also got along well with Adams. I knew she wouldn't have a problem there and she was very eager to help, so we would go up there in the mornings and we would just ask him to bring the things out and talk about them. And then I'd count them or describe them on a rough sheet of paper and we would box them as they came out until a box was full, there was no real rhyme or reason to the way things went into the boxes, that is it was pretty much up to him. I tried to keep some things together uh, the display cases for example, which had the best material in it, the bone artifacts, and the uh, a lot of the effigy material, the copper pieces, which are fairly, not as unique now as I thought at the time because I've seen them in other collections. The Carters have several nice ones in their collection, but they're also from this general area. The rattlesnakes, and then the little animal heads. And it was a continual amazement having only worked in this area at that time for a few years, but having done a lot with a lot of material, all of a sudden he'd bring out things, you know, and I'd see things I'd never seen before. Effigy, a lot of clay effigies, little clay dolls. Of course, the flint was just without comparison I thought because of the size of

the pieces and the types, particularly the Adena type of material, the large Early Woodland type material, which by the time you look at collections these days, people looking plowed fields that have been collected for 50, 80 years. That stuff is gone, it's contrary to you know, what I tell people sometimes that it might seem like there are little elves under the ground making flint and pushing up through the dirt. It's uh, not uh, there is a limited amount of the stuff out there even though you can collect the same it year in, year out, and find new things every year, gradually you get to the point where you realize you're picking up the same flint chips that you picked up last year. So, there is a limit to it, but back then in the, probably the late 20's and 30's when he did the bulk of his collecting there was very little competition out there for one thing. These days in the spring if you find a field that is collectible, that is the owners will let collectors on it, if you look up and down the Ohio Valley, I suspect there are days you almost have to take a number and wait to get into the field to collect, there are so many people out there collecting artifacts. Partly because there are so many more people doing, with time on their hands, and partly because a lot of people do sell the stuff. Adams was never interested in the value, he had an idea of the value of his collection. In fact, he had turned down many offers to sell it, and to show you how the state of West Virginia, how archaeologically bankrupt they are, the Carnegie Museum had known of his collection, probably through Solecki, Ralph Solecki, who was involved with him in the petroglyph discovery. They had been after him, he told me, for several years and finally a representative came and he took him down in his basement where he kept what I'd call the archaeological garbage from the collection, all the broken stonework and literally bushel baskets and tomato baskets full of axes and celts and things, most of them broken or fragmentary in some fashion, which still made them valuable, but not to a collector with his quality of collection, but it does show that he collected everything which is important, and uh...he said he gave them a couple of baskets, didn't show them the good stuff, and they went away very happy. So, they didn't know what they missed. But had it not been for him deciding to give the collection to the state through the museum, there's no doubt that nobody would ever ask him for it, and uh, it would have been broken up at the time of his death. His family, as I observed in Burrett's family, having known his daughter personally, that when these old guys die, their children tend to just break the stuff up, they get rid of it any way they can. A lot of times they resent it, I think, because of the amount of time their parents spent with it when they were young instead of with them. But uh, the Pitt/Stark collection at the museum had just come to the galleries a couple of years before, under the same kind of conditions. It had been held together by one old gentleman, the Stark family from down around Kenova, who are in the banking business now, an uh, it had come at his death, nobody had been passed around, nobody wanted it. And it finally ended up, I believe, with a nephew or someone like that and he decided he didn't want it either, but he realized it was something decent so he decided he would give it to the galleries and at that time, the Huntington galleries. If it was worth anything then

he'd take it as a tax donation. Well, we appraised the thing at probably eleven or twelve thousand dollars. I realize now it was probably an underestimated figure, but at the time we did the best that we could, and uh, apparently the rest of the family thought, you know, when they found out how much it was really worth they regretted apparently not having either sold it or donate it themselves, because to the guy who donated it it's like cash because he gets a tax write-off. So, at that time we decided that that was a good thing to encourage people to do. At that time, I didn't realize that there was going to be the problems with curating the material and displaying it although we did use a lot of the Pitt/Stark collection virtually immediately in the junior art museum display that ran for a year and was very effective up there, so it did some value, but it's still there. But, back with Adams, you know, he would talk about you know, I would ask him questions from his, I would say...is this piece from Clover also? and invariably he would say yes and, again, I was frequently at the time having been working with Dr. Sanderson, Geology Dept., at Marshall on the flint types I was something a little skeptical 'cause of the exotic nature of some of the flints as to where they had come from. But, I have since learned that artifacts are really where you find them, you can find just about anything anywhere anymore. And I'm a little bit, frequently I have seen things that I would say if I didn't find them myself I wouldn't believe 'em. And uh, so I'm not as skeptical of collectors as I once was, particularly if they're, unless their overall reputation or whatever is a little questionable. Somebody like Adams who had no reason to say otherwise, I...you know, I got to the point where I just believe it. That is, I've met other collectors that are into acquiring artifacts that they haven't found themselves in other fashions and even artifacts that aren't real artifacts in terms of their age they claimed to be. But usually you can pick these kind of people out, and uh, with a little experience as to what, and if you know what you're doing about the flint, you get harder and harder to fool. But uh, I found no reason to disbelieve anything in the Adams Collection as far as where it came from or the authenticity of it, other than a couple of pieces he had probably purchased as he said from other areas. So we went to boxing it up try to keep track of it. By the end of the week it was getting to be a monumental task, the smaller pieces particularly the little triangular points he seemed to have in pill boxes and every time you opened a drawer there was a bunch of boxes of little artifacts so we just kind of started counting those and putting them into boxes, because they were worthwhile and they were particularly worthwhile to him, and it became difficult at the end, he even offered me the stuff in the basement and I just felt that it was beyond the capacity to take at that time, and archaeologically it was a minimal value because everything that was there that was in fragmentary shape he had in abundance in quality material in the regular collection, but I didn't want to offend him because he had taken so much time and trouble to preserve this over the years, literally for the state of West Virginia and at that time he knew what had happened to Durett's collection at Sunrise so he didn't want it to go there. There was nobody in Morgantown anymore. At that time the

archaeology section of the geological survey was more or less defunct. So, the museum here was about the only chance he had. It was probably his best chance all along, anyway, because the cultural and history center in Charleston had a well-deserved bad reputation among collectors who had donated things for display or because of the political turmoil and turnover every four years. I know people who would never, uh, I know a local informant that I used when I was...at about this time and then became a friend of mine who was in the archaeology uh, society was a local expert on the Civil War. In fact, he knew more about it than anyone at Marshall or anywhere else. And he had donated, or loaned not donated, a Civil War uniform to the Cultural and History Center in Charleston, and it came back all the buttons were stolen and everything else on it. So, you know, that kind of word gets out among collectors real fast. So, no one, to this day there aren't very many people who will have anything to do with collections at the culture and history center as far as letting them have any materials, so the state is very poor in that respect. And the things they should acquire they don't acquire from their own citizens because there's a wealth of good quality things out there. But, so he was diligent in keeping the stuff and I felt the least I could do was get as much to the museum as I could. Later, when he passed away, his daughter Mrs. Neal, called me and wanted to know if I could come up and get the things out of the basement. I got the feeling that they were just going to pitch them out if nothing happened, so I did go up there and just took everything I could. The baskets, and a lot of it was of no particular value although I did give all of the pottery fragments, which were a lot of large pottery to Bob Maslowski, the Corpsot Engineers archaeologist at the time and I don't know what they were working on collections, pottery collections from the area, and I figured something would be taken care of there. I don't know, subsequently what happened to that material although again it was mostly fragmentary stuff which is in abundance everywhere else and I kept some of the stone work. But it was mostly just fragmentary flint undiagnostic of anything important. And...but I took it all just to keep it, and went through it again and made sure that there wasn't anything significant which belonged with the rest of the collection, other than the pottery there wasn't. So, it didn't amount to that much, so flint chips...he was a prolific collector and he collected everything. If it was a broken vase or a tip fragment. Hi...one more interruption, that's the way it goes here, so. If I can remember where I was here about the leftovers from the collection. So I went through that and there wasn't anything really significant that belonged with the rest of the collection. At that time it had been close to two years I guess since I had done the original transfer up to the museum, but I'd looked at all the things in the basement at the time and had pulled a few pieces out to go with it, a few axes and things just to make the collection more complete in terms of stonework, anything that he didn't have a complete issue of in his collection. So I think that what ended up at the museum is by far the best and a complete look at what was available at the Clover Site. I don't know, subsequently what Marshall excavated there, probably I know that there were a couple of burials that Adams

didn't, unlike a lot of collectors, he wasn't interested in human bones unless it was an artifact of some type which I believe there was one human femur bone which was made into a beamer collection which was really fairly unique for this area. But, if memory serves me right, it's been many years since I saw the collection too, since then I've seen a lot of other collections but none any better, I'll say that, maybe only one or two as good in other states and none any better than his collection was at the time. And certainly none better taken care of, that is the way he put the material in the cases, the way he arranged it, and his ability to describe, for example, how a certain...you know, I can only remember a couple of stories about him finding fish hook bone, fish hooks, Durett his collecting partner was the guy who did it all with him and I just like having done a significant amount of collecting years ago myself with the same individual over and over you develop a relationship with another collector when you're out in the fields working you work together almost as a team and you get as excited when the other guy finds something as you do, although you're very protective of the area you're collecting at that time, if you're walking rows of corn you don't step in, there's kind of an unwritten line if you both see something at the same time, as to who's closer to it. So you hope it's on your side of the line. He and Durett obviously had the same kind of relationship. He...talking about Durett was always saying whenever found any bone fish hooks up there and that's an unusual, highly sought after item because of it's unusual nature. And there are obviously not very many of them preserved because they break so easily, and they're very fragile even in their original state and 1000 or several hundred years later it's unlikely, so he's talking about after the '37 flood he and Durett went up there as soon as they could get out and I guess the banks were just awash with material and they were digging as fast as they could in the banks from underneath to get things out where they could see them before the large dirt clods would break off and drop in the river. And he was talking about one, he showed me these two fish hooks in his case and he said, I remember the day I found these because I was always kidding Durett about he never found any fish hooks and we were digging under the bank, under the lip, after the flood. And he says a dirt clod falls down and hits me in the head, and I pick it up and start to throw it in the river and it breaks in two, and both these bone fish hooks fall out at the same time. Which is, you know, certainly quite exciting to a collector, someone like Carol Carter, who was there, she goes practically hysterical about finding something like that and it was very exciting, you know, that you could imagine the run he had, not knowing really the importance of what he was doing at the time, but uh, having the good sense unlike Durett, for example, the guy who worked with him. His collection is virtually useless, it may have originally been as complete as Adams': who knows; 'cause he probably found things that Adams never found. But his collection was literally thrown out the back door by his son into the weeds, some of it in cans, he kept it in coffee cans and I've seen one of the coffee cans and it had a few, maybe forty or fifty artifacts that his daughter said she rescued at the time of his death from his son, her brother who had thrown them all out the

back door. Other than what he had given to Sunrise, or loaned as it was, as it turned out he had loaned them to Sunrise, they considered it a gift. That's just the way it goes with a lot of collections, unfortunately, most of...many collectors keep their collections thinking their children will take as good a care of them as they did, but it hardly ever happens that way. I tell collectors any more to get rid of the stuff before you die. If you can't find a place to take it, sell it. Let somebody have it who, this is probably, you know, when I was a working archaeologist this was not a good attitude. You know, you couldn't...we'd say well, we want to keep it together, we want to give it to a museum but I've seen that the museums don't always take as good as care of it, or curate it the way they should. And, I would rather see people given the material who are gonna appreciate it. So I say, hey, at least keep it together. If you sell it, take a trip around the world or something like that, but if you wait for your kids to take care of it, it'll disappear and it will all be busted up, or who knows, stolen. As you get older you have health problems. Adams never had any, to my knowledge, any serious health problems and as I said, he cut his own grass up to; the year before he passed away, I think. And he was at 100, he told me he was going to make it to 100 and he did. I went to his birthday party, which was a big affair. But he passed away shortly thereafter I believe. I think that his birthday was like in April, and he died in July or June, it wasn't too long after. Uh, trying to remember back to when we were at his house working. Of course, I was interested in everything he had to say about it at the time. I should have probably had a tape recorder is what I should have done. No doubt about it, because he was such an interesting person, he put this little two or three page biography of his early life together for his family because none of them knew what an interesting guy, you know, his first job, he grew up I believe in Marion, Ohio or some place like that, and his first job was lighting gas lights and street lights at night, and driving an ambulance in the Spanish-American war as a Red Cross Driver, I don't think he was in the war but I think that he worked at it. Uh, he had a lot of odd jobs in his early years that we don't even consider, they're not even jobs anymore. And then he became a salesman and moved here to Huntington. Oddly enough, his doctor told him when he was about I guess in his forties or fifties that his health was failing (laughs) that was a joke! And he needed exercise to get out, he had no prior interest in artifacts, but he was interested in Indians because in his collection of papers and books he had a lot of original National Geographic excavations or uh, out west at that time. Of course, I had studied the stuff in school and it didn't occur to me that there were people alive (laughter) you know, when all this, you know you go to Chaco Canyon you know, it's hard to believe that there, you know, it hasn't been that long ago that they were there digging, 1920's and he had all, that what a stir it must have caused in the papers, and National Geographic supported it and he had all the original reports so he was interested in going back in time. He had all, he was a charter member, of course, of the West Virginia Archaeology Society. He was also a charter member of the Ohio Archaeology Society, he had their publications back to when

they weren't even the Ohio Archaeology Society. But uh, so he kept even, well, even up to the time he died as Secretary Treasurer of the Archaeology Society. I had noticed at the time I was receiving his dues that he always mailed in a check for his dues and he always mailed the society an extra five dollars or something like that, and always a little extra. And he kept up, so, 'cause he had all the publications and he still kept up with everything that was going on, which was one of those people who led an active life. He kept his brain working right up until the end, and I don't think it failed him; it was probably his body, unlike a lot of people whose bodies last but their brains stop functioning and uh, some of 'em never start I think. But uh, that's the kind of person he was. He wasn't a big guy, he was probably about 5'9". And had kind of an elfish look about him, you know; he got along really well with this lady who worked with me, and I gathered from the fact that he had spent a lot of his time as a dance instructor and a dance competitor, ballroom dancing, that he was quite the ladies man and that he enjoyed it, he was a big flirt I know that, and I probably got a lot more information out of him by virtue of the fact that this woman was there and she was a big talker and kind of flirtatious herself and they had a great time. In fact, he gave her a couple of nice artifacts from his collection, which she didn't solicit or anything; I mean, he just wanted to be nice to her and he knew she'd take good care of 'em, which she does to this day. And they're labeled separately in her collection and everything else. But, they were a couple of very nice pieces and she said she'd never found an axe, so he gave her one of his axes--I think he gave her two. And she frequently went back, she became better friends with him and visited him, she had more time. Even after we finished the artifacts for the next year or so, she would frequently go visit him and talk to him, 'cause he was lonely, and uh, so she got to know him pretty well. And she can probably give you more stories about him than I could at the time. (coughs) Excuse me. I guess you probably want to talk about the collection some and it's kind of hard for me because I'm so far away from it. If I had, I'd say, "oh, yeah, I remember this piece," if I could pick it up and there are things there I don't remember or what's unusual about it. I know when we took it up to the museum, I pulled out, oh, 15 or 20, I don't know how many pieces, that I thought were fairly unique, and that they would be interested in seeing right away, which was a good thing as it turned out because some of the boxes are probably just now being opened after ten years, which is very typical. I remember giving a address at the West Virginia Archaeology Society meeting back at the time I was working on Adams, eighty or eighty-one, when I asked people what the best archaeological site in America was, and at the time the Koster site was being excavated and people would say, well, the Koster site or of course you ask any archaeologist what the most important site, he'll tell you the one he's working on at the time. And I said, "you're all wrong, the best archaeological site in America is the basement of the Smithsonian Museum." That's the best archaeological site, cause there are things there that have never been seen since they came out of the ground. And a lot of it probably should be re-excavated, it would take a re-excavation

project, and I suspect, up until this point anyway, that's what happened to the Adams Collection; it's just become, the new archaeology is digging up the same old stuff again out the boxes. But that's the problem with the seventies, there was too much money and too much salvage that the attitude in professional archaeology, which I was coming up through the ranks at the time, was "get it out of the ground now before we lose it." The responsibility to describe and analyze it even to curate it took a back seat. And I know even the people I worked with going to graduate school, that was the great failing of the professor that I had, she was very well known; in fact, she went on to become the president of the Society of American Archaeology right after that, but her main criticism of the profession was a sight she'd worked on in Mexico, an early man site that still hadn't been published, you know, five or six years before. And she was really behind. She had so much digging going on and so many projects that nothing was getting published. And that was going on everywhere. Same thing in West Virginia, I mean if you look at the St. Albans site, how long it took to get, you know, I would have people call me up as secretary of the Archaeology Society, I'd had people call me from New York and North Carolina saying on their vacation they wanted to look at the St. Albans site 'cause they'd read about it and knew how important it was. I said, forget it, it's just a gravel pit, you know. The state road had dumped gravel in it. It was a nice big convenient hole and they just filled it up, they owned it so they filled it up with gravel (laughter). And it's sitting beside the road up there in St. Albans to this day. And there's eighteen more feet of deposits under, that would probably rewrite the history of eastern archaeology if they could get below the water line, it would be a million dollar project so it will never get done. At the time it was affordable, but if you look at this famous St. Albans site report that was written in 1969-71, you'll see that it's called a preliminary report. That is they never really came back and analyzed the artifacts the way they were supposed to. They got some carbon dates, went to press, and that was the end of it, more or less. It's a shame because I suspect that some of their conclusions are a little faulty, having worked subsequently with some of the artifacts of similar type.

Chang: Nobody has ever worked on it any more?

Kuhn: No, Dr. Sanderson and I called to see, we knew the archaeologist that was up there at the time. We were interested in putting the artifacts in our computer program, and they wouldn't let them go. And part of the reason was that they didn't want to let anybody see the fact that they were unlabeled and in some cases, even unwashed in bags, still in the collecting bags. So, to me as an archaeologist trained in a different situation out west where people take great care to do it on everything they dig up. I was just appalled frequently at what went on in the east, bulldozer archaeology and very little attempts to recover certain types of material. And the environmental aspects of archaeology I think were just being discovered in this part of the country in the seventies. It was, you know, a real education sometimes to see what was going on around here. Things haven't changed much,

the cast of characters hasn't changed much, unfortunately. Might keep me or get me in trouble but, you know, eastern archaeology I think is different from western archaeology primarily because the archaeological visibility around here is so difficult. The other reason is there are not enough people trained in both areas. That is, there are not enough people, people are home grown, that is a lot of the archaeology in this area in the last ten years, in the whole Ohio Valley, cause it's government contract, has gone to one or two institutions. Primarily the University of Pittsburgh, or a little further south, the University of Tennessee, or on down the University of Arkansas. You know, three or four places. In the past you had more of an interest from your Ivy League schools in the east, and they were a little more, I guess, eclectic in their approach. They had people who were trained like Ralph Solecki and James Ritchie and these big names in American archaeology from the forties and fifties who were trained all over the world. That is, the professor I had, Cynthia Irwin Williams was trained in American archaeology, primarily in the west and she was from Harvard, her graduate training, she'd trained at the Cro Magnon site in France under Movius, famous European archaeologist, and today we don't get that. Our people are trained locally, they're trained, they go to a certain school they're trained by a person who worked in that area, he's hired by the school, he graduated from...you know, you graduate from Pittsburgh, you go back to Pittsburgh, you train archaeologists who work locally and they don't develop the world view. There's so much to study in archaeology. One of the reasons I got out of it was frankly, in graduate school, I refused to be pigeon-holed and, you know, I didn't want to say, well I'm gonna do this or I'm gonna do that. You have to keep up, there's been very little done since the new archaeology of the sixties theoretically, I mean there's nothing being done intellectually. It's become an exercise in salvage basically. And like I told you the other day, they don't even call themselves archaeologists any more, they're called cultural resource managers, and that tells you a whole lot about it. Because, frankly, I said this when I was working I made some people mad, I said there are too many people in archaeology. Archaeology got more done when it was an elitist field, when a few people who had, not putting myself in this category, but there were people who had interest over and above the one little site they were working on. So that when you read about the great advances in archaeology, when you read about people who, the same names crop up. This guy, you know, McNeish, is digging in Mexico or he's digging you know, in Alaska. You don't get people doing that anymore, people will get attached to one spot and they stay there so their focus keeps narrowing and narrowing and narrowing. And it's, the whole discipline suffers because there's not enough free flow of information back and forth, and people don't get access to other people's ideas. It's very difficult, for someone trained, who's seen archaeology out west going back to the original point was why they dig with bulldozers is because they can't see it's hard work to get anything around here. You don't know what you're looking at. For one thing, the sites are enormously scattered, they're not concentrated unless they're in a rock shelter. The villages are big. The primary focus has been

in late prehistoric because that's what you can see, or woodland. You can see the mound initially in Ohio where lot of the good work was done with the Hopewell and Adena cultures the mounds. You could physically see your universe. That's what's the great thing about digging in a rock shelter, your universe, your archaeological universe is clearly defined, so you can make pronouncements about what you found, you can theorize, you can analyze. But when you get out here on a site that covers forty miles, literally, from Huntington to Point Pleasant, with ten villages in between and there's a village about every four miles on the Ohio River. Then it becomes a really daunting task, particularly if you're an archaeologist and you don't have the support system that you have out west where you have ten people on the project, professionals of different, uh, from different disciplines, you don't have, when I was working under Cynthia Irwin Williams, I mean, if she needed a palinologist she hired a palinologist just for a semester to study the pollen from her site, or she had her own geologist in her pocket, you know, who came to the sites and she had, whatever she needed. She had a computer expert just to analyze the pottery. Well, see that's unheard of, you could never operate like that around here. So you have to do it all yourself, so, that doesn't excuse. I talked to a young archaeologist when I first came here, who was up and coming, making a name for himself, Gary Wolf, who went on down to Arkansas and Tennessee or whatever, and finally probably finished a Ph.D. He made a couple of important discoveries about mountain top sites, early archaic sites. And he wrote it up in Eastern states journals, and started getting a name for himself. I looked at some of his early excavations, I had some people who worked in Jackson County, where he literally bulldozed a village, you know. And talking with the guy later, he didn't realize, you know, why do it? You don't need to see the whole village, I mean, if you can't dig up a part of it and do it right, don't mess with it. But the government's attitude is, well, we're going to destroy this site say when a bridge is going to be built or a road or a coal mine or something like that. So, we want to get as much as we can. So, finally the government came around to the point of view which I think is the proper one. For example, if you're going to flood a whole valley, there's no better preservation for the sites. Why do you have to dig them up, they've been there for ten thousand years. If you're gonna flood that valley, you know, that's the best protection you can afford them, don't mess with them. You know, dig up one or two and do a good job, but don't go in there and rip out the whole thing and see if it's going to be destroyed. Or if you're gonna pile a say, if you're gonna built a, as we're gonna do over here in Ohio, built the 29th Street bridge there. There was a site next to the off ramp, and they were digging it because, they were gonna build the off ramp over top and they were gonna cover all the dirt. I told the guy don't dig here, dig over there where you're tearing it up. This site's going to be under twenty feet of dirt. Why are you digging it? Let somebody else have it a thousand years from now when there's nothing else here to dig. But, I think there's more and more of that government attitude, I think simply because the money isn't there. Before...before 1980 there was money. After 1980 there

was no money and it's still that way today, and it's going to be that way for a long time. That's why I say I think archaeology should become more of an elitist profession again. And if they're gonna get private money, there's only one way they can do it and that's to produce artifacts, that's to produce things that people like to go look at. You know, like King Tut's tomb. And that's...in the new archaeology, the new American archaeology that was always kind of a no-no, too. It wasn't very cool if you were an archaeologist to like the artifacts, you know. You weren't supposed to like them. I like them, and to me that was the purpose of taking them out of the ground, you know, you don't need to keep digging and digging to prove that Indians ate birds and lizards and fish and everything that crawled, swam, flew, or ran on the ground. We already knew that you know, it's like what Cynthia Irwin Williams used to say in her theory class. It's like killing ants with hand grenades. We keep doing the same thing, we keep rediscovering the wheel. Every time we dig up a rock shelter, we discover the same things. Indians built fires in rock shelters and lived there during the winter time or the summer time, or whenever. I mean, we don't need to keep spending money doing that. You know, if you wanna get money, you've got to get the public involved. If you want the public involved, you've got to put the stuff on display. You gotta produce the goods. People aren't going to go uh, it's like one of the differences out west is one of the purposes of digging is to produce something for the public. And we don't have that around here, like try to write a grant to produce something for the public, you know, an educational display. You won't get it done. But out there, I know at Salmon Ruins, where the school was working when I was out there. Well, the county owned the land. It was a major site, like Aztec ruins of a Chaco period site. Like at, related to Chaco canyon, it was only about eight miles from Aztec ruins, and this old guy, Mexican guy, had lived on the site literally for years, and guarded it with a shotgun because he knew it was an important site. And he could keep the pot hunters from out of there. There was the mound, it was a 200 room pueblo. I mean, it was major, major site. And finally, I mean, he was kind of a Mexican version of Adams I guess. He knew he had something important and he wanted the state to live up to their responsibilities. So, finally you know, he wanted the county to buy it and get it excavated. That's how the university got involved in it. But he said, okay, I've had it. I'm gonna sell this off in six foot squares.

Shin: No?

Kuhn: Yeah, to the pot hunters. Well, so that got their attention and they got, the county got a bond issue of about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars and bought the site. And then Cynthia got the contract to excavate it for seven, she worked on it for seven years. It's basically, where she left it the last year of the excavation, she never got everything she wanted done, but they walked off and left it preserved. They covered up, now it's...the county runs it as a historical center. And they have a director who's a historian, not an archaeologist, who was involved

with the excavations and it's preserved and you pay admission and you go in and you see the stuff. You see how it was, you got the national monument sites, Chaco Canyon and Aztec ruins right near by and Mesa Verde, too. So there's plenty of that, but this is done a little bit different. That was the whole purpose to accomplish something for the public so that's how the money got spent. But, around here the state had a resource like the St. Albans site which would have produced enough, oh, by now it would have paid for the million dollars it would have cost to excavate it. Because they could have built a museum on the site, they would have had people coming in, people would still come in to see the stuff. It would still be as important. There still hasn't been a site of equal importance anywhere in the U.S., a deep site like that. Which is another reason eastern archaeology is different, there are no deeply stratified sites like you get out west. But uh, you know, you're not gonna discover a bunch of mammoth bones and stuff like that with spear points in them, like you can out there. It...and it's to, if they could have, if they had taken at that time, gone after the money to finish that excavation it would be a major, major site right now. There'd be a museum and somebody working there.

Shin: Going back to Adams collection.

Kuhn: Yeah.

Shin: Do you remember if Mr. Adams ever said anything about his collection, what he wanted his collection to be?

Kuhn: He anticipated, I think, that was kind of implicit, that he wanted it displayed. In fact, he was concerned about that before he died. I think he would have given them, they came back with a plan to build some book display cases, to display his collection in the library was where they were gonna put part of it. And they were gonna rotate the collection, the pieces. We were gonna work with pipes, you know, we were gonna build these different displays. I talked to Eason about it, and they even got an estimate of like twelve hundred dollars a case, and they were gonna buy two cases. And then they had to have the money. Well, I, you know, I thought that was not a very nice thing to do, but they're a public institution...they don't do it all the time. If you don't want to ask people for money, you can't work at a museum. So, get another job. But, I think he would have done it. He was concerned at the time he died he was still talking about it. I think if they would have ever formalized it and put something in writing, he probably would have given them the money. But again, they never would. It was just, we gotta do this sometime. That was the attitude, we gotta do this. So like every time we go up there, Roberta Emerson, the prior administrator up there would say, "we've gotta do something about the salt rock petroglyphs. These 60 tons of rock." The museum owns that. Part of the original design of the Huntington Galleries was to display the salt rock petroglyphs. Do you know why there is a courtyard in the center of the gallery?

Shin: Yeah.

Kuhn: To put those rocks in there. From day one, the allegedly have had x numbers, \$2,000, \$5,000, so many dollars in the bank to move those. And we talked about it, they're right by the C & O Railroad track. We talked about getting the railroad to move 'em, helicopter to lift them. They had all these grandiose schemes and it was beyond their ability to handle it. But the museum, from it's foundation, has had an interest, apparently whoever the powers who founded it were involved in some way in wanting to contribute to the prehistory of the area. And there's no doubt at the time working on the Adams Collection and prior to that the Pitt/Stark Collection and having access to the vault up there and seeing the things on display, I was amazed at the range and the quality of the North American Indian material at the museum. That was prior to the Dean Eskimo Collection which came in about the time of the Pitt/Stark Collection, donated which is a fantastic collection. It would be the envy of any museum that had it. And nothing being done. Overall they have had good Plains Indian material and Adams added some good Plains Indian, his collection had several Catlinite pipes of a really, of a 19th century type. the tomahawk pipe, chief's pipe that you see in a lot of the old chief photographs of trips to Washington. A lot of them were gifts and uh, to Washington. We had a couple of good war clubs, and one especially nice buffalo horn war club, the quilled pipestems. He had more pipes than stems, but a couple of the stems were exceptional with quillwork. Historically, I'm trying to think of what else he had in his collection of historical...because he bought a lot of other things people would sell him. And I put a lot of that in the boxes, just for...because he wanted it to go up there. There were things that I didn't particularly want at the time, artifacts from other parts of the U.S. nailed on, glued on boards and things like that, but we took 'em because it was the right thing to do at the time anyway.

Shin: Was it necklaces?

Kuhn: Necklaces, of course, a lot of the necklaces are done from the Clover Site, but this is common to what a lot of collectors do as they go along, they find bone beads and uh, they restring 'em. So uh, there's a necklace up there in the Pitt/Stark Collection I believe, that's fresh water pearl, the only one I've ever seen. You know, prehistoric freshwater pearls.

Chang: What about Peruvian pottery?

Kuhn: Well, see, I don't know the age of the authenticity of that. The problem with Peruvian pottery is you know, he didn't go to Peru that I'm aware of, so it's something he's purchased. And the reproductions of that stuff are so close to the original even today you can see the stuff in shops coming out that I don't know how authentic, I'm not expert enough; I can't tell you the difference in a Mochica or a Chimu pot, but uh, from Peru. But

that's more than most archaeologists trained in the U.S. can't even tell you the sequence of Peruvian cultures.

Chang: Do you remember whether they were in whole parts or effigies?

Kuhn: I think they were effigy pots, little...I seem to remember a bird on one of them but...

Chang: Complete?

Kuhn: I can't remember. There were some fragments I know, but again, as to whether they were authentic, you know, 12th century or 11th century or whatever, I have no idea. I don't know if he had, I suspect they were probably good fakes because he bought a lot of you know, the things that he bought cause he liked them, probably.

Chang: Do you remember much about the Clover Site, white most of his collection come from?

Kuhn: Well, see, the Clover to me, there's two sites at Clover. There's what I call the flint site, the archaic, the campsite, which is the long ridge that runs parallel to the swamp, what I call the swamp or the green bottom marsh or whatever it is. It's like a dyke between the river and that wetlands, it's what created that wetlands. It's the best terrace between Huntington and Point Pleasant. From an artifact collector's standpoint, it just jumps right out at you because walk on it, it's like the Huntington floodwall. I mean, it's like somebody built it like that. Well, I'm sure that ridge is where most of his big flint, all of his early stuff came from. Then as you flatten out where the village going up towards the river, there's a flat area before the swamp starts in again, as it bends back towards Guyan Creek. And I've always held, although Maxowski at the time disagreed with me and excavations haven't proved any, but looking at the artifacts from what I know, I always felt there were two villages there. One overlaying, you know, because you get the famous aerial photographs here, if you look at a plowed field and there's a village there, you see, the village and it's just like a black doughnut on the ground. It jumps right out at you if it's a plowed field. Of course, none of us alive have ever seen that as a plowed field, so we don't have the photograph. Plus, talking to Adams, I would estimate that at least 60% of what was the main village has already washed away. What Marshall excavated up there is starting down the reverse slope. Well, from looking at other villages I've looked at and worked on up and down that's, the slope came up and leveled off and came back down, you know, to the river. And the village was up on the top slope like a bluff over the river probably, and what they're doing today is the slope. So you get a lot of broken pottery and burials and the stuff that was probably outside the village property or in a later village, an expanded area of the village. The flat upper part of the bluff had already gone into the river. So, it's really hard here. You very seldom get a late prehistoric village that isn't on top of earlier

material; it just doesn't. Uh, occasionally you do because they chose to live closer to the river which the earlier peoples didn't do. You've got a series of terraces back from the Ohio. The older terraces are farther back as the course of the river changes. And sometimes you get three or four terraces and once you get used to collecting you know, pretty much what you're going to find 'till you get back to the terrace with the gravel on it, the paleo soil, you know, the glacial stuff. So, uh, the villages will be right down on the bank of the river itself. The earlier peoples didn't do that too much.

Chang: So Adams probably collected from _____

Kuhn: Oh, yeah, without doubt, because it was plowed. He collected from the ridge because it was plowed. And he dug on the village site. Uh, I did a similar site with another guy on up above Gallipolis for oh, seven or eight years. We'd go up on weekends. Well, I had no interest in the village site pretty much, but I would collect the upper site and then at the end of the day when we had an hour left, we'd go down and collect the village looking at it because it was very concentrated. He wanted to get down and find bone beads and things; I didn't. I was interested in flint end scrapers, or something like that. And I didn't like the tedious collecting. I'm sure that there was a similar situation up there. And if you look at that ridge it runs probably for about half a mile there behind the swamp. And you really have to, until you physically have gotten out on it, like I've been able to do a couple of times when I was at Marshall uh...it's kind of hard to appreciate what an ideal site it would have been for early people compared with other areas up and down there, plus they've got that great resource there in that swamp today. You've got everything that lives in there. You've got, back then they could have collected the water lillies, you know, the vegetable produce. Plus, you've got beaver, and every kind of animal, deer in there. I mean, it was just a, it was probably, you know, a...like having a grocery store right there if you could stand the mosquitoes, which apparently they could. Because it apparently didn't bother, because I...you know, the villages as I say, they were every four or five miles. I dug the one I was telling you about up above Gallipolis that I collected. I excavated on one the other side of the river, about four miles down the river, the last summer I was at Marshall called Lewis old farm, and I wrote a little report on that. And uh, we were digging some controlled digs for a girl collecting mollusk shells. But I noticed that the artifact types were almost identical to the ones I dug, so. And the dates, we got one carbon date. I says, you know I thought about it, this kid from Cincinnati, one of the Ohio regional preservation officers had developed this theory of every four miles studies down along the Cincinnati area. And I found it held pretty true and it always puzzled me, why are there village sites every four miles. These are stockaded villages and, what I'm saying, working on that one and noticing to me there was no doubt there was very subtle similarities in the projectile points, like I can look at, I can tell you, there are some very subtle similarities in the Clover points. But uh, the main uh,

the last village. But I looked at this guy and said, why four miles? And it occurred to me that these were stockaded villages, that's as far as you, as a work crew could walk in one day and build a new village and walk back to the old village in the evening. And they had to build new villages as they wore out the slash, you know, the agriculture, the slash and burn or whatever. More importantly, I think that the garbage just got so deep that every few years they just had to move, literally. I think they... because if you look at a Fort Ancient site the garbage pits are just, fish bones, you can imagine fish bones, mollusk shells rotting in the sun. Winter time you had to keep it all in the house, they even buried the dead people in the house in the winter time because the ground was frozen outside. So, the burials are right along the back walls of the houses on the inside, very shallow pits. They just scooped out a little bowl, curled 'em up, and stuck 'em in there. But, I just think that every so often the garbage got so deep. There was a lot of warfare going on, and the projectile points are enormous in number, triangular points, but looking on these village sites, the garbage is just unbelievable. And I think they just trashed themselves out. But the Clover again was unique. That village was probably maintained. It was probably a center, a trade, you know, it was probably a ceremonial center and a trade center, because there's so much stuff like the rattlesnake gorgets coming up from the Kanawha Valley. That could only have come up from the Kanawha and down from the Scioto Valley, from Hopewell. It's probably the last remnants of the Hopewell interaction, what's called around here the Hopewell interaction sphere. And those are probably the last trade route remnants. And Clover was probably one of the main stopover site on the road south. It was probably neutral ground too, because there was a lot of warfare going on in the late prehistoric period, the later stages of Clover probably.. I don't think there's any excavation large enough, I know Marshall didn't do anything big enough and as I say much of it has gone in the river. But if they had a large scale excavation one of the things that would be interesting to me would be to prove if it was or wasn't a stockaded village. I suspect it may not have even been a stockaded village because of the way it's laid, the scatter. Now the earlier artifacts that you're going to find in the Adams Collection uh, they obviously show that that site was more or less continuously occupied for ten thousand years. I doubt that there was very few times when it wasn't used as a base camp, you know, or a seasonal camp by any culture. It's like the sites I've worked on up in Gallipolis, the other site for several years. There are some environmentally unique features. There are some ponds in a very attractive spot. There's no evidence, there's no break in the archaeology, there's no five hundred year break. I mean, every projectile point that has been identified for this area and a lot that haven't been identified yet have come. You know, I have found things there that I wouldn't have expected to find a hundred miles down the Ohio River, or down the Big Sandy, or even down the Kanawha River. So, because it was in continuous use, and Clover was the same way. The Adams Collection has a lot of projectile point types that if you show the collection to people and say, "well, this is a central Ohio collection, this is

a Ross County Ohio Collection, because of the big early woodlands stuff, the Adena spear points and things that we just don't normally find around here." I think again part of it is the fact that Adams was able to collect and keep his collection together in a time when no one else was collecting in West Virginia. In this part of the valley. Everyone was collecting up in Ohio. So, the material was probably there all along and he had access, you know, he had the visibility that nobody's had at Clover since then because it hasn't been a plowed...I haven't been able to talk to anybody at the time, all the local collectors going back to the 50's or 60's, no one can ever remember that field being plowed. So it may not have been plowed since the 1940's or fifties maybe, which is probably when Adams stopped collecting. I think it was ...he said, fifty-two, fifty-three, somewhere around there is where he stopped collecting.

Chang: When did he start?

Kuhn: I think he started in the uh, around 1930, give or take.

Chang: So, the whole collection probably...

Kuhn: Twenty years. Yeah, 20 years. But apparently as a salesman he had a schedule he could develop where he could go out in the day time. And, it doesn't take that long to build a big collection, surprisingly. If you collect on a year round basis. I've seen people get what I call arrowhead fever, you know, where they leave their job and they have to be out in those fields every day in the spring. And I, my own collection, I discovered that, you know, I didn't find any good things till I got a pair of insulated boots and went out in January and February, you know, when the people plow in December, before the collectors, before they disc it all up. 'Course the plowing techniques are different today. They dug a lot deeper back then today they have no till agriculture which has ruined artifact collection for most amateur collectors. They plowed deeper, they had a sequence of more frequent plowing, they plowed things under they had to fertilize. So more stuff got turned up. Today, stuff doesn't unfortunately, doesn't get turned up quite as much.

Chang: What do amateur archaeologists do with artifacts once they find them other than keep them, do they analyze them?

Kuhn: Well, very few people do. There are a few good collectors and when we were in the archaeology society, we try to educate and in the local area we have contests and awards for the best collection and for the people who can identify most of them are pretty good about learning the types of artifacts. They're all curious about books, they want more information. and uh, fortunately, professional archaeologists seem to be reluctant to give it to them for some reason, I don't know why. They don't write, most of the point identification guides are written by amateur collectors and for that reason they have some weaknesses, most of 'em have weaknesses in 'em. But, the amateur collectors around here do a good job. We're got some of them like Carol

Carter and her husband, who label their collection for the most part or keep it, she keeps very careful records. She keeps a book, a code book of where she collects and has a code for all of her sites. She won't tell you anything, where anything. I'm lucky sometimes, if I can get a county out of her. You know, I say, well, at least tell me what county. But uh, you know, it's something good. And they're very protective, and you can't blame them. I used to get upset when I was collecting this one site for several years, I'd see someone else. One reason I stopped going up there was because I started collecting it and I didn't like seeing other foot prints, you know. That was when I wasn't working, I just did it as a recreational deal to fight boredom on the weekend more than anything else. It's uh, the serious collectors around here, they work year round and they keep very good records. Now, in other areas of Ohio there are people in it for fun and profit, you know. I mean, they go out and they dig the stuff up. And the other good thing I can say about collectors in this area, there aren't any diggers, you know, they don't dig. They're mostly surface collectors. And I see no harm really, a lot of archaeologists don't like it. Around here the surface collecting, those plowed fields are so disturbed you know, there is no archaeological value to them. There is more archaeological value in somebody going and getting the stuff and taking it somewhere, you can look at it. On the ground, there's no use to leave it there, cause in the first place it's...a lot of it's overkill, if you ever get to the place where you're doing something somebody's already done. The other thing is the money isn't there anymore and isn't going to be there. You might as well let the collectors who are going to appreciate it and get it do something with it. But like all professionals, I look down on people who sell their artifacts, you know, buy and sell artifacts. I just think, you know, I tell people all the time, they say, I bought this at a flea market. Is it any good? I said, well, if you found it would you sell it? And they say, I wouldn't sell my artifacts. I say well, then anytime you buy it you're risking a fake, and then I'll show them how to make a fake as good as the one they found. So there's not as much of that that goes on. I'm always appalled when I go to Indiana or other parts of Ohio at how much of a market. I went to a flea market up in Western Ohio this weekend and there's always a lot of stuff for sale up there.

Chang: So you said Adams collected most of his artifacts from Clover site?

Kuhn: I would say probably of the material up at the galleries probably 85, maybe 90% is from Clover. Of the West Virginia artifacts. And those that aren't, that are questionable to say if it's flint, it doesn't matter any more to me. Because if it came from ten miles away one way or the other, in the big picture it doesn't really matter and that's the only thing that wouldn't be Clover, is the flint pieces. The other stuff all came from there. All the village type material, pottery, all of the bone pieces. He may have worked another village on up the river.

Chang: inaudible.

Kuhn: Wallace Farms, or a...there are several farms, Frazier's Farm.

Chang: Frazier's.

Kuhn: Yeah, well that's this way. That's closer to Huntington. That's up near Green Acres, Frazier's Bottom. And there will be flint but it will be the same type that was on that ridge at uh. And the unique stuff on that ridge, the fluted points, the Plano point, the big, big pieces, I'm sure it all came from there because there's no other place it could have come from. I mean, there's no other place that unique and we don't find that on these other sites. So, if he said Clover, I'm more willing to accept it now than I was back then. I was a little more skeptical then than I am now, knowing what I know now.

Chang: Did you say he also systematically collected from another place?

Kuhn: No, I don't think so. I don't think there was any system to what he did. I don't think there was any system to what he did. I think uh, I think he was just a good surface collector that as he picked up what he saw, he didn't pick up just the pretty pieces. There were a lot of tools though that he probably didn't pick up. They didn't know how to look at tools. I mean, you don't see a lot of end scrapers and things that probably if you're getting some of the things that he got, there's probably tons of little things. You know, the collectors still don't do that.

Chang: Did he have pieces from Illinois?

Kuhn: Yeah.

Chang: Were those uh...

Kuhn: Purchased.

Chang: Purchased.

Kuhn: Yeah, he purchased all of that or it was given to him. People, as a salesman, he came in contact with a lot of people and they knew what he did. Or people came to him, because he told me about it, because I asked him about it. It was all purchased material.

Chang: There are some metal axes from prehistoric times. Did he also find them?

Kuhn: No, that was all purchased. Yeah.

Chang: So they weren't from Clover?

Kuhn: No. Copper, the copper pieces were the only metal. Now Carol Carter, the woman I told you about, she and her husband

found a copper axe a few years ago in West Virginia. That was one of the biggest ones ever recorded. They brought it to me the evening they found it, they were so excited, to look at it. They took it to artifact shows in Ohio, they won the best find of the year. It was written up, they have it in safety deposit, they even had a cloth impression on the copper where it was wrapped in burial. It's about nine inches and the biggest one I've seen in books are like seven or eight. And it's, there again, I know them. If someone else brought that to me and said I found this in West Virginia, you know, he's not telling the truth. But uh, I feel better about the Adams Collection and the Clover material than I did back then. Several times he'd say, or I thought, well, I'll write it down, but his memory's probably failing him. I took a group of students on a tour in '81 out west. And I took them collecting up in the mountains where I had worked on a master's thesis on obsidian. And I walked down this road that I had probably walked down ten times, and I found an obsidian blade cache that day. You know, seven years later it's in there in a display case. We...I've got pictures of us digging it out. Twenty-some pieces. Well, if someone else had found that and told me where they found it, I wouldn't have believed them. 'Cause I said, "I've been there. There are no big pieces. There's no big blades." The obsidian isn't from there. It's from maybe thirty, forty miles away. You know, I wouldn't believe it. So, you know, I believe more about Adams Collection after, I'd say that stuff did come from Clover because now I've got more familiarity with the area all the way down, and the flint types too. And uh, there's nowhere else it could have come from. If it's...and it's authentic material, it's good material. Now the purchased stuff it's easy for me to pick out 'cause the flint's not local. If it comes from more than oh, you don't get any flint from further away than Harrison County, Indiana, which is about 230 miles from here. You get a lot of stuff from eastern Kentucky and Kanawha flint. I'm very familiar with most of the Ohio flint, so I can look, and occasionally there was an exotic piece of flint in there that I won't recognize and an exotic type, and it might be an artifact that was traded in or came in from further south. But uh, I feel real good about anything that's identified and if you're not sure, just call it Clover because that's probably where it came from. You know, that's the way I got...that's the way he was. See, I don't remember, it must be from Clover. Obviously, that's where he spent most of his collecting time, and uh...

Chang: I kind of sense that collectors have a collector's culture. They have their code of ethics. They have their way of...

Kuhn: Oh, yeah. Say, you don't cross someone else's tracks to pick up a...you know, there was a guy collecting and we walked five corn rows apart, you get to the end and you turn. And if you see something out there that's kind of in the middle you don't run to it. You wait to see if he's going to see it, and if he walks past it on his side, then you can go pick it up. And you can be best of friends, but over an artifact there are certain things that you just don't do. It's like, I hope he doesn't see that as

he walks past it, and then you can go behind him and pick it up. But uh, as far as, you know, you never ask a collector where his site is. Yeah, they're not gonna tell you, or they're gonna lie to you. But you know, I always, unless you know 'em real well, unless they know you're not gonna go out and look at it, because I know Maslowski in this area, he told some...revealed some sites some people told him about, and now no one will talk to him. There's not an amateur ground here that will talk to him. Seriously, I mean, they just won't talk to him. He lost all of his credibility with the locals.

Chang: That so called code of ethics...

Kuhn: Yeah. He broke his rapport, his anthropological rapport. So he lost his informant network is what he did. But you know, Adams and Durrett collected a lot of that together. And I suspect that Adams must have done a better job taking care of his all along if he took care of it better at the end.

Chang: Do you know any of Adams' contemporaries or people who still know him as a collector?

Kuhn: No, no, Sig Olafson was the last and he just passed away a couple of years ago.

Chang: So, probably just you and Carol Carter...

Kuhn: Yes. Talked to him about archaeology. Of course, his daughter, Mrs. Neal, still lives in Huntington, I think. But uh, you know, I don't think she was, she's up there herself. She must be seventy, so when he was collecting she was probably already...see, he started pretty late in life, so his family already was probably gettin' up there. He was in his thirties or forties when he started collecting, which I don't find unusual. I'm surprised now there are more young people in it, but most of your good collectors are in their forties. You know, they have the experience and know where to go.

Chang: It makes sense.

Kuhn: Yeah, they know where to go. It takes a long time to learn around here. And they've got the time; they're not working all the time.

Chang: Thank you

Kuhn: See, I don't remember how much information I can remember specifically but...

END OF INTERVIEW