

A TEI Project

Interview of Myron Nutting

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1. Transcript

1.1. TAPE NUMBER: I, Side One (October 12, 1965)

SCHIPPERS

I want to ask you first the question about your genealogy.

NUTTING

Well, the family is very much an American family on both sides and a mixture of the North and South. My paternal ancestors. New England, and my maternal Ancestors] from the South. My maternal grandfather was from Virginia, so I grew up with a mixture, psychologically, of the Puritan and the Roundhead, which may account for some of my difficulties. [laughter] The Nuttings came over in the seventeenth century, the time of Governor Winthrop: [For the record I will say that there are two genealogies of the Nuttings published that I know of, copies which I saw in the genealogy department of the Los Angeles Public Library. I have copies that I am concerned about as they are annotated by my Aunt Anna Nutting and they ought to be in the hands of someone really interested in our family, or at least to be placed where they would be easily accessible to such a one. Briefly I am of the ninth generation of the Nuttings in this country. They came from England. Our progenitor, John Nutting (born in England), owned property and lived in Groton, Massachusetts. He was killed there by the Indians during an attack on the town in 1676. My branch descends

from John Nutting, born 1762, of South Amherst, Massachusetts.] But, the earliest Nuttings I know anything about were farmers. There were two brothers. They left their plows in the field in the manner of Cincinnatus and went to the wars. One of them settled at South Amherst and became what I imagine they called a master builder in those days. He was a carpenter, architect, builder, contractor and everything. There's a church at South Amherst, still standing, a good example of a New England church, which is his handiwork, very tasteful. The other brother went to some place up in Maine, and he was the ancestor of Wallace Nutting who distinguished himself first as a very dynamic preacher. I think he had a church at Providence, Rhode Island. Then he became interested in photography, and I remember, as a youngster, his photographs were all over the place. They were very popular New England scenes of orchards and doorways and girls in bonnets and the like. He afterwards became quite an authority on Americana, especially furniture. I think he was one of the editors of the Britannica on that subject. Incidentally I recently met Mr. Kinsey at UCLA. He was a neighbor of his and the first person I've met who really knew him and gave me any impression of him. I never met him myself and apparently he knew him quite well. So those are the two Nuttings, [that I know much about]. My grandfather was one of a large family and had seven sisters. And like many people, not well-to-do in New England, the first thing you did, apparently, was to learn a craft [so as to have] some way of making a living. Thoreau, for example, was a pencil maker and [another man was] a cooper. So they combined an education with something for money-making. My grandfather, Eli Nutting, was trained as a toolmaker. I wish I had known him. I described him once to my father as I imagined he might have been, and he said I was surprisingly correct. He left a very interesting library which, I'm sorry to say, my aunt dispersed. It had old volumes of things like Addison and Steele and biography and science. I remember taking down a book called Natural Philosophy, and then I realized that was what we now call physics. In his days it was called natural philosophy, but it was a book on physics. So evidently he was a very much of a reader and, in his way, quite an unusual man. But he left Massachusetts and spent some time traveling around the country. He went up into Wisconsin--he came West--and one story was that on a lake in Wisconsin he shot a loon with a rifle, which was supposed to be quite a feat. If he repeated it, it would've been a feat, but I rather imagine it was more an accident than anything else. Apparently, that made quite an impression on his family. He finally decided to settle near Cleveland, Ohio, in what is now Kent (in those days, it was Portage Mills), and he built a sawmill there. He too was a builder as well as being a craftsman's toolmaker. He had two children: my aunt, Anna Nutting, and my father, Myron Eli Nutting. My father went to Ohio State. Anna didn't go to college. A girl didn't go into higher education in those days so

much, but she taught school and became principal of a high school in Kent, and taught Latin and math. They were both very grand people. One of the last times I saw my Aunt Anna she was, by that time, nearly blind and could hardly do any reading, but during a conversation [she heard what] I told my father about a friend of mine who was a musician. He had an idea that if he did a little algebra everyday at breakfast, it kept his wits alive and that was his "daily dozen," so far as brain work was concerned. [One day] this friend said, "Myron, I can't do this. I don't know what's the matter." He had what was a very simple little algebraic problem, and so I tried it, but I didn't get it either. Well I wasn't too much interested, and my algebra had become very weak. So I gave it up. I told Father about this and he said, "What was it?" I told him what the problem] was, and then went on talking about other things. Then I looked through the doorway, and there was my aunt. She had a little stub of a pencil and her eyes close up to a piece of paper and, darn it, here she was, in her nineties [doing this problem]. She worked it out beautifully. [laughter] She made me quite ashamed of myself. My father, too, was the same sort of a good old-fashioned man with his wits about him. [He had] a wonderful memory for verse and quotations. In his nineties, he was physically and mentally in wonderful shape [and remained so] up till the last year or so before he died. He would get out and dig up his lawn or cut down trees, read, think about things, and he liked to discuss things. It was stamina and character, somehow. I don't know. I may be wrong, but that seems to be somewhat rarer now. Maybe it was the harder life, but the pioneer spirit was in them--dogged determination and will, strength, uncomplaining meeting of life. It was quite wonderful. On the maternal side, my grandfather was a Virginian. I don't know where he was born, and unfortunately I haven't been in contact with relatives. I have no near relatives or people who'd know very much about the family, and due to a couple of fires, which destroyed property, records, family portraits, heirlooms, and such, I have hardly anything except my memories of the Carpenters. His name was Chester Carpenter My first name Myron is from my father's name and [my second], Chester, is from my grandfather's name. He came out from Virginia through the Cumberland Gap sometime before the Civil War, and he was a student of law. But the first way he had of making a living was getting a job for the surveying of land, which was paid for in land. So when he surveyed a section, he got maybe a quarter section, although I don't suppose it was that much. So while still quite a young man, he owned little parcels of land all over southern Illinois. This gave him a very good start. He was a brilliant man, apparently; at least he has the reputation of being one. I remember when I was a youngster, I was taken down to McLeansboro to visit their family (my aunt was still living) and I met an old boy who looked at me and said, "So you're Ches Carpenter's grandson. Well, well," he says, "the smartest man I ever see and the beatenest

one to fight." [laughter] Apparently Chester Carpenter had a very quick temper. But he and his brothers were very intelligent boys. One of them took the position they had then of auditor and treasurer of the State of Illinois. My grandfather, Chester Carpenter, died when he was only thirty-two or thirty-three, but he was already quite a well-known man and rather well-to-do. He owned all the buildings along one side of the square. You know the southern towns were built around the square, with the courthouse in the middle. And after my grandfather's death, the property was in the hands of a lawyer who was rather careless. He let the insurance expire just about the day before that whole side of the square burned. [laughter] Also, my father's house burned--another fire--so, as I say, our records and heirlooms and family portraits and all the things that people treasure and are of value to us have been lost. My grandmother died rather young, of consumption. What her ancestry was I don't know, except that there were relatives in various parts of the South. Where she came from originally I don't know. My mother, when she was quite young, was left as an orphan. She was a ward of this lawyer who let the insurance expire, and when she became of age, she married. She was still in her teens, and it was a very unfortunate marriage which was dissolved before long. She, too, I always felt, was a very amazing person, because she was raised in southern comfort. Her people were not rich, but had a certain degree of affluence for those days in that part of the country. So she was sent North to a boarding school, I think some school in Ohio. I don't remember where and I have no record of it. But she always had a little southern accent, although not much. She had horses. She was a beautiful rider, and as a child, I remember seeing her ride. There was one short time in Mexico when she had a beautiful Arabian horse. Women still wore habits and rode sidesaddle, and it was like an old engraving--her flowing skirt, you know, and this wonderful little black Arabian horse, galloping across the country hills. It's something I remember quite vividly. But, as I say, in spite of that kind of a life, when suddenly faced with reality, she took the bit in her teeth and [got a job] through some friend who was a congressman. I've forgotten who he was. I ought to remember his name because she spoke of him, and he may have been a relative, [but I think he was probably] a family friend. So she got this job of teaching on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota, and she picks up and goes out there with a youngster (I think he was about ten years old). And for a year, she taught Indians on the Rosebud Indian Reservation, and she lived a pretty difficult life--so far from civilization. Then, from there, she went to Denver, Colorado, to some friend of hers. She was kind of a companion-secretary for this person. There my father met her. My father, as I said, went to Ohio State. In those days, the college was sort of semi-military, and my father commanded the company from his college at the funeral of President Garfield. When I was a child, I used

to be very fond of his sword. He had a sword (it was lost in the fire) and I used to get the sword down and swing it around. Father's interests as a young man were essentially scientific. He, I think, wanted to be an engineer. He was not a great reader of literature, but he had a wonderful memory for poetry. I think that was partly due to his upbringing. His parents used to have him recite a verse every Saturday evening. He had to memorize, during the week, a piece of poetry and then recite it. That was part of his education, and he got in the habit of reading poetry and memorizing it. So, even as an old man, as I say, in his nineties, he amazed the nurses in the hospital by bursting out in long quotations from Tennyson [laughter] or other poems that had been his favorites, which he could remember beautifully. It was quite astonishing. But in a general way, his interest was in scientific things. He was interested in political life; he never took part in it, but he kept up and was very keen on it. His ideas were what in those days were considered quite to the left--socialistic. One of the books that influenced him was Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. He thought that was a very fine allegory of political economy and a basis for real thinking on our problems. Of course, the period as I remember, was a very difficult one in this country. It was the depression; it was the days of things like Coxey's army, the Homestead strike and labor troubles. And life was not easy for my parents when I was young. As an engineer, there were times when he was out of work, and times were extremely hard. Father and Mother were married in Denver, and then he got a position as a reconnaissance engineer and surveyor for the Union Pacific, which took him to southern Nevada. I was born in a little town in southern Nevada called Panaca, which is not very far from Pioche. In those days, I think it was about 145 miles from the railroad, [you] hitched up a rig and drove across the desert to Panaca. When I was on the way, my father, of course, was very much concerned (I don't know what they had in the way of doctors out in that neck of the woods--only there were no woods), so he sent to Denver [for a woman]. How he got her name and connection, I don't know. I always heard her spoken of as Auntie Reem. Auntie Reem came down to take care of my mother during her pregnancy and my arrival. She was one of these old-fashioned New England characters and must have really been one. She made the trip, as I say, 145 miles with a couple of mustangs and buckboard. [laughter] She stopped someplace to ask about lodging, and the girl, apparently a bit snooty for some reason, explained to Auntie Reem, "This is a ho-tel." So Auntie Reem looked around and said, "Well, I never would have mistrusted it." [laughter] She arrived and I came into the world successfully. Auntie Reem stayed with us, I think, for a year or so as my nurse. There were Indians there (I don't know what Indians were down in southern Nevada at that time), and Auntie Reem apparently was quite startled one day to look up and see an Indian looking in the window. She said, "What do you want?" And he said, "Huh,

papoose." Auntie Reem said, "Yes, a white papoose." "Hold him up." So Auntie Reem lifted me out of the crib and held me up for him to look at. So he was looking at me and said, "Huh. How many?" Auntie Reem say, "One, you fool, do you think babies like this come in droves?" [laughter] That was one of my mother's favorite stories about Auntie Reem. Well, then Father left the Union Pacific, and went to work with the Butte and Anaconda Mines to do reconnaissance [work]. Here again is something I think is quite amazing about my mother: the way that she would have courage, you know, in meeting all situations. She went with Father. She had an almost religious belief that the wife's place was with her husband. No matter where he went, she was going to be right there by his side. So she went up there to Montana to the Bitter Root Range in midwinter, riding horseback, making camp at night and carrying me, a little baby, on the pommel of her saddle and warming my toes by the campfire. And she took it all in her stride. Then, at Hamilton, Montana, my brother was born, Arthur Nutting. I was fourteen months old then, so I suppose I was about a year old when Father was doing this reconnaissance. And from there, he went to Butte to work as mining engineer for the Butte Mines. Those were the days of Marcus Daly. Well, my earliest memories are of Butte, and I think my earliest memory is probably from about the age of three. It is very definitely a memory of childhood, because I'm not in a bed, but in a kind of a crib and there's a window just above my crib. Under that is a calendar, and I still have a piece of that calendar [laughter], for some strange reason, at my desk there. It made quite an impression on me. It was of birds sitting on a branch; it was a chromolithograph sort of thing and had an interesting way of reflecting a rosy light up onto these birds from some sort of metallic paper back of them. Then I remember my mother must have been ill. This was, of course, later and I think I would have been then between three and four. I remember going out with my father to a restaurant, and I can still remember the disposition of the table and the white tablecloth and where the door was and that we had a baked potato. I remember that quite clearly--the atmosphere of that room. The reason that I remember my age then is because my mother said one day, "You're four years old." Well, I didn't know what that meant. It was something about me; but she didn't explain what it meant that I was four years old. And how little I understood, I remember, because some boy came to the place, delivering something, and he talked to me and said, "What's your name?" I said, "Four years old." [laughter] I suddenly had become something different. I wasn't "Myron" anymore; I was four years old! [laughter] And those years [when I was three, four, five and six years old. I can place by dates because we moved about once a year. That house I can remember very distinctly, and I thought I would like to describe it and everything that happened there (this is kind of a psychological experiment, you know), because so much of it comes

up to mind. It was on a hillside, and it was a very small house. I remember very distinctly that when we first went there we only occupied three rooms. Then the woman who lived next to us (apparently the top floor was divided) moved away, so then we had the whole top floor of this little house. I remember her name was Black. I remember that on the right side--we faced the street--[there] was a German family by the name of Mushrush. How in the world that name is spelled, I don't know. She was a very talkative woman, and she had a baby. [She had] a colored boy who took care of the place. For some reason, she must have been more prosperous than the rest of us. This colored boy, I remember, was devoted to my mother. He sensed some home atmosphere about my mother in the way she treated him, and he didn't like the people in Butte very much and didn't like his life there very much. On the other side, down below us, was a family by the name of Cook, and they were a very strange family. My older brother, Merritt (he took his mother's family name--Merritt Carpenter), was living with us, and he was also working. He was a member of the Montana militia, and he used to be called out once in a while for troubles such as APA riots. I remember riots used to be one of the events in those days. The fact is that Butte was a decidedly tough mining camp for labor troubles, APA troubles. When we left, I can still remember my mother crying for joy about getting away from there. From there, we went down to Mexico, and we were there for a little over a year.

SCHIPPERS

What was the community life like in Butte?

NUTTING

We were rather isolated. We were up on the hill, the time I am thinking of just now, not far from the Bell mine. Father and Mother had very few friends in Butte; there were very few people that were at all congenial. I remember one person they were quite fond of (I don't know why she was living in Butte) was a great granddaughter of Nathaniel Greene. She had a beautiful, big St. Bernard dog. And they used to see her quite often, but I don't remember anything that we would call social life--I mean, many people for dinner, going out much, anything of that sort. Mother used to take rather too much care of us, I think. [Every day] she used to make us put on a clean, white shirtwaist. [I think that's what they called them] in those days. They had wide collars and were funny kinds of things for boys to wear. She had an idea, I'm afraid, of making a kind of a Little Lord Fauntleroy out of me if she could, to tell the truth. And both myself and Arlie had long hair and wide collars. (Little Lord Fauntleroy made its impact on childhood life at about that time.) So that, what with her housework and all, she had long hours, doing all her own laundry and everything. She used to wash and iron these shirtwaists (there'd be fourteen of them a week), so you can imagine she didn't have very much time or very much

strength left over. She wasn't a strong woman, and she wasn't well very much of the time--really well. Both Father and Mother took a great interest in the life around them, in a way, that is to say. I remember that while we were there, there was the campaign on for the choice of the capital for the state of Montana, whether it should be Helena or Butte. My mother used to write articles for the local paper. First, she'd pull for Helena [laughter], just because she liked to write. She had talent as a writer, too, which, unfortunately, never had a chance of being really developed. The fact is, there were two influences on my childhood and my youth--my father and mother. On one side, there was the sort of the scientific, rational approach from my father who wanted to discuss things and argue exactly, to the point and so forth, which is very good. He stimulated that in me. He wanted me to develop the concept of clear, rational thinking. My mother, who was a great reader and a great lover of Dickens, would have loved to have been a writer. She left some little scraps of manuscript that showed some talent, but she never had the chance to do anything with it. What with a very early marriage and divorce, bringing up Merritt, making a living, and our coming along, she couldn't develop her talents in those ways, but she did cultivate in me a love of literature and the other side of mental activity.

SCHIPPERS

Was there any church-going?

NUTTING

No. Father, of course, was brought up in the stern New England idea of religion--Congregationalist, of course, rather Calvinistic in some ways--but he rebelled early in life. So, for a long time, I think, he was what you'd probably call agnostic, but I don't know if you could pin anything on him especially. Mother was very religious in feeling. As a girl she was brought up as an Episcopalian. A Jesuit priest of quite an old, fine family of Cincinnati (I think it was, Garachet) befriended her and had quite a lot of influence, I think, on her life. For awhile she tended to turn toward Catholicism. But aside from [that, although] I think, in a true sense, both of them were very religious, they weren't church people in the least. They read, they thought, they felt deeply, but without joining anything. Neither of them were very good joiners.

SCHIPPERS

And how did you get along with your brothers at this young age? What was your relationship with them?

NUTTING

My relationship with the family was always marvelous, really. I don't know how old Merritt would have been, [but from] when I first remember him, he'd be about nineteen or so. I think he was sixteen when I was born. My little brother, Arthur, was fourteen months younger than myself. He was a very strange child, very intelligent, very quiet. I was more extroverted. I liked to go

out and dig around the dirt and make mud pies and build things. He liked to sit around and meditate about things, and he didn't like to get his hands dirty. If he got his hands dirty, he went right off and washed them. [laughter] I never bothered. He had a very strangely mature mind for a child. Just before he died, before his last illness, Mother came in one day (it was down in Jalapa in Mexico), and [he was] sitting on one of these little chairs you see around Olvera Street, little small chairs. They had a couple of these chairs for us youngsters, and he was sitting on it when Mother came in and said, "Arlie, why so solemn? What are you thinking about? You just had your sixth birthday. Tell me about it." And he said, "Well, Momma, I know I'm six years old, and you know, I'm thinking about what good times I used to have when I was a small boy." [laughter] And he always felt himself as an adult for some strange reason. He always went around very dignified, very sweet, very nice. Childish foolishness was something that wasn't for him. [laughter] Why I don't know, because I liked to romp around and be foolish. No, he wanted to think about things--meditate. Butte in those days was not only a big, very rough, mining camp, but also they had smelters. It was open-air smelting, and the dire result of that was that the fumes, the smoke of the smelters, killed all vegetation around town. You couldn't have any gardens. You couldn't grow flowers. You couldn't have any lawns. So that was one reason it made Mother extremely unhappy: to have us children growing up on what was practically an ash-heap, so far as nature was concerned. Nature was in the distance, because we were up on the hill, and we could look across to forests on the mountains in front of the house. To the south, there was the mountain range and the horizon. And to the north there were hills. They had no trees, but you could just barely make out little tiny dark spots moving around. We were told those were cows. Father used to set up his transit once in awhile and let us look through the telescope. And we looked and, sure enough, these little tiny black spots were cows. They were eating grass, but there was no grass around us. The fact is, Arlie and I used to wander around the hill [on which we lived], and once in awhile, there would be a little green something coming out of this parched earth. It was a wild onion of some sort--the only thing that would grow on that hillside--and we found that very exciting, this little green thing coming up. Father suddenly was given a position by Marcus Daly. Marcus Daly then had interests in a railroad in the state of Veracruz. Marcus Daly thought a great deal of my father. If my father had been a more practical, business-like sort of a person, and with a good Rotarian sort of mind he could have made a fortune easily. But he was somewhat introverted and not the sort of a man to push himself in the least. So he never did make a fortune, but other people did. Opportunities were tremendous. Well, Marcus Daly sent Father down to Jalapa as chief engineer of a railroad, not a very long railroad but with a very long name. I don't know

whether I have that name someplace or not. We were down there for about a year and a half. And then Marcus Daly sold out his interests. Father didn't get along too well with the other people on the road, so he returned and went back to railway surveying and reconnaissance out in the Northwest. Life in Jalapa was delightful. I think it was probably the happiest year of my mother's married life, because we had a house, we had lots of servants, we had horses (the whole company's stables), and Mother had this beautiful little Arabian horse that sort of danced. It couldn't walk; it was so full of life and feeling that it waltzed down the street instead of trotting or walking. And, as I said, when she had on an old-fashioned riding habit, and riding side-saddle, and galloping across the country, she was quite a lovely sight. I had a little horse called Fred. Fred got burrs in his tail, and Father told the stableboy to get the burrs out. He got the burrs out, all right, in a very simple way. He simply clipped the hair around the root of the tail--burrs, hair and everything--which made the horse look rather like a mule, rather grotesque. It embarrassed me terribly because people would make fun of my horse and its funny tail. So when we went out riding I was very glad to get out in the country where nobody would see me. I still remember my embarrassment with poor Fred and his funny tail. Arlie had a little black pony, and he was rather afraid of the little animal. It was frisky. Arlie longed for a donkey. He thought it would be lovely to have a donkey and ride the donkey around. But he looked so fetching with his yellow curls and this little black horse, just out of a picture book, that Mother couldn't bear to give up the little horse and hoped he'd get used to it and learn to ride. But she always regretted that the last year in his life he didn't have more fun with his riding, which he could have had with some other animal. Jalapa had a very delightful climate and there were very delightful people there. There was a French consul at Tampico; he had his family there, and I think he owned an estate or some property. There was an English colony of people who were buying land, planting coffee and doing things--a superior group. It was the first time in many years Mother had a chance for association with people of that sort. So we had wonderful dinner parties and Christmas parties and went horseback riding and, in many ways, had a very delightful time until my little brother got scarlet fever. He pulled through the scarlet fever all right, but then because of some aftereffects I think it affected his kidneys--he was terribly ill and didn't pull through. We did everything in the world. Father even chartered a special train to bring a doctor down from Mexico City to see if he could do anything for him. This cost quite a lot of money. He came down and said that nothing could be done, that everything was being done that possibly could be done, that the care was excellent, that the doctor we had there was very good; so he went back. At least Father and Mother had the comfort of knowing they didn't leave a stone unturned. Then [with] Arlie's death and this change of hands with the

railroad, we came back for awhile and stayed with my aunt in Ohio. Then I had to be ill, which scared my parents, I suppose, half to death. I was ill for quite awhile. I remember I went straight to bed after we got to my aunt's, and I wasn't up for quite a long time. And the result was that [I never went to grammar school, although I did go] to high school. It seemed to work out quite well in some ways, although not altogether because I missed being with other children and the experiences of school which you have besides the studies. But in some sort of strange way, when I went to high school, I was rather better prepared than most of the other kids were. Without any pressure being put on my work, [my parents] seemed to lead me into quite good paths of thinking, learning and reading.

SCHIPPERS

What was the nature of your illness?

NUTTING

Scarlet fever. It didn't leave any permanent damage. I was frail for awhile after that, and they were rather afraid to have me do anything except look after myself and having me taken care of. My father then was doing some reconnaissance for Northern Pacific up along the coast of Washington, from Grays Harbor up to Strait of Juan de Fuca. Mother had the idea that outdoor life would be wonderful for me, so we went out in camp. We were in camp for a year up there. And it did [help]. It was great.

SCHIPPERS

During this time that you were not attending school, how did you receive your instruction?

NUTTING

In a very hit-or-miss sort of way, but not altogether too unsuccessfully. Mother was a great reader; she loved to read to me, and she taught me to read and cultivated a sense of literature and a love of reading. Father loved to discuss things with me; he loved to give me the elements--even as a little child--of geometry, for example, telling me the various mathematical terms. Then they had the idea I needed more real schooling. I was more or less convalescing for some months from severe scarlet fever, and so they used to buy me books. Among other things, there was the problem of arithmetic. Father got me a small arithmetic and introduced me to the study of arithmetic, of how to add and subtract and so forth. I started the book on page one with the definition of arithmetic; I learned the definition by heart and then did the problems. I then came to another definition and would learn that one by heart. Everyday I would do a little work in my arithmetic book. Sometimes it wasn't very much; other times I would be more ambitious, and I might do quite a bit. And, finally, I took that book to my father, and I said, "I finished this book." And he said, "So, you finished it? Let's see what you've done." So he gave me a little examination, a

few problems to work, a few definitions to answer, and he said, "Well, that's not bad." And we went downtown and bought another arithmetic book, but this time about three times as thick. The strange thing, is that I took this book and treated it the same as I did the first book. Starting with page one, I learned the definition or any difference in the definition there might have been. I did all the problems. Page by page I went through the book. Every day I'd do something in my arithmetic book. Other studies were [handled] more or less the same way. They got me schoolbooks, and I remember there was a set of books called "Carpenter's Geographical Readers," which was supposed to teach children geography by an imaginary trip of youngsters around the world. I enjoyed them and I followed these kids all around South America and Europe, everywhere, and I got quite a little idea [of what it was like]. I was very fond of map-drawing, I used to win prizes at county fairs by drawing maps. So with a combination of map-drawing and that sort of reading, my geographical knowledge was somewhat above most kids of my age. Both through this strange method and my fondness for reading, it turned out, when I did go to high school that I was rather better prepared than most of the other students. In some spots I might be much weaker, but in general information, I was way ahead of most of them. It might have been better for me to have had a little more companionship, spend more time with children my own age and have human relationships, but there were compensations, and I have no regrets.

1.2. TAPE NUMBER I, Side Two (October 15, 1965)

SCHIPPERS

[When did you first attend high school?]

NUTTING

Well that was about the year that I was twelve or thirteen years old. We lived in Penn Yan, New York. Curiously enough it was my first experience in school, and I found it quite interesting. My mother was also very ambitious for me to study music. She was very fond of the violin, and she bought me a violin. There was a teacher [who came] from Corning, New York, from the conservatory for music there. He had a rather original way of teaching the violin. At least one facet of it I thought was rather impressive, and I've never forgotten it. He gave me my first lesson on the violin--all the instructions on how to hold the fiddle and keep my elbow in and one thing and another--and then he sat down and wrote off a little bit of a manuscript, an exercise for me. I knew my notes. My mother had taught me my notes whenever we had a piano. That was at least an introduction to music. But the impressive thing was that when he got through, he said, "I think you could learn to play quite well if you work hard, but this is very important" (he spoke with a German accent), "you must read Homer."

Well that rather surprised me. [laughter] He said, "Yes, you cannot be a good musician if you don't know Homer." So I said, "Very well, what should I read?" He said, "You get the Iliad, and you read the Iliad along with your practice of the violin, and that will help you a great deal." So my introduction to Homer was Pope's translation of the Iliad. I went down and got a copy that they used in school and read the Iliad. But there was a note there--I think maybe more German than anything else--of a certain idea of the relationship of the cultures. You know, music and art and literature all went together, and there must be some way of integrating them, not simply [to] be a clever fiddler [laughter] but you must be a cultivated man if you are going to be a musician. Many, many years later, I told that story to James Joyce, and he was quite startled. And he said, "What was his name?" [laughter] Joyce was very interesting that way. When he had some idea or met a person who had some peculiarity, he became intensely interested, and he wanted to know all about them. He wanted to know their name, where they came from and all that sort of thing. I had been out with him one evening and we met a Greek. Something about the evening being finished off by meeting a Greek seemed to him quite important, and he sat beside this Greek sailor and talked to him. [laughter] Of course, that year in Penn Yan was important to me--at that age when the world is opening up before you--my introduction to music, my introduction to Homer and my going to high school, which was a brand-new experience. Another quite influential aspect of my life was a young fellow I knew there--also a high school student but older than I. It seems to me all my life I have associated with people who are older than I. That time is long past now, of course, but as a young man I seemed to go around with older boys and with older people. He was studying piano. He belonged to a well-to-do family in Penn Yan, and his father had a very nice library. I used to go to his house in the evening, and he sat at the piano in the next room. I remember he was working on Bach preludes. He could play rather well. He was not going to be a good musician, but he was a good student and a hard worker. And these Bach preludes made quite an impression on me, and ever since then I've been extremely fond of Bach and the preludes. I went on to other Bach compositions and music and eventually played some little things myself on the violin--solo and a little group playing. But while he was doing that, I would sit in the library and browse among the books, and I found John Ruskin. Well, I was interested in drawing, art, and so I became interested in Ruskin. My aunt happened to run across a little copy of Ruskin's Elements of Drawing, and I took that little book and studied it very seriously. Then my father got me a set of Ruskin, and I still have it. [It's a] cheap set, you know--reprinted complete works of John Ruskin. Some of it I found rather disturbing, and some of it extremely interesting. And, as a teenager, I was rather a disciple of Ruskin. I read with great interest his ideas

on art and his ideas on sociology and politics and all the rest of it. Father came back from his work up in northern Canada. It was a sort of a semi-exploration, survey-reconnaissance for the Grand Trunk Pacific that was afterwards built, but in those days, the country was not even well mapped. So it was a rugged experience, especially in the winter. He traveled by dogsled, and he had adventures, such as getting lost. Not having it well mapped, he didn't make his destination at the time he was expected. He and his party were three days late and out of food, so they all went hungry for three days. But the curious thing is that he didn't think that was abnormal at all. He thought it was rather a wholesome thing to do, to fast once in awhile. [laughter] He didn't think that he had undergone any special hardship; it was just unfortunate, that was all. [It was] especially unfortunate when finally, at the end of three days, they came to a lake, where they managed to catch some fish, and they cooked the fish and everything was hunky-dory; but after he had finished his meal, he choked on a fish bone and threw up his meal. [laughter] It was wasted. But, as I say, he was gone and there was about three months that we didn't even have word from him; he didn't even get any word out to civilization. But when he finished the work, he came back and wanted to give my mother and myself a treat, so it was a trip to New York City. We went to New York City and, of course, what I wanted to see most of all was the Metropolitan Museum of Art. So, we went there. At that time, the Metropolitan Museum of Art had its collection of master drawings on view--something that you'll very seldom see. I don't know that any museum really does that now. They'll have a few things out. They have a few things out down here [Los Angeles], and they have quite a good collection of drawings and prints. But they had a very large portion of their collection on screens, on one of those balconies around one of the courts in the Metropolitan Museum. The screens were set at right angles to the wall, and as you walked down on each side, they had the master drawings. Well those fascinated me beyond measure. I was thrilled with those things. Although I was interested in the painting, I think probably that collection of drawings influenced me more than anything else--that stimulated more love of that sort of thing. So we spent about a week in New York and, of course, did all the things--going to Grant's Tomb, up the Statue of Liberty (we had to walk up in those days and I remember my legs ached for days afterward). Every morning Father would say, "Well, son, what do you want to see this morning?" So I'd say, "I'd like to go to the Metropolitan Museum of Art," Well, poor Father was bored stiff with the Metropolitan by that time. He'd seen all he'd wanted to see of all those old things. But we'd spend part of the day at the Metropolitan and I would go up and study those master drawings. So those were not the beginnings but one of the most powerful influences in my interest in visual art. I made good use of my little copy of Ruskin's Elements of Drawing, and I think I still have

someplace a sort of a facsimile copy I made of a bit he has in that book of a woodcut of Albrecht Dürer's. He advised you to copy that very meticulously, so I did. I must have worked hours with a fine point, getting each line exactly the right shape, with this little piece of a woodcut. [laughter] Years later, Ruskin wrote another book called Laws of Fiesole (he always had rather fancy titles for his books), and to my distress, his advice on how to study didn't seem to jibe at all with his earlier book, Elements of Drawing. [It was] a little bit confusing. Among other things in his career, Ruskin was the first Slade professor of fine arts at Oxford. Then I used to spend my pennies, in those days, on a publication of prints, called the Perry Pictures, that you could get for one penny apiece. You got a catalogue and got all the masterpieces of art in little halftone reproductions, oh, about six-by-eight, I suppose. They were used in schools, etc., [in the] study of art history, before the days of the beautiful, wonderful color reproductions of things we have now--things, of course, which are much more valuable, much more interesting to an art student. Magazines that are now thrown away would have been quite expensive, thrilling things in those days. So I had my little Perry Pictures. I also used to browse around secondhand bookstores in stacks of old magazines and find things from which I'd make clippings. I had quite a large stack of clippings. I knew all the American illustrators very well; I could spot them a mile off. [And that was] one thing that always impressed me. I didn't understand why people couldn't tell an oil painting from a watercolor or an etching from a drawing, because I learned quite early. I remember on the wall of my grandmother's house, there was a picture which was obviously a photographic reproduction, but I could see, [even from] the photographic reproduction, that it was a drawing and on toned paper, probably in charcoal and worked over with white. It may have had some color in it, but you couldn't tell because of the monochromatic reproduction. I happened to mention that reproduction of a drawing, and my grandmother said, "That's a painting." I said, "No, Grandmother, that's not from a painting, that's from a drawing." "That's from a painting!" Well [laughter], I didn't contradict her, but I was amazed that a grown person, after years of experience, couldn't tell a drawing from a painting. From my many clippings and my little penny pictures and other material, I rather early got quite a little feeling for art and its period and its schools--what was American, what was French, what was German, what was the Eighteenth Century, what was Renaissance, what was Gothic. And maybe it would have been a more practical life for me to have carried it on and maybe become an art historian or something of that sort, but I like to make things. I like to make things besides paintings, drawings. I used to be always interested in constructing something. I remember reading about early American life and [that they] had spinning wheels. Well, I hadn't seen a spinning wheel, but I got the principle of the spinning wheel, and I thought it

would be interesting to make a spinning wheel. So I worked like a Turk trying to build a spinning wheel. That was before the days of Santos-Dumont, and I thought that a flying machine oughtn't to be too difficult to make. And I argued with Father, "Now, why can't you make an airship? All you have to do is have a balloon that you can get up in the air, and then you put sails on it like you would on a ship, and why can't you sail around just like you do on the water?" So Father went to great pains to explain to me the difficulties. I got as far as understanding, theoretically, but I don't think it was too obtuse [to think] that, if the wind was going quite fast, you could maybe have some way, instead of pushing it ahead faster than the wind, of slowing it up and then you could steer it. That, of course, is rather feasible. But what do you want to slow up the thing for?--you want to travel. [laughter] So Father was very patient in his discussion of all subjects, and we used to discuss all sorts of things. He introduced me, very early, to the elements of geometry and elements of science or physics and chemical knowledge, which was very helpful to a kid. It was very nice indeed.

SCHIPPERS

You just discovered that we got a little out of sequence and that before you went to Penn Yan, New York, you went to Cleveland and stayed at your aunt's, during that period you were ill, and you stayed there for about nine months. Then you went from there to Idaho, and from Idaho to Washington. Then, after Washington, you went to Penn Yan, New York, where you first went to high school. So we are going to fill in on that period you didn't discuss before.

NUTTING

Well Father went back to railway reconnaissance and surveys, and he had a piece of work on the Northern Pacific, in Idaho, up above Lewiston, up the Clearwater River, I think it was. It was the branch of the Snake and the Clearwater. I think their confluence is at Lewiston, if I remember rightly. So we went to Lewiston, Idaho, and then Mother wanted to be nearer my father, so we went over to Camus Prairie. But that I remember very distinctly--and that was rather unusual in a way--because we went seventy-five miles across the mountains in an old-fashioned Concord stage--the sort of a thing you see in the movies. (I may have been nine years old, between eight and nine years old), so, of course, my memory of that stage is of something enormous, great big, high wheels, and I had to be lifted up in the contraption. The trip started at four o'clock in the morning, I remember. We made the seventy-five miles in the one day to a little settlement on the prairie. (For a moment I can't think of the name of the town.) There were three little settlements in those days on the prairie, and they raised wheat. It was beautiful country. After you crossed the mountains, you came down on this prairie, and in the distance on the horizon, it was circled by the mountains. There were wheat farms there. We stayed at a little hotel. Father's camp was up in the mountains some miles away. He used to come

down and spend weekends with us. One day, I went out a few miles out from this little settlement to where they were heading wheat and rode around on a header all morning. Then it came lunchtime, and they asked me if I wanted to ride one of the horses down for a drink. Well, that pleased me very much, so I got on board this animal and rode him down a few hundred yards to a creek so the horse could get a drink. Well, I was still not strong. I was well but still frail from my bout with scarlet fever, and what with the hot sun, I suppose, and a certain amount of fatigue from riding around on this header, I fainted--fell off the horse. I had a feeling the horse was running away, but it wasn't because when I came to, the horse was grazing right beside me. So it hadn't been running, but I suppose the landscape commenced to heave up and down and then disappeared completely, and the next thing I knew I was lying flat on my back staring at the sky. I got up and found that my left arm felt very queer, and I couldn't move it. I picked it up, and it hurt like fury. So I took my hand about my wrist, and carried my arm, and started to the house, which was in sight. It wasn't too far away--a few hundred yards, I suppose. I started walking, but I had to lie down every little while. I'd get faint, and I'd lie down; then I'd come to. Finally, I got up to the farmhouse, and they were preparing their midday meal. The people were very sympathetic and said, "Oh, what happened?" I said, "Well, I fell off my horse and hurt my arm." "Oh, you did. Well, let's feel it." So they grabbed it and commenced to work it to see what was the matter with it. I protested of course. And they said, "Well, I guess you must have sprained it or something." So I said, "Maybe so." They made me a sling from a towel and put my arm in it and said, "Doesn't that feel more comfortable?" And I said, "Yes, that feels a little better." "Well, now we'll have dinner." "Well," I said, "I'm awfully sorry, I'd like to get home." And they said, "What? You won't stay? Aren't you hungry? Don't you want to have something to eat before you go?" I said, "No, I don't feel hungry." So somebody hitched up a little two-wheel... (what do you call those little vehicles they used to have in those days?) and we went off across the prairie. Here I was hanging onto this thing and jolting up and down in this little buggy. They got me home and got a young doctor who was there. I remember his name was Stockton, an awfully nice young fellow. He examined my arm. By that time it was swollen quite a lot. And he said, "It's broken, undoubtedly broken. But," he said, "the swelling has started so that I can't tell too much about it." Well, they put me to bed. One thing that was rather peculiar, and I think very unusual (usually you can fall under a horse, you know, and you never get stepped on) was that there was a print of a horse's hoof, black and blue, around my elbow here. Dr. Stockton said that he didn't really feel qualified to do very much with that arm and advised sending up to the mountains to a surgeon who was stationed up there in the mines. He thought that he would know a lot more about that sort of a problem than he

would, so Father sent up for him and he came down. He was a very jolly fellow and I remember he liked to use big Latin words and wanted me to read Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. So they got me a copy of that, and he put my arm in a cast. As a matter of fact, it was very lucky that that accident happened when I was so young, because my arm was stiff as a board for a long time. Mother used to massage it every morning. And then [I'd] do little exercises. It's still crooked, but I can get it almost up as far as the other arm. But for a year it was just a stiff arm. Then Dr. Stockton used to take me out on his trips; he was very nice to me. I'd ride around over the prairies and visit his patients. One day the team ran away coming home at night, and that was quite an exciting experience because I only had one arm to hang on with while the horses were galloping around over rocks and all sorts of things. I thought the horses were going in a straight line, so I didn't know how many miles I had gone. What happened was that the doctor had gotten out to find the road, because there wasn't any real road, and while he was out, the horses were startled and they ran away. But the lucky thing was that Dr. Stockton could station himself in the direction the horses wanted to run, and every time they'd come towards him, he'd scare them around and they went around in a circle I didn't know that. So when they finally did stop and I called Dr. Stockton, I was amazed to find he wasn't very far away, I thought I was miles and miles away. [laughter] Then we decided to go into camp with my father, and he got the tent, and we went up into the mountains where his work was, and we lived under canvas for the rest of the summer until the fall. I caught my first trout, very much to my surprise. I was looking at the stream one day, and I thought it would be rather interesting if I could catch a fish. So I got some thread from my mother and a pin, and I bent the pin and put it on the thread and tied it to a light branch that I cut from a bush. Then I stuck a grasshopper on the pin and tossed it over. I was simply going through the motions of fishing; I didn't know I was going to really fish. I had never seen anybody fish. I'd just seen pictures of people fishing, and that's the way it seemed to be done--you had bait on a hook, and you dropped it in the water, and they were supposed to bite. So I was playing at fishing, and no sooner did this grasshopper strike the water, then wham! the trout grabbed it. [laughter] And I yanked it, and the trout flew over my head, and I remember it landed, flopping on the ground some distance behind me. I was so startled, so wildly excited, I jumped up and down and yelled for my father, and he came rushing out of the tent to see what in the world happened. [laughter] And that was what happened--I caught a fish! There were some pheasants up there, too. You saw them around in the woods. It was beautiful up there. There was the pine wood. It was the sort of memories one has as a child, you know--lying all alone up on the hillside, the sunshine, and everything so very, very still and being impressed with a little murmur in the

distance, getting louder and louder, and then a gust of wind would blow across the pine tops, then die down--the sort of memory that [would] come back later in life and relate itself to the ride of the Valkyries or something of that sort. Spirits going across [the sky]. [laughter] The sense of light and space. I was a very imaginative sort of kid. Of course, I lived not too wholesome a life in the sense that I had so little companionship, especially of my own age, which led me to read a great deal. I had a book my aunt had given me, which I still have, and which is quite an unusual library for a youngster because, it being one book, I could have it with me on trains and in hotels and all the places that we were, and out in the woods. My great treasure. It's a cheap sort of a book (it was illustrated with woodcuts), but it had Robinson Crusoe, Swiss Family Robinson, Anderson's Fairy Tales, Paul and Virginia, Arabian Nights, and Aesop's Fables. It gave me a little variety of reading. Early in the nineteenth century there's a publisher in France who, not just for monetary purposes but to get out as beautiful a book as he possibly could, spent a lot of money on an edition of Paul and Virginia, with some drawings engraved on wood. I can't think of [the illustrator's] name for the moment, but they were really very good in their way. And they were reproduced in this book, not very satisfactorily, of course, because it was a cheap edition (I have seen a copy of the original edition, and it's really quite beautiful) but well enough so that you could appreciate their illustrative value. They were very good drawings, and I used to copy and study those things a lot. As a child, they were one of my strong influences in art. From Idaho we went to Spokane, Washington, where Father was a division engineer for the N.P. [Northern Pacific] for awhile. And, there, my mother tried very hard to give me advantages. I didn't go to school yet, but she rented a piano and taught me my notes on the piano. That's why, when I took up the violin, at least I had the elements of music. I could read simple music fairly well, and because I was interested in drawing, she wanted to find me a drawing teacher. I can remember going out with her, and she'd hear of somebody who taught, and we'd find some girl who had a little class of youngsters and had them doing pastels of still life. I remember [one who] had an ear of corn hung up and something hanging beside it, and here was a girl working away copying this ear of corn in pastel. Mother had an idea that none of these people seemed to be very good. Then she discovered there was a little society in Spokane, a woman's club or something, that sponsored a small art school. A young fellow who had been a student at least, at the Art Institute in Chicago, was teaching. [It was] not quite real training. We drew still life and sketches from the model, but in a serious way. It wasn't an amateur teaching other amateurs [laughter], so it is a very good beginning. And, for awhile, I used to go Saturdays and do charcoal drawings from still life. And, also, I learned a little bit of the piano, not very much because our stay in Spokane was

not very long. I was also introduced to baseball, because the kids around used to get out in the evening [and play it]. As I say, I don't know why my companions were always somewhat older than I was. These boys were older. They were the only others about that I could play with, so I used to go out and play with them. But they made baseball a little bit unpleasant. I used to work pretty hard trying to learn to catch, pitch, the rest of it. The ball seemed abnormally big for my hands at that age, which wasn't at all pleasant, and they weren't too careful in [teaching me]. They wanted to toughen me, I suppose. I can remember my hands stinging from the ball, and it was quite a long time before I learned to catch that big thing with ease. Of course, as I grew older, the ball shrank, but by that time my taste for baseball was rather marred. [laughter] Afterwards, living in Europe, I never did recover too much enthusiasm for baseball. I sympathize with people who are enthusiastic. I'll stop by the roadside and watch kids play baseball, but I never have any wish to see a professional game. I get quite excited when I see youngsters rushing around. I'm sympathetic with [enthusiasts], but somehow I never [developed it]. Maybe, I had a little bit of a complex, I don't know. I got my big St. Bernard dog in Spokane, who was afterwards lost on the Mississippi in a shipwreck. That's about all, I think, that that period contributed. From Penn Yan, we went to the Pacific Coast--the coast of Washington. Father was then starting a reconnaissance from Grays Harbor up to Puget Sound for the Northern Pacific Railroad. From Hoquiam, we first went inland to a camp for a few months. Incidentally, this idea of my mother and I going into camp was very much against my father's will. I can remember very distinctly, when we got to Hoquiam, Father had made arrangements there for us [to stay] at the hotel while he was doing this work. He said it was absolutely impossible for my mother and I to go on this work. It was going to take us miles from civilization, and there were no roads into that country at all--it was just wilderness--and it was no place for a wife and child. So, we were established in a hotel, and I can remember my mother going down to the engineer in charge of the entire project, who was then staying at the hotel, a man by the name of Van Arsdale, whom my father had known for many years. Mother went to Mr. Van Arsdale and said she wanted to go into camp. Mr. Van Arsdale expostulated that it was too rough a life and that it wasn't right for her to go off on a trip of that sort, but she finally convinced him that's what she wanted to do and that she was going to do it. So he had the company provide our tent. The tents we used for that work were, I think, twelve-by-fourteen canvas tents with a fly and a Sibley stove. A Sibley stove is a conical sort of a stove that sits on the ground and the stovepipe goes up through the tent. Any furniture you had was built on the spot, except maybe some boards for tabletops would be taken along. The first part [of that camp] was moved along a road that had been built up into that region--

a puncheon road. The puncheon [was made of] split cedar slabs laid across especially bad parts. If the ground would hold up the wagon wheel, why they you had no puncheon, but there'd be miles though of puncheon road. Then we came out from that part of the work and started up the coast. The first camp, I think, was the Hoh River. The party [consisted] of about fourteen men. There were the instrument men; there was my father, who had the office tent, and the office tent had the instrument men and the draftsmen. And then [there were] chain men and four or five axe men. Supplies were gotten in by a pack train. We had a pack train that was twenty-one horses. And the only way they could get supplies to us was along the beach; the camp was always near the beach. The work might be some miles inland, but they walked to and from camp, onto the line and back again. But as we got farther and farther from Hoquiam, of course, the longer it took to get supplies and the mail in, so that it wasn't too long before there'd be about a week during which we would be without mail or supplies or news of the outside world. It wasn't too easy a job. The coastal land is extremely precipitous, very high cliffs, and very dense forests in those days. I don't know if it's been slashed now or not, but then it was just a virgin territory. At the mouths of the rivers are the Indian reservations. There were the Quinalts, the Hohs, the Queets and other reservations. The Indians on the reservations were the only ones who could catch salmon; they would net salmon. So there were no commercial fisheries, and the Indian villages [were] at the mouths of the rivers. And we used dugout canoes a great deal. I had a little dugout canoe of my own; it was only about eight feet long. Nobody else would dare get into it. As a matter of fact, the dugout canoe isn't too stable; it rolls over rather easily. It's strange (I used to build rafts and fall off continually), but I never fell out of my little canoe. [laughter] I'd even stand up in it and pole it over shoals and little rapids in the creeks and streams. [I was] quite successful and quite expert with that little object. The surf, of course, was extremely heavy, all up and down that Oregon-Washington coast, much more so than it is down here. I don't know why that is; the swells, the rollers, are bigger for some reason. One difficulty that the pack train had in going back and forth was waiting for tides; [that would] hold up travel quite a bit. They could travel so far; then they'd have to wait for extreme low tide before they could get by a certain point or a certain part of the beach. It was a rather dangerous performance. As a matter of fact, two horses were lost that year by being caught. They tried to make a passage when the tide wasn't low enough. I remember getting caught myself. I was on horseback and I tried to pass a point and a wave came in. It would have been all right except the horse got frightened, and it bolted and got onto slippery rock. So I went down into the surf and water, with a thrashing horse and everything else. I can remember that very vividly. It scared my father half to death, and he came and rescued me. Of

course, those years, as in everybody's life--eight, nine, ten and as a teenager--are tremendously impressive, and my memories and impressions of that life are strong. I think they color, as with all of us, other thoughts and feelings that we have. As I just mentioned, I never hear the "Ride of the Valkyries" that it doesn't take me back to nine years old and the lonely mountainside where the wind was going across the pine tops. It's part of a complex of sensations and visions and fantasies. And the same way with that year along the Washington coast. It was a virgin territory in those days. The only white people were people who came in to hold down timber claims and had carried their belongings on their backs most of the time. I can remember a little family--a man his wife and two little kids--and they had everything they owned in bundles, and he would put down the bundle, and then he'd go back and pick up the bundle he left behind and carry that ahead of the bundle number one. And he kept backing up and carrying them, mile after mile along the beach, to where they built a little shack in the woods to hold down a timber claim. He spent so much of the year on that timber claim in order to file upon it eventually. So there were these people, and there was a Captain Hanks who had a little store at the reservation on the Hoh River. He was a very strange character. He was living there with his wife and children. I remember there were two girls. The boy I've rather forgotten. Captain Hanks had had his license taken away from him as a captain because of maltreatment of sailors in his employ. He had this little store and a small sailboat. I have a photograph of it here someplace. I think it was a two-mast schooner. But he had to sail it alone; he couldn't hire help. So he'd go out alone and sail up to Port Townsend and around down to Seattle and get supplies on the way back, when he'd be out at sea, he'd tie his rudder down, go below and get drunk, which wasn't a very safe thing to do. They said that several times he'd been picked up on the beach. He'd been washed ashore but had come through without being drowned. I do believe that he did lose his life from that foolhardiness. Another very strange thing about Captain Hanks was that people used to come and stay overnight with him. And then next morning, they'd set out going on further north, and he'd say, "Well, I'll show you the way across the point. We have got a trail. It's pretty rough, but I'll go along with you." So he'd go off with this fellow and come back, and strangely nobody ever heard of the fellow again. That happened several times. So he may have profited by a night's lodging more than the law would allow ordinarily. He had another fellow with him who was building a bigger boat, all by himself. If it were a house, we'd say he had it framed in--he had the ribs cut, the keel laid and quite a lot of the boat built the last time I saw it. But I believe he never did finish it. Afterwards, I asked somebody who had been up there, and they said it was still in the same condition it was years before. I also have a photo of that. Father got a four-by-five Kodak. We didn't get many good pictures, but a few rather interesting

pictures of that trip. But, as you know, the Northwest, especially in the wild, has a very solemn grandeur. My St. Bernard dog was my only companionship besides the grown-ups. I enjoyed it; I was very happy. I used to work away drawing maps and making sketches and reading my book. [laughter] They used to get magazines sent in; the fellows would take up a collection and tell the fellow to buy a bunch of magazines next time he came back. So we had quite a lot of current reading matter. I learned to handle a canoe quite well, but I didn't learn to swim, unfortunately. The water comes right down out of the mountains there; it's very cold. The Indian kids used to splash around very happily and I tried it a few times, but I couldn't stay in long enough to profit very much by it. It was quite icy. I think that probably one of the most impressive things to me about the wilderness was its silence, because I used to go out and walk around the woods, and there wouldn't be a sound, [not even] a bird. Once in awhile, some little animal like a chipmunk would startle you, but if a cone fell down, it made you jump. Still, still, still. An overpowering stillness. Then in contrast to that, of course, was the roar of the surf and the tumult of the ocean. In stormy times, it was very much of an uproar. And I remember having a nightmare one night, and I woke up and there was, along with the roar of the water, the boom of a cannon. I discovered the next morning that many big logs had broken loose from the logging industries and were cast ashore. This one was about four or five feet in diameter--a big cedar log--and it was at a right angle to the surf. So every time a big wave would come in, it would pick up this battering ram and hurl it against another pile of logs, and it would boom like thunder. You could walk for miles from one log to another and never put your foot to the ground. [It was mostly] stuff that was washed down from the rivers at floodtime. Large trees would come down in floodtime in the wintertime. The water would be very high. Strange sort of things used to happen. Once we were camped in what was called a big burn. There had been a forest fire many years before and, apparently, this was rather larger than the other fires before. The trees were all standing, but dead, which in a way is good because it let in light and gave us a camping ground which was pleasant. Father went to choose the camping ground. When he came back, he said he had found what he thought was a very nice camping ground, but there was only one difficulty--there was no water. So he sent a party up to dig a well. That worked out very nicely because they didn't have to go very far and found plenty of water. So we moved camp. Well, we hadn't been in camp very long before it started to rain. It hadn't rained very long before we had to build bridges from one tent to another. [laughter] We had about six inches of water in all of our tents, and we had to put platforms from the bed to the stove to the table. There was more water than we wanted. Added to that a storm came, a terrific storm. I rather imagine at the mouth of the Hoh River to this day--they wouldn't have moved it--there's the hulk of the Ernest

Reyer, a French sailing ship, a steel bark, on its maiden voyage. They still built sailing ships in those days, except they were steel. It was wrecked at the mouth of the Hoh in this storm. Well, the way that storm affected us was that it blew over these standing dead trees. I remember one fellow was so frightened that he went and slept in a stump all night. He had rather good reason to be, because the wind was so heavy and in the course of the years there apparently had not been such a heavy storm, and the trees were somewhat rotted and they'd snap off. I'd be afraid to say how many trees I could see falling at one time. I can still remember watching the standing deadwood, and then all of a sudden, several of these trees would snap off and fall with a thunderous noise. Of course, we were lucky none I think struck us. That fellow had a rather good reason for sleeping in a stump for he had protection. The fact is that one tree did fall very near our tent.

SCHIPPERS

Did this powerful experience with nature in the raw have an influence on your painting later--this also in conjunction with your exposure to Ruskin?

NUTTING

It had a very powerful experience. In the first place, the material and forms, colors and shapes. I still find it rather difficult to do anything imaginatively without having the sea in it. The sea to me is, in essence, not anything that is very friendly or placid. It always has a sense of power, of drama. The other forms of nature--the dense forests, the animal life, the mountains, the power of the rivers, the devastating floods and things of that sort--were things to make an impression. The only thing I can think to contrast it [with is if] I had grown up in a city--as, of course, many of our finest writers and artists have. There you have much more association with people, much more with objectivity, and much more with immediate problems and activities. I think that this sort of a life for a boy is inclined to develop more of a sense of mythology, of nature spirits, which would be perfectly meaningless to a youngster who played on the pavements of the poor part of a city, for example.

SCHIPPERS

Did you view nature as a friendly thing or more or less as an implacable force?

NUTTING

I was awestruck by nature, but I don't remember ever being frightened. There was a slight sense of it when, as a child, I used to go out on a clear night and look at the stars, and after awhile, I'd get a little sense of the awesomeness [which] would change into a sort of fear at the immensity of the universe. I was very sensitive to the more cheerful aspects of nature--the sun and the play of water and sounds and cheerful things. I was not at all morbid in my reactions. I think on the whole I had a quite wholesome relationship to natural phenomena. The psychic stability of my parents may have had a great deal to do with that.

SCHIPPERS

Just [a moment ago, we] stumbled across the St. Nicholas Magazine that your parents subscribed to for you.

NUTTING

That was a magazine that I enjoyed very much. It was an excellent magazine in those days. It was when Mary Mapes Dodge was editor of it. She was the founder and editor of it. And I imagine [it was] through her friendship with writers of her day that she got contributions. She got some very excellent writers and some excellent illustrators, including Howard Pyle. It was a department called the St. Nicholas League, edited by Albert Bigelow Paine, who was afterwards Mark Twain's biographer. I used to write and draw for it. I used to have my writing published, but not my drawing. I eventually won a gold badge for writing, but my efforts in drawing weren't appreciated at that time as much as I'd have liked. One of the earliest things I read of Jack London, which must have been one of his earliest writings too, was for St. Nicholas. It was a story about the San Francisco Bay that was published I think first in St. Nicholas. It's a boy's story, an adventure story.

1.3. TAPE NUMBER: II, Side One (October 19, 1965)

NUTTING

The summer when I was about sixteen, I worked in an engineering party of my father's in northern Minnesota. He did this work from Minnesota into Dakota. Father gave me a job in his party as back-flag. In the survey, the transit man has the two sights--his back-flag and the head chain man--in running a line. Being a back-flag is a very monotonous job. You spend most of your time just standing still until you get a signal from the transit man, and then you put up this red and white pole for him to get a sight. As long as it was in Minnesota, the work was through the dense woods, and I was never very far from the transit man. But when he got through the woods and out onto open prairies, then sometimes the sights were very long. It was a lonesome job. You held your post until you got a signal to advance, and then you moved up and, meantime, the party may have moved far ahead. So, only when you met for lunch, were you near anybody. In open country, with a telescope of the transit, the rest of the party could go quite a long way ahead. Then you're supposed to keep your eye on this little figure in the distance, and when he signaled, you picked up and moved ahead to where the instrument was and gave the sight from that point to where the instrument had gone. It, of course, doesn't require any special intelligence or any ability except that you have to keep your mind on your work, which isn't too easy to do, I discovered. It takes practice, because you watch this little figure in the distance. The fact is, my father gave me a pair of field glasses; they were so far

away that I'd keep watching through my field glasses for the signal. Well, maybe, they'd be there for an hour or so, and little by little you'd forget about them, and first thing you'd know, you'd look in your field glasses and here was the instrument man having the St. Vitus dance up there trying to attract your attention [laughter], and get a sight. Once or twice, they had to send somebody back to put me back on the job; I missed my signal. But it's one of those things: after awhile you get in the habit of keeping your mind on what you're supposed to do and look often enough so that they don't have to wait too long to attract your attention and get the sight. The country sometimes offered a little bit of difficulty. One day the whole party had to cross a little river. I think it was twenty-one times that day I was up to my neck in water [laughter], so I, and everybody else, was sopping wet all day long. Which wasn't too good because I got a sort of chill and wasn't too well after that for a day or so. Another time, which is very vivid, we went through some fenced country. The party got through all right and I came up to my hub, and everything was very quiet and nice. I looked around, and there was a bunch of cattle moving toward me. In the middle of the bunch was a young bull who seemed to be curious about me, which I didn't like in the least. So I measured with my eye the distance to the fence, and I crept towards it very slowly and prayed I wouldn't be sent back to my point, but I was several times. [laughter] The animals were curious and kept me quite worried; however, they didn't start anything. It was rather a test of courage, though, because I was scared to death with this animal pawing the ground. He was really concerned about having this kind of an activity in his field. Little things like that varied the monotony of a day's work. I've forgotten where we were when cold weather came. At that time, I think Father went back to do something in northern Minnesota. The lakes froze over. Minnesota, of course, is a state of many lakes--I believe that's the meaning of the name of the state. I got some skates and learned to skate. The woods were lonely, one seldom saw a soul. I had whole lakes to myself to practice on. I didn't learn to skate very well, but I enjoyed sliding around on the ice. It's the only place I've ever experienced the dense forests and the cold. It is the only place I ever knew where, when the temperature drops very much, the ice will crack and make a weird sound at night. Weird in the sense that when you have a perfectly clear and perfectly still, starlit night, you suddenly hear a roll of thunder. It's very much like thunder. Rhumbumbummm! The next morning you can see the line across the ice of the crack. Also we'd hear the wolves howling in the night, which gave us a nice, eerie kind of a feeling. Thunder on a starlit night and howling wolves is my principal memory of that period. Some of my educational activities were carried on in the sense that I did quite a lot of reading, and also, some map-drawing. As a boy, I always more or less emulated my father and would learn what I could about surveying. When I was about

twelve I got myself a little compass and set it on a somewhat crude Jacob's staff I made and borrowed a hand level from my father and went out and ran a line on my own and plotted it and took the elevations and made a contour map, and I did the whole thing as a kind of a project. And I remember--when I was younger than that--when I was curled up on my father's stationery chest in his office and somebody asked me what I was reading, and it was Wellington's Handbook of Civil Engineering. They thought that was a rather ridiculous thing for a youngster to be doing. But I studied quite seriously and learned quite a bit--surveying, taking topography, elevation, mapping, et cetera, et cetera. So my reading and my map-drawing and my wandering around with my big dog in the woods and skating by starlight and things of that sort was my occupation. I don't remember exactly what time of year it was, but then we moved to Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, which was then quite a small town. But it had a good school, and that was my second year in high school. I did all right. As I said, our courses were simple and old-fashioned. We had Latin, literature, history and some science, algebra, geometry, etc. We debated and did other somewhat extracurricular things--not too ambitious. I can still remember the name of my principal; his name was Bolander. I liked my teachers. I never was a very good student in some ways. But from a point of view of education, it may be of some interest that if a child is brought up with systematic schooling he accepts it more easily and he doesn't get let astray into other interests. I always found it very boring to have a special assignment--to read to page so-and-so, to do this, to do that--because in my reading I had been used to getting excited about something; then I'd branch off and pick up something else. It wouldn't come in these definite chunks, and I found that somewhat constraining. With quizzes and examinations, I had a feeling down deep that, after all, it was my own business how much I wanted to know, that it wasn't somehow something to be measured and graded. [laughter] So, it kept me from being a really systematic hard worker after good grades. I made fair ones, so I didn't have too much to worry about. The community was a very nice one. Our friends there were interesting people, and we enjoyed them. Part of my daily work was practicing my violin, and when they found that I could play the violin, I used to be asked to play in the little church there. Whenever we were in a town, I always attended some church. In Spokane, it was an Episcopal church. In Mandan, I think it was a Methodist church. It all depended on where my friends went, the people I went with. In Spokane when I was nine I went to the Episcopal church because, principally, my maternal ancestry were Episcopalians and Mother had been born an Episcopalian. I was being trained for the choir. I have always regretted that I didn't have a chance to be a choirboy. It would've been a very good experience, musically, and also from the point of view of voice training because the teacher was very good. But just

about the time I was supposed to put on that little costume and join the choir in the cathedral in Spokane, we moved someplace else, so that it never came to anything. In Detroit, my friends in the school went to the Baptist church, and so I went too. They used to ask me to play solos once in awhile, and I played a solo at a baptism. That was the first time I'd ever seen a Baptist baptism. They had a little tank, whatever they call it in the church, back of a low curtain, back of the pulpit, and people stepped down and were submerged. Trying to play appropriate soft music, and watch this--to me--strange sight was quite difficult. However, I got through all right. [laughter]

SCHIPPERS

Did you miss the vitality of the Pacific West Coast setting when you were in Dakota and Minnesota, or did you find another kind of nature there that you loved?

NUTTING

I found another kind of nature. It hadn't the grandeur, of course, of the Pacific Coast. But in those days, there were the dense forests of northern Minnesota which were fascinating, with innumerable little lakes and the charm of wild life. Even in Dakota, though it was much more monotonous with the prairies, you have the wonderfully dramatic quality of the Badlands. I find that my feeling was formed more by my reading and by being in wild and primitive country than by my life in town. One of the earliest things that I remember as a boy was a certain resentment towards a smallness of feeling. It seemed to me that the interests of so many of the people that I knew were stupid. Maybe I got a sort of an ideal of culture somehow. Everything that I read stimulated the idea of some sort of great expanse of the mind, of something rather grand. Even though, in actual fact, it might have had those same qualities of smallness. When presented by a writer such as a Dickens, for example, or one of my favorite writers, it became sublimated. It's something that was greater than that rather picayune, money-grubbing, worrying of small things that seemed to me to characterize so much of the life when we got into towns (most of them were rather small communities). This isn't quite fair, of course, because as I grew older and had a little deeper understanding of human nature, [I could see that a] small town had grandeur as much as a big city. But I always aspired to seeing the great cities of the world, to travel. One of my dreams was to be in places where great things were being done.

SCHIPPERS

And you just told me that you resented the violation of the wilds or of nature.

NUTTING

Oh, yes, I always resented intensely. One of the reasons I never really wanted to go back to the West Coast was the way in which beauty, even in those days, was being slaughtered. I imagine it was more spectacular than it is now,

because now it's done at least with more neatness and with more conservation and replanting and care. But in those days, when those wonderful forests were cut down, leaving very high stumps which were then burned and the rest was slashed, it left, for me, a depressing Dante's Inferno effect. And that beauty of Puget Sound. As a boy I could feel [that it was being] marred by the amount of rubbish and refuse from lumber mills, etc. that was floating around. You felt that it was a desecration of what was very beautiful and very wonderful. Maybe it colored my feeling about the people around me, that they always felt, "Well, that tree represents so much lumber, so much money," and that they never seemed to be interested in anything but money. It's just that they were ordinary people. They were people out there trying to make a living, trying to hold down a claim, to make a go of things, struggling for their livelihood. It was natural, but at the same time, aspects of it made me very unhappy.

SCHIPPERS

Where did you go after you left Minnesota?

NUTTING

Father's work in that region was finished and he went to Mandan, North Dakota, where he had charge of surveys and grade revision for the Northern Pacific Railroad as far as the Pacific Coast, as well as quite a lot of reconnaissance in that region. I spent my third year in high school there. It was also a good little high school, of which I have quite happy memories. My Latin teacher was the principal, and the other teachers were sympathetic. I still worked with my violin, but I never got very far. I'm sorry to say it's a good many years since I've even touched it, but I used to enjoy it very much. I remember my first automobile ride was in Mandan, North Dakota. The man, who was a neighbor of ours and who kept a livery stable, bought a Buick car. Father made one of his trips across the country in this Buick, and Mother and I went along. It was very exciting. In those days, cars were exciting. They were uncommon, not many people had them. They had a county fair at Mandan, and as a boy, I always entered maps in county fairs. I was always winning prizes drawing maps. Not that I drew them very well, but at least they were much more ambitious than those of the other kids, [laughter] so I used to clean up on maps. There's all sorts of map-drawing, and I used to practice surveying using the hand level, taking elevations and making contour maps. Then I'd plot them up and do a contour map of two or three miles of line. Then I became interested in knowing the whole world, and I started a very elaborate copy of a map on the Mercator projection. I penciled it in, and then I started inking it in, but then the project seemed so colossal that I got discouraged. At county fairs, they always had things for the schoolchildren. Among other things they had prizes for maps. Well, they'd usually specify what they wanted--a map of the county, so much for that; a prize for the map of the state; and a prize for the map of the

United States. So I drew them all and I used to clean up pretty well on map-drawing. It started in Penn Yan, and I worked awfully hard on a set of several maps. I think one was the county in which Penn Yan is situated, and one was the map of the United States. But they, apparently, had been used to having the maps that the children did in school, only maybe a little neater, which were put on cardboard mount; whereas, I inked my maps in and tinted them and lettered them. I think I even put one of them under glass and framed it. Well, of course, that was attempting far more than what the other youngsters were doing. I lost out on one because they found I'd misspelled the name of a town. That inaccuracy of the map made me [lose]; they gave the prize to some other kid. But the next year, there were quite a number of quite ambitious maps. They were done in ink and watercolors and it changed the whole idea of map-drawing for entering those competitions. My half-brother, Merritt Carpenter, stayed in Mexico when we left and was there for a good many years. He was doing mining engineering. His great interest was in mines and in all probability would have done very well except that it was a very troubled time, or eventually became so because of the growing unrest and eventual revolution. He'd be on the verge of success in some mining venture when his hopes would be wrecked by an uprising, or revolutionary movement of sorts, that would spoil his chances. He stayed in Mexico until after World War I. He married a Spanish girl, a daughter of a Spanish officer. Her father had been, I think, a captain in the Spanish Army in Cuba and was killed, and the mother and daughter went to Mexico City where Merritt met her. She was a very charming woman. They adopted a baby (they had no children), and the adopted daughter now is married and lives in Galveston. Working as Father did for many years with the Northern Pacific, by reason of promotions, our life became much easier. My memory of Father as a young man starting out [was that] he had quite severe difficulties, especially in those days when depressions were really very serious. Nowadays there are chances for some sort of relief and help which in those days were not available to people out of a job. It was really a desperate situation. Sometimes the worry can darken the atmosphere of a household quite a lot, which I can remember when I was very young. Father eventually finished his work with the Northern Pacific as engineer in charge of all surveys and grade revisions from St. Paul out to the coast. Then life was quite civilized and reasonably comfortable, which was something that meant a great deal to my mother. Mother was not strong. She had a terrific will and drive and was very uncomplaining, but it was very welcome when our life became easier. We had a nicely furnished home, more leisure and more things to enjoy. I finished high school in Mandan. It wasn't a very good idea, but for some reason, I piled the work on and did the work in three years, which worked well enough except for Latin. My Latin grades were nothing to brag about;

however I squeezed through. [laughter] But trying to read Cicero and Vergil the same year was a little too tough for any really satisfactory accomplishment.

SCHIPPERS

What sort of graduation ceremony was it?

NUTTING

Oh, I didn't stay for their ceremony. As a matter of fact, my father got transferred to St. Paul at the end of the school year, and we didn't stay over the extra week or so for the graduation.

SCHIPPERS

While you were nearing the end of your high school work, had you begun to lay any plans for further education?

NUTTING

All my boyhood, Father and Mother had anticipated my going to college, and once in awhile, the question would come up as to what college I would go to. I think they both were ambitious that I go to Stanford; they used to mention Stanford more than other places. But things didn't work out that way. While we lived in Mandan one or two things happened [worth mentioning]. I kept up my violin practice, although I had no teachers. I even gave violin lessons, as I remember. There was a little boy who wanted to study the violin and his mother, a very hard-working woman, used to pay a rather small sum, and I'd give this kid a violin lesson once a week. My interest in music then was quite strong. There wasn't very much to satisfy it. John Philip Sousa's band came to Bismarck while we were there, and I went over to hear the concert. The railroad company put a lot of chairs in a boxcar (Mandan and Bismarck are not too far apart; they're on opposite sides of the river), and provided our transportation. I thought the concert was marvelous. Of course, it was a very good band, a very fine one. Then Father and Mother wanted to give me a treat, and they let me go to St. Paul alone for a few days to hear the violinist Mischa Elman play. So I went to St. Paul and was tremendously thrilled by hearing a great virtuoso violinist. Of course, it meant much more in those days before radio and TV. We had phonograph records then, but they were rather squawky and not satisfactory, at least ours weren't. And to hear a really great musician play was very, very thrilling. While I spent that two days in St. Paul, I went around and managed to find a little art school that I had heard of some way and met the teacher. Afterwards, we became very good friends. So I went back wildly excited. I'd not only heard a great musician; I'd seen, what seemed to me, a real art school, because here they were actually painting and drawing and [doing] serious study. They only had two teachers, but one floor had a life class and painting class and composition class, also clay modeling. Downstairs they had an office and library and a nice lady taught watercolor painting. Watercolor painting was rather mediocre in the art department, but the rest of it was quite

good. The teacher, Dell Randall, was a graduate of the Chicago Art Institute and was quite capable. So I went home much excited. Then, not too long afterwards. Father was transferred to St. Paul and he consented to my going to art school, if I also kept up my violin. We'd put off college for a year or so.

SCHIPPERS

What did they hope that you would prepare for if you went to college? Do you have any idea?

NUTTING

No. I know that both of them would have liked me to become a writer. I think that their real ideal of attainment was somebody who could write well. If I had turned out to be a writer, they would have been very happy. Mother did have talent as a writer, although she never had a chance to develop it. I have a little bit of manuscript someplace where she started a story which is rather promising. Father, though he was not a literary man--he was more of a mathematician, a scientist, a thinker along very rational lines, not so much the poetic side of literature--would have been very happy indeed if I had developed into a writer. So I took up the violin study again in St. Paul under a man by the name of Claude Madden, who was afterwards the concert master of the Seattle Symphony and who died in Seattle, a very fine musician. I started in at the St. Paul School of Fine Arts, I think it was called. I sat down before a huge plaster cast of a slave by Michelangelo and nearly went crazy trying to draw the thing because, in those days, they had the old academic way of teaching drawing. Usually, you started drawing from plaster casts and you worked hours and hours on making a charcoal drawing of the cast. When you can't draw very well, it can be a dreary performance. Nowadays, our ideas of art teaching have changed drastically, and they're much more efficient. We teach one to draw more rapidly than they did then. This rather stupid copying of a cast in charcoal when you haven't experience is not too profitable to the beginner. It's not too good a way to learn to draw. Naturally, St. Paul seemed to me a large and wonderful city compared to what I had been used to up to that time. And it did have so much that I enjoyed. The Minnesota State Capitol hadn't been built very long. Among other things, the painting in the Minnesota State Capitol was to me impressive, and some of it, of course, is quite worthwhile. The supreme court room with its murals by John La Farge, as I remember it, is really very fine. The other mural painting of the capitol was very proficient. [it was done by] people who had a great reputation in those days, like Kenyon Cox and [Edwin H.] Blashfield. But one picture that impressed me, because I had a great admiration for the artist, was a painting of the Battle of Gettysburg by Howard Pyle. It hung in the governor's reception room. Howard Pyle had a great influence on me as a boy when my parents subscribed to St. Nicholas Magazine for me. He wrote and drew for St. Nicholas. Then I was familiar, of

course, with his illustrations for Harper's Magazine. In those days Harper's Magazine was an illustrated magazine, and Howard Pyle had been the most important illustrator for many years. So I used to read his stories and admire his paintings. I even sent some of my drawings to Howard Pyle. He wrote back a very nice little letter and gave me some good advice about art study. This painting in the governor's reception room of the Battle of Gettysburg was the first original painting of his I had seen and it gave me quite a bang. And, in its way, I'm sure it is very good. There were also art exhibitions of the Minnesota Art Society. Important painters from the East were shown in St. Paul. I had my first introduction to the original painting of the Impressionists. I've forgotten what dealer it was in New York that sent out an exhibition of Impressionist painting which included some very fine things--Monet and Pissarro, Sisley and Mary Cassatt. A very fine thing of Mary Cassatt was in this show and was looked upon by people in those days as being extremely modern art. They couldn't understand why the pictures were so fuzzy and so vague. There were all sorts of things that seemed, to them, very strange about them. But I was excited because I was asked to come down and help hang the show in the gallery. And I was thrilled being allowed to handle paintings by great painters. It seemed a great privilege. So what with the exhibitions, with the art school, with concerts, [I was happy]. We had a symphony orchestra in those days, which was a new and rich experience, I used to get seats, the cheapest ones way up in the top balcony, and commenced to know something of orchestral music. Also another thing that was heavenly was access to a really good library. They had a very good art department in the library. The library burned after we left St. Paul and the art books were lost, but I think they had a rather surprisingly good [collection]. And one of my greatest joys after dinner was to take the little streetcar downtown and spend the rest of the evening in this art library. They had some art books I could take out, and I had them out continually. I went through Muther's History of Modern Art in four volumes several times. I'd start Volume I and then go on to II, III, IV, and then go back to Volume I again. [laughter] So from Muther's point of view, I had a pretty good idea of modern art, which, of course, didn't come down very far so far as modernity is concerned, and many of the people he talked about are now completely forgotten. But to me, it was all fascinating. I enjoyed it--enjoyed my work in the art school, and my violin playing. Altogether, it was about two years that we were in St. Paul, and I had much to make me happy.

SCHIPPERS

Were you still living at home during this period?

NUTTING

Yes.

SCHIPPERS

And were your parents subsidizing you?

NUTTING

Yes.

SCHIPPERS

It seems as if, when you got your first opportunity to go to St. Paul, you made a beeline to the art school. You must have decided to do this a long time before?

NUTTING

Yes, it had been my dream for years. Ever since that trip to New York when I was thirteen and we went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and after those evenings spent with my friend when I used to read Ruskin while he played Bach, it seemed to me that the career of the artist was the grandest thing imaginable. The only other thing that could equal it would be to be a conductor of an orchestra. As a matter of fact, I was much more musical as a teenager than later in life. I seem to have had a better musical memory, and maybe music really meant more to me. But visual arts really took over. So that after that visit to New York, I had that one dream: that someday I would go to art school and that I would paint. So the first thing I did when I got this trip to St. Paul [was to look for this art school]. I don't know how I heard about it. I may have read about it in the International Studio, for example. You could find that in even small libraries, and that would have art news. It probably mentioned the activities in St. Paul and Minneapolis. But in some way, I knew about it and I hunted it up and made my first contact with really serious art activity, because it was a serious little school. The young fellow was a very good teacher and a good draftsman, a good painter and an interesting man to talk to. After we moved to St. Paul, I met other artists. We had quite a little group of them in St. Paul, some of them quite able. There was one fellow by the name of [Nicholas] Brewer, a very prolific landscape and portrait painter, who was very nice to me. He was a friend of my teacher, and he used to be with them quite a lot. We used to go out sketching together. Here was something that I had really dreamt of-- people who were deeply interested in the same sort of things that interested me, especially the artists and the musicians. [There was] not so much [interest in] the literary way, as afterwards, when I had many friends in the field of writing. Some of my fellow students at the school were very superior. One very delightful family of quite an important lawyer there, a German name, the boys and girls were very talented, bright people. One of the girls studied at the art school and was also an able pianist. We used to play the violin and piano together, and the boys also were intelligent and interesting fellows. A fine family. There were a number of quite proficient artists in St. Paul, too, in those days. Of course, most of them were commercial artists. The business, such as Brown and Bigelow, was already flourishing.

SCHIPPERS

Did they overawe you, or did you take this in stride?

NUTTING

No, I don't remember being overawed. I was simply delighted, delighted to have people to talk about the things that were interesting to me and who were also excited about them. In one way, I was not a very ambitious person. I never looked forward to the idea of being famous or important. I would like very much to have money for what it could give, but I never seemed to have the desire to be rich, to have money for its own sake. If I could have money and make it yield what I wanted in life, why then I thought it desirable. I don't know exactly how to express it. Many people consider it a weakness, but I've never felt a really competitive spirit. The idea of getting out there just to win never appealed to me. It seemed to me that the people who accomplished things and who meant the most to me in my reading were people who were moved by a great love of the thing in itself, and that to get ahead of somebody wouldn't be the characteristic of that thinker or that writer or that artist. My attitude towards all of my activities was trying to find out the essential meaning of them, and some of them would excite a great sense of wonder--that that could be done, that that could be accomplished. If this writer wrote something that I felt deeply moved by, I didn't try to put him in a category or find out how he rated. If I debated the merit of an artist or a work that I thought worthwhile, it was always in terms of what it meant to me. It always seemed to me rather silly to give prizes for artistic achievement, and that feeling has grown on me. When one looks back and sees the prizes that were given to people who are now completely forgotten, either they were wrong or else human nature is terribly fickle. In other words, if a thing is worthwhile, it has a life, a vitality of its own, and what other people say for or against it is not too important. Also, it led to another idea, something that has meant a great deal to me, and that is that the artist (and I mean by that the artist in the broad sense of the word) is doing something that is not the making of something to be measured. It is, in a sense, a by-product of a greater phenomenon--the evolution of a mind and a spirit. And, in that sense, even the great things--the Beethoven, the Rembrandt, the Michelangelo, the actual works--to a certain degree are failures because they fail to give the complete expression of what that man has grown to, or the depth of his insight, because of the limitations of media, maybe, or limitations imposed, social or otherwise. But to the degree to which he has done that, the importance lies. And to the degree in which you can respond to that, do you profit by it. And the gold medals and the rest of them are all absolute nonsense, except as a stimulus to activity. It's perfectly commendable that the Medici, Louis Quatorze, and the governments onto the present day would be interested in the arts and do things to foster the arts. But it's not so much that they foster the arts as that they can foster a condition or an atmosphere, or at least a

tolerance towards certain activities which give things a chance to grow. But the attitude--"Now that's a very fine product; that thing of Rembrandt is one of the best products we have in the art market today!"--is wrong. It's not measured that way.

SCHIPPERS

At the beginning of your art career in St. Paul, did you have any idea that you were going to have to fight for a living with this?

NUTTING

Oh, of course, that was a very serious matter, especially for people who don't grow up in affluence. That's one thing that you think of continually, and I did. And Father was very much worried about it. He thought the career of an artist was probably something that would be very impractical. So I had to find out just why I should embark upon that sort of a study and what livelihood was in the offing. Well there were only two fields in those days in which one could make a living. One was magazine illustration. And sometimes this period is spoken of as a golden age of magazine illustration. It wasn't in the sense that a great deal of money was made, but much of our best magazine illustration was done then. This was before the magazine got jazzed up from the point of view of layouts and color. Artists did very serious work, and some of our very best painters did magazine work, especially in the beginning of their careers. So it looked as though that field was one that I could follow and make a living. What we call commercial art, now, wasn't as highly developed. The fact is that a boy doing advertising work usually worked in an engraving house. An engraving house had an art department. Somebody would come in and want an ad, and after they had the idea of the ad, the next thing would be some sort of art work. The engraving house would also have a department which would do the layout for fashion drawings, furniture drawings or whatever. So the advertising agency and its art department was something that we didn't hear as much about in those days. Afterwards it became, and still is, a field in which a boy interested in drawing and design can do a great deal, especially with good training. The other field was portrait painting. So I studied pictorial composition, with the idea of illustrative drawing, and I worked quite hard, drawing and painting the model, with the idea of becoming a portrait painter. Neither field did I ever develop very far. I loved to paint portraits. I loved to paint people; I always have painted people. But I am not temperamentally built to follow portrait painting professionally. Although I haven't followed either the career of an illustrator or a portrait painter, I've done both. I've not done too much actual commercial work, although at one time I used to do weekly fashion drawings, believe it or not. They weren't very good fashion drawings, but still I got paid for them. [laughter] I did some illustration and I painted quite

a number of portraits. Some were semi-official portraits, you know, things for schools or businesses. Others were just run-of-the-mill portrait painting.

1.4. TAPE NUMBER: II, Side Two (October 22, 1965)

SCHIPPERS

Just as I was leaving last week you made a comment about your love of drawing. I would like to know when you first started to draw and what attracted you to it.

NUTTING

Well, it's rather hard to remember. Every child draws more or less. One of the ways to keep a child quiet is to give him something to scribble on and some colored crayons. And I had that propensity along with other kids. I loved drawing; I loved to play with the colors and pencils that my parents provided me with. I can remember very distinctly the very first picture that influenced me. It got me interested in expressing myself in drawing. Curiously enough, it was an illustration by Gustave Doré in one of my books. The Deluge. It's a Bible picture, and I remember it very distinctly. It's one of those distinct memories of childhood that stay when so much fades. Why? One wonders. Maybe they're what Freud would call a facade, which has some meaning back of it. Usually I think children have ideas [for drawing that relate to] their ambitions. They want to be a soldier; they want to be a policeman, or cowboy; they want to draw trains. Nowadays, they want to do airplanes. I noticed that trains are very passé with the youngsters, but they'll do planes. I didn't have that sort of feeling apparently. I think it was linked up more or less with the things I saw in the world around me--a certain amount of landscape feeling, of forms, of nature, clouds, trees, mountains, moons and forests--more of moods, of states of mind. What I actually did, of course, was nothing ambitious in expressing those things. I simply tried to draw, and not especially well. The fact is, as I look back, I did rather badly for a youngster. Sometimes parents save their children's work, but my parents didn't save mine. So, my earliest drawing was rather weak when compared with [what I did later] in life. As I said, my interest in art began really to become quite strong on that trip to New York that Father gave us, when I was so impressed by the Metropolitan Museum and the exhibition of the drawings of the masters that was on show at that time. From then on, I became really interested [in drawing]. Not exclusively. I was interested in other things; it wasn't that I was very much of a one-track mind. I was interested in studying surveying and map-making and the theory of contour maps and such things. I was also very fond of reading, largely because during so much of the time I had no companionship. Books, I think, became companions, more so than they would for a child who led a more gregarious

life. At the age of about twelve or thirteen, I really became, what you might say, almost excessively interested [In drawing]. It went a little further than simply doing funny pictures or cartoons or trying to draw my parents. I became interested in pictures. In graphic art, in the visual arts. I was interested in other things as well as painting--in building and architecture, sculpture and art history. [There was] a bit of the engineer and architectural feeling in the family blood. [laughter] But my interest began, quite naturally, with the pictures in magazines and books that were available to me. A certain sensitivity was cultivated in [me, that was of] more use than I put it to. It wasn't very long before my interest in looking at reproductions in magazines and in books made me wonder how they were made [and caused me] to investigate the processes. So I knew what a woodcut was, what a wood engraving was, what a metal engraving was, and how they were made. In the library, I'd look them up and read about the techniques and processes. Then came the problem that I did not have very much access to paintings or to original drawings. The sight of an original painting or original drawing was always very exciting. There were no exhibitions, very few at least, in the places where I went and very few people drew or painted; so I seldom got the feel of the actual material. One of the fascinations in looking at reproductions and photographs and engravings was wondering how the original thing was made, and it would be exciting when I could translate, say, a wood engraving and see how the engraver had translated a watercolor technique or an oil technique or a crayon technique into a wood engraving. That developed a sensibility to prints or drawings or graphic art to the extent that quite early in life, I could recognize across the room all of the important American illustrators and painters. I was very surprised that other people couldn't see the difference. They didn't know the difference between an etching and a wood engraving; they didn't know the difference between a watercolor and an oil. In Paris, I had a course at the Sorbonne in Renaissance and Romanesque and Gothic art, and on the wall, there was a collection of reproductions of sanguine drawings (drawings in red chalk), old master drawings; but they weren't drawings that I knew. By that time, I was very familiar with the history of drawing, and I was rather surprised that here were some excellent drawings that I didn't recognize. So when the professor came by, I asked him some questions about these drawings and whose they were (there was no name on the frame). And he said very casually, "Oh, they're sanguine drawings. One sees they're eighteenth century Italian," and he walked on. And they were so obviously seventeenth century Dutch [laughter], it gave me quite a jolt. That same professor gave me my oral examination afterwards, and so I didn't have very much faith in him.

SCHIPPERS

So you were well primed by the time you entered art school at St. Paul. You had made yourself familiar with drawing.

NUTTING

Oh, yes, very familiar. I used to spend most of my allowance, while browsing around secondhand bookstores, trying to find magazines that had articles on art and artists, and I made quite a little collection. Also another of my amusements was to take down the Encyclopaedia Britannica when we were staying at my aunt's. I would turn through them and look at the biographies, and if one was about an artist, I always read it. It was not so much that I was interested in art history, but I was very curious to know how they got that way--what an artist did to become an artist, what sort of experience did he have, what sort of schooling did he have? It would fascinate me. So the first part of the biography interested me more than the story of his success and subsequent fame. It was always a bit disturbing because it usually started out by saying that So-and-so at a very early age showed remarkable talent, and I couldn't by the widest stretch of imagination think that I had any remarkable talents [laughter], so it wasn't especially encouraging. Sometimes [the artist would have gone] through long training; then there would be those men who accomplished a great deal who were entirely self-taught. Of course, that was very encouraging as I hadn't any access at that time to an art school. So, in that way, I entered the little art school in St. Paul. I went there happy and in a state of eager anticipation. The teacher was a young man from the Chicago Art Institute, who drew and painted very well. Afterwards we became warm friends. But the school, which afterwards grew into quite an important school, was then a very small affair. There were a few plaster casts, and they had regular art school training--models and drawing and painting and study of composition--and the teacher used to get visiting artists to come in and give lectures and to criticize compositions and so forth. Incidentally, a couple of my predecessors among the students of this school afterwards became very well known. There was quite a number of charcoal drawings and other studies by Paul Manship that he [had left behind]. Paul Manship afterwards became an extremely successful sculptor. At the same time Manship was studying there, Nathaniel Pousette was there. He was a very talented student, and he had left behind some oil studies and sketches and some interesting things. His son, Nathaniel Pousette Dart, is now quite a well-known figure, both in painting and in photography. He does very beautiful photographs and also is one of the well-known abstract painters in this country. So the little school had quite a real art atmosphere. There wasn't too much to see in the way of painting exhibitions, but they did have exhibitions. There was an annual exhibition which showed very good things, and in the St. Paul Capitol Building, there was the work of some of the well-known mural painters. The murals that made the greatest impression on me were those of

John La Farge. I still feel John La Farge is one of our really more important artists, and it seems to me he is not recognized quite as much as he ought to be. I think it is quite right to think of a trio of our really great American artists as: Ryder and Eakins and Winslow Homer. But we had others, and I would rank John La Farge quite high, maybe because he had an influence on me. But he also was a very good writer and critic and a man of high culture.

SCHIPPERS

Did they push any particular convention at the school? Did they have any style preferences?

NUTTING

I can't say that they did. It was the typical art feeling of those days. Of course, we were very much influenced by the school of Paris, partly the academic, and the really very modern painting to them was that of the Impressionists. But the discipline in the school was practically derived from the old *École des Beaux-Arts*. That is to say, they set the youngster to work, making very finished drawings from the plaster cast. The one big cast we had in the school was one of Michelangelo's slaves, the one holding his arm up behind his head. It was a life-size figure or larger. I imagine it was the size of the original. They bought that while I was there. I was just beginning to draw, so I worked for weeks trying to draw that thing, which was far too difficult for me. Finally, little by little, I got used to the problems. I did fairly well in my drawing, and then I took up painting. We were allowed to take up painting before too long. They were rather liberal that way; they didn't have a course which tied you down. My teacher had a girl friend who had been one of his fellow students at the Art Institute in Chicago. She went to Boston and worked with Edmund C. Tarbell at the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts, and she wrote him letters of great enthusiasm. (My teacher's name was Dell Randall. He later came out to Los Angeles and died out here many years ago. He became consumptive.) So Dell became enthusiastic about the teaching at the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts, and he thought it must be the finest teaching in the country. He got me all worked up and excited about that, and I wanted to go to Boston. I sent some drawings to Tarbell to see if I could get in his class because Tarbell didn't have a beginners' class. They had a course there which was life-drawing under [William M.] Paxton, quite a well-known painter in his day, and anatomy with Philip Hale, and then painting for a year under Frank Benson, an excellent painter of his school. The advanced students worked with Tarbell. Well, for some silly reason Tarbell accepted me, and it was another one of these cases where I was working with students who were way ahead of me. That, of course, psychologically, is a pretty tough thing to buck. You get a sense of inferiority, and you begin to wonder if you'll ever make the grade. I worked too hard in Boston and almost had a nervous breakdown. But then I came to my senses--or

rather my parents did and saw that I got more recreation and more exercise and that I didn't take my work quite so seriously. Father had resigned from his job at the N.P. He wanted to take some time off, and he and my mother were with me in Boston for that year. Then Father went to Mexico to put in a road down in southern Tamaulipas for El Aguila Oil Company. It was an English concern. Lord Cowdray was the head of it. I remember he came out to Tampico when we were down there to visit some of his holdings. That was before the nationalization of so much in Mexico, before the Revolution. Mother wanted to go down to Mexico to be with Father, and I went down with her.

SCHIPPERS

Did your parents go to Boston as a concession to you in particular or were there other reasons?

NUTTING

You know, I really don't know. I was wondering about that myself. There is a kind of a blank in my memory of the sequence of events leading up to that. It'll come to me I suppose. Well, the course at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts was a very serious one. Ordinarily, you started in at the beginning with the drawing classes and went on to the second and third year--I think it was a four-year course, if I remember rightly. Tarbell taught the advanced students. By a fluke, as I've said, I was in Tarbell's class with all the other students who were very much ahead of me, which was very difficult. Not only that, but there was another unfortunate thing about that school. A lot of my tastes had already been formed, and my feeling for painting, for art, had been shaped up quite a bit, naturally, by the amount of attention I had given to it for quite a number of years. So anything that was specifically in a very definite groove was not too wholesome. The training there was very definitely, especially under Tarbell, *École des Beaux-Arts* teaching. You had to work from a model in the painting class, with tremendous attention to copying very precisely what you had before you, in drawing and in color and in values, piece by piece. Tarbell would always say, "Make the pieces." He'd even take out his penknife and use the point of the knife to demonstrate how a shape around the corner of an eye would be--why it went this way and was soft there and fuzzy there and sharp there and got fuzzy a little further down. You were supposed to study that out and then do the next piece and the next piece, and when you stood back and saw the number of dreadful little pieces to be made you felt it was sickening, especially when you already had them all wrong. Of course, it was in a way good discipline, technically, in picture making. But next door to the school was the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, with magnificent things to study. I used to spend my sparetime over there, studying the paintings, and getting great stimulus from than. Then I would go back and look at the things we were doing in the school, and I couldn't see too much relation between what I was taught to

do in the school and what a man like Rembrandt or Rubens or even the modern painters like Whistler or Duvenceck would do. There seemed to be nothing that we were doing that led to that sort of accomplishment. That, of course, gave me a sense of frustration. It was, simply, a kind of slave labor without too clear of an objective. However, I think, in many ways, I profited a great deal both from my study and from my being in a place like Boston, with its exhibitions and very fine museum and art galleries and other artists. Also it happens to be in Massachusetts, the home of my ancestors. The Nuttings came from Massachusetts and some cousins of my father are still living in Boston and near Boston--the Bridgmans, who were very hospitable to me. I was happy to know them and to see them often. Two of them who were writers for many years wrote on political subjects for the Boston Transcript. And one sister had a private school at Newton, outside of Boston. They were a very brilliant family. Raymond Bridgman was a writer for the Boston Transcript and his son, Percy Bridgman, later became a professor at Harvard and Nobel Prize winner in physics. At that time, he was a young man, not much older than myself. The fact is, he was out of college then. I'm sure he didn't have his doctorate, but I may have forgotten. To go back to art study, something you remember [is that you really sweat] away doing these studies. Sometimes it would take about two weeks, four hours each day. You'd get awfully sick of them. But you kept trying to improve them. Somebody had lettered very neatly around the wall up near the ceiling: "Little drops of turpentine. Little daubs of paint. Make the model look like. What the model ain't." [laughter] That was just about the sensation I left Boston with. Mother and I went down to Mexico to join Father because, as I have said, she always felt that her place was with her husband. That was one of her deep-seated feelings about a wife's duties, and she wanted to go. So I went with her; we stopped off in New York where I met another member of the Bridgman family. [Herbert Bridgman] he was then part-owner and business manager of the Brooklyn Standard Union. He also was in the newspaper business. He was secretary of the Peary Arctic Club and was a very charming, a very interesting man. He was very kind to us. He used to have us out to dinner. We stayed in New York for a short time and then took the boat down to Tampico, and from Tampico it was about 135 miles south by launch to a little village which was the headquarters for Father's work. He was to put in this narrow-gauge railroad into the oil fields for the El Aguila Oil Company. So we were down there for a few months, and when it came time for me to return. Mother was torn between staying with Father and coming back with me. She finally decided to come back with me and take care of me, which she did. We went to New York. One of the principal reasons that I went to New York and gave up the idea of Boston was that I felt I was in the wrong place and because years before I'd seen two or three very large canvases of Robert Henri, and they

excited me very much. It seemed to me they were real paintings. They weren't these carefully worked out drawings in oil paint. They were really painted; they had all the gusto of a real painting. And, in the meantime, I had learned quite a bit about Robert Henri; he was a very popular teacher and a very influential one. But instead of going to Henri, I went to the Art Students League and worked with William M. Chase. Chase and Henri, at one time, had an art school together. Henri was then teaching in his own place, and Chase had his class at the Art Students League. I was in the last class that Chase had. That was a great contrast to my experience in Boston because Chase was one of the American painters who went to Munich in the early days, like Duveneck and Walter Shirlaw and other young men who learned to paint well and in a painterly way. Chase carried on that tradition. He had us paint still life, especially still life and heads. We were supposed to paint as though we enjoyed it and not leave any trace of tears and lamentations over our canvases. If the canvas looked tired and worried, you scraped it off and started again--kept it looking fresh and as though it was fun to paint. And it was fun to paint. I really got a little circulation in my blood system again [laughter] and commenced to really enjoy studying. I was there for one season with Chase, and it did me a great deal of good. I got back the life and enthusiasm for my work which was commencing to dwindle a bit in Boston. At the end of the year, Mother again wanted to go down and be with Father, so I went with her. That was rather tragic, because the year before when we'd been down there, although we didn't know it, she had gotten malaria. I had rather wondered why she didn't feel well after getting back to New York, but she insisted on going back again to be with Father for at least awhile. We no sooner got down to Tierra Amarilla, which is this little place 135 miles south of Tampico, than she became ill. It was very difficult. We had a young doctor, and I think a very good one. I liked him personally very much, and he seemed to be very dedicated and very able. He seemed to understand the situation quite thoroughly, but, of course, the principal difficulty was that there were no hospitals or adequate nursing. Father and I had to do all of the nursing and care of my mother. To complicate matters, the Revolution was going on. It wasn't President Díaz--it was the one who followed Madero as a revolutionist, Victoriano Huerta. His troops were rampaging around the country. They were taking our horses and motorboats and one thing and another, and it kept us in rather a commotion. In the midst of all this, my mother died. We couldn't bring her out, so she was buried down there. I stayed on with Father for three or four months, because I didn't want to leave him. He was rather broken up and so I persuaded him to let me stay with him for awhile. So, I drew and painted. I'd get natives to pose for me and I would do heads. I even got a little portrait commission; somebody liked my painting and paid me fifty dollars to paint his wife.

SCHIPPERS

You had spent so much time close to your parents. Can you remember what effect the death of your mother had on you?

NUTTING

Well, it was terribly hard, but I don't think that it was anything abnormal, in spite of the fact that we had always been together and were a very close-knit trio. No, it wasn't a traumatic experience. I'd already known what it was to have people die and to lose friends. And it seems that I took it as a part of life. Curiously enough, I felt self-sufficient, as though I could carry on. I felt terribly sorry for my father, having him down there in a part of the world that wasn't too healthy and among people whose language he didn't know because, curiously enough, he had no facility in learning a foreign language. Some subjects he'd be a whiz at, but a foreign language was a complete mystery to him. For him to have his wife and his son both gone and for him to be down there alone is what I remember most about him, and it was one reason I was very anxious to stay with him, at least for awhile. As a matter of fact, he made a trip to New York. It may have been in connection with the El Aguila Company. I can't remember for the moment. He was only in New York for a very short time, and then he took the boat back to Tampico, where he stayed for quite a number of years. He didn't come back until 1922 when he retired. He did a variety of engineering work for the El Aguila Company and then retired and came out here and settled in San Gabriel. He bought a little place south of there. He also brought his sister out, my Aunt Anna from Ohio, and he and Aunt Anna lived there and in Alhambra until their death.

SCHIPPERS

So you left Mexico and you went to New York?

NUTTING

Yes, then I read an article by some painter who had been a student in Munich and who described student life in Munich. One thing that impressed me very much was that, according to this article, student life in Munich was much cheaper than in New York. I thought that was a pretty swell idea--why not go to Munich! [laughter] I was crazy to go to Europe anyhow, and I wrote to Father, who was supporting me, and explained this to him. He wrote back, "Go ahead!" So I took the boat to Hamburg and went from Hamburg to Berlin and Berlin to Dresden. Unlike Father, I like languages. They intrigue me. I rather enjoy foreign languages. I met a young musician on shipboard. He was apparently a very talented pianist and was going to Paris to work with Vincent D'Indy and study composition. We played around Hamburg and went to the opera, and we also spent two or three days in Berlin together and had quite a good time. Then I went on down to Dresden, and for the first time, I felt being absolutely alone. There was nobody within hundreds of miles whom I had ever seen and I didn't

know a word of the language. But, as a matter of fact, I found it very exhilarating and wonderful. I found the galleries there. They have some very important things. I enjoyed that enormously. I spent the day there, and the next morning I decided I wanted to spend another day in Dresden, so I went out to see the city. I got lost and walked and walked and walked and just had a wonderful time. I got across the river, and it was a beautiful early autumn day. I looked across the river and saw the spires and the Baroque architecture of Dresden, and it was fascinating. I lay on the river bank and admired and enjoyed it and watched the people out promenading. Then I got up and walked some more, and the first thing I knew, I found my hotel. [laughter] I've forgotten exactly how. I think I had some landmark to follow. I don't remember asking my way; I think I figured it out somehow. Then from Dresden, I went on down to Munich. There I had been given an address of a pension from some relatives in Boston who were much given to European travel and who were fond of this pension in Munich. So I went there and it turned out to be a very nice place indeed. That's where I met my first wife. She was spending some time there. I wanted to enter the Academy [of Fine Arts] in Munich, but I didn't know anything about national academies in those days. There was an American painter by the name of Carl Marr who was a professor at the academy, and I thought it would be quite interesting to work with him. He was a very accomplished painter in certain Munich traditions. I went to see him, and he was very kind. He explained that you had to pass an examination, but it was too late for that. So I entered a private art school in Munich to prepare myself for the academy. Then I discovered that you could get your own studio very cheaply. I've forgotten how much, but it was an amazingly small sum for which you could get a studio of your own, I thought it would be wonderful, so I rented a studio and would work part of the day in the school and then part of the day in this little studio that I rented. I tried to learn German, but I didn't do too well. Later, I got a little more used to learning foreign languages and I think I'd have done much better later. Some of the sounds of German seemed to be very difficult for me, and I thought if you didn't pronounce the "r" exactly the German way or if you didn't get the "ch" exactly according to the German pronunciation, they wouldn't understand you, which, of course, is absurd. You don't have to be a perfectionist to get along quite well in a foreign language, as we know from talking with people who speak our own language sometimes very funnily but who get along very nicely. That I didn't realize.

SCHIPPERS

Were there mostly just German students there or were there students from other countries? Americans?

NUTTING

It was very cosmopolitan. There were quite a number of French at one art school that I went to, lots of English, and a good many Americans were studying at the academy. There was a little club of American art students, as a matter of fact, and I found that and joined it. Then the pension where I stayed had people from various parts of Europe. There were English and American, Polish, Russian and of course quite a few German people. Life in Munich in those days was very delightful. It was a student town. The student was made very much of. If you held a student card in the art school, or I suppose most any kind of a student card, it got you into concerts and all sorts of places at half-rates. So we heard lots of wonderful music, and people were very gay, very sociable, very kind. I didn't notice right away that there is quite a difference between the people of northern Germany, the Prussian, and the people of south, the Saxons, and especially the Bavarians. Bavarians are a warm-hearted and generous and hospitable sort of people. I found living there to be delightful, as well as the fact that there was so much to see. They have very fine collections. The Pinakothek and the Glyptothek were two very fine museums, with any amount of exhibitions of all sorts of contemporary art. That was quite an astonishing thing to me. My introduction in modern art, if I may go back to tell about Boston again, was very curious. About that time, the famous Armory show hit this country with a bang, and people who never thought about painting were arguing and coming to blows, almost, on this question of modern art. And one day at the art school in Boston, someone said, "There's an exhibition of Matisse at the museum" Well, I thought that strange. I was there this morning and I didn't see an exhibition of Matisse. "Oh yes, there is one." He was so insistent that as soon as school was over, I went over and went up to the girl at the desk. I said, "I hear there's an exhibition of Matisse here." I didn't expect her to say yes, but she said, "Yes, there is one. Do you want to see it?" "Why," I said, "yes, I'd like very much to see it." "And she said, "Very well, would you mind waiting just a moment?" She was busy with papers or something on her desk and she finished them up and put them away. Then she reached under her counter, pulled out a drawer and took out a big bunch of keys. We went down the hallways and turned this way and turned that way and came to a big door of something like a board room. It wasn't one of the galleries or exhibition rooms at all; it was some special kind of a room. She unlocked the door and I slipped in. Sure enough [laughter], here was quite an exhibition of the painting and sculpture of Matisse. And I was being led in a little bit like the Gabinetto Segreto in the Museum of Naples, as something that wasn't fit for public consumption somehow. [laughter] So you can see that those were the beginnings of things in a way. And when I got to Munich, I found that everybody was talking about Cézanne and Matisse and [André] Derain and Odilon Redon, and these people were being shown all over the place. I'd seen

nothing of that sort in the original work in this country up to that time. You see, it was quite startling, and it was also sometimes very puzzling because that was the beginning of a period of some of the strongest of the German Expressionist movements--Die Brücke and Der Blaue Reiter, groups of that sort. So, it was a combination of rather austere schoolwork, because the school I went to just taught you to draw, good solid drawing and painting, and then experimenting on my own in my little studio and going around to the exhibitions, and then going out at night. I didn't sleep very much for quite awhile. There was too much to be done, too much to enjoy, too much excitement.

SCHIPPERS

Did you have lengthy discussions with people over these exhibits?

NUTTING

Oh yes. A young Frenchman who spoke very good English (he was a sculptor) and I went around together quite a lot. He used to come up and do some modeling in my little studio. We shared this studio more or less, as a matter of fact, though I paid the rent. Then I met other people. Of course, we had tremendous arguments. The American students in the club that I belonged to weren't so interesting. I found more interesting people other places.

SCHIPPERS

Where?

NUTTING

The people in the pension, curiously enough, were interesting. There was a musician and a writer but no other painters. But they were very interesting people to talk to. And there were quite fascinating girls. There was one Polish girl especially; she was a beauty. She wanted a date for the Polish students' ball, so I was very glad to invite her. It wound up with my taking, I think, three or four girls to the Polish ball, which turned out to be quite an interesting affair. I didn't know what a student ball was like, and the way they described it and tried to make it very attractive, it sounded like something extremely elegant, something really to be remembered. That rather frightened me a bit, so I went out and got evening clothes. I found a tailor who made evening clothes quite inexpensively. I got a silk scarf. And, by Jove, I had him make me tails. Then I got an opera hat. So I was dolled up and it turned out, of course, it was much more than necessary because students don't have too much money to spend. A lot of them had rented evening clothes, had rented tuxes and one thing and another, but nobody was especially elegant. So with mine being tailor-made, I really felt like something. I guess the girls thought so too. They liked it.

SCHIPPERS

Besides the income you had from your father, did you do anything to subsidize it or augment it?

NUTTING

Mother had a little property she left, a house in Dakota she had acquired. I sold it and used that money. When I was trying to learn German, as I say, I thought if I didn't pronounce correctly some of the sounds we do not have in English that they wouldn't understand me at all. So I used to walk about practicing some of them, and especially the guttural "r." For some reason, I thought that was quite necessary. Well I was out in Schwabing one evening and I was walking home alone. It was about a mile or so back to my pension. I'd been out there quite late at a brauerei and was walking home in the moonlight. There was nobody around. The streets were deserted, and I felt it was a good time to practice the German "r," So I started sounding, "Rghhhhhh! Rghhhhhh!" and made all sorts of weird sounds. And then I turned the corner suddenly and almost ran into this poor guy and said, "Rghhhhhhhhhhhhh!" right in his face and frightened him dreadfully. He jumped back and crouched a little bit and then crept over to the edge of the sidewalk and off into the street and then legged it away as fast as he could go. [laughter] Another thing that amused me very much and impressed me quite a lot was the goose step. Up to that time, I don't think I'd even heard of the German goose step. In front of the palace in Munich, when they changed the guard, they'd go down the street one behind the other, and all of a sudden, one of them would bark a command because they sighted an officer, and then bang! bang! bang! they'd do this stiff-legged goose step. Well I thought it was very fascinating. So on one of my walks around Munich, I came to a passageway or a tunnel, and I looked ahead and behind and nobody was around, so I thought I'd try this out. I lit out and went bang! bang! bang! [laughter] in imitation of a German soldier goose-stepping. And while I was concentrating on getting it just the right stylish sort of a way, I raised my eyes and here was a very impressive German officer walking toward me. At first I was afraid he thought I might be trying to make fun of him, but he went by and tried to keep a straight face. He had a little sense of humor.

SCHIPPERS

Speaking of the goose step, how aware were you of political developments and world events at that time?

NUTTING

I was strangely unconscious of them. We've jumped ahead a little bit, but I might as well tell this because it's quickly told. What happened was that at the pension there in Munich, I met my first wife, also a Californian. She was traveling in Europe and she stayed there for some time. We had awfully good times together. Then she and her companion (she came over with a friend) went on to England to finish their trip. In the meantime, we corresponded. The upshot of it was that she left her companion, who continued home alone, and she came back to the Continent and joined me in Venice. We were married in Venice. Well, from Venice, we went to Florence, and while in Florence, I got a

letter from a cousin who was in Munich. She wanted very much to see me before she left to go back home to Boston. I didn't see much sense in it, so I wrote her that I didn't feel very much like spending the money. But she insisted that she must see me before she went back. So we threw some things into a suitcase and took the train up to Munich. We read the papers, but we didn't take anything very seriously. But there was an Italian in the pension where we were staying in Florence who urged us not to go. He said, "It's not the time to go to Germany. You don't want to do that." He tried to explain to us, but his English wasn't very good and our Italian hadn't gotten very far, so we didn't pay much attention to it. We took the train and went to Munich and saw my cousin. But what happened was that when we crossed the border, war was declared. So we found ourselves in Munich, really cut off from the rest of the world and with only money enough to spend for, at the most, a week. We didn't take any money with us. We had money in the bank in Florence, but thought that if we needed money, all we had to do was to write a check and we could get some money. But, no! Here we were, and I think it was something like three weeks before we could get out of Munich. But we managed to make our money last pretty well. The fact is that we never did know when we'd get any money, so we economized tremendously. In the meantime, my cousin and her party had gone on. They had some kind of lucky break, so they got passage. But we couldn't get a train out of Germany and we couldn't get money to pay our way out of Germany. So we spent our time running from the police station to the consulate, to the bank and back to the consulate. There were about four or five different places that we kept going to all day long, from one to the other, and then to the bank to see if by chance they had gotten any money, "No, there was no way of getting any money yet. But you be patient, you'll get it." So finally one evening, all tired out, we went out to get some dinner. We had dinner on the terrace of a restaurant, some nice little restaurant. When I sat down, I took everything I had out of my pocket, so many marks, so many pfennigs, copper and silver, and put them out on the table. Then we looked at the bill of fare. This item was so much, and so I'd put some money aside for that, and then money for something else and so on, and finally ten pfennigs or something as a tip. So when that was decided upon, we sat back and a boy came and took our order and we had a very pleasant little dinner. We didn't worry about anything; it was our last pfennig, but, so what? We had a leisurely meal and then came the time to pay for it. I called the young waiter over and offered him the money to pay for the bill and he said, "No, I won't take it." I said, "Why?" "Well," he said, "I see that that's all you have, and it's not right that you should go without any money at all. You keep that. If you get some money, you can pay me, but you keep that." Well I was quite taken aback and, of course, very appreciative. I told him I certainly would pay him as soon as I possibly could and that I

appreciated having at least a few pfennigs in my pocket. We went home, and the next morning I went to the consulate to see if there was anyway of managing something, and then I had my rendezvous with my wife at the bank. I went in, and to my amazement, she walked towards me and she was smiling. She opened her purse and here was a great wad of money. I said, "How in the world did you get that?" So she told me what happened. She said she came to the bank, stood in line and finally got to the wicket and asked if anything had been done. They said they were sorry, they had nothing so far. And she said, "I was so tired, I just couldn't help it. Tears commenced to roll down my face. And a man behind me said, 'Oh, here, here, don't feel so badly about it. I think something can be done. Come over here and sit down.'" And he was a German who spoke very good English. So he and she went over and sat down and he said, "Where are you from?" And my wife said, "From Hagerstown, Maryland." "Hagerstown, Maryland! Do you know the Updegraffs?" And Helen said, "Oh, the Updegraffs have been family friends for years and years." He said, "I've done business with the Updegraffs for years and years. I'm in the glove business and the Updegraffs buy my gloves. How much money do you want?" [laughter] Well, Helen explained that all she needed was enough to get back to Florence, and so he said, "Just name however much you want." So he wrote a check and cashed it and gave her a bunch of money, and we were all set then to get back to Florence. It took us three days to get back. The mobilization was on then and the trains were crowded and full of soldiers. It was frightening. There was a very tense feeling--a strange, electric sort of feeling that I never felt again, although I was in Europe for the rest of the war. I never again felt that sort of tenseness. For example, there would hardly be anybody in the street and somebody would come and put up a little notice (it might be a very simple thing, like a room for rent or something of that sort), and all of a sudden there'd be a lot of people reading it. They rushed up to see what it was. There was also the sense of being enclosed in Germany that you didn't have in France or Italy, for example, or England, where you knew, at least, that there was nobody at your back. But there in Germany you had a sense of being encircled. It gave you a slightly claustrophobic kind of feeling. And, of course, the Germans weren't very pleasant after that if you spoke English. If they were convinced you were an American at that time, well, that made a difference because a great many Germans married Americans or had American friends. And we were not at war, and they were not anticipating then trouble with us.

1.5. TAPE NUMBER: III, Side One (October 25, 1965)

SCHIPPERS

I'd like to ask a little bit more about how you met your first wife, Helen Hays, and how you came to marry her on April 6, 1914.

NUTTING

Well, when I wait to Munich, I went to a pension, the Nordland on Schellingstrasse. My cousins in Boston, who were quite given to European travel, always stopped there. They highly recommended it and they seemed to have been friends of the two women who kept the place. So I spent my first period of study there at the pension which proved to be a very pleasant place and also a very interesting one. They had quite an interesting clientele and there were people of all nationalities. There were some Americans who were over there traveling and who were spending some days or even weeks in Munich. There were people from Austria and from England. There was quite a delightful young woman who was studying music, a Scotch girl, a pianist. So the company there and conversation at the table was quite interesting. There was also a man who had just retired, who I understood had been quite an eminent oculist in San Francisco. His name was Dr. [Adolf] Barkan. He and his family were staying there, and my first wife, though I don't think she knew him in San Francisco, knew his name very well. Well, among the people who were pensioners at the Nordland was Helen Hays (the same name as the actress except she spelled her name without the "e"). It was an old Maryland family. She and I had very delightful times together. We used to go out and dine, and I spent interesting evenings with other people there. When the year of study was up, I decided to go down for a little trip to northern Italy. In the meantime, I had not seen as much as I wanted to see of Munich, and also I was ambitious to spend a little time in Vienna. There was an art movement in Vienna at that time that was interesting, and there were some artists and painters that I would have liked to have been in contact with. My visit to Vienna consisted of spending the Christmas holidays there with a young American architect who had come to the pension. He was going to Vienna, and I thought it would be a very nice idea to spend a week at Christmastime in Vienna. We went and had a delightful time. I was very much impressed with the charm of Vienna and the charm of the Viennese people. They're free from a certain stuffiness of the north German, and they had all of the warmth and friendliness of the south German people, plus a certain atmosphere of elegance that was still to be found in Vienna. There are several little incidents that illustrate what I have in mind--not only the friendliness, but also a certain quality that is quite hard to describe. There was a certain aristocratic sense, even among very simple people I met there. And people from whom you might expect more coolness could treat you with a consideration that was not in the least condescending. A very funny little incident, one of those that makes quite a vivid vignette in your memory of life, took place when I was leaving Vienna. I got aboard the train with this friend of

mine, and I found I didn't have any cigarettes. I looked at my watch and found I had plenty of time to go out and get some cigarettes, which I did. When I came back I found the train gone, very much to my surprise. The only person near me was an army officer in a very elegant uniform. He was gorgeous and looked very superior. I don't know what his rank was, but it was a rather high rank judging from his looks. But I spoke to him. I thought he might know English. I couldn't do very much with German, and at that time I knew no other languages. He understood what I was troubled about, and he made me understand (I've forgotten how) that the train would come back. It had gone down to come back on a different track, and it would be there shortly. So I felt relieved, and sure enough, the train came and I got aboard. I looked out the window as the train pulled out of the station. I saw the officer standing there. He smiled and saluted in a friendly and a dignified way. I can still see him. There were quite a number of things like that about the Viennese people that I remember. It seems to me to be rather a special characteristic of theirs. Of course, that was in the days before World War I when there was much more gaiety. The war clouds had not really commenced to gather at that time. And I found both Munich and Vienna charming places, I arrived in Munich at the time of the Fasching (their carnival), which was great fun. And in Vienna this young fellow (I'm sorry to say, I've forgotten his name but, of course, I only knew him for a short time) and I went to a different cafe and to a different theater every evening. We also went to the opera. Of course, I hunted up everything I could in the way of the art galleries, so I could see the famous pictures there. There were certain things that I especially wanted to see, that I was especially interested in. There were some late Rubens in the gallery in Vienna that I was looking forward to seeing, and I went to visit them. As I was hunting the hall where the Rubens were said to be, I passed a door and looked in and I was startled to see a whole wall, maybe more than one wall, of the works of Brueghel, the Elder (Bauer Brueghel). I knew they were there, but up to that time, I hadn't been especially impressed by him. But when I got a glimpse of those I went in, and I spent the rest of the day, really, with Brueghel. It was a revelation to me to see his work in the original. And since then, Brueghel has been one of my--what shall we call him--heroes in the history of art. There was another part of that vacation too. I've forgotten just exactly how it fitted in. There was a young fellow from an art gallery there in Munich, he was a clerk, and he said that we could go up to Garmisch-Partenkirchen and have a wonderful time. He, having a very small salary and being very economical, of course, I thought it was a good idea. I could go with him inexpensively, and in fact it turned out that way. We went to Garmisch and stayed for several days. He had friends or knew somebody or had introduction to some family about a mile or so out from town, in the mountains. It was really

an old-fashioned peasant family, the well-to-do sort. They had a farm, and they dressed in peasant costumes--the boys with their bare knees and leather breeches and feathers in their hats. And we really had a good time there. The people were friendly and warm, and I learned to like the sort of food that the people in that region ate. In the evening, we'd walk down to town to the brauerei and have beer and sing songs with some of the fellows around there. Neither of us went in for any of the sports that they're now so famous for. In fact, I don't know that they did very much then. Maybe they did skiing and things of that sort, but I didn't see any. But the evenings were fun, and then we'd come home by starlight. One thing that struck me very much was these people's health. I wasn't too strong and I was a pretty slender sort of guy. I was embarrassed by these people in the mountains--these big husky girls and powerful young fellows. I felt like some kind of an anemic monstrosity [laughter] in the face of the vigor and health of these young men and girls. Of course, to add to this, we had a little trouble in speaking to each other, although we had lots of fun trying to understand one another, even though we couldn't get very far. Then I went back to Munich and finished my year's study. I worked in my little studio and also in a couple of the schools. I changed schools a couple of times, trying to find one that was sympathetic. Then I'd get models at the academy. That was the first time that I ever engaged a model on my own. I went to the academy to get a model because I was told that's where you got them. The academy had a big imposing entrance. I don't know whether that building still stands or if it was destroyed in the war, but it was a very plain building hidden behind a big facade. Most of the building was made up of studios and lecture halls of a very simple sort. In this entrance, there was a large hall and an imposing stairway. I went in, and sure enough, here were a great many people--young and old, men and women. The men were on one side and the women on the other. Many were in costumes; the Italian costume was very popular. In those days, models were used much more than they are now, for all sorts of pictures that we are familiar with. There were many painters who were hangovers from the eighties and nineties, who did Italian scenes and all sorts of anecdotal pictures of people in costume, many in Tyrolean costume. Well, they all rushed toward me and held up their hands to attract admiration. Didn't I want a model of this type or that type or with this costume or that costume? I found this rather embarrassing, and I went and hid behind a column. I felt it was sort of a slave market, as though I was going to pick out a favorite slave. [laughter] Finally, I made up my mind: "This would be rather interesting to paint." So I went up to this girl, and she was delighted and trotted along after me to my studio. I've forgotten now what it was I tried to do. I had an idea that I'd make some effort at exhibiting at that time as well as studying, but that was rather a premature idea. I was tremendously impressed, of course, with the art

in Munich and with its galleries. In this country, as I said, we didn't have a chance to see very much before World War I, the work of many of the people who were influencing modern art--people like Matisse and Derain, to say nothing of Picasso, who then was not so well known. But in Munich you could see plenty. There were many galleries that showed a most advanced sort of painting, beginning with Cézanne. I saw some excellent Cézannes in a very fine Cézanne show. Naturally, it was rather puzzling to me, because I felt sympathetic to so much of it and found it exciting, and on the other hand, I was very much puzzled. When you go to a school and get academic training and most of your reading looks upon the Impressionists probably as the most advanced form of art, you are not prepared for this. And in those days, a man like [John Singer] Sargent commanded enormous respect. It's rather hard to realize how much we admired Sargent. He seemed to be to us students a man that you put up along with Frans Hals, Velásquez and Titian. He was really one of the important painters of America, and I think he is not really recognized for his full worth. With all his shortcomings, I think we can be proud of him as a figure in American art. Now, of course, we feel that Ryder and Eakins and Homer most represent us as real American painters and are among the most genuine artists; whereas, Sargent and Whistler and others reflect more of European art. All of the Munich crowd painted directly from life or from nature as much as possible--even Carl Marr, who was quite a distinguished man in those days, although he held with the more academic idea for quite a long time. There's a huge thing of his in Milwaukee called The Flagellants. Incidentally Carl Marr was from Milwaukee and afterwards became a professor at the academy in Munich and, in his time, had a big reputation. He's forgotten now, but one reason I went to Munich was that I thought I might work with Carl Marr. In Munich, I think that I commenced to free myself, and I realized that you had to get something; it couldn't be given to you. If it's for you, you'll get it, and if you have a vision or feeling that there's something wrong, you must do something about it; nobody's going to do it for you. Fundamentally, all education is a matter, in the last analysis, of self-education. Of course, that was not a conviction at that time, but that was a beginning of a feeling which afterwards has meant much to me. Well, to go back to the Pension Nordland: Helen Hays and I had some very delightful times. We used to go to concerts and to the theater and to the opera together. She enjoyed music. She was a great reader. She loved to explore the town, not just for its picturesque qualities, but rather for a deeper feeling of life. She seemed to be making so much of her travel. Other people were picking up superficialities, it seemed to me, while she had a much deeper sense of the meaning of what she was seeing or hearing. She and her traveling companion left and went to England after a few weeks, and when the school year was over, this sane fellow with whom I went to Garmisch

decided he too would like to go to Italy. For the same reason I mentioned before, that appealed to me quite a lot because he had so little to spend and also I wished to spend little. It was not that I had little to spend because Father (who wanted me to get the best of my education and who was paying for it) didn't put any limit on it. He said, "Spend what's necessary. When you need money, why, write for what you need." If we had decided on what I would invest in this enterprise, then I would have budgeted it, but as it was, I was always trying to get along on the least possible. I was very proud of myself when, at the end of the month, I hadn't spent much. Well, this young man, whose name I think was Rhule, decided that he had saved up a little money and that he'd like to go down and spend some time in northern Italy and that we could go together. He knew some French and a little Italian and, of course, in northern Italy, German is quite helpful. So we went together to Venice, and sure enough, soon he found a very cheap place for us to live. We commenced to enjoy Venice. I really enjoyed Venice. I had always had an immense love of Venetian painting, all the way from the Bellinis through [Giovanni Battista] Tiepolo, even though Tiepolo, especially in those days, was not considered worthy of much enthusiasm. But there were qualities in the painting of Tiepolo and his son Domenico that appealed to me strongly. I found two fine things of Domenico's in Venice that I still remember and I'd love to see again. I don't ever see them reproduced. It'd be quite an adventure to go back and hunt up some of those things that impressed me at that time. In the meantime, I was in correspondence with Helen and the upshot of it was that she came to Venice and we were married there. The problem of getting married was something that had to be solved, and we didn't know anything about it. But we soon discovered that by being married in the consulate you're married on American soil, which simplified matters. The first idea was to be married by the Episcopalian minister there, but there were difficulties about the publishing of banns, or something of that sort that held us up. We didn't have time to wait, so we found the Scotch-Presbyterian minister, a very nice little man, who was very pleased to marry us. We were surprised when we got to the consulate to find that the wife of the consul had put some flowers up over the consul's desk, trying to show a little touch of consideration for the event in that way. So we were married there. I thought it would be most romantic to take a gondola to the consulate, but I found that it was such a short walk that it would be much easier and quicker just to walk. [laughter] From there, we went to Florence for our honeymoon. It's rather hard to describe Helen very quickly. I'd have to stop and think. She was rather small. She was, without being prim in the least, always very correct in her manner. Though she came from Hagerstown, Maryland, of an old Maryland family, she was born in California. Her father was an army doctor stationed in San Francisco, and she was born there and raised in San

Luis Obispo. Then she went back East for her education, and on the death of her parents, she went back to Hagerstown and was by way of being a secretary to an uncle of hers. Her uncle, whose name I'd have to look up, was quite well-to-do and apparently a very interesting man. He had been a consul in Rome at one time, and he'd had other activities of that sort. I don't know what his interests were in Hagerstown. I don't remember how long Helen lived in Hagerstown, but it was quite a long time. She had a great sense of responsibility for her relatives, and I think she took care of an aunt until her death (not long before I met her). I know that she eventually became so versed in her uncle's affairs that he would go off, maybe on quite long trips, and leave her in complete charge. She was a very capable person in that way. And, in the meantime, she bought a little house in Hagerstown and was very fond of gardening. She always wanted to write. She had a great feeling for all of the arts--music, literature, painting. And she not only did gardening with enthusiasm but also wrote about it. She wrote articles for the New York Post, I believe--a newspaper that then existed, although I've forgotten the exact name of the paper. I think she wrote a weekly column for awhile, and the result of that was a book called My Little Maryland Garden. It had some success, not too much, but it got good reviews even in England which pleased her because the English are such critical people about gardens, and anything that she might have to say about a garden that got their approbation she felt really meant something. She also wrote a novel which was never published but apparently wasn't at all bad for a beginner from criticisms and advice she got from an agent. She wrote quite good verse, some of which was published. She had studied piano, and she liked to draw. I have a great many of her sketches, drawings, and small paintings. Sometimes they were from nature, many from fantasy. She had a very fine feeling in her work. In fact, she even had a couple of her drawings that got noticed in a national show at the Art Institute in Chicago one year. She had an amazingly catholic taste in reading. The last years of her life she wasn't at all strong. She was ill for a long time, and it was quite astonishing how much she would read. I used to get armloads of stuff for her to read. She was well up on all her detective stories and the writers and was a very good critic of them. She also read Dante's Divine Comedy through in the original while she was ill. She worked through it bit by bit. I found a book on Easter Island that fascinated her; things that were historical or archeological she found interesting. She wasn't at all pedantic in her interest in history. She just liked people and what they did, not only in modern times but in ancient as well. So with her great inner resources, the difficulties of the last years of her life were not as great as they would be to a person with less.

SCHIPPERS

Was she the same age as you?

NUTTING

She was much older than I.

SCHIPPERS

How much?

NUTTING

It seems rather absurd to say, but I don't know exactly how much. I never thought about it one way or the other. I suppose she was about twenty years older, not more than that. At least, it's hard for me to believe that she was any more than that. One reason that I can't feel that she was is because afterwards, when we came back to California, I knew her younger sister, and she seemed twice as old as Helen. She was an old lady; whereas, Helen never gave that impression. She was so easy and graceful in her movements and her figure was in such beautiful condition up to the time of her death. Her posture and her gestures were not that of an old person. Up until her illness, her mind was anything but that of a person along in years. Her interests and curiosities were that of a young person, and that to me was her great attraction as a companion. We enjoyed everything so much together. She had not only a liking for, but a deep appreciation of things that I liked, whether it was wandering around a curious little Italian village, with appreciation of the life there, or whether it was in art or music or whatever it might be. We shared interests deeply. She had dark hair and dark eyes. She never put on too much weight. She never had to worry about it. She had a nice figure and dressed very simply and very tastefully. We went to Florence for our honeymoon, which was a delightful city to have a honeymoon. Also, it was interesting to me for its art and architecture and association with names such as Michelangelo. We stayed at a pension near the park. Our room overlooked the Arno, and it was very pleasant. We were so much absorbed in our life in Florence and with each other at that time that we weren't at all aware of the storm clouds that were gathering. We were learning Italian and could at least make out the headlines of the Italian papers, but we didn't read the papers from England and from home too closely. So what was happening was unknown to us, and the final explosion was a great surprise and very much of a shock. While we were in Florence, I had a letter from a cousin who was in Munich. She wanted very much to see me before she went back home. She was traveling with a group. She was one of these Boston relatives that I mentioned. I didn't feel much like going up to Munich because it was an extra expense. But she was so insistent, that she sent money down and said, "I must see you." So I finally decided, "Well, we'll go up and spend a couple of days in Munich and come right back to Florence." We took the train to Munich, and war was declared as we crossed the border into Germany. We were all told to get off the train and were examined one by one. There was one fellow who I took to be an American, but he really was a German who had lived in this

country for a long time. He was starting up conversations with people, and I thought he was just trying to be friendly, but what he was really doing was trying to find out whether I was on the up-and-up, whether I really was an American tourist or whether I was an Englishman or some other nationality. Having lived in the United States, he of course could ask all sorts of leading questions about one thing and another. He was satisfied we were all right, so we got back onto the train and eventually moved out. A lot of people were left behind in a kind of a corral, in a fenced-in place. I don't know how many there were, or what the situation was exactly. Anyway, we went to Munich and saw my cousin and then she went on and left us behind in Munich. Did I tell about the experience in Munich at that time?

SCHIPPERS

Yes. You told us last time about this experience in Munich, so we can pick up again on Florence. While you were in Munich and then later in Venice and Florence, you were still, of course, working at your art. What was it that you were trying to accomplish specifically during that period?

NUTTING

Well, I still had a great faith in good schooling for the artist, a feeling that it wasn't a matter of genius or talent, basically, that it was learning the craft of a painter. And even that summer in Florence, I found an art school and joined it. I'd go down every day and spend part of the day working in class, painting from a model. The rest of the day I'd spend seeing sights and galleries and exhibitions or anything of interest. So we didn't take many trips in the environs of Florence, except quite nearby. We went up to Vallombrosa. Helen always remembered a line from *Paradise Lost*; "thick as the leaves of Vallombrosa." That was a very haunting line to her, and she wanted to see Vallombrosa. We went up in a little horse-cab, and coming back down the hills, a car swerved around a corner and took the back wheels of our carròzza, and we went bouncing down the road with only the front wheels. We had quite a scene there and a very noisy altercation between the young fellow who owned the car and our cab driver. But the young fellow was very nice and polite to us, and he drove us back to Florence. That's one of the little adventures of our outing. And then because of Shelley, more than anything else, we went to the place he was drowned. North of La Spezia, isn't it? We spent a few days up there in that region where he lost his life. I think I have two pencil sketches I did (I saw them the other day) of the old castle there. Then with the coming of autumn, we decided to go down to Amalfi on the Bay of Salerno. It resulted in our spending the winter there. It was a wonderful place to be. Although it was wartime, living was amazingly cheap. There were no tourists and people were so glad to get any patronage at all that you could get excellent quarters for very little. We stayed at the Hotel Luna in Amalfi. Originally, it had been a monastery. Our

room was a kind of a monk's cell. It had a little front room and then a little dark bedroom behind and looked out over the water. Down below us was the road, and across from us, there was an old tower. Of course, the swanky place in Amalfi--and I think still is--was the Santa Catarina. But the Luna was very nice. An English couple who were there were very pleasant and we enjoyed knowing them. And I started painting. I got people from around the village to come and sit for me, and I'd pose them out in the patio (you didn't call it the patio there) and paint from life. There was a young priest who was quite pleased to come and sit for me, and I think I still have the study I did of him. We'd take long walks. I became quite interested in wine. The board at the pension included wine. Well, I didn't know one wine from another. My family was not a teetotal family at all, but we had very little in the way of drink at home. Very seldom did we have anything alcoholic. My experience with wine was extremely limited. One thing that bothered me was that, though we had quite good meals, I was wondering whether this proprietor was taking advantage of an ignorant American when it came to the wine. He could have easily given me the cheapest kind of wine and I wouldn't have known the difference. It reminded me of an English friend of mine who said that when he was a boy, his father, who was quite a lover of good wine, would sometimes let him have a sip of some especially nice vintage to cultivate his taste, and he often wondered what grown people found good about this stuff that tasted like a mixture of ink and rusty nails. [laughter] So along with enjoying the scenery and sketching out-of-doors, one of the projects I took on was to learn something about wine. The wines are good around Naples and Capri and Salerno. The Falernian wine, of course, we find mentioned in among the classical Roman writers. So I would stop and get a sample of wine at this place, and then at another village I'd get something a little more expensive, and I'd compare that with what I'd drunk before. Then I'd see something that was very, very cheap and I'd try that. Finally I went back to the hotel one evening, and at dinner, I had the courage to say, "You know, I don't think this wine is quite as good as that I had last week," or words to that effect. As a matter of fact, I didn't have the slightest idea whether it was or not. [laughter] The proprietor, of course, got quite excited: "Oh, this is a better wine than last week," or "They're exactly the same," or something. "Oh, maybe so, maybe so. Let me try it." Well, little by little, I did learn. From then on, one of the pleasures of living in Europe was exploring the vintages of the various parts of the country we lived in or visited. Wine and cheeses. I became interested in the cheeses--goat cheeses or the cheese of sheep's milk or the various kinds of peasant cheeses, expensive cheeses, famous cheeses. Cheese and wine came to be for me sort of the basis of good food. If you have some good cheese and bread and good wine and some fruit, you're all set. One day when I was out walking, I saw a fellow

painting in the distance. Well, that's not so unusual down there, but when I drew near, I saw that he didn't have the appearance of an Italian. I spoke to him, and he turned out to be an American. We got into conversation and I found that he and his wife and a friend of theirs had rented the villa over the sea, about a half a mile from Amalfi. They turned out to be extremely interesting people and afterwards we became very warm friends. His name was Earl Henry Brewster. Next spring he went to Sicily from Amalfi, and we went up to Rome. And while the Brewsters were in Sicily, they wrote us and invited us down. They had some means and lived a very interesting life. They would rent a villa or house or some kind of comfortable place and really live in a place for awhile, instead of simply being a tourist. They were doing that at Amalfi. They painted very industriously, and they had this nice villa and lived a delightful life. Then they went down to Taormina and did the same thing. Well, we were very pleased to go because it happened that winter was very unpleasant. It was rainy, cold, rather dismal in Rome, and it seemed to be a great idea to go south and get some real sunshine, so we went. We got to Taormina right in the midst of a heavy rainstorm. [laughter] We went to their villa, and they had a very charming place above the sea, a short distance from town. The next morning turned out to be beautiful. There was no rain. It was clear and there was a beautiful sky and sparkling sea. Henry and I went out on the veranda for breakfast--we were the first ones up--and down below us was a cargo steamer that was moving along unusually close to the shore. We watched it and commented on the fact that it was so near to us. Then, all of a sudden, there was a puff of smoke that came out of the middle of the steamer. There was a boom, and we realized what had happened--it had been torpedoed. So I started jotting down notes. I thought now history is being made--my first experience with gunfire [laughter] that to a slight degree resembles warfare. So I noted, at 8:10, there was so and so; 8:11, so and so; 8:12, so and so. I made notes of this, and in the meantime, Henry had rushed into the house to get up the rest of the family to come out and see what was going on. While I was watching, I was surprised to see a little puff of smoke come from a submarine which had then surfaced. I watched the submarine surface and then came this little flame from it. I wondered what had happened, and while I was wondering, there was a funny sound that a .75 shell makes and the whole garden in front of me seemed to go up. [laughter] But it didn't do any damage. There were very large cactus plants, and they absorbed the fragments of the shell. There was hardly any mark on the house, and I didn't get hit; so it was all right. But that submarine stayed there and the ship sank in about ten minutes. The two ends of the ship upended and disappeared beneath the surface of the water. The crew was taken off; it wasn't a very large crew. I never really learned whether any lives were lost or not. I should think there would be because the boat was completely cut

in half. How everybody could escape, I don't know. We couldn't get any information because it was pretty well clamped down. Afterwards, in the afternoon, a boat came from Taranto, an Italian Navy boat, and it circled around the oil slick a few times and then went back. The submarine stayed around all day and rather stupidly sank some fishing boats and sailing craft. The population of Taormina, of course, was excited, but what surprised me was that the English people that we knew there were not at all the phlegmatic sort of people that they have the reputation of being among the Europeans. The idea, of course, among the French and Italians is that the Englishman is very reserved and very taciturn, a man of few words and rather cold in his manner. But these English people were anything but reserved. They were expressing their opinions and they were shouting and saying and doing all sorts of foolish things [laughter], whereas the Italians were curiously calm, except for one funny fellow. They weren't shelling the town, but there was a semaphore just above where we were staying and the submarine was trying to quiet it, because it would spread the news. But, it being quite high above the sea, they couldn't quite make it. So after about half-dozen shots or so, they stopped. But, of course, these shells fell on the hillside and rather disturbed the people. So this man I mentioned began rushing around, gathering up his animals and putting them in pens, and getting his family together. Finally they started up the hill to take shelter among the rocks. He was in the lead, marshalling his little flock. As a baton he had his wife's rolled-up corsets, and he was waving these corsets and shouting at his kids and his wife and old folks and all the rest of them. These Italian corsets were a funny, stiff, old-fashioned corset that they wore on the outside of their blouse. It was that sort of thing; and rolled up, it made a good baton.

SCHIPPERS

During these years, what was your source of income? Was your father still sending you money? Did your wife have an income also?

NUTTING

Father was still sending some money. He wanted to do it. I had the very definite idea after our marriage that I would go back to the United States, and I expected to go into commercial work, illustration, portrait painting or teaching. I had prepared myself for all these fields except commercial art. I'd always had in mind the possibility of doing illustration, and in those days, illustration was a more interesting field for the painter than it's since become. Afterwards, it became a more jazzy sort of idea for making a magazine attractive. But in the days of Howard Pyle and his pupils, like Harvey Dunn and [Newell] Wyeth and all of those men, they took their art very seriously, and it was a perfectly good field for someone who expected to be a painter exclusively to enter. But Helen had had a life, not only of quite hard work but of very heavy responsibility, and

when her uncle died and left her with money, not very much but enough for comfort, she was so enjoying Europe that we finally decided to prolong our stay over there. Little by little I did some things. I'd paint a portrait or sell some of my work, and with what my mother left me, we got along, not at all luxuriously but pleasantly.

1.6. TAPE NUMBER: III, Side Two (October 29, 1965)

SCHIPPERS

Last time you made mention of Earl Brewster and you wished to correct that and state his full name as Earl Henry Brewster.

NUTTING

Yes, his full name was Earl Henry Brewster. It's curious that, for a moment, I remembered him as Henry. His wife's name was Achsa. They were both painters. Achsa was very ambitious to do rather large decorative canvases. Earl had also been a pupil of William Chase, but he deviated quite a lot from his training as a painter. He and Achsa were living at this villa near Amalfi with a friend of theirs, Frederick Shaler, a very talented man, who had saved up his money and had come to Europe for a couple years of painting and studying. He, I think, would have been quite an important painter in the modern trends, but unfortunately, when they were living in Sicily about a year or so later, they went out for a walk (they were both great walker and loved to take long hikes) and he stopped and got a drink of water at a farmhouse and was dead of typhoid a very short time after that. Earl had an exhibition of his work in Rome which was noticed quite well and especially admired by people like Giacomo Balla and some of the painters of the Futurist movement. But what trips we made in Italy really were those to the Brewsters at Amalfi. We spent the summer there, went down in the spring, and, I think it was in October when we left and went up to Rome. Also, my wife had a friend, an old friend of the family's or, at least, she was a member of a family that had been friends of her people in Maryland, and she was married to an Italian, Ferdinando de Chiara. In his youth, he was supposed to have been the most handsome boy in southern Italy and from an aristocratic family. In some ways, he was very charming--and in some ways, quite annoying. They, apparently, were rather well-off because they had a beautiful villa up at Anacapri. So while the Brewsters were in Amalfi we used to visit Capri quite often and we'd stay with the de Chiaras. The social life on Capri, as it was in Italy, was somewhat disrupted by the war. People had either gone home or were absent on other things, but life, in some ways, was even more delightful than it would be in normal times. Capri, which was usually overrun with tourists was then more or less deserted; so we could enjoy the island and the people and the residents in a way that wouldn't

otherwise be so pleasant. One of the pleasures I had, which I think would be quite incredible now, was to be able to go to the Blue Grotto and have the place all to myself for a swim [laughter], things of that sort, you know. And there were interesting people on Capri. Compton MacKenzie, the writer, had a villa there, although he was away most of the time. His wife lived there, and we used to see quite a bit of her. We also made a friend there who afterwards had quite a lot to do with our life, both down there, then in Rome, and then in Paris. That was Richard Wallace. He came into my meeting of Joyce. Wallace entered into the picture quite a lot, and the fact is, in [Richard] Ellmann's book on Joyce, *The Life of James Joyce*, his name appears rather frequently for certain periods of the story. As a boy I was extremely shy, which was rather understandable because I didn't grow up very much among people. When I was involved in something that I was especially interested in, then I wasn't at all afraid. A case in point would be that as a boy I used to want to browse around secondhand bookstores a lot. Well, proprietors of bookstores are not especially anxious to have kids hauling their books down off shelves and turning them over [laughter], but I felt that, doggone it, those things are very important to me. So, I'd brave the disapproval of the proprietor if I saw a book I wanted to look at. What I have in mind just now is that when I had an idea that somebody might be of unusual interest to me, I would find some way to meet him or get in touch with him. Later in New York, I was ambitious to be a mural painter and I dreamt of winning the Prix de Rome and going to the American Academy in Rome. When I was working at the [Art Students] League I had that in mind, and in my work in composition, I always had the idea of large, monumental sort of designs in mind. Well, in those days, the really known mural painters in this country were people like Kenyon Cox and Edwin H. Blashfield. They did big things for our state capitols and public buildings. One day I took the idea into my head to go down and see Blashfield, which I did. He was very nice. I had quite a hard time finding his studio. I finally found the place and I rang the bell. Then I heard a voice away up in the heavens someplace, and I turned around and looked up a long stairway. There was somebody and he said, "Yes?" And so I said, "Mr. Blashfield?" And he said, "Yes, what can I do for you?" So I went upstairs and explained to him why I came, that I wanted to be a mural painter, and I thought he would give me some good advice as to a course of study. He said, "Well, I'm very busy, but I will give you just five minutes." So I sat down, and he talked very nicely to me for just five minutes. In the meantime, in this huge studio, boys were working on big canvases, with projectors throwing up designs onto great canvases destined for some state capitol. He was doing one of his big allegorical compositions. So the same thing happened to a certain extent in later life and usually it happened to work out very well. I've had no reason to regret my temerity. Another hero of mine as

a boy was Elihu Vedder. My aunt had a book, that was published, oh, way back in the eighties, I think. The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, with his illustrations and decorations. I liked it very much; I thought it was quite wonderful. There was a thing of his in the Boston Museum that I liked. I liked things that were very imaginative; that's one reason I liked Howard Pyle so much. His illustrations were very imaginative, especially his own version of the story of King Arthur and his knights. They were pen drawings somewhat influenced by German engravings, but very decorative, very fine illustrations. They were quite a good influence on me as a youngster. When I was in Capri, I heard quite a lot about Elihu Vedder. He'd been living there for a good many years, and he had a villa there, the Villa Quattro Venti. He was then one of the patriarchs of the island. There were two American gentlemen who were more or less of the same class--Charles Caryl Coleman and Elihu Vedder. So I couldn't resist calling on Mr. Vedder. My wife and I found the Villa Quattro Venti, and he received us, at first, not too warmly. He said, "Are you trippers?" (He used the English expression--"trippers.") So I explained to him what I was in a sense: that we weren't just passing through and my reason for coming was because I loved his work. Well, the result was that we became quite warm friends. His daughter Anita took care of the old gentleman, really sacrificed her life for him. She was a very charming person and talented. If she'd had a chance, I think she would have developed quite a way. Afterwards, when we were living in Rome, they disposed of their property on Capri and came to Rome to live, so we saw quite a great deal of both of them. That little painting on the wall is one I did of him at the tea table one afternoon. So the Brewsters and Shaler and these friends of my wife's and Elihu Vedder were among the first acquaintances that we made in Italy, people with whom we became real friends. We went to Rome and found a place to live near the Piazza del Popolo and the Via della Fontinella (the Street of the Little Fountain), which is just the next street to the Via dei Incurable, or the Street of the Incurables. [laughter] The two names rather stuck in my mind. It's a little short street that connects the Via del Babuino with the Corso. A very pleasant little woman, Signora Dividus--I remember her name well--whose husband was away at the war rented us a very nice room and served us breakfast and brought in our bath. Very seldom in our stays in Italy did we have a bathroom. We would ring in the morning, and the first thing the maid would do would be to bring in a big shallow tub and towels and soap and one thing and another. You'd bathe, and then they'd bring in breakfast. That was true at Signora Dividus. She provided breakfast and bath, and the rest of our meals we ate out. Well, all of this time of course I was very much concerned about my study--what to do, how to work. But I still had the combination of ideas which began in Munich: that I would like to work in a school or under some painter for whom I already had great respect. How to find

that master was quite a problem. In those days, the study of painting differed quite a bit from the feeling that a student has about it now. They will go to a school. They'll go to the Pennsylvania Academy or the National Academy or the Art Students League, but mostly it's the atmosphere and general feeling of this school that they think out; whereas, then, it was very much like it would be with a musician. A violinist might be a pupil of [Leopold] Auer and a pianist of [Theodor] Leschetizky. Art students, on the other hand, dreamed of studying with some famous artist. The two most famous teachers in those days in this country were William M. Chase and Frank Duveneck. Of course, there were others who had followings. So I think that if I look back now, I was rather on the lookout for somebody who'd be my mentor and guide. And that led to another experience, similar to the experience that I mentioned before in the case of Blashfield and Vedder. In Rome, the director of the Villa Medici was [Paul] Albert Besnard. When I was studying in New York and I used to go to the library, I ran across an article on the work of Albert Besnard and his travels in India, and I was much impressed by the reproductions of some of his watercolors and drawings. So I got the idea that he was really quite a great man, and his academic success, of course, bolstered that idea. We looked around for a studio and place to work, and we were quite lucky, because being wartime, things were quite cheap. Our living in Amalfi was amazingly inexpensive, and in the Via Margutta I found a vacant studio, and it was very large. I don't remember what the dimensions were, but it was a very large and very high room, a studio with a big window and a marble floor, black and white squares of real marble. It had been occupied by a Russian princess who, due to the war, had to go back to Russia. She had partitioned a small part of the studio off and had put all her valuable furniture and belongings in this corner. It didn't take up too much room, it didn't look bad, and the rest was this beautiful studio, which we got very cheaply. The window looked out on the Pincian Hill, and at sunset, I could look up and see the Villa Medici in the orange light of the setting sun. I got busy in my studio and tried to do some work, but I also started looking around for some really serious place to study. I used to look up at the Villa Medici and think, "Now, Albert Besnard is up there," and I wanted more and more to meet him and to get his advice. So I screwed up my courage, and I went up to this magnificent Villa Medici, which is really a beautiful place, with beautiful, big grounds. It's been the French Academy since the early nineteenth century. Besnard received me and he was to my surprise extremely pleasant and gracious. He said, "Well, let me see some of your work. I'd like to see it." So I thanked him very much, and he said, "Bring it up and I'll look at it." The next thing to do was to pick out some stuff to take up to him. I was doing rather big canvases, so I solved the problem by hiring a fellow who roped up a big bunch of my canvases and put them on his back and we went up to Villa

Medici. Besnard took me into the library, and we spread these canvases along the wall. I was extremely nervous because my progress hadn't been too rapid. I was never too happy with my teaching, and I pulled this way and that and didn't know exactly what I was trying to do. And he looked at them and made a little remark about this and a little remark about that. Then I said, "But, Mr. Besnard, what do you think I ought to do?" Well, he, of course, was a Prix de Rome. He was one of the most brilliant of the Prix de Rome students, and afterwards won many medals and honors. He became director of the École des Beaux-Arts and of the Villa Medici. So I thought, with his background, what he would feel was that this was infantile, inept sort of stuff and that I should go to school and study. I imagined that what he would advise me was, first of all, to work hard and improve my drawing. But to my surprise he didn't say so. "Oh," he said, "I'll tell you what you do. You get a big canvas. You paint a big picture." And I said, "A big picture?" He said, "Yes, anything you want. Do your sketches and your composition and paint a big picture, and I'll come down and look at it." So I went out and bought a canvas six feet by nine. I thought that might [laughter] qualify as being a big picture. And I set to work on it. I made, first, some sketches and drawings and pastel compositions, and finally, I had an arrangement of three figures for a romantic sort of decorative composition. I got it on the canvas and started to work. I'd have to run up and down a step-ladder most of the time. I'd get up there and do it piece by piece. When I finally got the thing pretty well along, I called on Besnard, and to my surprise, he and his wife came down. They had tea with us, and we had a very delightful afternoon. He wanted to see everything I did, and I'd haul out canvases, and if I'd see something that looked especially bad, I'd try to shove it behind the piano. But he'd say, "No, no, no, no! Let me see that." So he commented on my work and gave me encouragement. He didn't give me any special advice except to go ahead, be myself and work. As I say, from a man of his rigorous academic training, you'd expect something rather more severe. So I didn't enter any school or study under anybody in Rome. While I was in Amalfi I had sent a canvas to the Amatori e Cultori dei Belle Arti and got refused. I got up to Rome, and the next show that came along, I sent again. I got accepted. And I think I had something accepted each year after that. I didn't have any one-man shows or anything of that sort, but that was their principal exhibition and I made it without too much trouble. My stuff wasn't too good, either, as far as that goes. In the meantime, of course, I was excited in seeing everything that was to be seen in the way of painting. I saw things that I was very familiar with. It was more than interesting to see them in the original because there would be revelations like the frescoes of Michelangelo, which I was perfectly familiar with ever since childhood through black-and-white reproduction engravings. I always thought that they would be rather monochromatic because

he was a draftsman and sculptor and not essentially a painter. The first thing to surprise me was the color quality in the decorative work of the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Some of our trips were just for pure pleasure and others were pilgrimages to things that I wanted to see in the environs of Rome. While we were living that summer in Amalfi, I had been to Naples very often and had become quite familiar with what was to be seen there, including the frescoes of Pompeii and the things in the museum in Naples and in the environs of Naples. I imagine that the environs of Rome have changed. People have not told me very much about it; and of course, it's many, many years since I've been there. In those days, the feeling of Rome was of this big city that was set down clean-cut in the middle of the Campagna. If you went outside the walls of Rome and up the Appian Way, you were out into an expanse of prairie country where there were these strange depressions every once in awhile which were hard to understand until it was explained to you. This is where the catacombs have caved in and the earth had dropped down and left a hole. The ramifications of the catacombs have never been completely mapped. Just before we went to Rome, as a matter of fact, one of the young fellows who had a fellowship at the academy went into exploring the catacombs and never was found again. That kept the academy and his friends disturbed for a long time. Leaving the Campagna to go up into the Alban Hills, you go up to Frascati and Tivoli. They are wonderful excursions, and also were settings for a certain amount of artistic influence, especially in the history of German painting. It's very interesting to see the influence that the Roman Campagna had in the nineteenth century German landscape painting. And we used to love to go out to Lago di Nemi which is a little lake. The Lago di Nemi is a mirror-like lake. It's the lake of Frazer's Golden Bough. A large Roman bark, or whatever they call it, sank there. Mussolini did something about exploring more of it and they pulled parts of it up, but it wasn't completely known at that time. And on the edge of this lake, which is in a round crater, there is a mysterious sort of a place quite suitable for the Temple of the Golden Bough. There's a little restaurant on the edge of it where we got roast kid and a white wine called Santo Spirito. The roast kid and Santo Spirito wine made a delicious meal, and while eating, you looked down on this still, mysterious-looking lake and the little village. As I said, the environs of Rome have so much to offer in the way of memorable excursions. I rather doubt it has still the charm that it had then, because it was in wartime, and there were no tourists and things were very quiet, and in many ways, more delightful. Also, of course, transportation now is so much easier with more roads and because people own many more cars. It's hard for me to imagine Rome jammed up with automobiles. Most of the city transportation was still with carròzzi. In Amalfi, for example, I don't think I ever saw an automobile all that summer we were there. There also was a little town which, I

believe was completely wiped out in the war--leveled, completely destroyed. A charming little place. I remember there was a hotel we used to stop at once in awhile. We would go there and spend the night, then go to Pompeii or into Naples or on some of our trips around there. So Besnard got me started on doing a big canvas and I finally decided to make it more of a problem of self-instruction rather than following a master. I think that was an important stage in my development. What had happened, of course, up to that time was that a certain amount of my upbringing gave me a respect for authority, that other people knew more than I did, that one mustn't pretend to try to do things until you know your business and that you must be a good student. And that was kind of hard if you were devoting yourself really seriously to an atmosphere that was unsympathetic and you couldn't figure out exactly why. Just recently I've been interested to find somebody else who I didn't realize before had undergone somewhat the same sort of thing but much more successfully, probably because he's a far more intelligent man. I was given a birthday present recently of a voucher good for a book, and I got this *Life of Delacroix* [by Rene Huyghe]. It's very interesting, because although it's not his life story exactly, it's a study of Delacroix by a very intelligent man. He traces the conflict that Delacroix had in his development between the influence of a classic spirit, which was so strong in art after the transition from the eighteenth to nineteenth century painters like David and Ingres on one side, and the rise of the Romantic movement on the other. Delacroix simply seemed to envision the problem in a much broader way and was much more courageous in following through. In my own case, I always had this idea that? first of all, one must engage in serious study and work and not bank on talent or the importance of your own ideas too much, which was rather unfortunate, because as I look back, I feel that even a very slight intuitive feeling should be treated with respect. And it's one thing that I have tried very hard to do in my teaching since and that is to watch very carefully for natural feelings and impulses and to cultivate a student's faith in himself, even though he might question it from the point of view of reason. Don't throw it overboard simply for that; it may be valuable. You don't know. Save it. Treat it very carefully. It may be well worthwhile. Well, it's just a case I remember which I've always felt illustrates one of the most interesting things about teaching, and that is, it's not only that you're able to give things of value to others, but it's a wonderful means of getting an education yourself.

SCHIPPERS

Earlier you mentioned that when you were in Rome, you started a large canvas and this was the first big one that you'd undertaken. Was your own style beginning to emerge at this time?

NUTTING

Well, yes. But it was something, if you call it a style, that took hold of me. It wasn't something that I subscribed to. I suppose I was conditioned to a certain approach by the things I had enjoyed as a youngster. I told you before that I could remember all those things of Gustave Doré, a very romantic illustrator, and those illustrations of Elihu Vedder in Omar Khayyam, which also were somewhat in line with that feeling. In other words, the Omar direct objective of painting from nature, although I was taught it in art school, was not a fundamental drive--that feeling toward painting that a born Impressionist has, for example, or that a landscape painter or en plein air or outdoor painter has. In other words, I suppose, I was a dreamer [laughter], and my dreams had more reality very often than the object before me. I really commenced to feel in Rome a certain dichotomy, most intensely. And I can almost remember exactly how it happened. I had this dream as a student in New York of winning the Prix de Rome and going to the American Academy in Rome and becoming a mural painter. So one of the first things I did when I got to Rome was to visit the American Academy, on the Janiculum Hill. I met the director, and he was very pleasant and very nice to me and showed me around. I saw what the students were doing. They were all working on projects. They were doing their own work in their studios, and then they did one in common. The architect and painter and the sculptor would work on one project. The architect did the building. The painters did the designs for decoration. The sculptor did the sculpture. It was, of course, all very accomplished, very brilliant stuff, and I admired it and envied it very much. They could all do so much more than I could dream of doing, and I hoped that if I really worked very hard, maybe I could get there too. But I remember walking away from the academy and down through a poor part of town, in the Borgo San Pietro, and I looked at the freshness of color and the vitality of real people, and then all this rather pretentious allegorical stuff that they were dealing with seemed to me suddenly rather meaningless. I found even the smell of garlic in those little narrow streets rather refreshing. It was something alive, something that had real substance to it. Even drawing, which up to that time I'd looked upon from the academic point of view, required a certain function of line, a copying of form very exactly. This is good drawing or that is bad drawing. They were very sure about it, you know. Now even that idea was badly shaken. As a matter of fact, Besnard had some influence on that because I could see that some of his drawings that I thought very exciting were, from a school point of view, quite poorly drawn. And I found that Rodin's drawings were very exciting, but they had few academic virtues. Of course, a person who had a feeling for drawing could see a rich background of understanding in those vivid drawings that to other people looked like ordinary scribbles. So, I think about that time my feeling or sympathy, especially for the more academic training, was pretty

badly shaken, and from then on, I would get Italian models with Italian costumes and other characters and people and do compositions and things which would be imaginative, but my pleasure in my work was increased by a certain play between my interior life and contact with the infinite richness of reality. The Beaux-Arts' spirit became something rather unreal and meaningless. One reason that I painted a great deal from the model then was because they were so available. In those days, Via Margutta was nearly altogether a street of artists' studios and of people who did casting for the sculptors. Usually the shops down on the street level were occupied by these fellows who did casting for sculptors. There were several of them in the little street. I think there were other businesses, of course, but up above were artists' studios. Models used to congregate in the Via Margutta; so if you felt like doing some work, you could lean out the window and see Pompilia or Vittoria or somebody, and say, "Come here and do some work." So she'd come up. You had a model right at your doorstep. Incidentally, it's rather interesting (I suppose probably this also is something that is past), but in those days, the little towns up in the mountains would each have a certain means of livelihood. In one little village, they were all caning chairs and in another little village, they were doing something else that seemed to be characteristic of that community and at which they made their living. The village of Anticoli Corrada was no exception. In the summertime they had their little bits of ground on which they cultivated their vineyards, their grapes to make wine. But they were all artists' models. The whole town was populated with artists' models, and they were much in demand. Like a lot of villages and towns in Italy, they almost had their own language and they had their own characteristics in build and feature. About this community, I believe some people had the idea (I've forgotten whether there was any reason for it), that it was sort of a colony which came from across the Adriatic. They were darker than the mountain people ordinarily were. Very handsome, very classic in their build, very intelligent, very nice people. They were magnificent from the point of view of the model in the conventional way. They had beautiful figures and fine shapes, very handsome people, and made wonderful characters for religious pictures and classical pictures and things of that sort. Models were cheap. Everything was cheap in those days. So, to go back to what I was trying to do, I would paint portraits, models, head studies and do a lot of figure drawing, because during all this time I had no idea if I were staying in Europe. I'd say, "Well, next year I must go back and get busy." So there were the three things I planned on: teaching and portrait painting and illustration. I hadn't dropped the idea of illustration, because at that time there was still a certain field for it. If you go back to illustrative magazines of the eighties and nineties, you'll be surprised to find some very interesting names. The reason was that as students they had been

first in Munich and sometimes other cities like Düsseldorf. But Munich especially had an influence then. And the ones who came back from Paris would be involved on how to make a living, and they would do illustration. The idea that illustration is a commercial art hadn't entered into the picture at the time. An art editor got the best artists he could, and sometimes some very distinguished painters began as illustrators and worked for magazines. Probably the most successful was Edwin A. Abbey who I think got practically his whole art education in the offices of Harper's when he worked for Harper's Magazine. In the beginning. Harper's and the early illustrated magazines published in this country got artists to do the illustrations, and they did their illustrations right there on the spot. They had a space set aside and the boys would work on making the drawings directly on the wood block which was then engraved and then published. But after the European-trained painters started coming back, they rather balked at that idea. They wanted to do the work in their own studio and bring it to the publisher. Some very important people did that. People I mentioned, like Blashfield and Cox, as young fellows started out as illustrators and afterwards became very successful mural painters. Even a man like John La Farge did some of the best illustrations back in the eighties or somewhere along there. Afterwards he became a very distinguished painter and writer and designer of stained glass. So, I didn't feel that there was, at that time, a sharp division between doing work for a magazine and being a painter. If I could sell my picture to a magazine, that was one thing. If I went to a gallery and sold to a collector, that was another thing. But, in either case, I was doing the best I could, pictorially, as a painter. I felt that there were certain discrepancies there, but they weren't nearly as great as they afterwards became, because the demands of illustration and the development of the talent of the real painter became more and more separated. So I hoped to go on with portrait painting, teaching and illustration, when I came back. But, of course, we were both enjoying our life in Europe enormously, and in a way, I felt that the war had interfered to a certain extent in what I was trying to do in my studies. I got into various activities--Red Cross and one thing and another. After going to Paris, we kept putting off our return, year after year.

SCHIPPERS

In Rome, you were of course absorbing all of the great works as you did elsewhere in Italy.

NUTTING

Yes. I think I mentioned it before, I've always had and still have an insatiable hunger for seeing things. I'll go into any exhibition or any gallery and enjoy it. I don't think of things too much in terms of good or bad or indifferent. When I go into a gallery I don't think: "This is by a great man and this is by a lesser man." I enjoy this or that, and then, all of a sudden, something will bowl me over

completely. I'll be just flabbergasted and have to go back again and again to see it and wonder what in the world made it that way. I felt that very definitely as a student in Boston. I spoke about going to the museum very often, it being right next door to the school, and what troubled me was that what I was learning in school and what these painters had done wasn't the same. I couldn't quite make out the connection. I didn't feel that what they did was what I was trying to do in the school. I didn't mind the fact that it was pretty dull, pretty hard work, and rather like slave labor, because I thought I could look forward to it giving me something that I wanted, something that these people had. But more and more, the people who had great influence on me were, I would say, essentially painters. That, of course, expresses it in a very general sort of way, a mere adumbration of what I had in mind. I was more excited, for example, by the painters of Venice than of Florence, though my admiration for Florentine painters and artists was unbounded. But they were essentially sculptors and draftsmen; whereas, we have a great school of Venetian artists, especially from Bellini on and even somewhat later than Tiepolo, who were definitely painters. And the Flemish [painters] influenced me for the same reason. I'm still greatly enthusiastic about Dutch painters. At that time El Greco was not spoken of very much. He wasn't especially well known. They have a good El Greco in Boston--or did have at that time--that fascinated me, but the other students couldn't share my enthusiasm because they couldn't see how I could admire anything that was so badly drawn. Of course, that story that I told about the first showing of Matisse that I ever saw illustrates, somewhat, the atmosphere I was in. The serious painter or serious artist couldn't think of that sort of thing as something important.

1.7. TAPE NUMBER: IV, Side One (November 1, 1965)

SCHIPPERS

While you were in Rome, you said that your social activities increased and I wondered if you'd tell us something about that.

NUTTING

Well, Rome was very interesting to me in that way because up to that time, except for the winter in Munich, I had not had much of what you would really call a social life. That doesn't mean I didn't have warm friends and a certain amount of enjoyment being with people, but in Munich and in Rome, I commenced to see many more people than I ever had before. We stayed in Amalfi that summer. We went down there in the spring and stayed until October and then decided to go up to Rome. We made the decision, but I rather wondered about it as I didn't know exactly what Rome would mean to me. All of this time, I was very serious-minded about doing something with my work.

Even at Amalfi, I sent things to the annual exhibition in Rome. And then by going to Rome, I had the idea, undoubtedly, that I'd find schools or somebody I would want to study with--something to organize my work a little more than working entirely by myself. And that's all I had in mind. We got to Rome and went to the Pension Quisisana. It was a very nice place. It was one that later we often recommended because it was a very delightful place, run by a Swiss and, of course, they are very good hotelkeepers. The next thing I did, almost the next day, was to go up and visit the American Academy, because for years, I'd dreamt of being a mural painter and even of trying for the Prix de Rome and going to the American Academy for mural painting. So my first curiosity was the American Academy. That is across the river in Rome and among the seven hills of Rome. It's a beautiful place with a very beautiful view of the city. And I was very nicely received there. I met somebody and explained why I came: that I was a painter, that I always had the ambition to become a worker at the academy and to have a fellowship. So, he took me to see the director, and he, in turn, was extremely hospitable. He showed me all over the place and I met some of the other fellows there that were painters and sculptors and architects. So I came away quite pleased with my first acquaintance with Rome. And that very evening I got a telephone call, to my surprise, at the pension. It was the director. He was an architect and was the resident director of the academy. He said that (I think it was the next evening) they were having an informal gathering, a sort of a smoker for the students, and would I like to come up and meet some of the boys? Of course, I was quite flattered and pleased, and I went up and spent a pleasant evening. We looked around for a place to live, and in the Via della Fontanella near the Piazza del Popolo, we found a Signora Dividus who had a very nice apartment. Her husband was away in the army, and she was renting rooms in her apartment. She gave us a very pleasant room, with breakfast and bath. We ate our other meals out. The next thing was to find a place to work. I thought I would try to find that first before I investigated any other of the art activities of Rome. I wanted some place where I could set up my easel and get busy. And we were very lucky. A great many people left Rome. In a way, that was one of the delights of being in Italy in wartime. There were very few tourists and none of the bustle and activity of great crowds of people. Many foreigners had gone home on account of the war and left their places for rent. And that was the case with this studio in the Via Margutta, which was a very large studio, with a real black-and-white marble floor. It had a huge window that looked out to the east, and from the window, I could see the Villa Medici up on the Pincian Hill, which in sunset, used to be especially impressive with the pine trees and houses and the buildings below. A part of the studio had been partitioned off by a Russian princess who had had the place. Princess sounds as though she was somebody very important, but,

apparently, princes and princesses are as common in Russia as counts are in Italy. [laughter] She had left there somewhat hurriedly and had kept the place to be subtle and simply put her things in this partitioned part which was done very nicely, well carpentered, so it didn't spoil the place at all. In fact, the extension of it provided another little storeroom and a place where I eventually had a printing press. I tried to do some etching and lithography, as well as my drawing and painting. My wife was much more accustomed to social activity than I had ever been, and we met some pleasant people. First thing I knew, she gave our first tea party. She was a talented and delightful hostess, so this tea party went off very nicely and led to our meeting quite interesting people, people who were more or less residents in Rome, especially of the English and American colony. They were the first ones that you'd meet, naturally. Among them from the very beginning, we found some quite warm friends. I remember one was Theodora Synge. She was a cousin of the playwright, John Millington Synge. She was a very charming middle-aged lady who all her life had dreamt of being an artist and had tried her best to study and to learn something. But very much like Anita Vedder--and as a matter of fact, Helen, my wife--they had taken up so much of their life with family cares, they'd been deprived of a lot of the normal sort of development in life that a person of talent ought to have. But as soon as Theodora had been freed of family care, she went to Paris and studied there and with quite a good teacher. She learned to paint rather well, and she had a studio. We used to take trips together. She was a very delightful person with all sorts of rather quaint little ways but enjoyable ones. The most impressive thing that I remember about her was that she always had her tea basket with her--every time we'd take a trip. If we wanted to go to see something, it usually involved going a certain part by train and then maybe partway by bus and then maybe we'd hire some kind of a vehicle to eventually get to our destination. At every stop, out would come the tea basket. She would light the alcohol flame, and we'd have a cup of tea while we waited for a train or for a bus. [laughter] I always remember Theodora for those interminable cups of tea we had at every stop for refreshment along our route. Another friend was the ex-wife of John Fothergill, who was quite a savant of sorts in classical studies, an Englishman. Gillian Fothergill had been a student at the Slade and made quite beautiful drawings. She was a very delightful person and, in a short time, we knew quite a fascinating group of people. I discovered that just back of my studio was the British Academy. The Circolo Artistica (Art Society) had quite a handsome building with a rather ornate ballroom. Sometime in the history of it, it must have had quite a little money from art activities or else some patron provided them with it. It was a palazzo kind of a building, with its ballroom, a very good library. It was very handsomely furnished. It had a large studio where artists met to draw from the model. I

don't think there was any special formality in joining the group. So I was very happy to have the chance to join them, because figure drawing was like daily piano practice and to draw from life regularly means a lot. Even older artists would feel the same way and would join. They were a very delightful crowd of people. I met quite a few people there that I enjoyed knowing and who became very good friends. One extremely picturesque figure was the minister from Cuba, Mr. Rivera. We afterwards became quite good friends. The first time I saw Mr. Rivera was when we were working away at drawing. I looked over and here was a man, immaculately dressed. He had a white collar, tie, and was a very neat, rather distinguished-looking man. He was drawing in a method which was very old-fashioned. I think it was really the first time I had ever seen anybody use that technique. First of all, he had gloves on. Then, in his left hand, he had an artist's palette that had been covered with chamois skin on which was what they call crayon sauce. (I don't know if you are even able to buy crayon sauce these days. What it amounts to is a stick of something like very soft pastel which you rub onto a surface--in this case, the chamois skin-covered palette. Then with a paper stump, you build your drawing up with tone by dipping the stump into this powder and using your stump very much like you would a brush. You can handle tones with great delicacy. And in the days when they wanted to model things very delicately in tone and spend a long time on them, crayon sauce was, apparently, one of their favorite means. It was a very practical, very good way of drawing that sort of thing.) So this man, with his gloves and his crayon sauce and his immaculate appearance [laughter] was quite noticeable. I went over and spoke to him and found he spoke perfect English, and we got acquainted. In all of the groups of that kind in Europe, even at the Julian Academy in Paris, what they expect of you is what the Italians would call a bevuta, or "treat the crowd." If you're poor, why, you don't do very much. But what they did ordinarily in this group, which was a group of about fifteen or twenty people, some of whom were well-off, others who were just students and had very little, was to have a couple flaschi of a quite cheap red wine and sandwiches, or something to go with it and toast each other's health. Well, apparently, Rivera felt that he should do something more than that--which he certainly did--because in the middle of the evening, at the time for the model rest. In came a flunky with big baskets and champagne and all sorts of delicacies. He really treated the group royally and made a great impression. Well, it turned out that he was the Cuban minister and that all his life he had a love of painting. As a boy, he wanted to become an artist and his family objected strenuously to anything of the sort and made him study law. And from law, he went into diplomacy. At that time he was the minister in Rome and used to give me, among other things, marvelous cigars. For the first time, I really appreciated what a good cigar was. Sunday afternoon, I think, was

our regular day at home. The European idea is that your at-home day is printed down in the corner of your card. It will say Mondays or Thursdays or Fridays, whatever your day at home is, so you know that if you go that afternoon, your host is receiving. Ours was Sunday afternoon. Senor Rivera was nearly always there. Well, he was one of our friends, and then another one that I enjoyed very much, whom we saw a good deal of in Rome and then afterwards in Paris, was Gordon Craig, the son of Ellen Terry. As a boy, with his mother and Sir Henry Irving, he began work on the stage, and afterwards, he had quite a lot of influence on the theater. The modern theater owes much to his pioneering. He was a strong influence as a writer and designer as well as his work in the theater itself. Gordon Craig published a beautiful magazine called *The Mask*. Incidentally, he did beautiful woodcuts and drawings. I saw him first when I was on the Corso. A carròzza drove by and in it was a man leaning back in the seat, with a broad-brimmed black hat and white hair brushed straight back. He had a cloak tossed over one shoulder in a romantic sort of fashion. I realized it was Gordon Craig, because I had seen a picture of him not long before and I was sure that it was Gordon Craig. Then, later in the day, I was calling at the Hotel Russie to leave a message for a friend, and at the desk, here was Gordon Craig getting his key or something. He was staying at the Russie. I walked right over and spoke to him. [laughter] He was very pleasant, very nice, and he asked me where I was living. I told him that I had a studio in the Via Margutta. He said, "I have too. I've just taken one." The result was that I went to see him in his studio, and he came to our studio. And from that time on, he was really one of our most interesting friends in Rome and, afterwards, in Paris. He seemed to have a way of going back and forth between London and Italy. He eventually settled in Rapallo, and he and Max Beerbohm became two of the most distinguished Englishmen to end their lives in Rapallo. Both were colorful figures of the colorful nineties. Knowing Gordon Craig meant much to me. His charm, wit, sophistication--his enthusiasm as well as his outstanding talent contributed to the "Education of Henry Adams"--that is to say, years later I too did a little designing for the theater, nothing of special importance, some sets for a small theater. Not only was Craig a man whose talk was interesting and valuable, but also he was marvelous fun. He had more fantasy capacity for enjoyment than anyone I ever knew. His erudition in his own field was amazing. Walking around Rome and later around Paris, again and again he'd stop and say something like, "You know. Nutting, over there in 1770 Adrienne Lecouvreur played Phaedre"--or some such fact of theater history. Well, the same thing happened in Rome. He could name theaters and plays and the famous people connected with them. He had a knowledge and a surprising memory for the history of the theater. And he loved, in his walks, to go back--to families, to people--to recall theatrical adventures. Everything he did,

everything he talked about, was seldom too far from the theater. But as I say, not only was he interesting but also he was such great fun. Once, when I was living in Paris, he stopped off on his way from London and we went out for the evening. It was just after World War I and Paris was rather dismal. The lights were still subdued, blue, and there was no real illumination in the street. Things closed very early and there was still quite a lot of the depressive feeling of wartime about the city. We went to a cafe for a drink and to have a little conversation. He felt rather hungry, so he ordered something. They brought him something in the way of a sandwich, and he said, "Won't you have one?" I said, "No, thank you. I think I'll pass." Well, for some reason, he thought that was quite funny. Maybe he never played poker. [laughter] Anyway it seemed to amuse him. Well, we sat there and talked and had our drink and he had his sandwich. He watched the people going up and down the street outside the cafe. It was rather a spooky effect because the street was rather dark. The lights were painted blue which gave a rather glaucous kind of an atmosphere to the scene outside. About all you could see of people, really clearly, were their legs as they walked back and forth in the light that shone from the cafe onto the pavement. While he was talking and making some remarks about the people, he saw a beetle or cockroach starting to crawl across the pavement. He became intensely interested in it. He was all excited because he expected it to be stepped on, but it kept on going slowly and the feet went back and forth and the creature didn't get stepped on. He says, "You see that, Nutting? That's fate. Do you believe in fate?" So he was all ready to discuss the philosophy of fate, and at the same time, he was watching this thing as though he was watching a superior performance of a Greek tragedy. The drama of this little object as it went across the pavement fascinated him. Finally it disappeared in the darkness, and he leaned back and sighed, and the drama was over. So we finished our drinks and there was nothing to do. Everything was shut up. It was a most dismal prospect for any sort of an interesting evening as you could imagine. He said, "Let's go and see the Wallaces." I said, "Oh, Craig, heavens! It's about eleven o'clock, and they're in bed." "Oh, that doesn't make any difference. They wouldn't mind." "Well," I said, "if you say so, let's go." So we went and, sure enough, the Wallaces were in bed, but they got out of bed and got out some drinks and we sat around and talked. Wallace had just gotten a book he found very interesting. It had some interesting illustrations that he showed Craig, and we talked about that. And then Wallace also had gotten an engraving or something of Craig's, and he brought it out. We discussed that. Then we got up and let the Wallaces go to bed and started out again. We walked over towards the Seine. We got to the Rue de Rivoli and over towards the water, and it was very dark. There was hardly anybody around, but we came to a place, I think they called the Cozy Tearoom. Maybe the name was to

attract English trade, although it obviously wasn't an English place. There was a little light that shone through the transom, and Craig said, "Somebody's here." I said, "But it's shut up. It's closed." "Oh, let's try it anyway." So he pounded on the door. Nobody answered. He pounded again, and pretty soon, it was opened a crack. I've forgotten what Craig asked for. Maybe he asked for some drink or something, but it was far after closing time and it was illegal for them to serve anything at that hour. But they whispered, "Come in! Come in!" So we slipped in, and they brought out whatever Craig wanted, and we sat there and ate and drank. Some of the rest of the family got out of bed, and they came down and we all sat around and chatted. I guess they found this Englishman who spoke very little French interesting. (Even his Italian wasn't very good, though he spent so much time in Italy, which rather surprised me.) We spent about a half an hour there, chatting and drinking and then went out again into the darkness. By that time it did look as though we really had to go home. I mean there seemed absolutely nothing more we could do. Even his genius couldn't cook up anything that was at all exciting or amusing and there was no place to go at that time--no cinemas, no theaters--and there was nothing to attract anybody. Just a gloomy night and these blue street lights and little else. We went on walking down the street and talking. Then, in the distance, we heard a strange sound. I'd only heard it once before. It's a little bit hard to identify, at least I found it so at first. It was the roar of a crowd, but when you hear it in the distance, it doesn't sound at all human. It's a strange weird sound. And he stopped and said, "What's that?" I said, "I think it is human voices, but what could it possibly be?" "Let's find it." So we went down the street a way and it got a little weaker, so we turned back and took another direction and by that time it got a little stronger. So by trial and error, we crossed the river, over in the direction of the Sorbonne and the Institute, over on the Left Bank. Then it was undeniably the sound of a crowd yelling their heads off. And sure enough, we came down to the end of a little street where it opened out onto the Boule Miche (the Boulevard St. Michel is familiarly known by the French as the Boule Miche), and there was a huge crowd of students. I couldn't make out what in the world they were yelling so about. There didn't seem to be anything going on to cause it, and so I spoke to one of the boys. "What is it?" And he didn't exactly know. He said something about a taxi and then he let out a yell and joined the chorus of yelling. I looked out over the crowd and, sure enough, in the midst of this crowd was a taxicab. Just then Craig came up to me. He also had spotted the taxicab. He said, "Here, you take this card and invite the people in the taxi to dine with us next Sunday at the Cozy Tearoom" And I said, "Good God, Craig, I'm not an actor. I can't put that across. You go do it." "Oh, you speak French, you can do it." I said, "Go ahead, you do it." So he went through the crowd (he wore this cape, you know, and had longish white hair) and went up to the

taxicab. He bowed, and I could see him presenting his card. He bowed and then he came back through the crowd, and I said, "Well, Craig, how'd it go?" He said, "Good God, they're Americans." [laughter] I said, "Americans? Oh. I'll see about this. I can't let compatriots be in trouble without at least trying to do something." So I forced my way through the crowd, because they were all squeezed together. All the boys were having a marvelous time, just raising Cain. When I got up to the taxicab and I looked in, here was a middle-aged man and his wife in evening clothes, very much dolled up. Obviously, they were coming home from the opera or something of the sort, I spoke to him, "Are you Americans?" And he said, "Yes! Of course, we're Americans! It's a God damn shame!" And I said, "What's a God damn shame?" He said, "I thought they were Apache and I shot." And then it dawned on me that there was glass all over the floor of the taxicab and, sure enough, the window opposite me was all shattered. Well, it turned out that the silly fool was driving home at night through the Latin Quarter, and some of the students were out looking for a little fun, like Craig and myself. They saw this cab with these elegant people and they jumped on the cab (the cabs had running boards in those days), and they probably said something cheerful to them and scared the couple half to death. He had a pistol and he fired it to scare them off. Well, all they had to do was to let out an appropriate yell of some sort, and they got every student in the Quarter out of bed and down in no time to join the fun. [laughter] But I couldn't get any further with them than that, because by that time the gendarmes came and pulled me by the coattails and told me it wasn't any of my business and that they'd be all right and not to mind. Pretty soon some other officers of the law came up in a taxi and took charge of the situation. Then two taxicabs went off down the street with the crowd following behind, a long retinue of them, yelling and singing and having a great lark, including Gordon Craig who was just as much of a boy as any of the rest of them. He marched along, his white hair blowing in the breeze, and waving his broad-brimmed hat and shouting, "Viva la bella donna! Viva la bella donna!" [laughter] When the procession disappeared we decided we'd had an evening, that it was quite successful, and went home.

SCHIPPERS

Who were some others you knew in Rome?

NUTTING

As a matter of fact, social life in Rome was very pleasant. Our own afternoons became more and more attended with the people we enjoyed. There were writers. There was an Englishman by the name of Storer, a poet and a writer with whom afterwards we published a little paper. And there was a friend of his, Roma Webster. I also knew quite a few very talented Italians. As I began to speak Italian with some degree of fluency, I enjoyed them more and more.

Down the street was a painter by the name of Felice Carena. Felice Carena was a very fine painter and a very interesting man. After we left Rome after the war, he became director of the Academy of Fine Arts at Florence, and I think he remained there as director for quite a number of years. The last I heard, he was retired and living in Venice. Up at the Villa Medici in the afternoons, all sorts of people came to visit, some of them quite distinguished people, writers like [Gabriele] D'Annunzio for example. Besnard had a way of doing portraits of the distinguished people of his time. I felt they were not all commissions, but done for his own pleasure. He did one of D'Annunzio, and he did one of Cardinal [Désiré] Mercier, the Belgian. He did a big canvas of him. He also did one of the Pope, also large. He did a huge thing of the King and Queen of Belgium, and I think it must have been quite a job for him because he was a very heavy man at that time. He obviously loved good eating. He was gone, I remember, for some time from Rome. He came back with studies and drawings and pastels and one thing and another as documentation for this big canvas, which I later saw in one of the museums in Belgium. It must have been at least twelve feet high, as I remember. So he had to go up and down a ladder to paint it, which must have been tiring. However he was used to doing huge canvases as murals. The king and queen are on horseback on a beach. It sounds like a huge canvas for just portraiture, but it had pictorial qualities, and Besnard was very fond of doing horses. Some of his most famous things include horses in the sunlight. First thing that brought him success was a canvas called Horses Fighting Flies, with an effect of bright sunlight. The strong movement of these restless animals in the sunshine was quite a brilliant performance, influenced by the Impressionist painters. Like so many academic painters, they latch on to anything that is despised at one period and then turn it to good account and make it academic for another period. [laughter] And that, of course, happened with Impressionism. The principles of Impressionism were afterwards used by a great many of the really very academic painters. There was quite a successful sculptor also that lived in the Via Margutta. His name was Sciortino, a man who got quite a stream, of commissions for monumental sort of things from various parts of the world. You'd go into his studio and there would be a work for some city in Russia, and later there'd be something being built up that was for Argentina. Apparently he was doing well. He was a good host and his evenings (he had evenings instead of afternoons) were very pleasant. Some artists, especially if they're doing things in quantity, such as watercolor painters and print makers, very often make their at-homes a way to sell their things. Again and again, you'll meet Americans over there who do that. It's not especially a European trick. Some friends of ours, for example, were both etchers, and they got along quite well. They stayed over there and made a living. He would go to the club, and she'd go to the woman's club and to the

church--wherever Americans congregated or were to be found--and she would meet them and invite them over You'd go there, and there'd be a crowd of people in their little apartment. Well, they'd come in one door and meet people they knew and have a very pleasant time meeting others. They would be served tea and nice cakes, and from there, the crowd was gently moved along through the next room and into the studio. First thing you know, they were looking at the prints, and so they repaid the hospitality by buying a print. [laughter] And these people seemed to live quite a pleasant life. But it was a sort of an aspect of art life that I personally didn't really appreciate. I couldn't see myself living that way, but still I couldn't criticize them for it. A much more distinguished man in Rome was Carlandi. He was really a brilliant watercolor painter and also a landscape painter in oil. He was very prolific. He worked from morning to dark, and at certain times of the year, when the flowers were in bloom in the Forum, he was down there painting watercolor after watercolor. Then he did other things besides, and he had a beautiful, big studio. He was very successful. He made his studio a showplace, and he sold a great deal of his work from his studio. There was a very brilliant academic painter, Sartorio, who did some of the murals for the Senate building in Rome. He also had a couple of magnificent studios in that building. It was rather a new building and well planned. I met him a couple of times and found him very interesting. But he went to the front and was captured and made prisoner and taken to Austria. There was an idea among people that I knew that he wasn't really captured, that he just let himself be captured. He wasn't in sympathy with the war. He had many friends in Vienna, and he was very glad, I think, to be there. He probably wasn't really a prisoner so much as being on some sort of restricted activity. Otherwise, he probably lived, from what I was told, a normal and happy life in Vienna during World War I. He was a brilliant draftsman and had great ability. I met [Leon] Bakst up at the Villa Medici. At that time I knew very little Italian and no French, but in spite of that, we got along quite nicely. The next day I met him at a little shop on the Corso, and he recognized me and came up and shook hands and wanted to know if I would like to see the set that was being done from, his design for one of his ballets that Diaghilev was putting on. It was the ballet of the Good Humored Ladies. It was given in Rome but I afterwards saw it in Paris and he had modified his design somewhat--making it less expressionistic. Diaghilev, at that time in Rome, was producing ballets that were trials. Some ballets he decided to keep on and others he discarded. A set by Giacomo Balla was not used. It was not really a "set"--it was an experimental ballet of lights and no dancers. Then the troupe went to Paris with a definite program. So quite a number of these things were produced in Rome, and the company was there for some time. Interesting people came to Rome who were connected with Diaghilev's ballet. People like Picasso and Stravinsky

were there. In fact, the first time I really heard Stravinsky was in Rome. There was some hall where they rehearsed their music for the ballet, and in some way, I got an invitation to a rehearsal. And we both went. We had to stand because, although it was a huge hall, there was not very much of anyplace to sit down. Besnard was there and right beside me was Picasso. I didn't speak to Picasso, because of my poor French. I'd like to have known him. At that rehearsal, Stravinsky played *Le Sacre du Printemps*. I looked over at Besnard, and Besnard's taste in music apparently wasn't up to that because he had a funny look on his face. [laughter] He looked at me and made a grimace--Stravinsky was still too much for him.

SCHIPPERS

You said the short story writer whose name you were trying to remember was Katherine Mansfield.

NUTTING

Katherine Mansfield, yes. Well one of our friends in Rome, whose name, curiously enough, was Roma [laughter], Roma Webster, was an intimate friend of Katherine Mansfield. We always hoped to know her, but, of course, she was in very delicate health when she had come to Rome at that time. Afterwards, when we were living in Paris, she was out in Fontainebleau, but she died not long afterwards. Roma Webster had a friend, Edward Storer. Edward Storer was an Englishman. Lately I've been trying to get in touch with him again, because somebody wrote me that, not too long ago, they had heard him talk over BBC, but I haven't succeeded so far. I'd like very much to get in touch with him because we saw a great deal of each other. He was a writer and a poet. He had some of his work published in England by the Egoist Press. One was a little volume of verse which were translations, in this case, from the Greek, and in that there were some little woodcuts and bits of decoration that I did. I'm sorry to say my copy got lost and I've never been able to get another one. One day Joyce turned to me and said, "I see you too have been published by the Egoist Press." I didn't know what he was talking about for a moment and then remembered my little woodcuts. Well, we saw a great deal of Storer and Roma Webster and were fond of them both. We used to go on excursions together. We had a great many interests in common and shared pleasure in things to be seen and to be done around Rome, so we enjoyed doing them together a great deal. In some way that I did not take the trouble to understand, he was given the choice of joining either the British or Italian forces. Anyway he joined the Italian army and turned up one day in the grey uniform of the Italian soldier. I got the idea that the Italians were somewhat embarrassed and didn't quite know what to do with him. He wound up in the censor's office where his job was reading mail from the front. He had funny stories about his work. He had to read stacks of letters written to loved ones and they often had flowers pressed

in the pages. He found these troublesome when trying to get through many letters, so he finally speeded up things by putting these letters in a separate pile, with a pile of the flowers beside it. Then when he finished a letter he would pick up a blossom or so at random and insert it before resealing it. He was stationed in Rome and we continued to see much of him. One day he turned up and had an idea. He said, "Let's start a magazine." Well, my wife and I thought that was a marvelous idea, but I thought, "Heavens above! Magazines are pretty expensive things to do." "Oh," he says, "I think we can do something. It doesn't have to be expensive, just so we get something printed. Because of this wartime, everything is so dismal. Let's have some activity that has some meaning to replace all of these stupid things that we have to think about these days." "So fine. How do we start?" "Well," he said, "I'll get materials. You and Helen provide some wood and linoleum cuts for it, and also you can get things. You don't have to pay for them. You explain to people what we're doing and get them to lend a block. It can be either wood or linoleum, so far as that goes, a process block. Not half-tone, of course, but a line cut." So sure enough, he found a printer and Storer's idea was that we'd have something striking by using an unusual paper. If we printed on butcher's paper it would make it attractive and unusual, and it would be perfectly good so far as practical purposes of printing were concerned. He found a paper that looked interesting. It had rather a roughish kind of texture. It literally was butcher's paper that was used at that time for wrapping meats. He took it down to the printer and had him try it out. It worked all right except that the printer complained because the paper had some sort of foreign matter, little bits of stones or pebbles or something in it, and was inclined to beat up his type rather badly, so he objected to that paper. So it finally came around to our using the ordinary cheap form of newsprint. I went out to my friends and told them what we were doing, and we got blocks--sometimes linoleum, sometimes wood. I was a little dubious about the use of linoleum in spite of the fact that the editions of our paper were quite small. I didn't think they would hold up, especially on an old press. I thought they would be beaten to pieces by the bang of the press. But I was quite wrong there. I cut the masthead in linoleum and it lasted perfectly through the three years that we kept the little paper going. Of course, the first problem we had to discuss again and again, with all sorts of arguments this way and that, was the name. We finally settled on the name "Atys." Atys was one of those gods like Adonis, one of the fertility gods, a Phrygian I believe. Curiously enough, Storer found a little altar (it was within the walls of Rome, although I've forgotten what hill it was on), which had been dedicated to Atys. When we finally got Atys launched, we went up and held a little ceremony at the altar to Atys, inaugurating the publication. It was improvised--there may have been a libation--maybe some chanting. Well, the way it worked out was that Storer

and my wife both had a certain amount of material of their own, but Storer had one quite nice idea. He had friends in various cities among the literary people, and he got them to write any art or literary news on a postcard--anything at all they could get on a postcard--and send it along. So in that way we got in touch with people in London and in Dublin and in New York, and I've forgotten what other places, and they came in various languages. Something I think came in German. I've forgotten where that was from, but it probably came from some Swiss correspondent, critic or someone of that sort. Then one of my friends in Italy was Enrico Prampolini. He was a painter. He was lame. He had hip trouble and limped but was quite talented, and he was interested. He belonged very definitely to the modern movement of art in Italy in those days. He wasn't completely a Futurist, but his things tended quite a bit towards the abstract. He was very good, and he always had his work done on time. He seemed to enjoy doing it, and you never had to go after him. Every month I would go around and pick up the new cover he made us. We'd print very often with two blocks, so we had two colors. Two colors would give three colors all together. So the general effect of our paper was quite good, and very often some of our contributions from some of the young writers and poets were excellent.

SCHIPPERS

What language was it printed in?

NUTTING

In all languages--English, French, Italian, and as I say, even German. It depended on where the news or contribution came from. If it came from Paris, it would be in French. If it came from Zurich, it would be in German. And, of course, the paper was largely in English and also things in Italian that we got there in Rome. I haven't seen Atys for years and years. I wonder where it is. I must get my copies out and look at them again and see what they look like. It was not a successful enterprise from the point of view of money (it wasn't meant to be), but very successful in the fact that we could do it at all and that we didn't lose much money on it. People seemed to enjoy it. It was something different I've forgotten how many subscriptions we had. But it was very simply done by this job printer who had a little place down in a basement kind of a place in an old building in Rome. He had this old press, and when he used to run out of type, he would change to a different font because he wasn't used to printing anything of much length. But the effect wasn't bad, and it was quite enjoyable. It was very successful in the way that it gave us contacts and communication with other people and, to my surprise, meant quite a lot afterwards when I went to Paris and found that there were people, even in Paris, who already knew my name.

1.8. TAPE NUMBER: IV, Side Two (November 5, 1965)

NUTTING

Well, my life in Rome from the very beginning was one of continual interest and fascination. Maybe because in spite of wartime the pleasure was greater. There were no tourists, and traffic was at a minimum. One had wonderful walks by moonlight through the shadows of almost empty streets. Baroque architecture by moonlight is thrilling. Acquaintances multiplied. At first, English and American and, little by little as the language barrier was overcome, Italian. It's not so easy for a foreigner to make friends quickly in a European country. But one thing impresses him eventually. Once people like you, once they're friendly, their friendship tends to be lasting. But, in the meantime, there will be maybe what seems to be a little diffidence. For one thing, they're not inclined to entertain in their own homes nearly as much as we are. At most, they would have an afternoon on which they would receive. There weren't cocktail parties. They would serve tea and very simple little refreshments, and they were really meetings for conversation, not the way in which we're used to which is to have long evenings or cocktail parties. And if we were invited out to a restaurant rather than to the people's home, we took it as a matter of course. I think that is especially true of people who are not too well off and live at home very, very simply. And if they did want to do something nice for you, they would take you out to dinner or some kind of a festivity. It's rather hard to pick and choose among the people we found most interesting in Rome. Some of them, of course, at the time had a certain reputation and since have become quite well known. Most of these people were people that I met rather casually. We had short conversations with people up at the Villa Medici when I used to go up there on their afternoons. They would serve tea in nice weather out in the gardens and in the wintertime, in inclement weather, inside. There was a great variety of people. It might be Cardinal Mercier or it might be Bakst. Designers and painters, sculptors, writers, musicians were among the people who were present at their gatherings. Some of the people were interesting. One that I've always wondered about quite a lot was a very charming old gentleman. He was an Alsatian. His name was Strohl-Fern. He must have been really very wealthy. Apparently as a young man, he had been quite ambitious to be a painter and had studied with [Charles] Gleyre. Gleyre was one of Renoir's first teachers--one of the few teachers that he had. As a boy, after he left his job as a china painter for Limoges, Renoir studied in Gleyre's studio. Gleyre didn't take him very seriously and maybe Renoir didn't learn too much. But Strohl-Fern had a beautiful villa. It was, as I remember it, quite a good-sized estate just outside the Porta del Popola, which is one reason that make me think that he must have been a man of decided wealth. By this time that property, I imagine, would be nearly invaluable. He was very interested in art and artists in a very nice and practical way. On the grounds of his estate he put up little studios, very simple

places, where one could work and live. It was a little bit like what Huntington Hartford did here at Santa Monica. Strohl-Fern always had young painters there. Sometimes they'd be Italian; sometimes they'd be foreigners. They would stay for a period and be able to do their work in peace or carry out some projects that they had on hand without worry. The old gentleman used to come to see us once in a while. He played the piano quite well. He would sit down and play a bit. I especially remember little excerpts from Wagner that he used to play, and he would talk art and discuss things. I'd say he had more of the feeling of the southern German. There was nothing the least bit Prussian about him. He was a very amiable, pleasant sort of a person. At least, he was in the little contact I had with him and from what I knew of him. Many Italian artists at that time were under the influence of Futurists; the influence of [Emilio] Marinetti was very strong. There were other movements in Italy as there were in France at that time--croups with different philosophies and ideas. The Futurist movement was still rather dominant, though during World War I. I didn't know many of the people in that movement. Of course, most of them were young fellows and were by that time in the army, and some of them were lost. Probably the most talented member of the Futurist movement then was [Umberto] Boccioni. Boccioni's work is still something that we feel is the work of a very genuine talent, both in painting and in a rather remarkable piece of sculpture that he did. He died in the war. Some were still in Rome and were working. Giacomo Balla was one of the strongest figures in some ways in the Futurist movement, though he was an older man than the others. Probably for that reason, he was not in the army. He was a very accomplished painter, academically to begin with, and it's interesting that a man in middle life should throw so much overboard so completely and with the enthusiasm that Balla did. His most famous work, which is reproduced again and again in the history of art, is of a woman walking with a little dog following. It's a little bit like the idea of [Marcel] Duchamps' *Nude Descending The Staircase*. It's a multiple figure. This little dog is trotting along, with a haze of little legs under him, and the feet of the woman and the swinging leash are multiplied in multiple exposure, so to speak. It gives an amusing sense of movement. The idea of movement and sound was something that the Futurists seemed to be most desirous of getting into their work, and they tried to evoke it by means of dynamic form and color. They wanted to express more than simply the aspect of things and other feelings that we get from life experience. Balla was also interested in doing something for the ballet and the theater. One evening in his studio he showed us a model for some play or maybe a ballet--I can't remember now exactly what it was--but it was quite an elaborately constructed model. He was trying to explain what he wanted to get into it, and he had arranged some lights that he could turn off and on by pressing a button. He explained that he

wanted his design and his color to get the effect and sound of a storm, and he even tried to evoke that with his little model. He pressed a button which gave the idea of flashes of lightning. He turned off the lights; then he'd press the button and he'd get a flash of lightning. And back behind a screen, he rattled a big piece of tin that made a thunderous kind of a noise. [laughter] It was pretty good, but the real delight was the man's excitement and youthful enthusiasm. He was a sophisticated, educated man, but in demonstrating his work, with his flashing lights and noisy sheet of metal, and in the interest and boundless energy that he poured into what he was doing, one felt a childlike simplicity that was part of his strength. Prampolini was one of our most faithful collaborators on *Atys*. He seemed always happy to do anything that was asked of him, and he did quite a number of cuts for us, most of which we printed in two colors. After leaving Italy, I lost track of him. I did see his name occasionally during the Fascist period. Apparently, he had success as a painter and became well enough known, because not long ago I saw a notice of his death in *Time* magazine. But just what he did after I left Italy, I don't know. I'm a bit surprised at his fame, for although he was a dedicated worker and highly articulate, he was not strong. He was lame. He had trouble with his hip and he walked with some difficulty, but it didn't hold him back from being an active and interesting artist. Fortunato Depero at that time was very active and one of the real Futurists, in that he was quite an uninhibited worker for his cause. He could be dadaistic in his behavior and his talk, and he was willing to try out any idea no matter how wild it might seem. He'd plunge right in, whether it was writing poems or making speeches or painting pictures or whatever. He had quite a lot of the more conventional idea of the Futurist as being a wild man in art. But it wasn't at all true of people like Prampolini and Giacomo Balla. Those were three artists of the modern movement that I really saw something of. There were some others, and I think that at that time they would have meant something to me if I had been able to associate with them. None of the artists that I met in Rome did I ever ferret out. There are a few occasions in my life when I've done that--and usually very successfully. I've seen the work of a man and I'd say, "We have something in common. I'd like to know that fellow. We have something to talk about." And sure enough we did. And the few times I've done that, as I say, I used to be very successful, and we remained good friends and found quite a lot of pleasure and companionship. But, in Rome, I don't remember doing it except in the case of Gordon Craig when I walked up and spoke to him. And from that little chance meeting came a friendship that I enjoyed for some years. The movement at that time would have meant something if I had known some of the group. Giorgio di Chirico was the chief exponent of *Scuola Metafisica*. He denies any value, however, in his early work. Apparently it makes him very angry to this day for people to pay large

prices for things he did in his twenties. But things he did afterwards, they don't think are of special importance. It's a very strange phenomenon in the history of art for a man with the talent he had and the influence that he had to suddenly go through this extraordinary negation of the whole spirit of his early work. The others were men like Giacomo Carra. He and several others were very interesting painters and remained so, more so than di Chirico. Sculptors, of course, were very numerous and some of them were extremely interesting. In Via Margutta where I lived, there were quite a number of them. Sculpture is in the Italian blood. A friend in the Via Margutta was Felice Carena, a very talented painter. He had his studio not far from mine, and his friendship was valuable to me both as man and artist. He was a good critic. He was taken into the army not long after we went to Rome, so I only saw him occasionally after that. Later he became director of the Academy of Fine Arts at Florence, and I think he won a Carnegie prize. Ferruccio Ferrazzi was another very talented painter that I saw much of. He was not a member of what you would call the real modern movement at the time. Prampolini and Balla and Depero and people who were influenced by di Chirico, of course, certainly were; whereas Ferruccio Ferrazzi and Carena were looked upon as extremely modern by the academic artists of the time. Carena was very much interested in the painting of Gauguin and I think he worked for a certain synthesis of form and design which was inspired by Gauguin. But his painting was much more impasto and, in some ways, more romantic than Gauguin's. Ferruccio Ferrazzi had been a prize winner at the academy. His work afterwards scandalized his professors terribly, but it would look rather normal nowadays. We can't look upon it as anything especially revolutionary. Sciortino, one of our best friends, was really an academic sculptor. I say academic--he was really a sort of a professional maker of such things as monuments and portrait busts and did very well. He used to have his weekly teas, often with interesting guests. The most colorful person that I met in Rome, the one that I remember most vividly, was an Englishwoman. She came to our studio, seemed to like the atmosphere, and we used to see quite a lot of her. She had the German name of Stanharding-Krayl. I imagine her English name was Harding, and it was hyphenated with Krayl. She was not at all the sort of person you'd expect her to be when you first met her, if you had known anything of her background. She was a rather small, rather elegant little person. She dressed simply, but with exquisite taste. She had a plaster cast of her head in Paris, and when she wanted a hat, she wrote her modiste that she wanted a hat of this sort or that sort, and sure enough this woman apparently could use this cast. I suppose what she had was a cast of a portrait bust which gave the lines of her face and form of her head, and the hats were successful. Her complexion was very good and she was a well-groomed, quiet sort of a person. So it was amazing, when you commenced to learn

something of her life. She was from an English family. Her father was, I think, a minister for a sect known as the Plymouth Brothers. She, as a young woman, rebelled against that atmosphere and went to London. The first thing she did was to get a position as private secretary to somebody, a position she held for some time. Then she got wanderlust. She really had wanderlust to an extraordinary degree. She went to Italy and made friends there with Käthe Kollwitz, I feel that there's no modern woman artist that can very well be put ahead of Käthe Kollwitz. She was not a painter. She was a very accomplished draftsman, drew marvelously well and with a great vitality and a very deep passionate feeling. Stanharding met Käthe Kollwitz in Italy and they decided on a walking trip together. They took the trip up the west coast of Italy through the Maremma, which especially in those days was rather a rough part of Italy. Il Duce drained the marshes of the Maremma so the malaria that had infested that part of Italy ever since, I imagine, the fall of Rome was gotten rid of. Now it must be a different sort of country. But then it was rather wild and a poor part of Italy. They took knapsacks and slept in the towers along the coast. There are still many towers in much of Europe that were put up for protecting the coast from piracy and other invasion. The Martello Tower that appears in James Joyce's Ulysses, I believe, was that sort of a tower on the coast of Ireland. Along the coast of Italy, there'd be these towers and they made good use of those places. They were at times more or less in ruins, but they were shelter. They traveled with their packs and made a trip, apparently, very satisfactory to both of them. I never met Käthe Kollwitz, but I heard quite a lot about her, especially from Stanharding. Then came the idea that Stanharding had to make some more money. And, in a quiet way, she seemed to know everybody and had many friends. She went to Florence with some introductions, probably from friends in London, and she solved this problem of raising a little cash by getting a lot of Japanese lanterns and decorating them. I have a little sketch by her which shows that she really had a nice feeling for drawing with the oriental brush. She learned to draw rather well, but that's about the only thing of the sort I ever saw of hers. Anyway, somebody gave her a garden party and all of the English colony in Florence was invited. It was very successful, and she was financed for another adventure. I don't know if it was only the money from that, because she also did other things. She corresponded rather regularly. She had a certain amount of writing she could count on in London magazines and papers. So she was a versatile sort of person with talents for drawing and writing. What she did then was quite astonishing. She went to China, and in order to know the Chinese, she steered clear of any foreign colonies. She tried to be, really, with Chinese people. She even went further than that. She went up the Yangtze Kiang with the natives in native boats. I imagine that with her travels and her talent as a writer, she did well. I'm sorry that I never saw any of her writing. I

might at least have gotten some newspapers or magazines. Now I think I was certainly a chump not to have done that, but it wasn't until later that I realized what a uniquely interesting character she was. Well, she did that same thing in India. She walked through India--walked? hiked!--sleeping in rest houses of some sort. I've forgotten now exactly how she described it. English people are fond of being really adventurous that way. I knew one Englishwoman who had much that same sort of spirit and even got herself a rank of officer in the Bulgarian army or some strange thing. But she looked it. She was tall and she was rather tanned and rather weather-beaten and you could imagine that of her. But you could not imagine Stanharding-Krayl doing all of these things. She had a very quiet and sweet way, but she could take the world by the tail. So she was in Rome then for several months. She was very fond of swimming in the Tiber, and she'd come down to the studio and want to know if I didn't want to go out for a swim. Well, in those days, there weren't any facilities for using the Tiber for swimming and water sports or anything of that sort. Going north of the Porta del Popolo up the river, there was a beach that had been roughly prepared for that sort of thing. They put up little rough shelters where you could dress and undress. We'd go there and have a swim in the river. As I remember the Tiber, it is a bit like a miniature Missouri River. It's rather muddy and it's not too attractive, but it's perfectly good for swimming. We had quite an enjoyable time on these little trips we'd make. Helen was not a swimmer; so she never went along. The time came when we sensed that she had some other project in mind, because she was bedeviling the people at the British Embassy to get into Germany. She was separated from her husband, Krayl, who was a German, but we couldn't understand what she was driving at. It seemed that she would go there to finish the separation or divorce from her husband in Germany. Well, she became rather of a joke with people we would meet from the embassy or the consulate because she was so persistent and would not let anybody alone they just couldn't get rid of her. She was going to get into Germany, and by Jove, she did. The last time we saw her, Gillian Fothergill and ourselves and Stanharding had a pleasant dinner together at the San Carlo Restaurant on the Corso. During the dinner, Stanharding turned to Gillian and said, "Do you mind if I sleep on your balcony?" Gillian Fothergill was staying at the Hotel Russie at the time, which was one of the better-known hotels of Rome, and somebody sleeping on her balcony seemed a little bit unconventional, but she said, "Why, yes, certainly." So Stanharding said, "it'll be very nice because I'm going to leave very early in the morning." As we went out of the restaurant, she reached behind the door and picked up a German knapsack, one of these sacks the Germans always carry on their walking trips. Coming into the restaurant, she had tossed it behind the door, and on leaving, she picked it up and slung it on her shoulder. She said, "Well, when your pack is on your back, the fun begins."

We didn't hear of her for a long time and wondered how she got along. Then, all of a sudden, in the London Daily Mail, we read she was back in London. She didn't go to Germany to get a divorce. It wasn't anything of the sort. Where she was headed for was Russia, and she got to Russia. I imagine she might have gotten along all right except for unforeseen events. There was another woman in Russia, American newspaperwoman, and they were both under suspicion--from what I heard from newspapermen at the time. Apparently, this American girl, to save her own skin, managed to throw suspicion onto Stanharding. Well, the result was that Stanharding was in prison for quite a long time. That was just after the famous days that shook the world, when things were pretty tough. I don't know just how much is known about the history of that story, or how much could be found out, but I understood she was under sentence of death part of the time she was there. Anyway, she was eventually released. I met someone who met her in London and who said she had changed a great deal, that she looked very worn and her hair had greyed quite a lot. The experience had been rather terrible for her. At least she survived it. What happened after that, I don't know, except that in this same resistant, strange way of hers, she commenced to bedevil the Foreign Office in London for some kind of damages or reparations, or whatever they might call it, for what she'd gone through. Somebody that I met said that she had gotten something out of the situation anyway, in a money way. One might expect that I'd know more about the student life of Rome during that period of my efforts, but I don't. All of the artists I knew were no longer students, except for quite a number whom I'd meet and talk to in cafes. There would be little groups, and there would be conversation, discussion and arguments in various languages. The fact is that for a long time, although Rome was not like Paris and Munich and other cities that became cities of art, it did seem to be a city to which scholarships, fellowships were given. The academies of the various countries were rather important; all countries had an art academy there. The English had one, both for art and classical studies. The French government awarded the Prix de Rome to students of the fine arts with four years' residence in Rome at the Villa Medici. The Spanish had part of a former convent where prize-winning students from the Academy of Madrid were sent for more study and work. There was also a German academy. Most of the academies were government institutions, but the American Academy was not. But they have a Very beautiful academy and give fellowships in art, architecture and classical study. Some of the boys I knew from the American Academy--a couple of them stayed in the same pension we did--were doing work in the classics. One was preparing a text of Heliodorus. He used to work every day in the Vatican Library. The other was a Latinist. I've forgotten what he was doing in Rome. So that was rather the extent of my association with students, with people who were more or less in the same boat that I was. One

young fellow that I enjoyed in his way was very talented. Maybe it was not that he was talented, but he was such a dedicated artist that by sheer application he was making good. He was a Mexican with a scholarship from the Academia San Carlos in Mexico City. He was Mexican and he was mostly Indian, if not entirely so. He had a little room in Rome where he was working. Mexico didn't have an academy; they simply had money to send him to live in Rome for a certain period. He used to start work at eight o'clock every morning; he was a tremendous worker. He had a very disorderly room full of all sorts of rubbish, paintings, sketches and drawings. He'd wake up to his alarm clock, roll over and light the alcohol under the coffee pot. Then he'd get up and start drawing. The kind of study he was submitting himself to rather interested me. It was unusual. He would never choose or set up a still life or think too much about the subject. He'd simply look around among all this disorder in his room and he'd find maybe a book and a pipe or something lying on the table. He'd choose a certain section of this, and for the rest of the morning, for four hours, he would draw that very meticulously. He acquired a surprising skill in very accurate and very minute drawing, highly finished in form and also in subtlety of tone. The tonal values of his drawings were remarkable. He'd draw an old leather-bound book and handle the tonal value so that you felt the worn and dusty character of it. That sort of drawing he could do astonishingly well. Then he would go out and get himself some lunch. The afternoon he would spend out-of-doors, drawing things that he saw around him. Sometimes it would be people, sometimes landscapes. He worked from a model to a certain extent. He was trying to do portraits, but his painting, curiously enough, was bad. He simply seemed to have no feeling, no taste for painting. But he had a faculty for close observation and accurate copying of nature. He felt his limitations very keenly. When I last saw him, he was getting almost neurotic because he felt that he was hemmed in. He had this ability, but he had no special use for it. He envied the people who were doing creative and imaginative things. When he tried to do something imaginative, it would simply be silly. And he knew it was. He didn't know what to do. All he could do was to sit down and draw another still life or go out and draw another peasant sitting on the Spanish Steps or something he could copy faithfully. A limited sort of illustration was about the only field in which he could be of any interest or of any value to anybody. There were also some South American boys who used to come on scholarships, or other means, and take studios for their work. Our neighbor, Salas, was from Ecuador. He painted steadily and made rather beautiful drawings. And there was our very good friend Raoul de Moulin Ferenzona. He had a combination French and Italian name. Coming from my studio one day, I found that the studio next to me, which had been empty, was suddenly occupied. So I made myself known to my new neighbor. He turned out to be a delightful person. He

was an Italian and did etchings. He didn't paint much except for a fair amount of work in watercolor and tempera. But he was a fine printmaker. He had been living in Vienna at the beginning of the war and had to leave his press and his belongings behind and get back to Rome. But he was an amazingly resourceful boy; at very little expense he built his own press. And to anyone who knows anything of chalcographic printing, that is an impressive accomplishment, even for one having means to buy adequate parts and material. He went to the flea market and various other junk yards and found a big wooden roller that was made of hardwood that served very well. It is the most important element. Then with odds and ends of hardware salvaged here and there, mostly little parts of machinery, including two from the brakes of old horse-cabs such as they used in those days, he put this stuff together and made, *mirabile dictu*, a printing press on which he did beautiful work. Well, anybody who knows anything about copperplate printing knows that a good press is of prime importance. It's impossible to do anything unless you can do adequate printing. Not only was he able to make his prints but also to build his press. There was just a touch of the Da Vinci about him, because he was more than just a conventional artist. He could do many things. And he was a delightful conversationalist, and he also had literary ability. He wrote short stories and poems. He got back from Vienna obviously with very little, and I wondered how he was going to support himself. But he rented this little studio and got himself started. He made a portfolio of his etchings, and he always had them with him. It wasn't long before he had entree to many places, and he always had his little folio of etchings with him and people bought them. They didn't buy them out of charity either, because they were things people liked. Also he soon got commissions for portraits in drypoint. He had an unconventional style in his portraits that appealed to many. So he lived simply, but nicely, through the wartime. He was too old for the army, so he was not drafted. He's another one of those people I often wonder about--what he did after the war, what degree of success he might have had in better times. I never knew any of the young men at the Villa Medici, the French Academy. Eugene Savage and Ezra Winter at the American Academy I saw quite often. They afterwards became quite successful mural painters in this country. Eugene Savage became head of the School of Fine Arts at Yale and did a great deal of mural painting. Well, all that I've mentioned to you heretofore was independent of my life and activity in the American Red Cross, which was my real contact with the war and, understandably, both a formative and reformatory experience to me. I got accustomed to a greater variety of people and situations. Up to that time, I was inclined to move in a small circle of friends, to see much of a few people with whom I was happy, but not to be out among people. In Italy, in the war years I became more aware of the world of people, their strangeness and variety. Once I had this feeling,

life became much more interesting. And I think one thing that contributed to it is that in the first place, there is a general feeling of warmth and good will (at least I've found that) in Italy, maybe more so than nearly any other country. There is more spontaneity and good humor. Near us lived a well-known (though still fairly young) figure painter, the Baron Shauensee. He did attractive portraiture, probably his main source of income. His father had been an officer in the Swiss Guard at the Vatican, and the boy was born in Rome and raised and educated there. He was really quite Italian. I used to see quite a lot of him. He was a rather successful portrait painter. He also painted some subject pictures in an old-fashioned sort of way. He was an interesting, cultivated man, and was a good musician as well as being an accomplished painter. After I left Rome and went to Paris (I'm a terrible letter writer and I don't keep up my correspondence at all well) I lost track of him and his activities. I lost contact with most of my friends in Rome except a few with whom I did have correspondence. But one day, after I had been in Paris for years, there was a ring at my door. I went to the door and here to my amazement was Baron Shauensee. I shook hands very enthusiastically. We were glad to see each other. He came in and sat down at the piano and played a little bit and we talked and reminisced. I got out some cookies and vermouth or something, I've forgotten what, and made coffee. We really had quite a gay time for an hour or so. It was just as though we hadn't been parted. We just picked up where we left off and everything was quite wonderful. Then he got up and we shook hands and said good-bye, and that's the last I've ever heard of him. But that was the sort of easy, spontaneous warmth he had. I have great admiration for the French--what intelligent, informed person hasn't? But all peoples have some outstanding and attractive characteristics. After living with the Italian people for some four years, I left, impressed, among other things, with their patience and good humor. They may blaze up easily--maybe the south Italian is more inclined to be impulsive and hot-headed--but when you're standing in line, for example, they're not elbowing their way to the front. They await their turn, quietly and cheerfully. Of course those were in many ways happy days and maybe my memories are a bit colored by nostalgia. [I look back on the period as one of great potential maturation, much of which should have been attained years earlier. However, as I look back I think for one thing I was very lucky. Maybe lack of worldly wisdom was compensated for by some evidence on my part of good will and good intentions. So far as my work was concerned it seemed to be acceptable--at least it was never criticized. But another thing concerned me, something more intangible than my routine job. In much of my work, I was out on my own, sometimes I was in places where foreigners were seldom seen, especially ones in uniform and a uniform makes you feel you represent something. You are bound to go away leaving some sort of an image

not so much of yourself but of the American Red Cross, even the Americans. Well, in spite of my very frequent feelings of inadequacy I can look back gratefully to very many experiences of kindness and generosity. I got a lecture once from some important townsman who seemed to think I had come on a sort of charity mission and seemed to want to inform me on how much they were doing, and were capable of doing for themselves. However, when he got it all off his chest and I had made my little speech, everything went fine and the meeting adjourned in high good humor.] Every day I spent long hours dealing with people of all sorts and classes. But it simply strengthened that same feeling I had and a certain affection I've always had for the Italians since those days. The general effect there, of course, was more or less psychological. It's part of growing up, war and so forth, meeting more people, being in contact with them. Though Rome was not a real center of art activity such as Paris was at that time, the movements there were very much alive; very intelligent, very interesting work was being done in all directions. So I had plenty of things to nourish me, artistically and intellectually, and in many other ways, and the great richness of the past of Italy, of course, was something that could never be completely absorbed. Then there was also contemporary life and activity, which was quite inspiring and stimulating. While I lived in Rome, I used to get accepted at the exhibitions pretty regularly, which was a certain amount of encouragement. I didn't try for any very formal study. Up to that time, I had quite a lot of faith in schooling. I gradually lost a good deal of that. But really on account of the war, I looked forward to staying on and getting at least one year in Paris at one of the good schools there. For that reason, what work I did in Rome, I did on my own and more under the influence of my friends and the advice of friendly, fellow painters than by taking any course at the academy. Well, when I look back on the work (I haven't very much left) I'm a little bit surprised. One of my friends in Paris was the negro painter, H.O. Tanner, and he said it was always very distressing to look at one's early work. Either you were so embarrassed that you didn't do better or else you feel so sad that you haven't made any progress. I think there's quite a bit in that, because very often I run across something I did when I was quite young and I wonder why I had that vision, that intuition at the time, but for some reason didn't have faith enough in it to follow it through. I think that's quite an important part in one's development. The ones who were really lucky were those whose intuition obsessed them. I think of a painter like Delacroix or Van Gogh--people who were quite different in style. The fires simply can't be put out. But if a person is inclined to be rather too rational about his work and tries to do creative work and to subscribe to some idea simply because he thinks it is the right thing instead of what he really feels it should be deep down, that's dangerous. I don't think anybody is completely free from that conflict. I've been studying

Delacroix lately, his writing as well as his life and work, and I discover something I didn't quite realize before. Looking at his work, you feel that from the very beginning he knew exactly what he was after and went at it wholeheartedly. Which in a sense he did, but he did it because he had certain support from talented people, like his friend Gericault, for example. With others, it was the same idea. They gave each other moral support. But as a young man, you can see that what we roughly speak of as the conflict between the classical and romantic was something in Delacroix's life. In the painting world, he was almost the epitome of the man painting for the pure joy of painting; at least, that's the general idea. Nobody showed more pleasure in actual painting than Renoir did, and that is one of his great appeals. You feel that he had such thorough and complete enjoyment in everything he did, and that is one thing that makes him very popular and extremely attractive. His work radiates that. People don't realize that even after he had a certain amount of reputation, he went through a very difficult period of trying to find himself in what seemed to be somewhat of an impasse of the Impressionist movement, of reverting to Ingres and to a classical feeling. And it took very hard work, very severe discipline. So when I look back at my early work sometimes I'm dreadfully ashamed of it and I don't want much of it to survive. I don't think that anything that I did as a young person would be looked upon as the work of a talented boy at all. Sometimes youngsters will do very interesting things, but I doubt if I often did. I used to draw a great deal, but my drawings were not at all distinguished. In fact, they were inclined to be rather weak. That period in Rome--which I think I suggested when I spoke of the American Academy--was a period of frustration in what is usually spoken of as "finding yourself," [a period of vague disquiet, a feeling somewhat like that of Dante, of being "lost in a dark wood," of longing common to everybody for a Vergil, for a master, for an exponent of divine wisdom. Although after choosing the path of art I hoped for material reward to a reasonable extent and was far from despising what medium of fame and fortune might eventually be granted me, I believe I am honest in saying that I was above all seeking a way of life. While still a teenager I was beginning to suffer from disappointment with religion as I found it usually presented. However a sort of faith gradually took hold as a compensation for the disappointment and I found it expressed in some words of Goethe. I don't know where to find the quotation but what he wrote was to the attest that: He who has art and has science Religion too has he. If he has not art and has not science Let him religious be. So far I have not really denied religion; I am in a state of feeling that in its essential purity it will be found in the deepest recesses of what is commonly spoken of as the "soul" to have a common source with science and art.] Well, I'll say the unfortunate thing is that very often natural feelings and intuitions come to the surface, but are promptly

mistrusted or, still worse, receive prompt discouragement from the outside. Education is not putting stuff into a person, it's drawing something out of them. Educare, the verb, means to lead out, to find out what is there and let it have existence and be realized before it is questioned and analyzed.

1.9. TAPE NUMBER: V, Side One (November 8, 1965)

NUTTING

With our entrance into World War I, being American, I became concerned about entering the army, but I didn't know exactly what to do or how to go about it because I was living in Europe. I was somewhat an expatriate in a way, not connected with my home base. But my question was more or less solved for me. We used to go to Capri in the summertime for our vacation or when we had any spare time, we'd go down for a week, sometimes for longer. We had many friends on Capri after a few visits, and some of my happiest memories are of Capri. Also I associate Capri with the beginning of my Red Cross work. It was there I made the acquaintance of a man who afterwards became a very warm friend--Richard Wallace. It's rather worthwhile to mention Richard Wallace to anyone interested in James Joyce, especially if he has read Richard Ellmann's life of Joyce, which was published fairly recently, in which his name appears frequently. He was part of that entourage of Joyce's in Paris which included ourselves and others. When I first saw Richard Wallace, I was sitting on a terrace in Capri with some friends. It was part of what we would call a patio back of their house, and you could look down in a little street below where people were going up and down the hill. I was watching all of the various types of natives and visitors as they went up and down this little street. And I caught sight of a man who was rather tall and had gray hair--rather prematurely gray--coming down the street, I thought he was a very attractive-looking guy and rather interesting. Sometimes you see somebody and their face impresses you but you will never see them again. I thought I'd rather like to know that man. It was just a thought that passed through my mind, you know, that if I had an opportunity, I was sure he'd be a very pleasant person to know and whom I would enjoy. There was something about him that suggested we just might have much in common. Well, after our visit with these people we went on to a cocktail party later in the afternoon. And who should be there but this man. So we got acquainted and found that he was Richard Wallace. We did have much in common and it was the beginning of a warm friendship that continued until his death some years later in Paris. It turned out he was taking a sort of a sabbatical leave. He started out in life as a commercial artist in Boston, and from Boston, he went to Chicago. He and Joe [Joseph C.] Leyendecker shared a studio and living quarters and did commercial work in Chicago. Joe

Leyendecker afterwards was probably the most successful commercial artist that we've had in this country. He did an enormous amount of advertising illustrations and before the days of Norman Rockwell many covers for the Saturday Evening Post. Well, Wallace and Leyendecker worked for a couple of years or so, I don't think it was very long, but both of them were quite able and really clever boys and made quite a good living. But they dreamt of going to Paris to study art and Wallace told me the story of how they came about making the trip together. Whatever money they could save from their week's earnings, they'd stash away someplace in the room, most any old place--under the mattress, in a drawer, or in some kind of receptacle--and leave it there. Finally they decided that maybe they had enough to make the trip, so they had a housecleaning, retrieved their cash, counted it and decided that they had enough to spend a year studying in Paris. So they went to Paris and worked at the Julian Academy under Jean Paul Laurens, and at the end of the year, Leyendecker went back and went to town with his commercial art. Wallace stayed on in Paris and did illustration for Hachette et Cie. Hachette et Cie is an old publishing concern in Paris, a publisher of magazines, books and all sorts of things. He worked for them and did quite a lot of illustration, especially for a magazine that they published, a very popular family magazine called Lectures Pour Tous. Then they also gave him a type of editorial job in connection with the company, and eventually, he became art editor for Hachette and Company. In as old and prosperous a concern as Hachette, I imagine it was a pretty good job. Somewhat late in life, he met an English girl who was over there with a theatrical company and married her--Lillian Wallace. They hadn't been married very long when I met them in Capri. Due to the war and I think with some other ideas in mind, which he later developed rather successfully, he took time off, the good part of a year, and spent most of it on Capri and in traveling. Afterwards he was in Rome for some time and then returned to Paris before we did. The reason that I always think of him in connection with the Red Cross is that one day on Capri, I got a telegram from Rome, asking me if I would report to the Red Cross headquarters in Rome. Well, it didn't explain very much what they wanted, and so I took this telegram to Wallace and said, "What do you suppose they want of me? They don't seem to explain what they want me for." But he said, "Yes, I have the same message. We'll go together." So we went back up to Rome right away together and went around to where the temporary commission of the Red Cross was then established in some offices. We found the major who had signed this telegram, and I went in to see him. He thanked me for coming, and he explained to me why he had sent for me and Wallace and quite a large number of other people. They had gotten the names of a number of Americans who spoke Italian well enough for all practical purposes and who could conduct ordinary conversations. That was about as far as my

Italian ever got, because I never really studied enough to write correct and good Italian. But I did have some facility at speaking Italian, and, of course, I could read it fairly well. And then he explained what he wanted me for. He said, "I want you to inspect hospitals." Well, that gave me rather a jolt and I said, "Well, there's been some mistake because I know absolutely nothing about hospitals." And he said, "Oh, well, that makes no difference." (That was another surprise!) And I said, "Well, if that's the way you feel about it, why, I'm quite willing." What it amounted to was that there were seven of us who were chosen from among the American people who were living in Italy at that time to visit hospitals because the Red Cross was supplying all the necessities of hospital work in quite a large quantity, but not through the Italian Red Cross. They sent a representative everywhere, even to dressing stations on the front that needed something. The representative would interview the people and get their request and then send back a report. The report was necessary largely because the requests varied so. And I discovered very quickly why. I'd have to go to a place. I'd find a hospital that was beautifully run and was very clean and efficient and seemed to have an excellent staff. I'd explain why I came, and they would be very modest about their requirements. The reason for supplying them was that after the retreat of Caporetto, when the Austrians swept down from across the mountains down toward the Piave in northern Italy, the Italians lost an immense amount of hospital equipment. A large proportion of their hospital facilities were up there in the north and they lost them very suddenly. So a great many were in rather desperate straits. So that was, as I understood it, the primary reason for this help that was given to Italian hospitals. Sometimes we'd find an excellent little hospital that was struggling along with very little. I'd explain why I came and asked what they needed, and they would say, "We're doing fairly well, but we are rather badly in need of autoclaves. It would be very nice if you could give us that." Of course, we would be very glad to. The very next place I'd go to would be a higgledy-piggledy old palazzo or something, where they were caring for the soldiers in a very inefficient and a very careless sort of way and maybe not too clean. I would go around inspecting everything--operating rooms, kitchens and everything that was on my list of things to look out for. And these people would say, "Oh, yes, what we need is a truck. It would be marvelous if we had a truck. Then we could do...." They thought the Americans were there with plenty of money and materials, and that all they had to do was ask for it and they'd get it. So, you had to send the report back to Rome giving a pretty good picture of the relative needs of things. That was quite a difficult thing to do. It didn't mean that I had to be a doctor or a man especially up in medicine. What happened was that before I was sent out on this, I was sent out with a hospital man, a doctor, with a thorough knowledge of everything and we worked pretty hard for two or

three weeks studying how hospitals were run, what they were doing, what you could expect, what you could not expect, what conditions should be and so forth and so on. Then, on the basis of that, the Rome office would supply the hospital. So Wallace and I went out and ordered our uniforms and started out on our work the same day. I was sent up first to Genoa and then to all the little towns from Genoa up to Ventimiglia to all of the military hospitals along the coast there. I've forgotten where Wallace went, but he did similar sort of work. One thing that I was rather grateful for--though it wasn't kept up--was that the first uniforms that they gave us in the Red Cross were of the English cut, with an American insignia on it. Well, they changed that pretty quickly, because in the distance you looked like an English officer. But the English uniform was so much better looking and so much more comfortable and so much more practical than the wretched ones that were designed for the American Army, with their tight collars and funny-type jackets and no pockets. The English officer's uniform had these beautiful big pockets. When your uniform was nicely pressed, it looked elegant, but when you didn't have to look elegant, you had plenty of room to stow all sorts of things in the pockets. And on hot days you were very glad to have the open collar. So I went onto Genoa and reported there to the general of the armada in Genoa, and with all the previous arrangements of the Red Cross, everything worked smoothly. They would give me a car and a chauffeur and very often an escort, just a man to help me out in case I got into some difficulty with the language or difficulties of any sort. They'd send along a young lieutenant or somebody who was very glad to have a little vacation. And it was pleasant to have a little company. Well, I took the work maybe a little bit too seriously--I felt I just had to make good. Something about its being war work was rather sobering, you know. It was very serious to me and you just had to get right in there. I worked hard, especially if I had an escort, and I used to wear him half to death because I got him up so early in the morning. I'd be out on the road before daylight. It was a rather unnecessary bother sometimes for the hospital because I'd have to rouse people out of bed and go around and poke my nose into everything, without seeming to, which wasn't too easy. But it always worked out quite nicely with a little tact and if you didn't act too officious. If you took your time and discussed problems--"May I visit your hospital?"--they'd show you everything. Sometimes, that involved quite a waste of time because every officer in the Italian Red Cross was a doctor. So when I said I was from the American Red Cross, they supposed, of course, that I was a doctor, and there seemed to be no way of convincing them that I wasn't even a medical student or somebody connected with medicine. So I'd have to examine their operations carefully and comment on the good work they were doing and look at X-rays and comment on this, that and the other thing. They'd ask me advice about something and I'd have no

advice to give, of course, and I'd have to slide by very often by pretending ignorance of the language or something. It got even worse when they'd be especially enthusiastic and wanted to be especially hospitable. Often the military hospital would be a wing or section of the building of a civic hospital, and after getting through with these poor boys and the soldiers, they'd rush me into the other wards where I'd have to look at all sorts of troubles and problems of the civilian population. Then I had to really work up a means of getting out of it all. Well, I finished my first assignment just before Christmas in 1917. I rushed back to Genoa. My wife met me in Genoa and we spent Christmas Eve together in Genoa. I just barely got through in time to do that. That trip from Genoa to the French border was maybe the most pleasant experience in my work. For one thing, there were many beautiful places on the way. Those little towns, the places where I stayed, were tourists' resorts. There were a lot of English people who liked to winter in Italy, and a good many of them were still there. People were very nice to me. I'd go down to dinner at the hotel and, after dinner, the first thing I'd know I'd look up and somebody would be standing there. They'd say, "Pardon me, but you're the first American officer we've seen here, and, of course, it's quite a thrill to see a representative of your country." They'd think I was English on account of my uniform and then they'd see the insignia that I was an American and they couldn't quite make that out. Then they'd invite me for liqueurs and coffee afterwards. And very often, I'd spend the rest of the evening quite pleasantly. At this town (I've forgotten the name), an orderly hunted me up at one of the places where I was working and delivered a note. It was from the sister of Theodore Roosevelt. She invited me up to have lunch. How she found out I was in town, I don't know, because I'd come in and put up for the night and planned to be gone the next morning. But apparently she knew of my arrival. She was very pleasant and hospitable, and I spent a couple of hours at her delightful villa, had lunch, and went back to work. Well, as I say, I was a little too serious in a way, because I got up very early and worked very hard in visiting these hospitals. And then came the job of writing reports and that was sort of nerve-wracking, especially in the beginning, because I didn't know if I was saying exactly the right thing or was making the right judgment. However, I was fairly well prepared, and with the training I had, it wasn't long before I got a sense of relative values, people, efficiency, character and needs. When I couldn't say exactly what their needs were, they had to make their own deductions in Rome from requests that they would get from these hospitals. I went back to Rome to report for the next assignment, and in the meantime, this temporary commission that had organized the Red Cross left, and I found an entirely new organization there. I went in to see my new chief, a tall military-looking man with a goatee, and he welcomed me. He was a doctor, and he wore the regular officer's uniform. His

name was Joseph Collins, and he was in the Officers Reserve, I think, something of the sort. The rest had the Red Cross uniform, whereas he had the regular army major's uniform. Well, he had not exactly a severe manner, but rather a very formal demeanor. He didn't frighten me especially, but he didn't have the easygoing feeling that the other fellows around the place had. Another thing that rather surprised me was that I found that none of the people that entered the Red Cross at the same time I did were around. It was now a fairly large organization. It was much bigger than it was when I left Rome to go on with my work. There were the two main divisions of the activity; one was the medical affairs and one was the civil affairs. I belonged to the medical affairs. I went in to meet my new chief. Dr. Joseph Collins, who turned out to be not only a doctor of medicine but also a neurologist, a psychiatrist, and an author. Afterwards, he became rather well known for his books, such as *The Doctor Looks at Literature*, *The Doctor Looks at Love and Life*. He had a series of those things that had considerable success. He turned out to be a very interesting man. But one thing that rather surprised me was that all of the people that were in that office when I left seemed to be gone except one other man, and that was Wallace. As a matter of fact, I think Wallace and I were the only ones that stayed on his staff, or whatever you'd call it, until the end. Others came and went and were transferred until he found people he could work with. He was very fond of Wallace and he was always very nice to me. I used to see a great deal of him and in off hours, he used to come down to my studio. The fact is, I did a portrait of him, but it wasn't very successful. And also he used to invite me out for excursions. He wanted to see the environs of Rome, visit some of the sights and explore things. So he'd phone me, and we'd go together and have lunch up at Frascati or Tivoli or someplace like that. He wanted to discuss things, and among other things, I learned quite a lot about psychology from his point of view. At that time, we were commencing to discuss Freud a great deal. He was not a Freudian, but he was quite fair and quite interesting in the way he discussed psychoanalysis. I was commencing to have an interest in psychoanalysis, not because of any complexes I might have personally had, but because from what I read of psychoanalysis it seemed to be that here was something that might contribute to the understanding of a creative mind, how the mind would function and work. Of course, it was a great disappointment when I found out afterwards that Freud himself admitted that it was a mystery to him. So if it was a mystery to Freud, it will remain a mystery to me, I'm sure. But Collins was quite a part of my life from then on, in Italy and afterwards in Paris, because he used to be back and forth between America and Europe very frequently. He would usually pass through Paris, and when he did, we always got together. I've forgotten what Collins had me do after my finishing the work along the Riviera from Genoa north, but if I remember rightly, it was visiting

hospitals around Rome. Of course, there was quite a lot of that sort of work to be done right there in Rome, and I rather imagine he did that more to keep an eye on me and to see what he wanted to do with me than anything else--not that I was especially useful around Rome--but he was satisfied with what I was doing and he sent me up to Padua. Well, Padua is on the Piave. That was not long after the retreat of Caporetto. It was just before Hemingway was up there. I didn't meet Hemingway, but he was there about that time. Our headquarters were in Padua, and I ran up against certain problems there. In a lot of ways, it was an education working for an organization of this sort, and like any organization, especially when it's not very solidly formed and has been put together rather hurriedly, there were all sorts of little jealousies and conflicts. So rather to my surprise, I found that I was looked upon as an interloper when I went up to these other regions. There were representatives stationed in various parts of Italy, and the seven of us that I spoke of had no fixed location. We were connected with the Rome office and were sent out from the Rome office, so we were looked upon as interlopers in a way. The man in charge of a certain district wanted to have it all in his own hands. He didn't like to have anybody from the main office come in and interfere. I didn't understand that at first, but it didn't take very long to learn. And then I got along very well. I was in Padua for some time and worked up and down the front, even in the dressing stations, the little temporary hospitals. Again I was out very early in the morning until late at night doing that sort of work. Padua was more or less evacuated. The permanent residents with means left Padua. At night, a very large proportion of the population went to the country. I don't remember whether they were required to, but I rather doubt if they were. But I can remember very distinctly that towards evening crowds of people would move out into the country. They had places to sleep with friends, I suppose, or most anyplace. So at night Padua would seem quite empty. They were afraid of bombarding. We weren't, really. A shell fell once next to the palazzo where we had our headquarters, but there was no special damage done and nothing very much happened. But they were always afraid of it. The work itself in Padua I found extremely interesting. It took me up and down the front and also over the plains of the Veneto, where a great many of the places I had to visit were old seventeenth and eighteenth century palazzos. Beautiful places. One place would be an army headquarters, another would be a hospital, another would be something else that was taken over by the army. In that way, I saw houses and gardens and villas that an ordinary traveler wouldn't have an opportunity to see. Sometimes it was quite astonishing to see what delightful places there were, and some were quite important places. The house itself might have frescoes by Paolo Veronese, for example. There were things that would amaze you. The seventeenth and eighteenth century Venetian families built these beautiful country estates. You

always think of them living in a palazzo in Venice, but they had wonderful properties out in the country. There were beautiful formal gardens with statuary, and there was lots of water up there and lakes. One estate had a moat around it. It was not for fortification but simply for decoration, and it had bridges across the moat to the villa. Wallace was on the same sort of work. He was sent on shorter missions to the front. I was more or less stationed in Padua for some time and worked from there out. But I would be in town every evening except for on a few occasions. Twice I had to go down to Venice and I stayed overnight in Venice, I came back the next day, I remember also going to Verona. But the work, as I say, was extremely interesting, and it wasn't anything I could complain of. Sometimes I was but it wasn't anything like the boys who were doing ambulance work or that sort of thing. So, in some ways, I felt kind of ashamed of myself--that I wasn't doing something a little more disagreeable. Still, it had importance, so I didn't feel too badly about it. Also, I didn't regret in the least that I was meeting interesting people, because stationed in Padua were quite a number of newspapermen and correspondents, interesting people to know and to talk to, more so than my Red Cross crowd. Some of them were quite distinguished. Perceval Gibbon was already well known as a writer and poet, and also he was a very lively, energetic and very amusing man. For some reason, he and I seemed to get along very well. I don't know what I had that he would find at all interesting, but he always asked me along to anything he thought would interest me. He was transferred while I was there and some of the Italian newspaper people and some of the other newspapermen met at the hotel to give him a little send-off, a very quick informal thing with a few drinks all around. It lasted about an hour. Gibbon hunted me up and asked me to come, and I was the only non-newspaper person there, which rather surprised me but also pleased me. Another man we liked was Thompson, the correspondent for Associated Press. We used to dine together quite a lot. After I'd been there for awhile, I found work for my wife. She could type and was very efficient in lots of ways and so they sent her up there to be in the office at Padua, and she did some work there. Well, at that time there was a tremendous epidemic of flu. They called it Spanish influenza, didn't they?

SCHIPPERS

Yes, they did.

NUTTING

And so it turned out that most of the hospitals I went to were crowded with people with the flu. It's quite natural, especially if you get rather rundown a bit and you're a little tired and your resistance is not too great, why, you're susceptible to the flu. So I got it. I was in bed in Padua for quite awhile. We had a very delightful place. It was an old, small palazzo, beautifully furnished. My room, though, was a spooky sort of place in a way. There was a huge

armoire against the wall, and all of a sudden, that would slowly and quietly swing out. Then somebody would come in from behind it. It was curious. Apparently the family that lived in this palazzo wanted to isolate an apartment and had figured out this way to do it. They put this big armoire in front of this door, which was the only place they could put it. And they hung it very nicely so that this armoire, which was very heavy, would swing out. I still remember lying there in this fever and then seeing the furniture start to move toward me. When I got well enough, they shipped me back to Rome where I convalesced. Then for quite a long time, I did my work all around Rome. I had some rather interesting experiences there, too, in a way that I wouldn't have had otherwise. It was analogous to going around the palazzo up in Veneto, up in Venice, and I saw things that I wouldn't ordinarily see. I'd visit little communities out in the Campagna with a doctor and a nurse and we would visit among the Italian peasantry to take care of sick people. Out in the Campagna you seemed far from civilization. With Europe being so crowded and out in the Campagna you'd think, "why isn't it all cultivated? Why aren't there fields of grain and all sorts of growing things?" It's a treeless land to the horizon where one sees the distant hills. Portions of aqueducts still stand, monuments of ancient Rome. Then you run across this little community of people and they would be living then very much as they did in the days of Romulus and Remus, and I mean literally. They lived in round structures with no windows. If I remember rightly, they were thatched, were built of stone and had conical roofs, and you'd go in and there would be a fire in the middle of the structure. At first you could see little in the dim light. Then you'd make out figures of sick people lying in their berths against the wall. Well, I wish I'd documented more about some of those communities at the time--how many there were, for example, and how prevalent or where I'd run across some kind of a freakish district of that sort of life. As I say, I can't imagine it still exists, especially since the days of Mussolini when he really did a lot towards modernizing Italian life, including road building and draining of marshes, etc. But in those days, you still would see the peasant costume. Socci were worn in place of shoes. They are a leather sole, laced to the foot with thongs. It makes a picturesque footwear and may be at least as good as moccasins. However, shoes are a status symbol and not to have real shoes was with them not only a hardship, it was a humiliation. While getting back my strength I worked in and around Rome. It was all interesting, and much of it very pleasant. I'd meet interesting people and see interesting places around Rome; some of them, like the swanky athletic club which I was once sent to, was made a place for convalescent officers. The boys were a cheerful bunch. One proudly showed me around. He kept opening doors to show me this and that. He opened one door only to quickly close it. I caught a glimpse of a pretty girl about to step into a tub. After my tour and interview I

went down to my car and found a young fellow lying back in the seat. "I saw your car here and thought I'd join you." I'd never seen him before. He was a young convalescent who wanted to have a ride, and here was an American and the car looked pretty good. He thought, "Let's take a ride with him" [laughter] As a matter of fact he spent the day with me and we got quite friendly.

SCHIPPERS

Did you make all these trips alone or did your wife accompany you?

NUTTING

She was in Rome and when I went on that trip up the coast from Genoa north, she wanted to see Genoa anyway so she went and stayed in a hotel in Genoa. I left her there, and then I went on--making many stops--along the coast, up as far as Ventimiglia on the French border. Then I got back to Genoa just in time to spend Christmas Eve with her. Then we went back to Rome together, and I was sent to Padua. I was there for quite a long time, but I've forgotten how long. After a few weeks, I got her a job at the office in Padua because the director of that district was a man by the name of Thwais, a wealthy Milwaukeean, who at first, I think, looked upon me as somewhat of an interloper meddling in his affairs. Well, I got things straightened out with him, so we didn't bother one another. And he was nice. He was all right. He had some funny ideas. He wasn't especially interested in what I was doing. He was more interested in civil affairs and caring for the poor and needy. I don't know what idea he had, but he tried to start selling surplus goods in Padua to the families who had men in the army. He got into conflict with the business elements of Padua there, so that didn't work out so well. His first sale caused excitement and drew a huge and noisy crowd. I had to stay home to help him and spent most of my time being a sort of traffic cop struggling to keep order. I got into civil affairs too. It didn't last very long, but it was an interesting change. I learned one day that a commission--I've forgotten whether it was more than one man--was coming to see us in Padua, apropos some new project they had. I didn't know very much about it. I guess I wasn't too much interested and thought, "Let him and the other people there in the office fight it out." Well, it turned out that boosting the morale of the Italian soldiers seemed to be very much on the mind of the Red Cross and had become one of their major concerns. A present of money, in proportion to the need of the family and number of the family at the front, was to be given. I was sent out on this work with an Italian marchese and one other American, but I represented the Red Cross in this thing. I had to go to the bank and get Italian lira bills, forty or fifty thousand lira, and that's when these big pockets came in handy. [laughter] An Italian secretary or an accountant or something went along with me. We'd go to the town and stop at the town hall and call on the mayor. Most of the towns were quite small, so work could be done rather rapidly. The idea was that the

mayor and people like the priest or other important people in the town--school teachers and important citizens--would form a group, hear and discuss the whole business. I had a little speech in Italian, which I practiced, and I'd get that off. Then the Italian (I've forgotten his name now), who was a very nice old gentleman, would speak and explain what it was all about. Then they would hand out leaflets and little pamphlets and postcards to be sent to the front and one thing and another, to all of these people. And, in the meantime, the secretary that we had with us would be in communication with the secretary of the mayor, somebody in his office, and would pass me a piece of paper that there were so many boys at the front, so many families in need and so forth. Between them, they would make out what they thought would be a proportionate sum to be given to that town, and I would reach down and pull out some money, lay it on the table and the mayor would take it. Everybody of course was very much impressed and very much pleased. If they didn't know that I was coming, it wasn't too hard, and we got it pretty well worked out. They'd call this little meeting and the important people would gather together; an effect would be made, and the present of the money would be given to the mayor for its distribution. Our pamphlets and literature would be distributed, and then we could go on to the next town. Sometimes it could be fairly quickly done. But in spite of everything we could do, a town would sometimes know we were coming--I don't know how--but they'd get word, and they were certainly very warm to us in those days. The first thing I'd know, I'd be driving up the road towards this village or this town, and on the wall of a house, I'd see a poster--"Viva gli Americani," in big letters, and the closer I'd get, there would be more of these posters. Then, doggone it, you'd get up to the square of the town, there would be a whole bunch of little kids with their flags waving, people standing up on the steps of the courthouse, and maybe there would even be some music. They'd come down and usher us up and get out the champagne. Then we couldn't get away, of course, sometimes for the rest of the day. I've forgotten how long this lasted, but for awhile, it kept me awfully busy. But it was fun.

SCHIPPERS

Were you receiving a salary?

NUTTING

I was receiving a nominal salary. I've forgotten, but it was something like ninety dollars a month. They didn't seem to have any fixed salary for the work we were doing. I accepted it, but I don't know whether all the others did or not. Some were very well-off. Of course, an experience of that kind, in which all of your thought and activity is taken completely away into other fields, is bound to have a great influence on one's thinking and one's life. I suppose what it did more than anything else was to get me outside of myself. I had to meet a far

greater variety of people and be in much more tense situations than I had ever been in before. There were problems to be solved very quickly--and they were serious because they involved many people and things of importance to them. Sometimes it seemed to me rather more than I could cope with. To begin with, this was my first experience in working in a large organization and facing the frictions and difficulties that here were aggravated sometimes by our plain inexperience. And a lot of the work of the Red Cross, especially in those first years of the war (I don't know whether they had background for that sort of experience or not), seemed to me extremely inefficient. It's not that I ever blamed anybody that I knew. They were all dedicated people. But my wife, for example, worked in Rome--well before I went into the service of the Red Cross--in places where there was work to be done for the poor, giving sewing work and so forth to families whose men had gone to the front, and also the packing and shipping of donations or things that had been supplied by the Red Cross to the boys at the front. And she was often very unhappy because things that had been prepared for the packages and that were supposed to be some sort of aid and comfort in their life, such as blankets, soap, chocolate, cigarettes, stationery and things of that sort were so inferior. The items were sometimes of little importance, but still it was something that should have been taken seriously. The packages were so shoddy and so badly prepared that she was ashamed to have anything to do with them. Blankets would be sent to the soldiers up in the north, especially the ones who were fighting above the Piave where it's pretty chilly in wintertime and the extra warmth would be more than critical. But these blankets, she said, were so sleazy that she thought she could stick her finger through them anyplace, that you could simply hold them up and poke at them and your finger would go through. They were made of the cheapest sort of material. The packages were also badly put together. She said that the cookies and chocolates and little things to eat were wrapped along with a cake of strong-smelling soap, and she couldn't imagine what they would taste like when the boys finally opened their packages. Well, things like that all along the line made us rather unhappy and I've never felt inclined to argue when people are critical of the Red Cross, because I could see that very often they had quite good reason to be. The Salvation Army was extremely successful and it won the hearts of the doughboy in a way that none of the rest of us were able to. Sometimes I would be sent to work directly connected with the population. Sometimes there'd be trains to be met that were crowded with refugees from the north. And that was a job that I always dreaded, because you get a crowd of poor and frightened, inefficient, and sometimes seemingly stupid people who didn't have even common sense in caring for themselves. I found it was a problem, that was out of my world. I have been moved to admiration by some peasantry when I have known them in their own

environment. The simple and uneducated though poor can have sterling qualities not only of character but in their skills and abilities. But once deprived of familiar surroundings, they are lost and confused very often. To hear or read about them is not seeing them (or hearing and smelling them) and being concerned in their welfare.

1.10. TAPE NUMBER: V, Side Two (November 12, 1965)

NUTTING

One of the interesting things, and one of the pleasant things a person remembers, I think, is the small thing that happens unexpectedly and has a very short duration. At the same time, because of some connection or some relationship it sticks in your memory. One of these things is the seeing of interesting or important people, maybe for only a few moments. One day, for example, I went into a bookstore in Rome. It was a small bookstore and there was nobody there but the proprietor and a very distinguished-looking old lady with a rather old-fashioned costume, rather elegantly dressed, and she was sitting at the counter. She wasn't standing, and I noticed she was being waited on with great deference. The proprietor was rushing around and bringing out some books and putting them in front of her. She would reach over with rather an elegant gesture and turn a few pages and then maybe brush the book aside with some contempt. Another book she'd look at with some interest and put aside, apparently, reserving it to buy. I browsed around and was fascinated by what was going on because it was just these two people, and as I say, I was rather impressed with the way the old lady was being treated--being seated at the counter, and in a queenly sort of way making her choice of what she wanted to read. Finally, she got up and went out pausing for a few last words with the proprietor. I suppose he was assuring her that her wishes would receive most prompt attention and that the books would be sent right over to her address. When she was gone, I asked the proprietor, "Who was the lady who just went out?" He said, with a feeling of awe in his voice, "Eleonora Duse, signor." Incidentally, when I was stationed in Padua and had a table in the dining room of the Storione, and right behind me was the table of Gabriele D'Annunzio and his group of aviators. So there was a quite vivid picture of a very distinguished actress, and it remains as a nice little vignette. She was so much herself and conscious, at the same time, of really being very much herself. And I have quite a number of little vignettes in my memories. One evening my wife and I were coming down from the Pincian Hill. We were on one of our very frequent walks up there. As I have said, it was a favorite place to go in the evening at sunset because the sunset from the Villa Medici is memorable, on a summer evening especially. And the hill being very near us, we did go up there very

frequently. So we watched the sunset, with the silhouette of St. Peter's across the city against the sunset and the city below us, and enjoyed very real beauty. When it commenced to get dusk, we wandered down the Via Sistina on our way to the Spanish Steps and down to where we lived. As we got down the Via Sistina, near the Spanish steps, the street was deserted. Hardly anybody was in the street. It's a very interesting street, not wide but with many palatial buildings, with what the Italians call portoni--the big handsome doorways that lead into courtyards. And out of one of these portoni came a rather short, stocky man, very much wrapped up. He had a scarf around his neck and had an overcoat on, and he was accompanied by a woman. He got into a horsecab that was waiting in front of this place, and I was rather startled. I was quite sure that I knew who he was. And so I watched. The horsecab drove down the street a few yards and stopped, and this bearded man turned and looked back very intently, as though he was expecting something. A couple of servants came out of the portone, carrying a box--a small chest or some sort of box--not too large. It looked as though one could carry it quite easily, but there was one on each side. They were walking very slowly and carrying the box very carefully, more or less as though they were transporting the Ark of the Covenant or something that they had to treat with great respect. They placed this box very carefully in the seat of horsecab number two. Then the two cabs went jogging down the street, as one could well have guessed, in the direction of the railroad station. And it was Rodin, Auguste Rodin. If Rodin had stayed longer in Rome, I think I would have met him because I afterwards knew a man with whom he stayed. He had an apartment in the Via Sistina, and Rodin was his guest. I knew that Rodin was in Rome at the time, partly because somebody told me, but also because of a rather amusing thing happened to one of my models, Pompilia. Pompilia was a very favorite model in Rome in those days, and she was working for me. To my surprise, when she came that afternoon, she posed rather badly. She seemed to be quite exhausted. She'd been working that morning and I said something like, "You seem tired, Pompilia." "Oh," she said, with a big sigh, "I'm so tired." And I said, "Why?" "Well, I've been working for Signor 'Rodeen' this morning." I said, "Have you indeed? Tell me about it. What have you been doing?" "Oh," she said. "It was dreadful. He didn't have me do anything all morning long but pull off and put on my chemise. Put it on--pull it off--put it on--pull it off--put it on--pull off. It was just terrible!" Rodin worked very little from, a posed model. He watched people in movement. He'd have them do some homely thing of that sort, some activity, and then he'd make hundreds of these very rapid drawings, which now are quite well known. But he never had them in exhibitions. They were his own personal reference material. From these things, he'd find the ideas and germination of themes for his sculpture. So the movement he chose in this case was to have this girl keep

pulling her chemise off and putting it on again, and poor Pompilia said that she was completely worn out, which is rather understandable, because Rodin was a terrific worker and I suppose not too easy with his models. He wasn't easy with himself. He worked very hard and he expected his models to work hard, too. So I knew that Rodin was in Rome and I didn't have any difficulty in recognizing him immediately. I might have been a little surprised if I hadn't known of it. I knew him by his pictures, so I wouldn't have been fooled at all. But I'll always remember that scene of that street with the falling dusk and those two horsecabs going down the street with great care because of this box which contained a piece of modeling that he'd been working on. I suppose it was wet clay, and he didn't want it shaken too much, and so they handled it carefully to avoid danger of it falling to pieces in transit. So those are my memories of Rodin and Eleonora Duse. Later, in France, I remember an analogous sort of experience down in Sables d'Olonne. It too was impressive because it was so unexpected. Sables d'Olonne is a fishing village and the women there have a very interesting costume. They have a very full, rather short skirt. They wear sabots--or at least they used to, I don't know how much they wear their costume nowadays. And they had a tall, starched headdress. It's quite a stunning costume, and it was a very pleasant place to spend a little vacation. The market there was very attractive. It was an open-air market. With all the fruit and vegetables and the women in their stunning costumes, and the color, life and activity, it made market day a real pleasure. Well, I was at the market one morning making some notes and some sketches of the scene and of the people when a Rolls-Royce pulled up, which rather surprised me because cars were rather rare in those days. And to have anything so elegant as a huge Rolls-Royce with a chauffeur drive right up into the crowd surprised me no end. I wondered who in the world that might be? And there was one passenger in the car who got out--rather short man with a moustache. And he walked around very briskly, examining the produce very carefully. I thought I had never seen a head of lettuce or a cauliflower treated so critically. He took his time, comparing this, that and the other thing. I wished afterward I had followed him and watched all his marketing. I thought--"you have to come to France to watch an elderly affluent gentleman, alone in a country market, carefully and with obvious expertise, choosing the components he wished for his dinner." When he returned to his car I got a good look at his face, it was Georges Clemenceau. There are numberless little scenes of that sort. One that I enjoy remembering took place when I was sitting at the Café Dôme in Paris one evening. It was rather crowded, and a lot of people were coming and going. A man came in, looked around for a table, but there were none vacant. I was alone at my little round table, and seeing him rather at a loss as to where to seat himself, I gestured to him. He smiled and joined me. He ordered his drink, and we sat

there and had a very interesting conversation. He was a pleasant person, quiet in manner and at the same time able to make even casual talk a pleasure. It showed an imagination, and whatever subject we mentioned, he seemed to have some remark or something to say about it. So I enjoyed my talk with him very much. He finished his drink, and he got up to go and I too rose and expressed the pleasure in talking with him. Of course, in Europe, you're a bit more formal than you would be here--at least they used to be. I didn't exactly click my heels, you, know, but bowed slightly and gave my name. He did the same, extending his hand and saying, "Chagall." So, I spent that time talking to Chagall and didn't know it. I didn't realize it until after he was gone. We first met Edgar Maurer on Capri. He was a correspondent for the Chicago Tribune, and one summer he had an apartment or a villa on Capri. His wife stayed there, and he would get to Capri fairly often for short visits. We saw a great deal of his wife and Edgar on his visits. Afterwards, we met often in Rome and became good friends. And in Padua, I also saw much of him while he was there. He and his brother were both newspapermen. And Edgar was one of these alive interested people. I would find it hard to imagine him suffering a moment's boredom. I said that Padua at night was more or less evacuated, and the families living in Padua, as many as could, left Padua and were living elsewhere. Well, the result was that there was a wealth of rooms and apartments available to the right people. The Red Cross had a very nice palazzo, and Edgar was very much impressed with a room that he got in a beautiful old palazzo, which he wanted me to see. So I went around and it was--as much as we could see of it--a wonderfully interesting old place. Understandably much was locked anyway. It had some good frescoes, and seemed to be one of the more elegant houses in Padua. There was one room especially he wanted me to see. He said, "This big salon is really so impressive, I wish you could see it. I wonder if we can't manage it?" He said, "It's now occupied by the chief of police, but let's go knock on the door." And so we went and knocked and there was no response. Then he knocked again and all was quiet. But he was so anxious for me to see the room that he tried the door. It was unlocked, so he opened the door and the chief of police was there having a nap. We had disturbed him. [laughter] He was very nice about it. He didn't complain about being disturbed. He didn't have any intention of answering the knock, but since we walked in, he was polite. I still remember the abashed look that Edgar had. We both were abashed, as a matter of fact. We told him what we came for, and he urged us to make ourselves at home. So we admired the carved ceiling and all the gorgeous decorations in the chief of police's boudoir.

SCHIPPERS

Previously you've spoken of having the Spanish influenza and just now you referred to it as trench fever rather than Spanish influenza. I think that should be inserted.

NUTTING

As I remember it, we simply called it trench fever when I was along the front. I remember using the term Spanish fever a little afterwards, but, at that time, trench fever seemed to be the most common term as I remember. At the end of the war, I was happy to get out of the Red Cross because all of this time in my life in Europe, there'd always been this dominant idea that I wanted to go to Paris and get down to some hard work as a student. That doesn't mean that I hadn't made quite good use of my time in Italy, but all my life, I looked forward to Paris. It's rather strange that I did not go directly to Paris but went to Munich first. I remember, when I was a boy, I first got the dream of going to Paris--one of those real dreams--"someday I'll go to Paris!" It was like something impossible ever to realize, but it would be such a wonderful idea to go. In those days, Paris had more prestige as a place for studies than it has now. We felt that you didn't get a real art education unless you went to Paris. I think that's because all of the painters that we boys admired had studied in Paris. Before that it had been Munich. My first influences may have been from Munich because Chase was one of my teachers. I was in the last class that William M. Chase had. Chase and Duveneck and Walter Shirlaw were among the group of Munich painters who came back and had an impact on American painting. It really upset the old Hudson River school of painting. They were looked upon as very radical. After that, it shifted to Paris with men like Thomas Eakins, for example, who was a pupil of Gérôme. Incidentally, you spoke of so-and-so as being a pupil of so-and-so, like Chase was a pupil of Piloty and that sort of thing. There's another thing that was rather different in the art education of those days from what it is now. I never hear a young artist today saying, "I want to study with so-and-so." Whereas, in those days, an artist was very much like a musician. A pianist would study with Leschetizky, for example, or a violinist with [Leopold] Auer or [Eugène] Ysaye. He would look forward to having a great master to study with. When I was a boy, we had the same idea about painting. You wanted to study with some great master that you venerated. It was a dream that you had in your mind continually. When I was a youngster, I was once in a store in Cleveland, Ohio. My parents had left me there because I saw a lot of prints and things that interested me. They said, "Well, you can stay here while we go and do some shopping." I had a few pennies to spend, and I was amazed to find I could buy what I thought were very beautiful prints for ten cents or fifteen cents or twenty cents. So I spent all my pocket money on these pictures because I was getting quite a prize. And while I was doing that, I confided to the fellow who kept this print store that

someday I wanted to be an artist, too. Then in a low and serious voice I said, "And someday, I'm going to Paris." I was very much disappointed because he didn't seem at all thrilled by the idea. He thought that was quite a commonplace idea to have. I had thought he might be sympathetic and responsive to anybody who had such a grand aspiration as that. In its way, that idea was always in my mind. Well, things happened. I went to Boston because of Edmund Tarbell. My teacher in St. Paul thought Edmund Tarbell was simply tops. Nobody in the whole country was quite so wonderful as Edmund Tarbell. He wasn't a student of Tarbell himself, but a friend of his was, and he got the idea that if one could only go to Boston and study with Edmund Tarbell, why, nothing would be finer. It could have been, but it didn't work out quite so well. However, it's curious how certain temperamental things influence you. I got a great deal from the Boston Museum which was next door to the school. That was very inspiring, very thrilling for me, and I spent all my spare time in the galleries there and studied. Another thing that meant much was the art room at the library. They were very nice to me there and got out all sorts of things that I found exciting. I felt more and more that although I had a tremendous appreciation for what I knew of the French painters--and in those days the Impressionists were looked upon as very modern--at the same time, there was something about northern European art that had a strong appeal for me. I think that it's a very mysterious sort of thing. It would be a very interesting thing to analyze how much one is conditioned in one's taste by inheritance and whether if you have Welsh blood or Irish blood or Celtic blood, that there is a spirit which we rightly call the romantic, which seems to be inherent. In other words, it's rather hard to imagine a man like [William] Blake, for example, being an Italian, isn't it? On the other hand, purely classical art or literature is rather hard to imagine in England. [Alexander] Pope maybe comes as near, doesn't he, to classical writing as anyone. It's somewhat understandable. We have a Corneille, a Racine in France, but a Corneille or a Racine would certainly be a fish out of water in England, wouldn't they? [laughter] So, there was a pull toward the north, in spite of the interest I had for French painters. That interest, of course, came partly through the influence of my reading and partly through the influence of the teachers I had, who were first or second generation students of the Paris school. So I finally decided that instead of going directly to Paris, I would go to Germany. I was moved to that by reading an article in an art magazine by an American painter who described student life in Munich, and it sounded extremely attractive and also amazingly cheap. My mother had died and I was back in New York, studying, and I wrote my father, who was financing my education, that I'd read this article. I told him that it gave me the facts and figures and that it sounded as though it would be much more economical for me, even with the expense of travel, to work in Munich than it

would be in New York. So he said, "Go ahead." So I went to Munich and I spent the winter there. Because of the interruption of the war. I didn't get to Paris for some years. It was a dream to be fulfilled--that at least part of my student life should be there and I should have something to remember as my artists friends who had had that experience there. As soon as I could get out of uniform, I made arrangements to get rid of my stuff, and I can remember being impressed with how much had accumulated in my studio that I had to dispose of. And I left my friend Ferenzona quite a legacy of some rather good materials and one thing and another, because I didn't want to travel with anything more than just our baggage, trunks and valises. Actually, I took away very little of my work; I destroyed most of what I did, including the nine-foot canvas that I had spent so much time on. I couldn't imagine anybody wanting it--I didn't kid myself that it was a masterpiece--so that went along with the rest. There was difficulty in getting passage to Paris because the reservations on trains were hard to get. I had to wait several days, and then got it so suddenly that I had to cancel a dinner engagement with my friend, Ferenzona. I'd been looking forward to that evening with him, but then had to leave without even a farewell. We went to Paris and that was in February of 1919, just after the war. I can remember the train pulling into Paris very distinctly. There had been a snowfall and the city was all white with a light snow that had freshly fallen. It's rather a rare sight to see Paris in that condition. It was duck, and we went to the address that had been given us. To go back a little bit, one thing that worried us very much about going to Paris was that we heard that there was what the French called *crise du logement*. There was just nothing to be had in the way of rooms or places to rent, and many hotels were still full of people who were in activities connected with the war. So finding a place to stay was really very much of a problem, and we didn't have any addresses and couldn't get anybody who would help us in this matter. Well, sometime before, we had met in the *Restaurante San Carlo* where we used to dine very often, a Captain Laurent, a Frenchman. He was sitting at the table next to us once when we were having dinner and I got into a conversation with him. For dessert, he was having my favorite dessert--cheese, fruit and wine. It seemed to start the conversation, that the most pleasant dessert that one could have was cheese, fruit and wine, and from that we commenced to form an acquaintance. He invited us out to his studio. He had taken a studio out in the *Villa Strohl-Fern* and fixed it up very nicely. He was an officer in aviation and was connected with the embassy in some way. Apparently, he was a man of considerable means. We saw him quite often; he was a very pleasant acquaintance. When time came for us to leave Rome, I happened to mention to Captain Laurent that we were rather disturbed because we had no idea where we'd stay in Paris. And he said, "Well, I'll tell you. I have a *garçonnière* and you're quite welcome to it. You stay there until

you find a hotel or whatever you want. Take your time because I won't be in Paris for some time. There's nobody there, and there is no reason why you shouldn't use it." Well, of course, we were grateful to him. So that evening at dusk, we drove through the streets of Paris, which were all white with the new-fallen snow, out the Champs Élysées to Passy. There Captain Laurent had quite an elegant little garçonnière and the concierge was very amiable. Apparently, she was fond of Captain Laurent, and any friend of Captain Laurent was a friend of hers. It was a two-room apartment. She built a beautiful fire in a big fireplace in the front room. Not only that but she prepared a very nice little dinner for us. So our introduction to Paris was more pleasant than we had at first anticipated. The next day we went out and commenced to scout around to see what we could find for a place to live. We explored the Montparnasse district because I studied my map of Paris pretty well and knew the quarters which were considered artists' quarters and the Latin Quarter and where the Louvre would be found and all the rest of it. I was very curious to see Montparnasse because it was a famous name in my reading. I found it disappointing because it was no more artistic than Santa Monica Boulevard would be. [laughter] It was shops and stores and cafes and streetcars, and rather shabby quarters, it seemed to me. It rather puzzled me. I thought there'd be some atmosphere about it, but there didn't seem to be a bit. There was the old railway station, the Gare Montparnasse, which I believe now has been torn down and replaced. However, in that quarter, we found a hotel and a room, I had to curb my impatience because I wanted to go out and visit the art schools and see the galleries and everything. But first we had to establish ourselves, especially to make my wife a little bit more comfortable. We stayed for some time in that hotel and looked around from that vantage point for some more permanent place. That took a lot of hunting, quite a lot of inquiry. I've forgotten how we located it, but on the Rue Falguière we found a big studio with a supont, as they call it, which is a typical artist's studio in Paris. It had two rooms, a studio light and then a high ceiling. At one end of it there is a very wide balcony which amounts to a room. A little stairway goes up to it, and it serves as the sleeping quarters. Well, this seemed like the real Paris artist's life—a studio, a supont. It suited us exactly. It was furnished. It had been the studio of a man who was a very well-known American painter in those days, John Noble. Having a studio was inexpensive, very reasonable, and living was simple but quite comfortable. We were especially lucky because it was furnished comfortably. It was very livable indeed. And I embarked on my life as an art student. Well, the first school that I hunted out was the Julian Academy. Most of my ideas about art student life came from reading novels like Trilby [George du Maurier] and other books of that sort. Of course, as a boy, anything that had to do with an art student's life or an artist's life I read, so

in some ways, I was quite well informed. I knew that the Julian Academy was one of the most famous art schools in Paris. It's near the river, on the Rue du Dragon. I haven't talked to anyone who knows anything about the Julian Academy since, so whether it's still existing or not, I don't know. I imagine that I came in more or less at the end of that period of atmosphere that you read about in artists' lives--la vie de bohème, of Trilby--you know, the nineteenth century idea of an art student's life. For one thing, the school was unlike any other school at that time that I knew of. It was divided into the men's school and the women's school. This school was the men's school and the women's school was someplace on the other side of the river. Well, being entirely a men's school, it was maybe a little bit more boisterous than it would be otherwise, certainly more so than the other art schools in Paris which were for both men and women. The Julian Academy was quite an old school; I imagine it was founded back in the middle of the last century. It is a historic sort of place. A lot of famous people have been students there and a lot of famous painters have been teachers there. I understood that a model wanted to start an art school and that one of the famous academicians told him that if he would get a place and that if he could do his own posing, this painter (who was fond of the guy) would come around and give criticisms. The painter's name being very well known and the model also being quite excellent, the school prospered. Models were very much more important in the old days than they are now. It really was a rather serious profession. And Julian, whoever he was, really got along very well. Where he started, I don't know. What they had in my time was a huge studio in which three classes worked. There were two painting classes and a sculpture class, all in this huge barn of a place. It was rather fascinating, it was so big. When you went into the place, first you went into a hallway, and then through an office, and from the office you went into this big studio. The place was swept out, but otherwise it wasn't taken too much care of. On the walls were many small paintings, what the French call esquisse. They are small composition paintings that were done by students as a weekly problem. It was surprising how many famous names were on these paintings. I think the school made really quite a lot of money selling some of them. There were a great many of them. The regular courses at the École des Beaux-Arts or at some of the more formal or the national academies were rather more elaborate, more laid out for you. They included the studies of anatomy, perspective--the required courses. If you were admitted as a student, you could graduate with certain work accomplished; whereas, in a school like Julian's, the only thing you were supposed to do, really, was to go there and draw and then paint and do your esquisse, and you'd get a criticism once a week from some men, many of whom were members of the Institute. They were men who were very well known academically. They would come around, but the criticisms

were not too satisfactory because the classes were very large. What would happen was that the little fat man who was the sort of the secretary would come into the room and announce "The master has arrived!" (I've forgotten exactly just what terms he used, but they were words to that effect.) "Le Maître est arrivé!" Any commotion or anything that was going on at the time would quiet down and everyone was very respectful to their teachers. Then this little guy would disappear and come back ushering in the master. He would go around, but he wouldn't criticize everybody. He would pick out a work here and there and stop and talk about it, and the rest of us would crowd around and crane our necks and try to hear what he was saying and try to apply his words of wisdom to our own work. Only the favorite ones got real personal, attention. The rest of us got none. That worked out pretty well though, because, after all, we still gained from it. I remember a teacher I had in Boston once said, "After all, you fellows learn more from each other than you do from me." Maybe that was overly modest, but in a way, it's true. It's partly what you get from your teacher and partly what you can make of sharing your troubles and problems with others, criticizing each other's work and so on. A large part of it, I think, is working with other serious students. Well, curiously enough, if you describe some of the activities of that school, you'd think they weren't very serious, but most of them were very hard workers. At the Julian Academy--in contrast to any other school that I ever went to--the kids seemed to have a capacity for all of a sudden having a few moments of fun, then they'd go back, nose to the grindstone, working to beat the dickens. It would be very quiet, then all of a sudden somebody would start to sing, "Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques." Then they'd all join in and have a grand time singing "Frère Jacques," and then get down to work again. One or two of the boys there would always be more or less the clowns. They'd have to put on an act once in a while to liven things up and have all sorts of fun for a few minutes. But then, they were back again, hunched over their drawing boards or working away at their canvases. But anything that might be a distraction, they would take advantage of. The one boy came in one day and said, "There's a wedding across the street." Well, that broke things up in a hurry. Everything was very serious and quiet and solemn until that announcement was made, and they all jumped up and the boy explained what it was. The people upstairs across the street were having a wedding and they were coming down pretty soon to drive off in a procession. So the fellows rushed around and grabbed all sorts of old rags or bits of costume hanging around the place and they put them on. This one boy looked especially funny. Among the equipment at the school were plaster casts of one sort or another, especially for beginners. Some of the casts were from life; there was one cast of the front of a female body from the throat down to the hips--just the front of it. This cast, of course, was not solid plaster. (Casts like that are

made more or less like a mask, because they are hollow on the inside, and have a sheet of cotton laid into the back before the plaster sets to hold it together and in shape if the cast gets cracks or breaks.) Well, this cast fitted this boy exactly, so he put this on his front and then put on some kind of a headdress. So he looked like a very white nude going out with a strange headdress. [laughter] He had something around his waist--I've forgotten what. Anyway, it was a very wild and funny-looking crowd that went across the street to greet the wedding party. Sure enough, the bride and the groom came down. They got into their carriages, and the boys all danced around and sang and cheered. They were very nice about it, and they had a lot of fun. The crowd cheered the bride and groom, and when the carriages of the wedding procession drove off, they fell in behind and went down the street and out onto the boulevard a ways. Then they went back to work again as though nothing had happened, and again all was quiet. All you could hear was the scratching of the charcoal and groans once in a while from some fellow who was having trouble with his work. But I was happy to have that experience because, as I say, it was the end of the period of the nineteenth century art schools that you read about in the old stories of the lives of the artists. It enabled you to visualize the boyhood of people like Renoir and Manet and people of that period. Although they didn't go to Julian's--I think Renoir was a pupil of Gleyre and Manet was a pupil of Couture who did that big picture, Rome of the Decadence, which made him famous. Quite a number of American painters were among his pupils. It was much the same atmosphere as in the old days, I'm pretty sure. Somewhat rowdy but in its way, quite serious. In other schools I went to I saw nothing of that. I stayed about three or four months at the Julian Academy. They had very good teachers of their sort. A couple of them were members of the Institute. The directors of the school had an idea that they ought to have teachers who could speak English, but that wasn't too successful. The reason for that was that there were a great many Doughboys who elected art on their educational program and wanted to go to Julian. Two or three of the boys that I knew afterwards became well known, not as painters, but there were two or three who became very successful commercial artists. They worked rather independently; they didn't seem to take the teaching very seriously. A number of them had real ability and had been doing professional work before they went into the army, so they didn't want to study with teachers. They simply needed an excuse for a place to work. They'd go off in a corner and do a painting, which obviously was something they wanted either to exhibit or to use for commercial jobs. They wanted to have something on hand to take back with them connected with their careers. I left Julian's, not because I wasn't getting quite a bit out of it--because I was--but because I didn't feel that I'd stay in Paris. All the time while in Europe, I felt I was on the verge of coming home. I didn't have any idea I was going to be in

Paris very long. I thought if I could be there a year and then come home and get to work, I'd be lucky. In the meantime, to get the most out of it, I would not only go to Julian, but I'd find out what was happening in some of the other schools. So I went to Maurice Denis at the Academy Ranson and worked with him a short time. Of course, my difficulty was that I knew so very little French at that time. I was learning as fast as I could, and usually there was a student who could translate for you, but that was not too satisfactory. You don't get too much from it. At the Academy Ranson, Maurice Denis and [Paul] Sérusier were the teachers. I'm very sorry that I didn't know that Sérusier was as important a man as he was. He was quite an old gentleman then, but he had been associated with Gauguin and that group at Pont-Aven. He was a writer and theorist as well as a painter, as was Maurice Denis. So he was very articulate and apparently a very fine teacher. I didn't get too much from Denis. From him, I went to André Lhote. André Lhote was a painter who unlike the others--Maurice Denis and Sérusier--criticized at the Academy Ranson, but he was very much like the professors who criticized at the Julian Academy. Teaching was only something that they felt was one of their obligations to posterity; it wasn't a means of livelihood in the least. I don't imagine that the Julian Academy paid any very large fee to these men. But for a French painter (I don't know whether I'm right or not) I thought Lhote was one of the most generous. He was very kind to a young student or a young artist, invariably. He put himself out to be nice to them. Any painter who got a reputation in Paris at that time seemed to be accessible. All you had to do is say, "You know, so-and-so, I think his work is wonderful." And somebody else would say, "Yes, I think so too. I'd like to study with that man." First thing you'd know, they'd get half a dozen people who admired this fellow and they'd call on him and express their appreciation and that they'd like to get criticism. Likely as not, he'd say, "Well, pick yourselves a place to work and a model, and I'll come around and see what you're doing." And it really didn't amount to much more than that. So when people say, "I've studied with so-and-so," it seems to me very often that's exactly what happened. Of course, they also studied in schools where they were criticized regularly. But André Lhote took teaching seriously and gave his students more time and attention than did most instructors. He was a good businessman as well as an artist of distinction, and I felt he managed his school profitably. He had many Scandinavian students, a good many Americans, lots of French people, and some Spaniards and Italians. He, like Sérusier, was very articulate. He wrote quite a lot, and I discovered that he seemed to be ready to write almost anytime and anyplace. I asked him once how he found time to write so much and he said some of it was done while traveling on the subway. And he wrote articles and criticism, one thing and another, and he could express himself clearly. I think that's one reason students liked him. Also he

was an exponent of something that was quite modern. It was a cubism which was not very arcane. It was obvious in the sense that you could see what he was trying to do. It didn't require any very deep explanation to understand what he was doing in his painting. He felt that painting should be two-dimensional, that what they used to call aerial perspective--that is to say, getting space through tonal values--was not part of the game, that your vocabulary of drawing should be extremely simplified and only elaborated as you acquired more and more skill and more and more need for it. So it was a simple discipline and I thought, excellent. I got quite a lot out of it. And I think all students--no matter what sort of work they would do afterwards--would get a certain idea of the function of line and the division of space and concepts of color, which were more or less derived from Cézanne. Of course, as happens with most teachers, especially those who had personality and talent, he produced little copies of himself. So there were a lot of little André Lhotes running around the place, but the more intelligent and more talented ones made use of his teaching and his theory for their own purposes, for their own needs and very much to their advantage. So from him I got quite a bit. Then there was a very brilliant Russian draftsman, Jacovlev, who did quite amazing drawings. He was with an expedition sent down through Africa by the automobile people, the Citroen Company. It seems to me they went just about the length of Africa as an expedition to advertise the car. But it was a very serious expedition. There were scientists of various sorts who went along, and this expedition was for a very serious study and maybe for some exploration to some extent. But Jacovlev went along with them and he made drawings, especially of natives. He was a marvelous figure draftsman, but he also did a great many sketches and small tempera paintings of landscape and scenery. His drawing impressed me very much. He had a big exhibition of his work when he came back. These large red-chalk drawings were the sort of things that would take the rest of us hours and hours to do, but he had this astonishing facility to do them in a very short time. I asked him if they ever had any trouble in getting natives to pose. Apparently they had none, and I asked him how long it would take him to do a drawing, and it was an hour or so. But he had a technique of doing these drawings on full-sized sheets of something like a watercolor paper. It was paper that would take quite a lot of punishment. With a rough, coarse eraser he could very rapidly get the tones and modeling. These natives had scars to decorate themselves with, and he could render those very quickly, somehow. So from the illustrative point of view, they were fantastic. They so fascinated me that I went around to a studio where he was criticizing. Unfortunately, he wasn't there but a fellow student of his was. There were three Russians in Paris at that time--Jacovlev, Gregoriev and Shoukaiev. They were all boys from what was then known as the St. Petersburg Academy. And Jacovlev had been a prize student, and I'm not sure that Shoukaiev hadn't

been too. Shoukaiev too had this ability. It seemed to be the sort of training they got there. I worked a short time with Shoukaiev. With a little bit of experience in other places, primarily, I think those three schools--the Julian Academy, the Ranson Academy, the Lhote Academy--and a short time with Shoukaiev probably constituted the most serious schoolwork that I did. Of course, there were two quite famous schools in Paris--the Académie Grande Chaumière and Académie Colarossi. Colarossi is a very old school. Many famous artists have taught at both place and successful ones the world over remember them. Both places were in easy walking distance for me and work there supplemented all my other activities. After a day's work in their studios, the boys would go down before dinner and spend a couple of hours in the croquis (sketch) classes. They were called the cours libre. There would be no instruction. There would simply be the model and you paid your fee, and in that way you got some extra life drawing and painting. The same thing could be done after dinner in the evening. In other words, there was a chance to work and to study from the model, with or without instruction, all day long. At that time three of the best teachers were Lucien Simon, René Menard and Castelucho whose first name I forget. Castelucho was a mild-mannered little Spaniard. He was always anxious to encourage a student. He would stand before a wretched attempt at painting, rub his hands nervously, and finally begin his criticism by saying, "it's not bad--it's not bad--but then, it's not very good either!"

1.11. TAPE NUMBER: VI, Side One (November 15, 1965)

NUTTING

I was very much interested in Hemingway's book, *A Moveable Feast*, sketches of the author's life in Paris in the twenties. Of course those were the days when I was there. I knew Hemingway slightly. I first met him at a gathering at the apartment of Eugene and Maria Jolas. I never had any extended conversations with him. It seemed to me we only got glimpses of him. He would be in Paris for a short time and then be away. There was one painter that I used to see quite a lot, by the name of Bertram Hartman, and I know he and Hemingway would go off into the mountains together. They seemed to get along very well together. I'd see Hemingway someplace, but maybe I was a little bit leery of him. The few times I saw him he was rather quiet, though he gave me the feeling that once warmed up he could be interesting. The first time I met him, about the only thing I remember was that he turned and looked at me and said, "You look like a Greco." Well, what makes me remember the remark is that I have a feeling that there was something behind it. It wasn't just a casual sort of remark, and it could even make you immediately a little bit uncomfortable.

Maybe the reason for that is that in *The Sun Also Rises* there is so much about Paris and many of the characters are quite recognizable, people that I knew quite well, and it seemed to me that he treated them very roughly. And he could do that. So maybe I felt that if by any chance he put me into a book, I might get rather a raw deal. In *The Moveable Feast*, he describes a few people that I knew. I was rather surprised with the way he treats Ford Madox Ford. Ford Madox Ford surely wasn't as much of an intolerable, tiresome snob as Hemingway makes him out to be in this sketch. It is amusing, but my own memory of Ford is that he was a pleasant, civilized person. To me his facility as a writer was awesome, both in quantity and variety. He was editing the *Transatlantic Review* in Paris, at the time, besides writing his novels. I have an idea--and I don't think I'm wrong--that he did a good deal of the writing in the *Transatlantic Review* himself under other names, besides publishing contributions from other writers. Also, I was very much impressed by the fact that Ford collaborated with Joseph Conrad in Conrad's first writing. I always felt that when Conrad made his choice to write in English instead of in French or his native language, he couldn't have found a finer person to collaborate with and to help to cultivate the style that made him famous than to work with as good a writer and as good a critic as Ford Madox Ford. Ford Madox Ford's grandfather was a well-known painter. Ford Madox Brown. Of course, the name Hueffer, which was his name originally, is German. He had it legally changed to Ford. Of course, by birth and education he was English; in fact, I would say very English. He and his wife, Stella Bowen, had a studio in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs, and they were very hospitable people. They had weekly gatherings and dances at this large studio. They became so popular that it became a bit of a strain on the Fords, so he moved his parties to a little cafe that Hemingway mentions in this book of his. I used to be invited to these evenings. I always dressed for the evening. Nowadays, we don't think so much of dressing for dinner as we did in those days. But it was so purely a personal matter, especially in Paris. If you wanted to go to Fords', for example, in a sport jacket, it was perfectly all right. If you went in a dinner jacket, it too was all right. But a great many people, especially our English friends, as a matter of course would put on a dinner jacket for most any occasion when they went out in the evening. And I liked doing it. I had a tux, so I liked to wear it when I went to occasions like the Fords'. We went there one evening when he was having somewhat of a party, not just a gathering for conversation, and for some reason, the feminine contingent in the early part of the evening outnumbered the males by quite a few people. And Ford walked up to me and said, "Nutting, look, you've got to dance like hell. Let me introduce you to a genuine grand duchess." [laughter] So he introduced me to a little dark-haired woman with whom I danced. She spoke English, but I've forgotten whether she spoke

English or French that evening. She confided that she, too, was writing and that Mr. Ford was helping her. Of course, I was interested and congratulated her on having the help of Mr. Ford. She was very modest about her efforts and fearful that they wouldn't be successful. Well, the book was successful, not because of literary merit but because it probably has historical value. She was the Grand Duchess Marie. So her memoirs, I think, from the fact that she was rather important, was a contribution to the history of her family and her times, and it had quite a lot of success. Ford, I believe, during the war was affected by gas, so breathing was a little difficult for him. His rather walrus sort of moustache and his slight difficulty in breathing gave him, maybe, a slightly pompous kind of a manner, but I don't think he was. At least I never found him so. There is no special reason for defending him against Hemingway's caricature, because he's a well-known person. But I just mention it as part of my experience with him. Hemingway has a little sketch of another man at a cafe table. In Clifton Fadiman's review of the book, he speaks of his sketch of "the drunken, joyous artist, Jules Pascin." Well, that's Clifton Fadiman's phrase, and according to Hemingway, he was drinking at that time. He had a couple of girls at a cafe table, but he wasn't a drunken person. At least I never saw him drunk. He was always extremely neatly dressed. He wore what the English call a bowler (we call it a derby) a little bit sideways on his head, and carried a little cane. He wasn't at all a *vie-de-bohème* looking character. He spoke English fairly well. The fact is that during the war, he came to this country and was in New York for some years and made trips into the South and to Cuba. He did wonderful little drawings. His real name was Pinkus, a Roumanian by birth. I think he was still a teenager when he used to draw for a magazine, *Simplicissimus*, which employed excellent draftsmen and cartoonists. So he was rather precocious in having his work published by *Simplicissimus*. Afterwards, he came to Paris and eventually became a very well-known painter. He was a rather witty man in his quiet sort of way and he could say very sharp, very good, very intelligent things and react in an interesting way to ideas. The funniest story that I remember of him had to do with a painting. At that time he painted a large picture. Which was rather unusual for him, because in the first place, it was a big canvas, and in the second place, because the subject was not at all the sort of thing that one sees in his paintings, although sometimes one sees something in his drawings a little bit along that line. But it was *The Last Supper*, a religious thing. And it differed from most of his work in that it was rather cubistic. It was an experiment and under the influence of Cubism and had a rather abstract quality and was less realistic than most of his work. Some people were looking at the canvas in his studio and some smart aleck said, "What are they eating? This is the Last Supper and I don't see they have anything to eat." Pascin took it very seriously. "Well," he said, speaking slowly and thoughtfully, "I'll tell you. That

is one point to which I gave very serious consideration. I asked myself again and again, 'What shall I give them to eat at the Last Supper?' And finally I realized exactly what it was I should give them" And he pointed his finger very solemnly at the canvas and said, "Artichokes." [laughter] All you saw on the canvas was a few little black spots and one or two streaks that didn't have any resemblance to food or dinner of any sort. But with a perfectly straight face, he explained exactly what it was. One of the painters that I saw most of in Paris was Paul Burlin. Pascin invited a few people up to his studio one afternoon, and Paul and I decided we'd go together. So, we went up to Pascin's studio, and it was a little bit like himself in its neatness, but it also was rather surprisingly bare. He had very little furniture. There was his easel, his canvases and so on, but no special comforts or any decorations. He had a little crowd of people there, artists and some of his girl models. There was no place to sit after the two or three chairs had been taken up, so people sat on the floor. For the girls in their very tight and rather short skirts in those days, it was rather uncomfortable for them. But nobody seemed to mind, and the refreshments were extremely modest. Pascin kept himself rather busy being hospitable, carrying around a bottle of Italian vermouth and a tray of glasses. There wasn't any spread of drinks or cocktails. It's not that Pascin couldn't afford them, because by then he was really doing very well. His exhibitions were attracting a lot of attention. I think his dealer was very successful with his work. But he thought that was quite adequate hospitality. As a matter of fact, I think it was. One nice thing about those gatherings in Paris, people didn't seem to think they had to spend a lot of money to have a good time. If they got together with a simple tea or beverage or wine or vermouth and a cookie, that was all that was necessary. They enjoyed each other. They didn't come with the idea of looking forward to cocktails or expensive hors d'oeuvres and all that sort of thing. The most amusing thing about the little party, though, was the music which Pascin provided. In those days--I don't know whether it still prevails or not--you'd sit at a cafe and somebody would come by, maybe a broken-down singer, who would sing a few songs that once they had sung in their professional days. I remember there was one little family--a man, his wife and the children--who had on little circus costumes. They'd spread a carpet down in front of the cafe and go through their balancing acts and one thing and another and then pass around the hat and go on to another cafe. That's the way the family would make its living. Well, there was one fellow who was around for quite a long time. He was a sort of a one-man band. He had a drum on his back with a cord that went to his foot so that when he kicked his foot it would move the hammer and beat the drum. Then he had a mouth organ and a guitar. He had bells on his ankles, one in one tone and the other in the other tone; so by kicking his foot, he could ring the bell and by kicking the other foot, he could ring the other bell. With the

mouth organ, the guitar and the drum--an incredible combination--it was rather a Rube Goldberg kind of contraption with strings and wires going from one thing to another. Well Pascin got this fellow to come up and play for the party. He played and everybody danced, and it was one of the weirdest, most unreal and dream-like parties that I have ever gone to. Everything was just a little bit different and in some way stranger than anything I'd ever seen before. The whole atmosphere was something that you felt wasn't quite real. Well, to cap the climax, there was a knock at the door and Pascin went and opened the door, and a very solemn procession walked in. It was headed by Barnes of the Barnes Foundation. I can't think of his first name right now, but he was the man who invented Argyrol, that famous foundation in Philadelphia. He was followed by, I suppose, secretaries or other members of his foundation. They were in Paris buying and calling on his favorite painters. Well, they were very solemn, puritanical-looking people. Barnes was very severe and taciturn and these women looked like old-fashioned New England school teachers. The mixture of this crowd of people--with this Bohemian art crowd going through their antics, with this fellow jumping around ringing the bells on his ankles, with these funny girls around the walls--was like the confluence of two rivers. I remember coming down the Mississippi, which is so clear until you strike the Missouri, then seeing the two waters swirl together which are not in the least alike. I had somewhat this same sensation when Barnes and his entourage came to this party. It was all right. Everybody seemed to take it all in their stride and nobody was the slightest bit embarrassed. Barnes' party didn't do much dancing and weren't frivolous, but they drank their vermouth and everything went very nicely. There was one rather amusing outcome from that. Burlin came over to me and asked me if I wanted a model. Well, I was spending part of my day working in my studio and part of the day working in the schools, so many hours at home and then so many hours in the atelier. So I said, "Why, yes, I could use one." And he said that there was a colored girl who had been working at the Folies Bergère, but she'd been ill and she couldn't go back to work for some time. So she was rather badly in need of some kind of work to tide her over. And I said, "Well, I'd be very glad to have her. I could use her." So, sure enough, she came and I did quite a lot of work from her. She was very good. She was an interesting sort of a person. She was from Jamaica and had an English accent. In those days, the Charleston was just becoming sort of the rage. I hadn't seen the Charleston danced, but this girl was a dancer, so as she was working for me, I asked her about the Charleston. I said, "Do you dance the Charleston?" She said, "Oh, yes, yes indeed. Of course, I dance the Charleston." I said, "I haven't seen it yet. How does it go?" She said, "I'll show you." I had an old phonograph there, and I said, "What kind of music do you want?" She picked out a record and said, "This will do quite nicely." So I

started the music, and then she started to dance without putting anything on except her slippers. Then she stopped in this very dignified sort of way and in a strong Cockney accent said, "Oh, but it's very rude, you know." Then she let fly and did the Charleston beautifully. So that was the final note of that afternoon. In connection with Shakespeare and Company and with some of the other things that we shall talk about later, such as Joyce, I'll have occasion to refer to Hemingway's very interesting book. For the time being, though, I'd like to go back to my feeling about the environment I was in in Paris, not only in the schools which I spoke about last time but also the general atmosphere of Paris in those days. I often thought of it afterwards as being a rather wonderful decade. It reminded me a little bit of what one feels about the happenings of about a hundred years before, say the 1830s, during the romantic movement in Paris, in the days of the conflict between the schools of painting of Delacroix and Gericault, with the David and Ingres spirit. The vitality of art at that time seemed to me similar and analogous to the situation in Paris at the time. The one thing that, was especially impressive was that we had been through the war. Now war, unfortunately, is rather more of a commonplace idea than it was then. I can remember that when the war started, nobody could believe that in this modern and civilized time a serious war could be carried on for more than a very short time. They felt that it would be settled very quickly. But when year after year went by and it still was being fought, we realized that we'd entered into quite a different period of world history. Nothing that any of us had personally experienced could have any meaning in the present situation. Now we have had the background of war ever since to give a certain shape to our ideas and feelings. But the end of that war, at least in Paris--and I imagine in other parts of the world--gave one a feeling of release. It was as though a terrible pressure had been taken off, and it seemed that we could finally be happy and gay without any compunction, that we'd won the right to it and paid the price for a better life and that we could look forward to a better life and a new world safe for democracy and all that sort of thing. The future was rosy and we'd greet it with song and dance, which we proceeded to do. There was more spontaneous party giving than I've ever seen during any other period. At least I felt that was so. Some of the most delightful costume parties would be gotten up almost on the spur of the moment. Somebody would call up and say, "We haven't gotten together for a long time. Why don't we tomorrow night?" "Okay, and who will we have?" "Well, I'll bring so-and-so and so-and-so, and then so-and-so will come." "Let's make it a costume party." And, sure enough, we'd have a costume party and sometimes those were the very best parties we had. They were marvelous, unplanned, spontaneous and full of fun. The balls that were given were often wonderful, the artists balls. They also had balls of other sorts. The Bal Bulier was a big dance hall which used to be taken over for

some very interesting balls by various art societies and other groups. They used to be great fun and I have some vivid memories of some of the things that they put on. One costume ball that I especially remember was one Fujita attended. Fujita was a Japanese painter. He afterwards became very successful, very well known, and he always turned up at these balls with quite amazing costume. The most striking one--it must have taken him a long time to prepare or have somebody prepare for him--was some kind of a peasant hat. His whole body had been drawn over with a beautiful design, patterned just like some kind of lace of an Oriental design. It must have taken him a long time to put it on and quite a little bother to get off afterwards. But it was wonderfully effective. With his hat and general get-up and his sandals and with some kind of fisherman's accoutrement he carried, then this strange intricate Oriental design all over his body, he was quite a work of art. Of course, the artists' ball is an annual affair there--the Bal des Quatz Arts--which is held every spring. It's a ball which in this country, for example, would be the sort of thing that would get a great deal of publicity. But the French are very interesting that way. If it was not an affair which they wanted publicized, it didn't get publicity. The artists' ball and the medical students' ball and other balls of that sort are private affairs and the newspapers don't make news on them. A visitor to Paris will probably only know one is going on if he happens to be out on the boulevard having an aperitif and a bunch of young people come by in crazy costumes and barge into the cafe and order drinks and are very gay, but not necessarily noisy or obnoxious. But he could then tell from the looks of them that the Bal des Quatz Arts must be on. I was working at the Julian Academy the first year they had the Bal des Quatz Arts and I didn't know very much about it. I heard some stories from friends that there was to be a big artists' ball and a great affair among the art students of the year, and I was interested in going, of course. The arrangement was that we'd meet at the school. It was supposed to be an Egyptian year, and so I worked quite a bit on making an Egyptian costume--an Egyptian collar and an Egyptian headdress and all that sort of thing. I got quite an ambitious kind of a costume together. It was homemade, but still it was quite effective. I think it worked out all right. When I went down to the Julian Academy to join the crowd, I expected the others to all be ready, but I found that their idea, which I didn't know about, was to work on their costumes down there and help each other paint themselves up and put on their costumes and even make them. And the rendezvous was arranged for very early in the afternoon. The girls who were the artists' models, quite a number of them, were there too and had a grand time getting ready. Well, they finally got all ready, and they all went out, en masse, onto the boulevard. They spent the afternoon going into cafes and in and out of anyplace that interested them and even to movie theaters. Very often, as far as I could make out, the people at the movie

houses would let the crowd in free. They'd stay a short time and come out again. They went down into the subway (the Métro) and the Nordsud, and went over to other parts of town. The afternoon wore on and we were larking around the streets and going in and out of cafes and seeing bits of movies and finding amusement here and there and getting into conversation with people at the cafes who wanted to be friendly with us. We finally wound up across the river at Maxim's. That was along toward dinnertime, and people were having their aperitif. There also was dancing: they had a good orchestra and dance floor. We barged in and the crowd all left the floor and we took over. The orchestra played for us and we danced and helped ourselves to the drinks of the customers, which the customers thought was all right. They seemed to think that if they could put on a good enough show, it was worth the price of the drinks. So we'd reach over and thank them for the liqueur or the cocktail, or whatever they happened to have and would drink to their health and then go back to dancing. The orchestra would play, and we'd dance several turns, and then we'd all go out again. What surprised me was there didn't seem to be any hurry to get to the ball. The evening was spent, more or less, in that sort of fun all over the place. It was about ten or eleven o'clock when we finally got to the hall. Getting into the place was really quite a chore because there were a very large number of the students from the École des Beaux-Arts and from all the art schools, and all of the artists and former students of schools that could get tickets were also there. And with a ball of that sort, there were a great many people who would crash it and pay quite a lot to get into it, because it was quite a famous ball. It was very well handled. Every student, or anybody who had been a former student, went to the representative of his school. Usually the massier, as they call it, of his class was there, and he identified you and passed you on to the next in order. If you were recognized as a bona fide art student or artist or one who should be there, you went down the hall and into the ballroom and were there for the rest of the night. They had worked out a rather interesting arrangement for anybody whose credentials were not in order or who couldn't find anybody to identify him. They made it quite simple. They'd say, "Oh, yes, monsieur. You just go down and see that person down there." So they'd go down and see so-and-so. "Ah, yes, yes. That's perfectly all right. You just go down there and through that door and that's the ballroom" So this poor guy would go down the hall and open the door and find himself out in the back alley with the trash cans and with no way of getting back and nothing to do but go home. [laughter] The ball was a beautiful ball because, naturally, they had a lot of talent to prepare for it. The architects and the painters and especially some of the advanced students of the École des Beaux-Arts and the Julian Academy were the ones back of the whole thing. I suppose there were committees. I don't know exactly how it was arranged. I think the students of

the École des Beaux-Arts were the real organizers of the Bal des Quatz Arts. They spent days beforehand in decorating the place, building up some architectural effects in papier-mâché, in scene painting and one thing and another, so the hall really was quite stunning and many of the costumes were excellent. And, of course, it's a terrifically bacchanalian sort of affair. I went twice, as a matter of fact, but I found it terribly tiring. It lasts so long, and after I'd seen it twice, I felt I'd had it. It was an interesting memory, but I never again wanted to go to the Bal des Quatz Arts. I have an idea that that sort of an affair is more successful among the Latin people than it would be with the Northern people. For one thing, the desire to drink too much isn't as strong with them as it is with us. I noticed that when the English and Americans came back on leave from the front, the first thing a great many of them, did was to forget their troubles with plenty of alcohol. But on the Italian front, I don't remember seeing an Italian officer more than maybe just a bit tipsy. I don't remember seeing one really drunk. The Bal des Quatz Arts, which I think in some countries would degenerate into just a drunken brawl, wasn't that sort of a thing at all. It wasn't that they didn't have as much as they wanted though, because in the middle of the night, or at I suppose about two or three o'clock in the morning, they had an intermission and a kind of a supper. You could get things that they had there and people also brought things. People drank light wines and beers, but most of them didn't really drink much and there was no real drunkenness. At least, I didn't see any. Maybe I wasn't there long enough or maybe they removed the drunks very quickly. I don't know. As I say, it was a very bacchanalian affair and very colorful. They put on a few performances with floats and one thing and another. Once in a while, there'd be a cry that would go up to go around and spot outsiders. It was one of the amusements, and if they found somebody who didn't belong there, the cry "Au poil! Au poil!" would go up, then the students would rush in that direction and the person who had gotten in under false pretenses or by bribery or any other way that was not legitimate was divested of his clothes or her clothes very quickly and had to join the party in a state of nature. There was plenty of voluntary nudity so it was more a way of making them participants and not just spectators. But they weren't treated roughly, and there was nothing too bad about it. After a certain hour, the doors were closed and the ball went on until about daybreak. In June, in Paris, that's pretty early. I think it's about six o'clock or something like that. Then it broke up en masse, and we all went down to the Champs-Élysées in procession. It was a very colorful procession, not only because of the costumes, but because it was rather chilly at that hour of the morning and a lot of the people who didn't have very much on tore down the painted decorations, the scene painting that was done on the regular cotton stuff that scene painters use, and wrapped themselves in strips of this. Also they had

a lot of lights that they used to burn in the old days. I don't know what they're called. They are colored lights that you make by setting fire to them. They make quite a little hissing sound and give a great blaze of smoke and light, I don't think they have them now. They were shaped like big firecrackers and they'd rush out and put them on the benches down the Champs-Élysées and they'd make a tremendous smoke and blaze and were very effective. I suppose they were magnesium flares. So here was this great crowd of wild, shouting people, with the band playing, going down the Champs-Élysées. They were still in an amazingly good mood and full of vitality even at that hour in the morning after having danced all night and romping around the town the afternoon before. We got down to the Place de la Concorde and many of them had stamina enough to jump into the fountains and take a morning bath up in those big fountains. I was too tired. I felt that cold water would just be the end of me. [laughter] But some of them got up there and splashed around and had a marvelous time up in the fountains. Then we crossed the bridge over to the École des Beaux-Arts, which is across from the Place de la Concorde. There's a large paved entrance to the school behind the big iron fence. We all went in there and the band played some more dances, and they whooped and yelled and danced around some more. It was one last fling. Then they stopped and the band put up its instruments. I never saw such a tired-looking crowd dragging themselves home, waiting for buses and trying to hail taxis, as all those people after their wonderful night. One facet of life in Paris in the twenties that I found quite wonderful was the theater. There was so much to be seen, from the most conservative to the most avant-garde efforts in drama. It also was inexpensive, so one could spend many evenings in the theater, as well as going to concerts and other things. But with the Comédie Française and the Odéon, you could see classic French plays with the finest actors of the time. They also had more experimental work. The most famous place, I suppose, was Vieux-Colombier. It was quite a small place and they had extraordinary talent. Jouvet was the actor that I most remember of the group working at the Vieux-Colombier. He afterwards became director, I believe, of the Odéon and also became a very famous actor in a bigger field than he had at the Vieux-Colombier. There was the Théâtre des Champs Élysées, which also had some wonderful performances. It was a very beautiful theater. It was the most modern of the theaters, at that time, in Paris. The others were old places and the Théâtre des Champs Élysées was comparatively new. Incidentally, its ceiling decoration was done by one of my teachers, Maurice Denis. It also had other interesting things in a decorative way by other French artists. It had frescoes by Émile Bourdelle and some very interesting things in the foyer by Edouard Vuillard. It was also a more comfortable theater than the older ones in many ways. There was plenty of room between the seats and you had a chance to stretch your legs,

more so than in the older places. There was also a little company of Russian players, the Pitoeffs. Their plays were acted in French, and although I think Pitoeff was recognized as a talented actor, the French were very critical of his Russian accent. But his wife was really quite a wonderful actress, and they had a small theater which was somewhat avant-garde in the presentation of the plays. Pitoeff himself had some very interesting ideas and considerable ability in the area of decor. He could establish a mood without the great expense of scenery and sometimes he could do that in quite an astonishing way. By just simply using abstract design and color, he could set the mood of the scene on the stage. That was one of the things that I enjoyed very much about his work. And then very often a small group would put on something in an improvised affair, like barracks on a vacant lot. They'd start some idea of an experimental sort. So you got a great variety in plays, from the classic French theater to the contemporary writers and also worthwhile experimental work and really adventurous sort of things that the very small groups would put on. Of course, at that time the Russian ballet was also still at its height. Nijinsky was before my time, but I saw many of the famous ballets of Diaghilev which were produced in Paris in the twenties. That's one of the things that gave us most pleasure. At that time, I was especially interested in the ballet because it seemed to be a wonderful art form in that it gave a chance for the collaboration of the artist, the musician, the actor, and the designer. They could work harmoniously to produce a fine work of art. I thought it was a field that offered a great deal for the future, and it's been one of my disappointments that it has not. It's not that we don't have some excellent ballet and some wonderful dancing, but we haven't built it into something bigger in which this work of Diaghilev would have simply been the forerunner. So it has been rather disappointing to me that a work of Diaghilev stands in history as somewhat isolated. He produced some wonderful things, but there has been so little development since. Some of the things were especially fine, like Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*. I don't think I've ever heard of it being produced since. Of course, we hear the music and it's really a stunning ballet. Maybe it's too difficult or expensive to produce, I don't know. But what I was speaking of in the work of Pitoeff also was carried on afterwards by the designers for the Russian ballet, and what was more or less started by Gordon Craig and Appia and Reinhardt. They got away from the old realistic scenery. Diaghilev was especially adventurous. He'd get Picasso and Léger to do sets, and it's amazing how successful they were. They were done by people you wouldn't think had the sense of theater. You wouldn't think of Léger doing it, for example. At least, I wouldn't have imagined picking him to do something. Diaghilev had great imagination, and he got wonderful collaboration. There was also another theatrical adventure at the time which afterwards became

successful and toured this country. That was the Chauve Souris. It was especially good then, and we discovered it rather accidentally. We were having an aperitif one afternoon before dinner on the boulevard, and my wife and I picked up a little leaflet that had been left on the table of the cafe. It was an ad for a little group called the Chauve Souris. We said, "This sounds rather interesting. Let's go and see what they're doing." So we went. It was a very small theater and not many people were there, but the performance was just wonderful. Everything about it--the presentations, the designing--was wonderful, and it was witty and colorful and the singing and acting were superb. So we said, "This is great. We're coming back when they change the program" So the next week, or whenever it was, we went back. The audience was somewhat bigger that time, and the program was again excellent. By the third week when they changed their program, their place was crowded and they were really successful. The Pitoeffs, of course, were Russian, which brings to mind the fact that there was an immense number of Russian refugees in Paris at that time, of all classes of society--poor and wealthy and aristocratic. Apparently, a large number of them must have come away with some means or at least have salvaged some of their belongings, because I went to the Théâtre des Champs Élysées to see Stanislavski perform and to see his production, and I never saw a more elegant or a more beautifully dressed audience than the Russians at that play (the audience was naturally very largely Russian because the plays were given in Russian). They were dressed in jewels and tiaras and beautiful gowns and things. So they weren't at all hard up by any means, though a great many were. I knew quite a number of people who had been very well-off and important in Russia before the Revolution. But they were then struggling in all sorts of ways to make a living. Incidentally, most performances of Stanislavski were very impressive to me from the point of view of the theater, because when he came to Paris we said, "Well, we must go and at least stay for one act of Stanislavski because he's a great figure in the modern theater and it would be well worthwhile to at least say we've seen him. But we won't understand a word of Russian, so I don't suppose there's any sense in our trying to sit through a play we can't understand a word of." So we went in with that idea in mind. The first play was the Tsar Fyodor Ivanovitch. It had a very gorgeous, colorful, medieval setting, and we were fascinated. I didn't know the story, but the movement, the action and everything was so interesting we said, "Well, we'll see the next play." And so we did. The next play was The Cherry Orchard by Chekhov, which was just as different as could be, of course, from this terrifically colorful play, with these gorgeous costumes and a Byzantine sort of grandeur to it. The Cherry Orchard was a quiet, dreamy sort of thing and in which these people just sat and talked. Of course, we were a little bit better off for this one, because we could read the play before going. We knew it more

or less anyway; so we could feel what was going on. But even if we hadn't known, I think we would have enjoyed it. The use of the stage for movement was fascinating. There would be a little glimpse through a door to where a dance was going on. These figures would pass by the door and so on. There were fascinating little things to watch all the time in the presentation of the play. It helped me enormously to realize the extent to which the theater can be a visual art. It's not only what people say, it's what they do, where they are. It can make the stage such a fascinating and beautiful thing. Even without knowing the language, you still have so much to enjoy. So having that in mind we went back to see the third performance. Stanislavski gave three plays that season in Paris. The first was this gorgeous Byzantine thing. The next was this quiet, modern play, and the next one was again a terrific contrast. That was Maxim Gorky's *Lower Depths*. That, of course, was an extreme contrast with the other two. And, again, it had that same interest for us.

1.12. TAPE NUMBER: VI, Side Two (November 18, 1965)

NUTTING

After one semester at the Julian Academy, I decided to contact something more in the modern spirit of art. I became interested then in the Académie Ranson and the work of Maurice Denis and [Paul] Sérusier. I lost out on quite a bit in Paris because so much time was spent in learning the language and in contact with the people through speech. Even if I had read French a little more easily, it would have meant quite a great deal, I didn't know, for example, what an important man Sérusier was and that he was an artist of considerable distinction. He was quite an important member of the Pont-Aven group. He was articulate and his writing had influence. He was a very interesting old gentleman. The only reason that I didn't go into his atelier at the academy was because he had them doing still life. I was somewhat bored with still life; I wanted to work from the figure. To get back to setting up a still life and painting it seemed to me too much like going back to my days at the Art Students League and Chase's enthusiasm for still life. But I was quite wrong, because I think that Sérusier understood certain principles of painting. He understood Cézanne, for example, more than most anybody at that time understood his work. They were inspired by it, but I don't think they really understood it as much as Sérusier. And if I would have worked with him, I think I would have made better progress in--what shall we call it--the philosophy of painting. I would have gotten away from the rather stupid accurate copying of the model without observation of the meaning and the function of color and line. Denis did a great deal for me in that way, in spite of the fact that I still had to have his criticisms translated by a fellow student. In

that atelier, there always seemed to be some student who knew enough English to translate the criticisms that the teachers gave you. However, I didn't stay too long with Denis, because I had some friends who were working with André Lhote. André Lhote was another man of theory and was also very articulate and wrote a great deal on art. Unlike the professors at Julian and at the Académie Ranson, Lhote had a school which he really gave serious attention to. He made it a part of his career to run his art school according to his ideas, in contrast to simply coming around and giving criticisms once a week or, at most, twice a week. I think once a week is about as often as you got a criticism at the other schools. But he watched his students very carefully and continually. He would be there in the morning and then do his own work in the afternoon, and he managed the school quite well. The principal difference between his instruction and the instruction I had in other schools was the emphasis on the more abstract form. It was definitely a study from nature, from the model, from life, from landscape and objects, but it was very much influenced by the Cubist painter, the conception of painting as being a thing of two dimensions. Maurice Denis formulated it in quite a famous line, which is often quoted: "A painting, before it is anything else, is an organization of color on a plane surface," or words to that effect. Before it's a nude or a landscape or a crucifixion or what have you, it's primarily an organization of color on a plane surface. Maurice Denis's compositions were much more figurative than Lhote's. Also Maurice Denis and a painter by the name of [Georges] Desvallières were both quite ambitious to found a school of Catholic art, to train artists who wanted to do things for the church and for liturgical purposes--murals, design, architecture and that sort of thing. They started a school for that purpose. That interested me quite a bit because there the emphasis would be on figure composition and mural painting. For a great many years, I was quite ambitious to do things on a very large scale. I could have worked with Maurice Denis, I think, though the school was really primarily for Catholics who were going to devote their life and contribute their work to the Church. It's rather interesting--I just happened to think of it--that there were three men: Desvallières, Maurice Denis and the painter [Georges] Rouault who were Catholics. Rouault was very devoted. It may come as somewhat of a surprise to people who only know his early work. In his later work, he did use religious themes a great deal. Some of his most famous things are religious themes. All three men had what I would call a very wholesome idea in religious art. It wasn't an old-fashioned idea that art was the handmaid of religion; it was, in itself, a way of life to them which was harmonious to their faith. And I think it vitalized their work. It certainly did in the case of Rouault, and probably also in the case of Maurice Denis. André Lhote's discipline in his school was rather austere, so far as what was prescribed. He wanted his students to do certain things--a certain use of the straight line and the curve, the

reverse curve, and to study the opposition of straight and curve in your drawing, no matter what you were drawing. That, of course, had the weakness that most of the students turned out to simply be little André Lhotes. But there are many, many teachers for which that is true. To a certain extent, maybe that isn't too bad. That a student should feel from the very beginning that he has to find himself is maybe not quite true. My argument is that in the days when painters were really important and valued, in the days of the Renaissance, you can't tell the early work of a Raphael, for example, from a Perugino. The early work of Van Dyck, you can't tell from a Rubens. Even later, as an original a genius as [Joseph] Turner spent years in an intense study and imitation of other painters' work. He did Claude Lorrains and Dutch paintings and all sorts of things. An analogous sort of thing, I think, we find in what Robert Louis Stevenson said about the formation of his style, that he played the sedulous ape. He named Addison and Steele and other writer-stylists that he admired. He did this in order to learn his craft. So I didn't mind spending a year or so (as a matter of fact, it was just about one year) working with Lhote and doing these rather geometrical things that I wasn't too sympathetic with. But the principles involved and a certain training in observation and exercise in certain simplifications, I found enormously valuable. Afterwards I remember exhibiting a large canvas, and somebody in writing up the show said, "Nutting showed some Davidian nudes as seen through a Lhote prism" I had to confess it just about described my picture. You had something more or less derived from David and rather academically drawn. "Seen through a Lhote prism," meant it broke up the nudes and made them look pseudo-modern. But I'm quite grateful to Lhote for much that I got from him. Incidentally, he was a very pleasant person. He used to come around to my studio and criticize my work, and we'd discuss things. I enjoyed his friendship, as well as his instruction. More and more, I started to work in my studio. It was a good place to work and models were cheap. So I worked by myself in the mornings or even most of the day in my studio. Then, not too far away, was the Académie de Grande Chaumière et Colarossi--two very old schools. They were not academies in the sense of Julian or Lhote's or Ranson but they were two buildings that were not far apart, and they had studios devoted to various activities--sculpture and painting and drawing. There were teachers, and it was a little bit more like the Art Students League in New York. The teacher would have his atelier there and other classes would be a cours libre--you simply had a chance to go and to work, models were provided, but you didn't have any instruction. That was especially true of the croquis classes which ran all day and well into the night, I think, to about eleven o'clock, with a change of models. So you could knock off work when it commenced to get too dark to see color and paint, and then go over and spend a couple of hours at a croquis class and get in some drawing. For lots of the boys,

it was really their principal art education. It was very cheap, and they didn't have to pay a professor for teaching in a class, which would have been much more expensive. It didn't cost very much and they could get in their daily exercise in drawing and in the painting classes in the same way. After all, you don't need the teacher so much as you think. I had one teacher that said frankly, "I think you kids are learning much more from each other than you learn from me." That isn't quite true because if the teacher is one for whom you have respect and you admire his work, he is inspiring to you and inspires all the students. Whether he says anything or not, his influence is there. It creates an atmosphere in which certain things germinate. So he is important. But, in that way, it was an excellent development for me to pass on from my schooling into working more by myself, depending more on my own feeling, my own intuition, in trying to find myself. Of course, curiously enough, I got a little stimulus to do that back in Rome when Besnard told me to paint that big canvas. Then I commenced to exhibit in Rome and, afterwards, in Paris. These three very brilliant Russian painters--Jacovlev, Shoukaiev, Gregoriev--were in Paris at that time and Jacovlev had a school. He was a prize student from the St. Petersburg Academy. He was traveling in China on a scholarship from the academy when the revolution took place, and he was stranded in China. He did brilliant work, and he did very large canvases in egg tempera. He was a master in painting in egg tempera. In a way, that is a Russian tradition because the Russian icon is done with egg tempera. One thing rather amused me about painting in egg tempera in the Russian way: I was talking to a Russian who also had very great skill in that medium, and he said that what they painted with was egg and oil and kvass--which, I believe, is a kind of Russian beer--instead of water. We use water. I don't know what that contributed to it. Some of his stuff was in oil, but, mostly, it was in egg tempera, largely because his graphic sense of drawing and design was much stronger than a medium, par excellence, for a person with that sort of feeling. Historically, one feels that in the early Renaissance or even as late as Fra Angelico and still later with Botticelli, that their work is, essentially, tempera painting because of the great love of design and drawing. Later the development of the feeling for space, for light, for a certain integration of the form with its environment in which there is a feeling of the essence (not in the way in which a thing detaches itself from a background but in the substance itself as it is illuminated in space and in air) really brought about oil painting. Of course this is a digression, and I only mention it because I worked in Jacovlev's studio and learned something of his very brilliant technique as a draftsman. This was in contrast to some of the problems that were presented by a man like Denis for example or others with more painterly problems. In that way--by going to sketch classes, by talking to other students, by getting this variety of experiences in the various schools--I

gratified my desire to be a serious student and to get in contact with all facets of the feeling and spirit of student life at that time in Paris. I soon commenced to submit my work to the salons in Paris and was lucky. I was usually accepted, not only in the more modern salons but in the academic salons, the old Artistes Français for example, which is the most academic of all, and then in the Société Nationale, which was slightly more modern. In those days the two societies showed at the same time in the Spring Salon. The Société Nationale was a secession from the Artistes Français in the early nineties, I believe. A number of artists felt that they were more in the modern spirit and that the old Nationale was "old hat." But the only way you could now tell one salon from the other is that the carpet changed color as you went from the galleries where the Nationale was shown into the Artistes Français. I sent to the Nationale and was accepted after having been accepted in the Artistes Français, the very conservative one. The somewhat more modern one was the Nationale. Then I tried the Autumn Salon and they found my work more acceptable than I realized at the time. Some years ago I found an old catalog of the Autumn Salon among my things and found that that year, I had four canvases in the show. They'd accepted four of my things. That, of course, is unheard of now in this country. If you get one thing in, that's as much as anybody ever does, except when they have some special showing or a memorial show. But, in the Autumn Salon, they would accept a number of canvases by one man. And, of course, at the Independents you had a chance to show more than one thing because there was no jury. So I showed at the Autumn Salon and also at the Independents as well as the very conservative ones. That makes it sound as though I didn't have any very special direction in my work, which wasn't quite true. I didn't paint for these salons. I simply picked out what I thought might be acceptable from the things I was doing seriously and would send them. Then there was another salon that got started. Paris is great for starting some new art society or having some new exhibition. This was called the Salon de Tuileries. They put up temporary barracks, if I remember rightly, in the Tuileries Gardens. The president of that salon was Besnard. The vice-president was the sculptor, Émile Bourdelle. I sent a canvas to the Tuileries and got accepted. As I look back, I'm rather surprised that I was accepted because I don't think my work was very good then and also because so many of the painters, year after year, would submit to salons--they would be working hard and studying--and would be refused. As I say, for some reason I seemed to be more lucky than the others. So I sent to the Salon de Tuileries. I remember trying to make up my mind whether to send or not, because I imagined it would be a very difficult show to get into. They didn't want it to be a very large show, and I've forgotten just what special ideas they had. As one could well imagine with such men as Besnard and Bourdelle, it wouldn't be one that would be very adventurous. At

the same time, I think they honestly wanted to take the best of the most talented work in Paris and from the painters who would be contemporary in spirit, so it would not be a rehash of academic things but, at the same time, what they would consider sound painting. There would be nothing of the Dada or the Futurist about it. Well, I tried to make up my mind what to send to the Tuileries, and then I realized that Émile Bourdelle was a neighbor of ours. He was really in the same block, but you had to walk around the block to get into the entrance to his court. So I decided I would go and call on Bourdelle. That was one of the occasions when I overcame a certain amount of timidity in doing that sort of thing. I put a half a dozen of my canvases in my little car, and I drove around into the court where he had his studios and asked for Monsieur Bourdelle. He was working in his studio, and after somebody told him someone was there to see him, he said, "Come in," and went on working. He turned out to be a very delightful person. He looked at my things, and, yes, he thought they might like them and suggested this one and this one and was warm and hospitable in every way. It was a pleasure to meet him. So I sent this thing of mine to the Tuileries and it was shown. The day before the opening of the salon was the Vernissage. The Vernissage gets its name from the old days when the Royal Academy in London and salons in Paris had a Petit Vernissage and a Grand Vernissage. The Petit Vernissage was just for the artists. They would go down to see their work, and if they wanted to touch it up a little bit or retouch something, they had a chance to do it before the Grand Vernissage, which was really the opening of the show, and sometimes by invitation. Then after that the exhibition would be on. Well, I went down the day of the Petit Vernissage and the show was only about half hung, so I wandered around to see if I could find my work. I wanted to see where it was going to go before I left, and I finally found it leaning up against a wall. So I stood around and waited. A committee was working to place this here and place that there, but they didn't hang my picture. I had an appointment and I had to go; so I was quite disappointed because I wanted to see whether I'd get a good place or not. I looked down the gallery and I saw Besnard; so I went and made some little remark to him about the exhibition, that I thought it was going to be most interesting and all that sort of thing--something polite. Then I mentioned I had to go and that I did hope that before I left, I would see where they were going to put my picture. And he said, "Oh, they haven't hung your picture yet?" And he put his arm around me and said, "Pauvre enfant, come with me. Show me your picture." So I showed him where the picture was. Then he spoke to somebody and said, "Would you like your picture hung there?" and he pointed someplace. I said, "Oh, that would be wonderful." It was on the line you know. He said, "All rights" and he gave instructions to somebody on the committee that my picture should be hung there. So I thanked him and left. But I found that sort of thing to be very

typical of the Frenchman. In other countries, people in the position of Bourdelle and Besnard and others, especially those with fame, academic honors and prestige, seem to feel that they have to be on their dignity somewhat more, although they might be very nice about it. One mustn't generalize, but I think it is understandable that I enjoy the pleasant memories of a happy period of my life. And it makes me sad to hear stories from friends, who return from European travel, of unpleasant experiences in France and of liking more the time spent, for instance, in the country of our former adversaries--the Germans. My continual showing was wholesome for me. To see your work in public can be a discipline in itself. I'd get occasional portraits to do and jobs of one sort and another--most anything that would bring in a little return. Curiously enough, I did an increasing amount of private teaching. I still had an idea that illustrations could be a serious phase in my work. I had a friend who was a correspondent for a New York fashion magazine, and she wanted me to do fashion drawing. It gave me a new experience, and it was interesting. To my surprise I enjoyed it. It was very good experience, although I felt I didn't have much talent for it, and I couldn't seem to be able to cultivate a style that seemed to be appropriate, or especially good. But it was interesting trying to do it anyway, and it gave me more knowledge of the requirements and techniques involved in magazine illustration. Those were the days when really distinguished drawing was often done by fashion artists. Once in a while I would meet "Eric." His sensitive and tasteful line was always a delight.

SCHIPPERS

What kind of paintings were you doing at the time, and what kind of paintings were you exhibiting in these shows?

NUTTING

Well, most of my work at that time, all that I exhibited, fell into two categories--portraits and figure painting directly from life. That was partly because I was interested in such work and also because I still felt that unless you had the continuous discipline of working from nature, you were not going to be a real artist. But the things that I exhibited most were figure compositions, and sometimes of quite good size, usually nudes. I don't know how to describe them exactly except that they were somewhat decorative and had a romantic feeling to them. As I think I mentioned before, one of the reasons why I went first to Germany instead of France was because something of the Northern spirit has always more or less possessed me. When I was in Boston, where the emphasis was on intense copying of the model, one of my greatest delights was to go to the library where I found in German magazines things that seemed to me much more thrilling than the more objective work you would find in the south of Europe. When I was a boy, the engravings of Albrecht Dürer were very impressive to me. Even as much as I loved Impressionist painting and was

thrilled by it, there was something about the sheer objectivity, the slice-of-life idea or the momentary vision, which wasn't as altogether satisfying as Dürer's engravings. I found something in them more deeply moving. That always has colored my painting. I have even made conscious efforts to get away from it, even to the extent of undergoing some psychoanalysis. It was not that I wanted to be cured of anything, but I felt that psychoanalysis--which was then becoming quite the rage and everybody was reading and talking about it--could give some better understanding of the creative mind. Of course, I was doomed to disappointment, but at least it was worth exploring. I felt that in this more introverted sort of feeling, I was out of step with the rational attitude, especially the French rational attitude towards all of their problems. The French have not had very much in the way of what developed in middle Europe known as Expressionism. You could place Rouault quite definitely in that category, but very few. Certainly not Picasso. The Surrealists, you might say, could be lumped in with the Expressionists, but that is debatable. And I don't think you can really include Dadaism or any of those other movements. My experience was that whenever I tried to exert my will on what I wanted to do, or what I thought was worthwhile doing, the proverb of the French always came to mind: "Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose" ("The more it changes, the more it's the same thing"). So it always looked very much like a Romantic composition after I got through. No matter what approach I took to make it something different, I always seemed to fall back to the same sort of feeling. Finally I gave up and let nature take its course.

SCHIPPERS

What was the particular advantage of having things shown in these salons?

NUTTING

One thing that was quite surprising to me was the amount of attention that is given to all art and cultural activities in Paris. When you think of the thousands of canvases that are shown and of all the centers for other activities--literature and music and everything else--it's surprising that they treat you seriously. I got many more notices and comments in French papers than I have ever gotten in this country. In Paris, there might be several magazines in which they wrote up a show, and I'd find my name or some comment. Here, if one paper will give a notice of a show, it's quite a lot. The critics have different shows that they are interested in, and usually they write about different people in the shows. So no one artist gets much space and quite talented boys will not get noticed at all. In Paris, you do get noticed, and it gives you a good feeling that people have seen your work. Maybe they knock it and say terrible things about it, but that's not the important thing. You are part of the life, the activity, the yeast.

SCHIPPERS

Were you selling any of your canvases at this time?

NUTTING

Well, none of my more ambitious ones. I didn't get any very large commissions. I did get commissions for portraits and once in a while a commission for an illustration or something for a decorative book for this fashion drawing I did. My friend seemed convinced I could be a good fashion artist if I wanted to be. I thought it was fun, so I did that. It gave me a weekly check but nothing of much importance. Of course, portraiture was the biggest bet because people like to have their portraits painted. Sometimes I sold a landscape, but not very often. I wasn't a very industrious landscape painter, to tell the truth. I didn't exactly get into portrait painting, but in Rome, I did several, largely because anybody coming to my studio would see that I was painting people, and if it was something they liked, it would inspire them to have something done. I'd begin maybe with a portrait drawing or a portrait pastel or something, and if that was pleasing, I would paint a portrait. Their friends might like it and also want something done. It just happened rather naturally. In Rome, I did a portrait of Dr. Collins. We became quite good friends, and he seemed to think I had something in me as an artist and decided to have his portrait done. So he posed for me. That didn't lead to anything else. But, usually it does. If the portrait is at all successful, there are other members of the family or friends who also want to be done. So, in that way, there were always some to do but not too many. Afterwards, I became quite convinced that I could not make a real success of portrait painting. I haven't the temperament for it. There are ways to get around some of the difficulties, but the principal difficulty--especially I think in this country and in modern times--is that the form of portrait painting is far too restricted for a man to make a whole career of it. If he's really going to make his living at it, his approach has to be quite realistic. Of course, it has to be a good likeness, and that is forgivable because people want a good likeness. The only time they might not complain is if the picture happened to be by Picasso, and then the very fact that it were by Picasso would give it worth even if you couldn't recognize the person represented. But, nobody like Picasso would consider himself a portrait painter. Another thing is that I felt that one of the primary necessities of being a portrait painter was that you have to meet a great many people. You have to be known, you have to be seen, you have to make contacts, as they say. It helps a lot to be a very amusing fellow and a good storyteller and good company. I was not especially ambitious to be any of these things and never have been. I like my friends, but I don't like to be out too much with strange people. Portrait painting, as I said, was something that you simply had to do at that time if you were going to live. You either did that or you did illustration. Commercial art, as we understand it now, wasn't a concept that we had then. At least I had not acquired it as a student. When I came back from Europe and found that everything that I loved about

painting was going to suffer by being put into the straight jacket of making likenesses of people--along with these other difficulties that I mentioned--I junked many early ideas. I have done more teaching for a steady income than anything else.

SCHIPPERS

What kind of income did you get from the portraits you were doing then?

NUTTING

Oh, I don't remember exactly. My prices were not high. They were from about \$300 to \$600 for a portrait. It was high then, but it wouldn't be high now.

SCHIPPERS

On the subject of money, how much did you have to pay to go to these schools you spoke about?

NUTTING

That I don't remember, except it was really very little.

SCHIPPERS

Was your income still somewhat secure?

NUTTING

Yes, I'd inherited a modest amount, but enough. And then my wife, too, had her income; so between the two of us, we were all right. I didn't attend any of the schools very formally for the last few years in Paris. I used to visit some of them and get acquainted with their activities, what this or that man had in mind that sounded interesting. Sometimes there were classes at the Grande Chaumière, Colarossi, that I would attend for a short time. There was a man, Naudin, whose drawings and etchings I admired. He did quite a lot of work for fine editions. He had a class for a short time at the Grande Chaumière in the evening. I used to drop in to listen to his talk and demonstrations more than anything else. So things of that sort I'd get here and there--lectures and education contacts. The last thing that I could call schooling at all occurred in my last year in Paris. One day I met a friend of mine who asked me if I would like to go to the University of Paris for a summer course in the Department of Art and Archeology. I said I thought it would be a very delightful thing to do. "Well," he said, "if you want to do that, all you have to do is go over to the Student Union and see Dr. Van Dyke and tell him that is what you'd like to do." So I went, and Dr. Van Dyke was very nice. He said that they had two vacancies in this course and if I'd like to have one, he'd be glad to let me have it. So, I spent the summer, and a very delightful one, not only attending these lectures but going to the Sorbonne. We not only had these fine courses at no expense but were also given a liberal amount toward living expenses. I took two courses--one, Renaissance and the other, Romanesque and Gothic. Both of the courses had excellent professors. We had a different professor about every week or so, a specialist in some phase of the subjects. I got through all right; I

even wrote my examination in French--which I couldn't do now--and passed an oral examination (they gave you an oral examination as well as a written examination). There were, if I remember rightly, about twenty American students studying in Paris on this scholarship. To tell the truth, I never knew very much about it. I attended the lectures and did the work but never found out exactly what I was in or why I was there. But it was a fine experience and gave me a chance to see a little bit of the life of the French student. One thing that rather bothered me was that the little fellow who examined me in Renaissance wasn't one of the professors that I liked. He was a professor of art from the University at Besancon, if I remember rightly, and he gave me the oral examination. Fortunately I was on to him and I knew what he thought; so when he showed me a drawing and said, "Who is this by?" I said, "It's supposed to be by Michelangelo." I knew perfectly well it wasn't by Michelangelo. It was by [Baccio] Bandinelli, if anybody. It was not by Michelangelo, but I knew he wanted me to say it was by Michelangelo, so I said that it was Michelangelo. He wasn't too good at drawing. He had some framed color reproductions of drawings on the wall of the room, and he passed by one day and I asked him, "Who do you think did these?" (There was no name, nothing on them, just the reproductions hanging there.) "Oh," he said, "I don't know but you can see they are French sanguines of the eighteenth century." That gave me a little jolt, because I didn't have to have any inscription to see that they were Dutch sanguines of the seventeenth century. However, the other men were brilliant professors--this little guy was an exception. One of them gave a little party for us at his apartment. He was a very jolly fellow, and he was wonderful on Gothic architecture. Goodness, I'd like to take a whole course from him. He was so full of life and fun and at the same time, had tremendous erudition. He used to run his classes overtime. It was quite amusing to see the professor of the following class open the door and stare at him, but he'd go right on talking until he got through. I wasn't there long enough and my work wasn't varied enough to get much of an impression of the Sorbonne. The seating in some lecture halls rises steeply toward the back. The lecture halls had the effect of an amphitheater. They also make use of the official talent, the Prix de Rome painters, for murals decorating the halls, something that you don't see so much elsewhere. One work of art there that is very important is by Puvis de Chavannes. It's in a big hall at the Sorbonne and is very large. Maybe its being a summer course, there wasn't the activity I would have seen if I'd been a regular student in one of the winter courses. The Sorbonne was my last contact with any formal schooling or instruction. After that was through, I went down to report at the Student Union and they asked me if there were any trips I'd like to make in connection with the study. It so happened that while I was going to the Sorbonne, I had accepted a position in Milwaukee as an art teacher in the

Layton School of Art, so I was expecting to leave as quickly as I could. What I did was to combine this offer with a visit to England. I found that the only port I could get passage from was in England. So I said, "Yes, I'd like to go to England," presumably to study English Gothic. So they paid my expenses for that trip to England, and then I sailed from there for home. But I believe that they would have given me a trip almost anywhere I wanted to go. If I had stayed longer, I would have tried for Greece or the Near East, which would have been quite a tremendous addition to my European experience.

1.13. TAPE NUMBER: VII, Side One (November 25, 1965)

NUTTING

There is one period that to me seems to be most important in my life. Also, I feel it has a chance of being of more interest to people than other periods. That is the period which I spent in Paris. It was the decade of the twenties, and it was a very interesting decade, when everything was in a ferment. The activities in music and art, literature and drama were at their height. I feel very inadequate in giving a picture of it. I haven't notes, memoranda or documentation which people might value. It's only my personal experience. In my talks, heretofore, in speaking of Paris, I had in mind, first of all, to give some sort of a picture of a young fellow who all his life had dreamt of going to Paris, the Mecca of the artists. Paris is not nearly so much now as it was then, but when I was young, it seemed the source of all art ideas, art education. Anybody who had studied in Paris was always interesting to us and we wanted to talk to him about what he did. We used to read novels about the bohemian life in Paris, such as Du Maurier, F. Hopkinson Smith. It was not just myself, especially, because any young student first of all contacts the art student life. He knows something of the salons, of the École des Beaux-Arts, of the academies, of the professors who have been especially influential in the student life. If we could go to Europe and knew of some famous master, then we wanted to study with him. But I didn't especially go to Paris for that. I simply wanted to contact the life and the activity. In fact, I was more or less prepared for a rather broader feeling of art student life from my sojourn in Munich. I saw the spirit of the academy there, and the academy at that time had some quite famous professors. There was one professor especially that the American crowd favored--Angelo Jank. And all of the American boys I met in Munich who were going to the academy were very anxious to work with him. Apparently he was an excellent teacher, and a number of his students that I have known have since gone places. It was the same time when there was a ferment of Expressionism. I was introduced to that and found it rather bewildering because we had had no contact with it in Boston and New York, to any extent, and to find that the galleries were largely

devoted to the modern movement seemed to me quite amazing and bewildering. Then came the period in which I didn't have too much contact with student life--the period during my sojourn in Italy. The vitality of the modern movements was impressive. It was the period in which Di Chirico was doing his best work for example. The Schola Metafisica was influential. The Futurists were still very lively. Marinetti was still alive and was Influential. And the young writers, the young painters, were in a state of excitement in spite of the fact that the cloud of war and the feeling of depression was heavy. The dedication of the young artists, writers and musicians was impressive. A boy that I knew had a skeleton cello in the trenches with him, and he would get out his skeleton cello and kept up his work as best he could. I also knew a Belgian painter who always had his paint box with him, even at the front. He used to tear off the window shades of houses that had been damaged or destroyed or vacated and use them for canvases. He would paint whenever he had a chance. Quite a famous example, of course, was Gaudier Breszka, the young sculptor, who was killed at Verdun when he was twenty-four. His letters from the front were most interesting. In spite of the fact that he was right in the midst of a terrible situation, his work as an artist was still as serious and preoccupying a subject as it ever was. So I came to Paris more mature in many ways than I would have been otherwise. Now, what I have in mind is the other thread--which I think is really the most important part of our lives--our mental development and how it happens. It's not that I have any explanation, but there are certain observations in looking back that I can make of things that have influenced me. I spoke once before of a certain conflict that I have always felt in myself. I am not arguing whether it's a matter of conditioning or a matter of heredity, but the people with north European blood do seem to have a certain attitude towards form in the arts which is not that of the Mediterranean people, that the classical feeling of the south is not a natural one to people of northern Europe. Whether that is conditioning or not, or whether it's the long nights and cold winters and psychological conditions which the people of northern Europe have grown up in that will bring on what seems to be certain characteristics of northern art, I don't know. I have forgotten who it was who spoke of it as a "metaphysical anxiety," which is not to be found so much in the south. There is a form of expressionism in the southern art, but not nearly to the extent of the northern. In my experience as a boy, as I look back, the things that impressed me and moved me deeply in feeling and also in action were largely of the northern spirit, though the Greek art also had a strong influence. As far as heredity is concerned, I have often wondered about my own family, the Nuttings. They seemed to have been quite intelligent people. My own line has not produced many male members. My grandfather had seven sisters, and he was the only boy in the family. My great grandfather was an architect and a

builder. Other family members have been clergymen, and one was a distinguished professor--I forget of what. Wallace Nutting made a name for himself. He was one of the editors of the Encyclopaedia Britannica on a subject of Americana. I think there may have been some musicians. Adelaide Nutting was head of the nursing at Johns Hopkins and professor at Columbia University. They have a fine portrait of her by Cecilia Beaux. Cecilia Beaux was an excellent portrait painter. She's almost forgotten now, but when I was young, she and Mary Cassatt were looked upon as the two most important women painters in this country. In my immediate family, the influences in my thought was a mixture of my father's New England background and my mother's Southern background. My maternal grandfather was from Virginia. The family were Episcopalians, but Father was brought up with, I won't say stern, but fairly rigid Congregationalist ideals of behavior. As I remember, my grandmother, who kept the Sabbath very faithfully, disapproved of my playing checkers on the Sabbath when I was a boy. But she got a little more broad-minded because her children and grandchildren had more liberal ways of thought. My father liked the exact sciences. He liked to argue things very clearly. At the same time, he was fond of poetry. He could recite poetry by the yard. That was partly his natural feeling and partly his upbringing, because one of his exercises as a youngster was to memorize poetry to recite every Saturday. Every Saturday he must have some verses to recite to his parents. So he learned to memorize quite easily, and even in his last days, when he was in his nineties, he amazed his nurses by lying in bed and reeling off yards of poetry to them. [laughter] On the other hand, he was not a great reader of novels, plays, etc. He was a slow reader and wanted to know exactly what was being said. And although he was fairly familiar with important works of fiction, he wasn't much of a reader of fiction. On the other hand, my mother was quite talented. If she'd had more opportunity, and if life had treated her a little better, she might have done something. She was a great reader and from girlhood had had an ambition to be a writer. I have some bits of manuscripts of hers that she had started that are rather promising. They at least suggest that under better conditions she could have fulfilled her ambition. Of course, there was quite a difference in temperament between the Puritan spirit of the New England Nuttings and the cavalier spirit of my maternal ancestry, who were from Virginia. They were rather fun-loving and inclined in a few instances to be rather hard-drinking. [laughter] My maternal grandfather, apparently, was a rather brilliant young man. He came out and settled across the Ohio River in Illinois. He had studied law. Where and how much I don't know, but he soon established a reputation as a lawyer of unusual talent. The first thing he did was to get a job surveying land for the government. At that time, he was paid so much land for every section or quarter section or whatever it was that he

surveyed. The result was that he wound up, in a few years, with nice pieces of property all over southern Illinois. It started him off very well. Maybe, I told the story about this old man who said he knew my grandfather mighty well. He said that he was the smartest man he'd ever seen, and "the beatenest one to fight." I have reason to believe that though quick-tempered he was very compassionate and capable of serious sacrifice for what he believed to be just. His intelligence and sensibility was passed onto my mother. My little brother Arlie (Arthur) and I were devoted to each other and got along together perfectly. I wish I could give a true picture of Arlie. He was strange but not queer, different but not abnormal, if that means anything. He developed very early a habit of putting his ideas into clear and precise form, though unlike me, he was not a talkative child. Mother said that as a matter of fact that he was so slow beginning to talk that she and Father began to be worried. Time soon showed they had no cause for worry. One evening Father came home with some thread Mother had asked him to get her and he took it out of his pocket and stacked the spools in a little tower on the table. Arlie looked at the varicolored little edifice in wonder and then said slowly, "Look at a-1-1-1-1 the thread." When he had something to say he said it, deliberately and clearly. In our walks around Jalapa we went one day into a cemetery. There we saw some things that were unfamiliar to us, supposedly imperishable flower wreaths, photos of the deceased in little glass cases, etc. Also, somewhat disturbing, a heap of bones from the graves where the period of tenure had run out. Arlie was silent during this tour but observed everything with solemn interest, especially the bones which seemed to trouble him somewhat. However, as we were going out he explained to Mother that it was all right, that the real people weren't there any more, what was there wasn't them at all. The real people had just gone away into the Happiness. I am talking about my brother not altogether for sentimental or biographical reasons, but also because, interested as we are these days in child psychology, I feel he is worth knowing. I think I'm quite unequivocal when I say that I can think of nothing in his life that was not normal in every way. We were healthy kids and lived in a healthy and normal atmosphere. If on the one hand he was inclined to retreat from anything boisterous, and to be wary of strange and unfamiliar behavior, on the other hand he was full of play as anyone. He did have this precocious habit of meditating on the mystery of life and often on its unhappiness, and coming up with an epitome of thought. An attractive young engineer in Father's office, with a Vandyke beard and who was usually about in riding clothes, was one of Arlie's best friends. He bore the name of Montmorency but was not French, but from Lincoln, Nebraska, where he knew the Bryan family and had amusing anecdotes about them. "Mont" was transferred, to the acute sorrow of Arlie. He bore the loss of his friend quietly but eventually confided to his mother, "Every

day and every day there is something more to be sorry for." He accepted the unfamiliar slowly. At a party at the Schonfelds, the French governess of the children in an English family, to amuse the group of youngsters there, dressed up in a man's riding clothes and strode about smoking a big cigar, doing bits of clowning. We all, with the exception of Arlie, appreciated her with noisy enthusiasm. He rejoined the older people, and when Mother asked him why he was not with the other children, he informed her it was because I don't like that French women, I don't like the way she acts." Well, I can see that had he lived, our ways may not have parted, but there might have been periods of divergence. However, I doubt if he would have eventually been more of a prig than I. What is innate--and why? Mother had gotten two little Mexican chairs that you see around, quite small, and he had one and I had one. Mother came in on his birthday and he was sitting in this little chair and looking very solemn. She spoke to him and said, "Arlie, what are you thinking about so seriously?" And he said, "Mommy, do you know what I was thinking about? I was thinking of what good times I used to have when I was a small boy." [laughter] Here was this little six-year-old who felt as though he had the weight of years on his shoulders. Lately, I've been reading Jung. There's something he says about children that makes me think of Arlie as having a very interesting personality for Jung to observe. Because in some way, it seemed almost as though he was aware of the shortness of his life and was trying to live it fully as he could and get as much understanding as he could in the short time that he had. I don't say it was so, but as I look back now, it gives me that feeling. I think he was more talented than I: he could draw better than I, although he was younger, and I think he was smarter in every way. But I don't know. It was a long time ago, and I don't really remember everything except these little pictures of him. I can remember very distinctly his golden hair. I was brown-haired. He was blue-eyed, and I was brown-eyed. We were very fond of each other, very devoted to each other. Of course, the strongest influences on me, after his death, came from my parents. And as I have sketched the two of them, you can see how I got a broad education, if not a deep one. Father liked to talk about scientific things and to explain things. He would have been a magnificent teacher. I say that, not only because of my own experience with him, but because other young men that he helped often said what a wonderful teacher he would be in a college. They liked to work with him. He had a way of imparting a lot of enthusiasm for everything that he talked about so that it wasn't a dry subject. And, with Mother, it was the same way. She used to read to me a great deal, and then I started reading myself. Certain things happened that may or may not be important but are rather interesting from the point of view of what is true of any youngster--I'm not speaking of any peculiarity in myself. They ask questions of themselves and decide that they're unanswerable and throw them

overboard. I had a peculiar tendency--it seems to me, as I look back now--of not leaving the question alone. I would follow it out until I came, so to speak, to the jumping-off place where it's obvious that there was nothing more to be said about it. To ask another question would be foolish. It would be meaningless if you asked them. But that was sort of the starting point. The first thing that I can remember along that line, although it seemed rather small, was one of those things that I feel was a milestone in my attitude towards problems, towards life. I read a science-fiction story in an English magazine called the Strand Magazine, in which the writer played with the idea of time. These young fellows had taken a drug which influenced their sense of time. It was rather a silly story, but it fascinated me because it gave me an idea--what do you do about time? what is time? Along about the same time, I read a story of Hans Christian Andersen that also dealt with the idea of time, of relative time. For quite a while, that thought rather obsessed me. I discussed this matter with my father. Well, Father was not what you would call a metaphysical thinker. When things were measurable and were obviously real, he was quite satisfied to deal with them. So I brought up these questions with Father--what is time? what is space? how do you define it? We used to have long discussions; he was an awfully good man to discuss things with. What I was struggling with, and afterwards formulated to a certain extent in a homemade way of thinking, was that time exists only if something happens, that if you could remove all events you have no time. And if you remove everything from space, you have no space. And if you have only one thing in space, that thing has no size. I turned this over in my mind (I was a teenager then), and Father could not make very much sense of what I was driving at. I don't blame him because I couldn't express myself too well, but the idea was there. Since then, it's impressed me very much. I don't very often bring up such subjects, but once in a while, it comes up as an interesting thing for a conversation. I find people have amazing resistance to grasp what in the world I'm driving at. They have a yardstick. It's not three feet long. It's simply a stick with marks on it. It could be a hundred miles long, unless you have something that goes with it that makes it a certain division of another length. Then you have something that you call three feet; otherwise it's nonexistent, as I say, in terms of something existing in space. Well, I don't know how to express the strange way I felt when I had that certain adumbration of a truth, but it did set a certain attitude for me towards life. It was not a self-revelation. It was a stage in the development of consciousness somehow and it really had some meaning. It wasn't just a funny idea I played with. It had something that would function in my life, in my will to live. The next thing I can think of that would be really a milestone in self-realization, if you want to call it that, was when I first went to high school. When I first went to high school in Mandan, North Dakota, they were rather bothered because

they didn't know what to do with me. I think I forgot to mention that in Penn Yan I did go to high school for a short time, and I think I passed some examinations. I can't straighten that out in my mind. All I know is that I was quite a nuisance in this little school in Mandan because they didn't know what to do with me. It wound up that I took a freshman subject and a junior subject and a sophomore subject, and I'm not sure I didn't have something else, all at one time. They finally got me through in their funny sort of way. I wanted to take geometry my first year in Mandan. I had passed my examination in algebra, and I wanted to take geometry. The geometry teacher said that would be quite all right, but she said there would be one difficulty, and that was that the class did very badly the year before and they were taking it over in one semester, and she doubted if I could do it in one semester. And I said that I'd like to try. It worked out perfectly well. Not that I was very good at math, because I never got very far with it. But thanks to my father, who stimulated my interest in geometry, I played with triangles and geometrical puzzles. I worked out a geometrical puzzle ahead of my dad one day. I wasn't especially delighted because I was not very competitive in my spirit--I go in there to win, but if I don't win, why, it doesn't break my heart. So geometry had a certain fascination for me. But it did a lot more than that. It opened my eyes to the fact that you have to start any research with some sort of a premise, and you have to accept it. We had the axioms of Euclid in those days. We didn't have the geometry that kids have now; it was just simply straight argument on a certain premise. And that fascinated me. So I enjoyed it and the result was, of course, that I got along quite all right and finished up there. I passed my examination at the end of the semester satisfactorily. I skipped telling one thing that had quite an influence on me, and that is when I took my first violin lessons. Mother worked very hard to give me every advantage. We were moving around because, at that time of my father's life, his work took him here and there and everywhere. We couldn't have a piano, so she was very anxious for me to study the violin. She herself was very fond of violin music and violin playing. The idea pleased me very much. I very soon developed the strong feeling that art for the artist is a way of life. And always, when I use the word artist, I mean people in all of the arts--music or drama or literature or any form we speak of as the fine arts. For the people for whom we have any respect, it definitely is a way of life. It is a means of self-realization. I've used this argument recently, but I don't know how much people would subscribe to the idea, because nobody has felt especially inclined to take it up as an argument. But it's an idea that I think has considerable validity. That is, we look upon what a person does and assess its importance, but not because of some intrinsic quality that a thing has. We say that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, which is perfectly true. If it tastes good, why, it's good pudding. But in the case of the poem or a symphony or a

drama, it's not that. That isn't of the greatest importance, it seems to me. The thing which the artist has accomplished is a by-product. What we are really interested in is what has happened to that person. If it is a way of life, then before Shakespeare wrote Hamlet, he was one Shakespeare and after he wrote Hamlet, he was another Shakespeare. And if you feel that something has happened to that man, that's the important thing. Whether the play amuses you is quite important, yes, but it's not the most important thing. The important thing is the life of the person who has done it. That enters into the argument: Whether a man is a great man if he hasn't done anything great. If he were out in the wilderness and the great man did not leave some monument of his activity or of his thought or of his ability, is he still a great man? I say he is. The greatness is an intrinsic quality, and given a certain condition, that spirit has moved among us and accomplished certain things. If those things were all destroyed and you had nothing but his name, that doesn't mean that his greatness is any the less. So that thought had quite a lot of influence on me. It's also why I criticize so much of the discussion and talk I hear evening after evening. I feel we lose getting into the depths of feeling with other people when we hear nothing but value judgments: "I like." "I don't like." "I think that's terrible." "I think Hitler's awful." "I think this is beautiful." Bang, bang. And if you raise your voice a little bit more, that makes it a bit more true. [laughter] But, by going back to Euclid and that kind of thinking, we can say: if this is so, then that is so and that is so. And you can finally unravel, unfold something that's very fascinating and very wonderful. Well, that sounds as though I were subscribing to a rational approach to life. What did Jung call it? The intellectual side instead of the intuitive--the one of sensation and feeling. But I think, on the whole, I've been fairly well balanced along those lines. I have sensation and feeling and intuition and reason, and none of them have gone too far. A certain balance has been maintained, although in some ways, it has not worked out from a very practical point of view. I always have been perfectly willing--even anxious--to have a certain place in the world to do something that people wanted according to my ability. If I could teach with any degree of success, then I'd be extremely happy in teaching. But if it was nothing more than using a certain craft for a certain demand, such as an ordinary form of commercial art or sign painting, and if I could do it well, I'd be quite happy to earn my living in that way. That may be looked upon as a certain weakness. I never dreamt of being very famous, of leaving my mark in the world. Some people break their necks to win a prize, but I've never valued prizes too much, which I always have regretted. Whenever I got something for one of my paintings in the way of recognition, it always seemed to me it was for the wrong picture or the wrong work. And after all, how was anybody to know? I suffered very severely from that. It's also been the other way around. In the old days I used to be on juries

quite often, and I was terribly unhappy about it. How did I know what is the best? Why should they take my word that this is the finest thing in the show, that this should get the prize and that this should get a mention? Some people seemed to be quite sure of themselves. They knew what art and good painting was all about, and they could tell right away and very happily went through with it and were very proud of themselves for doing it. But I never was. I always left a seance of that sort extremely tired and was often quite depressed for days afterwards. In some ways, my feeling has been rather borne out because in looking back, you can see that even in one lifetime, the people who have been the fair-haired boys in various activities are now completely forgotten. And what makes me especially unhappy is when these people are rather downgraded because they belonged to certain movements in painting which now seem to us not to have been productive of anything very important. But at the time, the works were carried out by people who were very able and extremely dedicated. I am thinking of the period of social realism. It's the first one that comes to my mind. It was back in the thirties, and at that time, I was still out of step. All the young fellows that I knew were quite interested in that attitude toward work. It was in the days of the American Gothic--Thomas Benton and [John] Curry, Grant Wood--that sort of feeling for painting. They were quite important painters at that time. It's too bad that we really don't appreciate them more now, because I think they had their place and importance and, historically, should not be neglected. So to get back to my development, I was endeavoring in some way to follow some rational approach to everything, such as when I got onto the time and space problem. I took it so seriously. It sounds as if I was trying to anticipate Kant or something of that sort, which isn't at all true, because there's one thing that has been rather consistent in all my activity through life and that is never--or as little as possible--to pursue any activity unless it has some meaning towards self-realization. Although my life has been dedicated really to art, especially the art of painting, it's not a way of life that I subscribed to readily. I found that pictures seemed to have a strange meaning for me. In other words, there was an idea that although you could not explain things, there was a vast and very impressive field of purely intuitive knowledge that could be gotten from art, not only from art but from all sorts of activities. Incidentally, my activities as a boy were extraordinarily varied. As I look back, I always did things for the experience that could be gotten out of it rather than trying to impose myself on a situation. It's rather hard to explain, but take a very simple thing: We came back from Mexico. My aunt was extremely interested in her garden; she loved planting and growing flowers. She was a very good botanist. As I said, she was a high school teacher. She taught math and Latin, and I think she also taught botany in the high school in Kent. She loved that sort of thing, but I had a different sort of an attitude

towards it. I wanted to grow things, too, but I wasn't especially interested in growing flowers just to produce something that was pretty and very beautiful. She was doing that. I wanted to do something else. They gave me a little piece of ground, and Father dug it up for me. I got some seeds. I was fascinated by the way a particular seed would come up this way, then change to this, then change to that. Eventually, if we got some potatoes or some radishes or some lettuce, why, that was all to the good, that was fine, but the excitement was in participating in some strange way with living and growing of the things. The forces of nature fascinated me in the same sort of way. There was maybe a little bit of the builder, the engineering spirit of my ancestry in me, too. I loved to make things. I was very conscious of the fact that I would look at picture books or pictures on a wall with a tremendous interest, not only as to what they represented but how they were made. Even as a teenager, I became quite familiar with the techniques of drawing; I could deduce from reproductions that this was done with watercolor and this was painted in oil. I'd be quite excited when I could figure things out from the reproductions. In those days, color reproductions were very rare and what reproductions we had it was not too clear as to the techniques and methods used. But sometimes you could make them out, and I found that quite exciting. What I have said so far is probably rather confusing because I cited various instances of experience, and what relation they had to some sort of integration for my activities as I grew up may not be very apparent. As I see it right now, it was really a sort of a struggle between the intuitive life and a rational one. They both had great appeal to me. For example, although I never had any ambition to be an engineer, there were other forms of that which you might call roads of rationality, which I would have followed quite happily. For example, I would have found law extremely interesting. And I have an idea that medicine, too, would have been a career that I could have devoted myself to with great dedication. In both those fields, of course, you have the great advantage of being in activities that are very much in demand. You feel that you're part of society. That was one thing that made me question more and more my impulse towards painting, because I'm sure Father thought that with my interest in art I was sort of a strange bird in his nest. He thought that if a picture looked like the subject and it was something worth looking at as a subject, why, that was a good picture. And he couldn't see there was anything else to it. Mother's tastes were literary, poetic, musical. Her feeling for painting was not very strong, and so it was rather a lonesome interest for me. I had it all to myself. I liked to draw and I liked to look at the pictures and I got tremendously excited sometimes by things for no special reason. But I would see something in its sheer existence. A little bit of what I have in mind of what I am driving at, can be found in Joyce's theory of the epiphany, that through certain things you get a certain revelation. It may

happen with a very commonplace experience, not one that's especially rational--or it may be--or it may come out of thin air as a message. I don't especially like the word "message." There are two things I'm rather suspicious of in the arts. One is a work of art having a message and also anything that suggests a teleological thing. What I have in mind may be something that's existential. I'm not sure about that. What I'm trying to do now is to steer clear of anything except a very genuine personal experience. How you interpret it or what school of thought you put it in is another matter. I liked to see things grow and I liked to use my hands; and in certain situations, I got certain experiences. The first time I heard Beethoven's Ninth Symphony I was greatly moved when it came to the final chorus. I still remember walking out into the cold winter night under the stars, and I was tremendously moved. I was much more influenced by music in those days than later. But it always meant quite a lot to me. And the same way with literature. It's not what it teaches or how it's supposed to influence, but what it is. That brings me to another very profound conviction that has arisen out of these experiences (or you may claim that it is interpretations of these experiences, that the experience itself is an unknowable quantity and what you make of it, is what you're talking about), that all of the arts are in their real value the expression of the experience of ideas, not of the ideas themselves. I owe that to John Ciardi. Some years ago, he was discussing Dante, and twice during the discussion he expressed that idea. It's the first time that I ran across it worded that way. But it made quite an impression and I still use it. I feel quite convinced that that idea and Joyce's idea of the epiphany have something in common. Anything that is nonverbal, of course, you can't talk about it. If people walk up to a picture in the gallery and start talking about it, they're not seeing the picture. It only can be done in utter silence. It's the same way with music. You experience it or you don't get the music. If you want to argue afterwards as to what it's all about, that's all right. But it has no reality except in terms of sound. And a painting or sculpture or architecture or what have you has to be experienced with a quiet mind and with a certain empathy or else there is nothing which leads to this thing which I think is the essential value--self-realization. In other words, in dividing what we broadly speak of as commercial art and real art, it's simply that. In the vast amount of art that we see about us--and we have it ad infinitum--you have that which is manufactured. I use the term "manufactured," but maybe there's some better way of expressing it. I mean that you go ahead and make a certain thing. You go to a carpenter and you say you want this, this and this. Whether it has been done before a thousand times, he can do it again. If it's fine craftsmanship, it's a work of art. But the real thing--to my mind--is only the by-product. I feel that beyond the work of art was an experience through which the man after having done this was not the same. If you experience Hamlet, you're not the same

person after you've heard it as you were before. Art has that function. It's the opening up and raising the level of consciousness somehow. Otherwise it has no special importance--it's an escape mechanism, or it's some kind of doodling, or it's a means for accomplishing some kind of ulterior purpose. It hasn't the real function in our lives which it ought to have.

1.14. TAPE NUMBER: VII, Side Two (December 3, 1965)

NUTTING

An influence in my Paris life was Otto Rank. My knowing him brought a sort of climax to a line of thought that had been going on for some years. It really started back in Boston when I stayed with my relative, Amy Bridgman, one summer. She had a school for young people who were having difficulty in school, not because of feeblemindedness but because of some emotional difficulties. And she was successful in her work. She'd get youngsters who appeared backward and with the help of proper physical and psychological diagnosis be able to help them, sometimes to a surprising extent. While staying with her that summer, I became aware that she relied a great deal on a psychologist in Boston. I've forgotten his name now, but he was quite well known at that time. A great many of her trips in Boston were for conferences with him and with the youngsters. That was the first time that I had heard the name of Freud, which didn't mean much to me, but he sounded interesting. Afterwards in Munich, I heard more about Freud. His teachings, his writings were then causing a lot of talk and were the subject of much argument. Psychoanalysis was on the crest of popular interest in the twenties. I too plunged in and read all that came to hand, but I had a special reason for exploring it. Being troubled with the tormenting mystery of the creative mind, I jumped at the idea that the Freudian concept of the unconscious might throw some light on it. Reading was disappointing and I yearned to find someone who was an authoritative exponent of the theory and from whom I could learn something of its application. It really amounted to a desire to undergo a short analysis with someone competent, and in that way to get insight by experiencing its workings. A young history teacher from Yale turned up in Paris on his way back from Switzerland where he had been in analysis with Carl Jung for some time. He was great fun and very interesting. I pumped him all I could about Jung. The upshot was that I decided to write Jung and ask about the possibility of a short period of analysis with him. After quite a long time I got a letter from him, which I am sorry to say is lost. He apparently typed it himself and it began "j received your letter..." and instead of "I" it was "j" this and "j" that. It wound up "Yours truly" and with no signature. Anyway it seems he was doing no more analysis and he gave me the name of a pupil in

Zurich, a woman who he thought was very good. In the meantime I learned of the arrival in Paris of Otto Rank. Now Rank was one of Freud's first pupils and a founder of the psychoanalytic Journal *Imago*. Boy, maybe here is our chance! I hunted him up and explained quite frankly what I had in mind, that I was not a troubled soul in search of help, that I had tried to learn from reading many things. Including some of his writings, and that I felt something of great practical value in my work might come from what he could give me. He demurred, which did not surprise me, and suggested the name of Dr. Allendy. I said that as a matter of fact Dr. Allendy was a friend of ours, that I had not too much faith in him, not because I doubted his capabilities but that he was somewhat a newcomer in the field. After World War I, I met Dr. Robert Allendy, a member of the psychoanalytic society of Paris. He headed a larger group which was for the investigation of modern thought. They held regular evening meetings at the Sorbonne for lectures. Alfred Adler was one of the speakers at one time; I was quite interested in his lecture. But Allendy had a great variety of people who talked--like the Futurist Marinetti, and others. We became rather good friends with the Allendys and had very delightful evenings. Their conversation was really quite wonderful on all sorts of subjects. As a matter of fact, one thing I miss about Paris is the good conversation one can have there. They seemed to love to get together just to have good conversation and discuss things in a free and easy way. That was just one part of the necessities of life--to have meetings for a good talk. That doesn't seem so common with us--or at least I haven't experienced it as much since those days. Dr. Allendy got me more interested in psychoanalysis. I read everything I could lay my hands on at the time, including his own books, and those of another French writer named Baudouin, who talked about art. My interest in it wasn't exactly what other people showed in their talk on the subject of psychoanalysis. In those days, it seemed to be a much simpler matter than it has proved to be. All you had to do was to remember your dreams and be careful not to talk about your dreams too much in public because you gave yourself away. They almost seemed to think that Freud was a writer of a dream book in which the symbols meant this, that and the other thing, and all you had to do was to know the symbols and you could psychoanalyze yourself and all that foolishness. I felt it was extremely shallow, and most of the time I was rather annoyed when people pretended to know a lot about psychoanalysis. There was one thing that interested me, especially in the readings of Allendy and Baudouin, and that was the function of the subconscious or the unconscious (whichever it might be called by the writer), in the life of the creative artist. It was very obvious to me that in this mystery of a creative work, things came from the unknown, and we could call it the "unconscious" as well as anything else. There was no real way of tracking down the inspiration of art to any very definite source, and I thought

that Freud might have something to contribute along those lines. As I said once before, I did not enter the profession of art, of being a painter, altogether willingly. I questioned it, largely because, although it always seemed a very strange and very wonderful thing, I couldn't figure out exactly how to fit it into what you might call the practical life. Curiously enough, I always had some vision or aspiration of what you might call a practical life, having a certain place in the world in which you contributed something that somebody wanted. You became part of society in a way that's not so obvious in the case of the painter. That was especially true in view of the conceptions of art that were held by most of the people I associated with as a youngster. They thought the artist was some queer duck who was not altogether normal. If he made pretty pictures and they looked like nature, why, that was good, but if they looked horrible that was terrible. [laughter] So it was a lonesome job. On the one hand, I had the common experience of all growing youngsters, especially when they get into adolescence, of seeing the necessity of having a rational attitude toward life and being able to think things out as clearly as possible. That was largely the influence of my New England parentage, who had that attitude towards living. On the other hand--what I did not at that time put into words--was the intuitive knowledge that you get. During all of my childhood, as far back as I can remember, my strongest experiences have been on the intuitive side. I could not neglect them. I got what Joyce would call epiphanies from things seen, more than anything else. So my curiosity ranged very far afield in all sorts of subjects. I was really quite interested in everything from growing potatoes to working out my arithmetic lesson--anything that gave some sort of an experience and involved the use of the mind in both aspects, the rational and the intuitive. Finally, my enthusiasm for art became very great. At the age of thirteen, it became somewhat of an obsession (using the word advisedly). I wanted to see; I wanted to collect. I wasn't as much of a doer as you might imagine. I think that possibly the genius will do it unquestioningly. He knows. I didn't know. I wanted to find out. The person with any very great talent, like a young Michelangelo, simply starts in when he's a youngster carving stones and he's carving stones until he's a very old man, because through that work he gets this self-realization. As I say, what I felt to be important was that the activity leaves an experience which enlarges your awareness, your consciousness, your sense of wonder in life, and which can be the only meaning to life. I could see right away that if you walked along the path of argument, you would come to the place, which is really the jumping-off place, where there is no answer to the questions: who am I? why am I here? It didn't take me long to find that those questions are there but cannot be answered. But, through a certain revelation of experience that I would get once in a while, I would find meaning. I say once in a while, because in the constant search there would be a lot that I would read

that would be enjoyable, a lot that I would think was very wonderful and very fine; then, all of a sudden, maybe one small part of this experience would suddenly hit with a terrific bang, and I wouldn't know why. The strongest ones, curiously enough, happened in painting. I will have to take that up with a discussion of my experience in painting. These experiences also aroused questions of--why? And I thought, well, maybe these complexes that Freud talks about will be something that would give some clue. If you could get ahold of those, bring them out into the open and see what they were, maybe you could make them work if they were of value. If they were not of value, you could forget them and not have them troubling you. After my conversations with Allendy and after reading his works, Baudouin's, and Freud's, Rank's and others, I finally wrote to Jung. I had a portrait commission that had brought in a rather larger sum than usual at that time. It was rather unexpected, somewhat of a windfall, and I figured that I might be able to spend a little money, since none of my reading had satisfied me. I found that Freud was diffident about the problem of the artist and finally admitted that he had little to contribute. There were certain aspects of a work of art in which he was interesting, and other writers were interesting in analyzing art, but they were of no use to me because I wanted to know what was the essence of it--what made a good painting? what made a great work of art? It could not be simply expressed in terms of the content. The fact is that I began doing purely abstract compositions long before I even knew that people would take that sort of thing seriously. I didn't know anything about [Wassily] Kandinsky at the time or the other abstract painters of some years later. Although Kandinsky at that time was doing his purely abstract work, I didn't know it, of course, being in places like St. Paul and Boston. So this problem got to be rather obsessive with me. There was a young teacher from Yale who was in Paris for a while, and we spent some time together. He was a charming, interesting fellow. He had just come back from being with Jung for some months. He talked about Jung's work; so I decided I would write to Jung. I thought that Jung seemed to be more of a thinker along the lines that were bothering me than any of the others. I had no idea of being a patient. I didn't feel myself at all sick. I just wanted to know something, to get a little understanding of this subject. Then I discovered that Otto Rank was in Paris, and so I went around and called on Rank and told him what I wanted. Of course, this may seem rather absurd; I suppose that most people went to him because they had troubles of some sort and wanted something in the way of a cure. I did not want a cure. I was quite frank with him about some of my curiosity, that there seemed to be nothing that I could get from my reading on self-analysis that seemed to be of any value, but at the same time, I felt that there was something in the theory of psychoanalysis that might be extremely important to me if I could get some signs of actual experience of what could be

done with the technique. Well, he demurred and wanted to know why I didn't go to some of the other analysts. The upshot of it was that he consented to take me on. Some years afterwards, he published a book called *Art and the Artist*. I rather suspect that one of the reasons that he accepted me was because I was a very serious young fellow in the field of art. He had a chance to observe another member of the fraternity, so to speak. Rank had a beautiful apartment that overlooked the Bois de Boulogne. It had a big window that looked out over the park. He had this huge couch, which was more or less what I expected, and he made me very comfortable there and we started the discussion. The experience wasn't especially rich. I don't know exactly what his technique was, but he did not take people for long periods of time, in contrast to people who spend years in analysis. Three months, more or less, was the limit of his treatments--or whatever you want to call them. He was a very interesting little man, and one of the most impressive things about him to me was the degree in which he kept himself out of the picture. I used to go into his waiting room, and then he opened the door and peeked around it. He wouldn't enter the waiting room. Then he'd smile and nod, and I'd go in and lie down on the couch. He'd sit just a little bit back of me, out of sight, and I'd look out at this beautiful view of the Bois de Boulogne. In the first part of my experience with him, I went every day; then he spaced it out to every two or three days and then a week and then maybe once a month. So I suppose if they were a daily affair, the number of visits would total three months. But I don't see exactly how he figured it out because the last time I saw him, I hadn't seen him for maybe a couple of months. I wanted to know what he wanted me to talk about, and he said anything at all. So I just started talking, and once in a while, he'd make some little comment. Then once in a while, he'd bring up the idea of a dream. He never asked me especially about dreams, but if I did have dreams, he said that he'd be interested. And that was another thing that surprised me. I got the idea from my reading that the analysis of a dream was something that would take a long time and that you had to go through free association and a patient unraveling of its meaning. But Rank didn't use that idea at all with me. Maybe he did with other people, but I don't know. He would listen to it, and sometimes he'd confess that he couldn't make anything of it. Then he'd say, "Well, I think" (t'ink) "that it means this and this." And he'd say something about it. Then he'd say, "isn't it? Isn't it?" And sometimes I would be rather dubious because it didn't sound like a very convincing explanation to me; and at other times, it seemed to be extremely obvious and I wondered why I hadn't thought of it myself. One example of that sort of thing was a dream I had in which I was walking down a road in a country which wasn't too fertile. It was farmland. There were three of us, and I think that the other two people were psychologists or psychiatrists or people in that field. They didn't seem to be any special

people. They might have been Freud and Ferenczi or someone of that sort, you know. As we walked down the road, we passed a little property, a little house and garden and a little farm behind it. In my dream I said, "When the 'tremens' expire, I become owner of this property." And it was a very simple, very clear little dream. That was all there was to it, and when I awoke, I thought I should be able to analyze that. Tremens, tremens? I thought of delirium tremens, but I'd never had delirium tremens. I've been squiffed a few times, but I had never gone much further than that. There didn't seem to be any association to delirium tremens or trembling or anything of the sort, and I couldn't see anything to this. The dream seemed to make no sense whatsoever, so I told my dream to Rank. He said, "Yes, yes. In three months. Tres menses." Three months, Latin! [laughter] Where in the world I got that I don't know. But it was very obvious. In other words, when my sessions with him expired, I would be in possession of something in the way of property. Of course, there was a lot more to the dream because the property wasn't a very impressive estate. It was a very nice place, but it wasn't anything to be especially proud of. So, I don't know whether that was a comment of my subconscious, or what. I really had great respect for Rank and already admired him for several reasons. One thing was his extraordinary memory; he kept no notes. He would say, "You remember last Wednesday when you told me this or that," and I couldn't remember what I said last Wednesday. But he would name the date I said something and quote stuff that I had told him verbatim. So, in many ways, besides being very pleasant to know, he was also one that excited quite a lot of admiration on my part. I had great respect for him on account of the remarkable work he had done in his association with Freud. In another of my dreams, I was playing in a park someplace in Paris along the river. It was a very beautiful day, towards evening, and I was out and walking around. A friend of mine had a rubber ball and we started tossing this rubber ball back and forth to each other. There were children playing down by the river bank and people were under the trees. And with the sunlight and the pine trees, it was all very charming and pleasant. But there was one little man in a gray suit who was wandering around in an absent-minded sort of way, and he was always walking between myself and my friend. So I'd hold the ball until he got by, find then we'd again start tossing the ball. The first thing you know, here he would be walking between us again and stopping and looking around and not paying any attention to us. I would wait, and then we'd go on playing with our ball. Finally (I think about the third time that he appeared on the scene), I gave him a terrific kick in the derriere. And I said, "Do get the hell out of here." [laughter] And Rank said, "Yes, yes, I was that man." Well, that rather startled me. I said, "How do you know you were the man?" He said, "Do you remember the last time you came, I wore a gray suit for the first time? It was a very warm day, and I put on a light

gray suit, one I hadn't worn for a long time. You had seen me in a dark suit up to that time." I didn't remember the gray suit. The fact is, as I say, he kept himself so out of the picture that I never had too clear a picture of him except his peeking around the door and saying come in, and the sound of his voice. He spoke very good English, but with a German accent. Once I was having lunch on a terrace in Fontainebleau, and I looked around and I was surprised to see somebody who looked vaguely familiar. I looked at him and then I looked at him again, and the first thing I knew, he bowed and smiled. He was about twenty or thirty feet away at another table. By Jove, it was Rank. But seeing him unexpectedly in a strange place, I didn't place him right away. He seemed to have systematically kept himself in the background. He was hardly more than a voice to me, and, even at that, he didn't talk very much. He was very quiet, but he made these very sharp and penetrating observations. Some of my dreams had enough meaning for maybe immediate practical purposes. I don't know how far he would want to push this analyzing a dream--going back to your childhood. But there was one, in which somebody with a pick was digging away at the base of a cliff, not having any effect on it whatsoever. Then, all of a sudden, a part of the cliff started to give way, and the fellow with the pick backed off and waited for it, and sure enough, there was quite a mass of the cliff that fell down. My observation was that it seemed to mean that we were not accomplishing much. But that I had a subconscious feeling that if it were carried just a little bit further, it would loosen a mass of materials and we'd really get something out of our work. To a certain extent, I was convinced of that, because I had been going for some days and our conversation, our talk--it seemed to me--had been rather empty. It had no special significance and it didn't seem to be getting anywhere. It didn't seem to me that I was telling anything of any special importance. There were no revelations of my life or any problems that you couldn't talk about quite sensibly and they didn't require anything in the way of profound analysis to deal with them. But then, one day, I was convinced that something was happening. On my way to my seance with him, I was parking my little car (I had a little Citroen car), and just as I was parking, a big swanky car rushed in ahead of me and almost struck me. Well, it was driven by a chauffeur in livery who was very imposing. Apparently, the fellow felt that he owned the world. Ordinarily in a situation of that sort, I don't blow up because what are you going to do? You can remonstrate, "That was a lousy thing you did," and that sort of thing, but if I can't see anything very practical to do I hold my temper, I take it easy. In this case I didn't. I didn't exactly lose my temper--that was the curious thing--it wasn't a case of blowing my top. I just simply stepped out of my car and walked around and read this liveried chauffeur a lecture on the way to treat people in traffic. After it was all over, I was so amazed at myself because I couldn't imagine myself doing it.

Ordinarily, I might have done something, but it wouldn't have been exactly that. In other words, I seemed to be reacting differently to the situation than I ever had before. I couldn't remember a similar situation that exactly paralleled my feeling and attitude and behavior in that little adventure. So I got to Rank and I told him more or less what I have just been saying. Here, all of this time we had been talking about what I thought was nothing of any special importance, but I had gotten a little bit of an idea of some pattern of my thought and experience. Also I had gotten a little clue on the way in which dreams will symbolize feelings which are completely unconscious, especially in that case of telling Rank to please get the hell out of here. That was something that I could not imagine that I had anyplace in my mind. But apparently deep down in me, he was interfering with something that I was wanting to do. Yet there was nothing in our talk or conversation that could make it at all reasonable. And so Rank said, "Well, I will tell you something that you may find rather comforting. I don't understand what happens." He said, "You don't understand, and neither do I." [laughter] He just simply knew that from experience he could expect that certain things could happen if they were handled rightly and if the person's psyche and personality could be influenced for the better along certain lines. But he wouldn't pretend at all to try to give me a lecture on why it was happening because he said, "I don't know." So that really is a summation of a very valuable experience along those lines of thought. My friend, Ramon Guthrie, who is now professor of French literature at Dartmouth, also went to Rank. Guthrie was not injured physically but very badly shaken up by a fall. He was an aviator during World War I, and one of those kites that they flew in those days came apart in some way, and he fell from a considerable height. He was unconscious for some time. [As a result of the fall], I think that all his life he has suffered from a nervous condition that has been quite a problem with him. I used to tell him about my seances with Rank and we'd discuss things quite a lot. He was also interested, and he finally decided that maybe Rank could be a help to him. He went and was with Rank for some time, and I believe that he was very happy with the results. He really got quite a lot out of it, although it didn't result in any complete cure of his troubles. The last I heard of him he still would visit in Paris with Dr. Vinchon, whom he was very fond of. He would be with Dr. Vinchon for some time during his frequent vacations in Paris. Anyway he went to Rank and told me some very interesting experiences that he had with him. Sometimes they were quite amusing. I think the most amusing one was when he told Rank about his difficulties in writing. Ramon wrote some quite good novels and very good verse and did some translations from the French into English. He was quite an industrious writer, but he wrote with a certain amount of difficulty, in contrast to his very good friend. Red Lewis [Sinclair Lewis]. I say good friend, with the emphasis on the

good, because they seemed so devoted to one another. There was a mutual admiration society, and they loved to be together. Yet they had little in common in looks and manner and speech and, in many ways, their ways of thinking, but above all, in their methods of work. Lewis was a very hearty and rather hard-drinking sort of a fellow. When he was writing, he would not drink, but when his book was finished and had gone to press, then he could go off and forget things for awhile. I never met him when he was really sober. That doesn't mean that he was drunk all the time. It simply means that I wasn't around him too much, but at parties, he always seemed to have a little bit more than was good for the decorum of a party. But Lewis, of course, was a professional writer. He had done newspaper work, and as is very often true of people of that type, he had very rigorous methods of work. He believed that the only way to get anything done was through contact of the seat of your pants with the chair in front of your typewriter a certain length of time every day. And he did it. In that way, of course, he did a great deal of writing. Ramon was telling Rank about his own difficulties in writing, how he could only write for a short period, and then he'd have to go into something else. I remember seeing that was true when I spent a vacation with him down at Dordogne in the south of France, down where the Cro-Magnon caves are, and which we explored every day for a couple of months. He did this writing in the morning. He'd get up early and write, and then he'd go out and buy a newspaper, sit on the curb and read the newspaper. Then he'd go back and write some more. Then he'd come out and wander around for awhile. Then he'd go back and write some more. He didn't have the strength to really hold himself to his job hour after hour for a specified time. But in that way, he did quite a lot of writing and certainly did a great amount of study. Rank listened to the description of his troubles very patiently and then Ramon wound up by telling him that he wished he could be more like Lewis, that he would be much more efficient in his work if only he could work like Sinclair Lewis, that it would be a great advantage to his career. Rank had not said anything until the end. Then he spoke [with his heavy accent], "Well, I will ask you a rhetorical question. I think it is a question you can often ask yourself very profitably--why the hell should you?" [laughter] I regret that the width of the continent has separated Ramon and ourselves so completely. None of our Paris friends do I remember with more warmth and admiration than I do Ramon Guthrie. Some years ago when Invitation to Learning was on the air I turned on the radio one morning to listen to it and to my great surprise I heard a familiar voice. That, I thought, can be nobody but Ramon. It was Ramon. The group was discussing Marcel Proust and I listened fascinated. I think it was Lyman Bryson who made some reference to the number of times Ramon had read Proust in entirety. Ramon admitted he had read *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* through a great many

times--it seems to me he said eighteen times! I think that must have been an average of about once a year. He told me that his father had once ridden his horse into the hotel Waldorf Astoria. The loss of his father when Ramon was quite young necessitated his becoming a help in family support with the result that the poor kid, from long hours of work, would fall asleep at his desk in school. Then came the war, interrupting his schooling. He became an aviator and flew one of those kites that were used in World War I. Some imperfection, even possible sabotage, caused his plane to fall and he was unconscious for some days. I remember him as a slender, quiet-mannered man and though we never spoke of any physical difficulty I had reason to believe that the shock of his accident left him with a nervous problem. He paid regular visits to a Dr. Vinchon in Paris, of whom he was fond, and later got help from Otto Rank. I have forgotten what they called the G.I. Bill in those days, but through its equivalent, he went to the University of Toulouse and completed his studies there so successfully that he first joined the faculty of the University of Arizona and later that of Dartmouth College. To carry on about my experience with Rank, it's rather interesting the way that I started something. I not only got Ramon going to Rank--and also getting a great deal of benefit from it--but also our neighbor down the hall, Ludwig Lewisohn's wife, Thelma. Lewisohn was one of our real friends in Paris, and we saw a great deal of him. Anybody who has read his novel, *The Case of Mr. Crump*, knows that his married life was unhappy (his first marriage). He was divorced after many years. His second marriage wasn't really much more successful. Thelma was a New England girl who married a Jewish traveling salesman in some little town up in Vermont or someplace. She was very ambitious to be a singer, and apparently the salesman was doing pretty well because she did get some musical education in New York and studied singing and felt herself to be very talented. She tried really quite hard in Paris to make an impression, but she was a rather impossible sort of a young woman. Lewisohn was very patient with her and rather wonderful, but how in the world he made such a terrible boner in his marriage the second time is something I could never quite understand because they were not in the least compatible. Well, he had an idea that Rank might be able to do something by psychoanalyzing Thelma; so he sent Thelma, and Rank took her on for I don't know how long a time. I doubt if it was very successful because I don't think very much could be done with her. I think it was just that she was made that way. It resulted, though, in something rather interesting so far as Rank and Lewisohn were concerned. They apparently became quite good friends and saw a great deal of each other. Rank's book *Art and the Artist*, which came out later, has a preface by Ludwig Lewisohn, so Rank must have admired Lewisohn. It wasn't published until 1932, which was quite a number of years afterwards. What I skipped telling, which also was an influence, was the fact that my boss

in the Red Cross, Joseph Collins, was a psychiatrist and neurologist, and he and I became good friends. We used to take long walks in the hills outside of Rome. Sometimes when we would get a day off, we would have lunch together. Although he was a much older man than I, he seemed to find me fairly good company and I profited a great deal by arguing with him. He was somewhat anti-Freudian, which made it interesting, because he could bring up all of the arguments against the things that I would mention. After that, my interest in psychoanalysis--I won't say died down--became very much less. A man whose work I enjoy is Jung. It's not a question of arguing whether you are a Jungian or a Freudian because, of course, I cannot be either. I take my nourishment where I find it. Sometimes I'll find it in one man and an equally nourishing amount in a man who is diametrically opposed. I think from the point of view of the artist, there is something strongly suggestive in Jung's concept of the unconscious. In Freud, you get the idea that the unconscious is a repository of stuff that you've shoved out of sight or swept under the rug. It still functions, but you don't know it because it's really more the stuff that you've refused. Whereas, with Jung's idea of the archetypes and that of the subconscious or the unconscious as being just as much a part of you as the conscious mind and is infinitely greater in its potential is something that really has meaning to me. It's not just a theoretical meaning of psychology, but rather it's an awareness that you can have a certain amount of faith. And if you don't like your work and you wonder where in the world that came from, don't think that it's a piece of refuse that you've thrown away which suddenly has come up to the surface, because in some way, it is really a valid part of you and you mustn't refuse it. It'll take care of itself if you keep on working and bringing those fields more and more into your conscious life and work, the conscious effort to produce something. The ordinary Freudian idea of a work of art is just about the content. I have earlier expressed my difficulty in accepting any of the analyses of people like Ernest Jones, for example, or some of the others who are very *ex cathedra* when they talk about a work of art. It's as if they are only talking about the content--what the picture is of or what the story is about. My argument--which I don't remember anybody ever taking me on for, but it seems to me it's a good start for an exploration of what I mean--is this: If you have a painting which seems to you superb, and gives you a terrific bang, that is a great piece of painting, that is a great work of art. But if that painting is copied by somebody, who, by careful work and careful measurements has copied the painting piece by piece and has made a picture which at a distance resembles the original very much, he has made something that is absolutely worthless from the point of view of the painter. That thing which made the original something of great power is gone completely and you're simply left with a still life, a Madonna, a historical picture, a Napoleon, or this or that. From a psychological point of view, it can

be interesting in its symbolism and as evidence of tendencies of this and that in the psyche of the painter, but it is outside the field of any real validity so far as being a work of art is concerned. So that is that strand of my development. I talked about my efforts to find a little knowledge of psychoanalysis, first of all by writing to Jung, and by going then to Rank, and that I was inspired to write to Jung by knowing a young man who was a teacher of history at Yale. He was just back from Zurich and spent part of his vacation in Paris. We had some long talks together, and I questioned him a great deal about Jung and his teaching. Once in a while he would tell some amusing stories or give imitations of Jung's way of talking. One thing that I thought was amusing was his description of Jung's theory that there are certain activities that one should follow in the development of what Jung calls "inferior functions," that is, Jung's theory of the function of thought, of feeling, of sensation and intuition. If a person lives a life that is not balanced, say, too much on the side of the field of thought, thinking would be the superior function and feeling would be an inferior function in that case. He thought one of the best ways of developing an all-around sense of the functions was theater. According to this boy, he was quite a believer in the value of amateur theatricals or any activity of that sort which would be devoted entirely to the development of the inferior functions. He thought it would be a great contribution to society to have that kind of a theater. And he said, "Just imagine how impressive it would be if you had a building and up in lights you had as the name of the theater, the 'Theater of the Inferior Functions.' Don't you think that would attract a big crowd?" [laughter] I spoke about my bringing Rank and Ludwig Lewisohn together and their becoming good friends and also the fact that Lewisohn wrote the preface to Rank's book, *Art and the Artist*, which apparently Rank was working on at the time I was being analyzed by him. Our Paris studio was in a new building and down the hall was an apartment exactly like ours, which had been occupied by George Biddle, of whom I would like to speak later. George left Paris and I heard that Ludwig Lewisohn was to be our next neighbor. That interested me very much because at that time his book called *Upstream* had made somewhat of a sensation, and he had become quite a famous figure, for the time being at least. I was looking forward to knowing him. Biddle's stuff was all moved out and we waited to see our new neighbors. One day I was sitting quietly in my studio and there was a terrific bang that shook the building. It sounded as though somebody had dropped something terrifically heavy out in the hall. I went out to see what had happened, and there Ludwig Lewisohn was standing, looking very puzzled and somewhat distressed. A fellow had brought a box of books up the six flights of stairs. They had no lift for freight, only this small elevator that you were supposed to use coming up but not going down. It was too small to bring up anything larger than a suitcase, and everything else had to be carried upstairs by

hand. It was a new building, and it seems rather preposterous, but true. This fellow had gotten this box of books up to the top of the stairs and almost to Lewisohn's door when it fell off his shoulder and burst, and the books were scattered all up and down the hall. Here was this man, who was rather fat and who looked like he might be quite a jolly sort of a person, with this very distressed look on his face as he saw all of his books on the floor. Then I realized it was Ludwig Lewisohn. Well, that was quite a surprise to me, because I had pictured him from his writings, especially *Upstream*, as an overworked, thin, worried-looking man. I could imagine his thin face and maybe some little whiskers. But the exact opposite of this person was standing there wondering what to do about his books. So that was Ludwig Lewisohn. *The Case of Mr. Crump* is supposed to be, more or less, autobiographical. If it hadn't been for Thelma, our life would have been extremely pleasant. Well, I have to do justice to Thelma. She didn't do anything to make it especially disagreeable, but she wasn't a very pleasant addition to our entourage, whereas Ludwig Lewisohn was. I enjoyed knowing him, not only for the pleasure of his company, but also because in so many ways he was a man of wide culture and most interesting in his talk. He, like Sinclair Lewis, was a person who had the ability to keep regular hours when he was working. We had a studio in the top of the building in the Rue Schoelcher and above us were small rooms that were supposed to be used by servants. If you happened to keep a servant, you could also rent a room for the servant, but not many people did. Lewisohn used his as a study. They lived in the studio apartment, and then he could go upstairs to do his work. His room was right above my studio, and I could hear his typewriter going at nine o'clock every morning. Well, I knew perfectly well that he didn't feel very much like working at nine o'clock. [laughter] But it never seemed to faze him in the least. So I remarked on it one day. I said, "I think it is perfectly amazing that you always start writing at a certain hour every morning." "Well, Myron," he said, "that's very true. I have trained myself to that through the years. I knew that if I had to earn my living with writing and teaching, I had to budget my time. One thing in my ambition to be a creative writer was not to depend upon inspiration, but rather to depend simply upon doing a certain amount of work. I find that it works; that is the way to do it. Very often I'll go to my typewriter full of ideas, thinking that I'm going to have a wonderful morning and everything is going to be fine, but when I get through, I'll throw everything I've done in the wastepaper basket. Another day I'll go to work without an idea in my head, feeling perfectly lousy, hating the whole idea, but I start doing something and, likely as not, that will be one of my best days' work. So I don't bank on how I feel or what ideas I have in my head, but I have great faith in doing something. By continually doing it, a certain proportion of it will be something that I'll want to salvage and it will be

part of my oeuvre, part of my work." Ludwig was very hospitable. He loved to have people around him, and his evenings were very interesting. By that time, of course, he had made a name for himself. I imagine he's somewhat of a forgotten writer now, but he was well known in those days for his novels. He was also a critic--a music critic and drama critic--and he did a great deal of that. He also wrote verse. So, invitations for his evenings were accepted by interesting people. It was in his studio that I'd meet people like Joseph Wood Krutch; I remember having a very interesting conversation with him. There was Josef Hoffman, a famous architect and art influence in Vienna. There was a sort of renaissance of decorative arts in Vienna in those days. I met Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis there. Sinclair Lewis disgraced himself abominably there one evening. Dreiser I found very interesting. I met him only a few times. I met him there and at other friends' houses, but the evening that I met him at Ludwig's, the only place to sit happened to be next to him. I went over and sat down, and he started talking. He wanted to know what I was doing. I told him I was painting. He wanted to know if I was interested in Japanese art and Oriental art. Which rather surprised me, because from his writing I would never guess that that might be one of his interests. But apparently it was--he was very much interested. So we discussed painting and art for a little while, and he said, "Where's your studio?" And I said, "just down the hall a few doors." He said, "Let's go and see your work." So we got up and went to my studio and he looked at the things on my wall, and again I felt somehow they weren't the sort of things that he would like because of the realism of his writings. And these more introverted, romantic things of mine, it didn't seem to me, would be anything that would appeal to him. So just to break the silence, I made some remark about my being rather romantic. And he said, "That's why I like them" Which surprised me. And then he told me that story, which Powys himself tells, about the Negro boy who was very bad in looking after the cattle. Nothing could be done with him. Finally it was discovered that the inside of his little hut was all covered with drawings of cattle. He'd been doing those things instead of really tending to his work. I don't know exactly how that was apropos of what we were talking about, but we were having quite a nice time. Of course, when Lewisohn found that one of his principal guests had escaped him, the first thing I knew there was quite a noise outside our door and the whole crowd had moved down to gather up Dreiser and bring him back to the party, which they did. I never heard Dreiser really talk to any great extent. The few times that I met him he seemed to be rather silent in company. Well, I imagine he could be a wonderful talker. In that way he was like Joyce, who also was a marvelous talker.

1.15. TAPE NUMBER: VIII, Side One (December 3, 1965)

NUTTING

There were many personalities in Paris that are very vivid in my memory, though they didn't enter into my life to any great extent. They were sometimes casual meetings; other times they had connection with some event. One was our ambassador. Ambassador [Myron I.] Herrick. Herrick must have been a very unusual man. I didn't know him except for a couple of meetings. I used to hear a great deal about him, of course, because he was our ambassador in that very important period of the war and during such historical events as the landing of Lindbergh which brought his name before the public continually. The most interesting thing about him was that his compatriots--that is to say, a good many of us who were living in Paris--used to be embarrassed by him at times. But the French liked him very much. To them he was a bon garçon. They thought he was just great, and they accepted him with a generosity and understanding that the rest of us didn't seem to always have. Of course, it's very gratifying if you're represented by someone in a foreign country and he is really liked. It means a great deal. There was nothing particularly gauche about him. In fact, he was a very charming man in his manner. He was very good-looking and in lots of ways was attractive. But as an illustration of what I have in mind, I recall when a banquet was given for Bernard Fay, a French historian who wrote some rather important works, especially on American history and the relation of American history to French history. The ambassador was a principal figure at the banquet. Speeches were made and Ambassador Herrick rose to make his little speech. The way this was told to me was that the ambassador rose up and addressed the audience by saying, "I am here to talk about a young man who has written a book. It seems to be a very important book. What's the title of this book? Oh, here it is." He picked up the book and he read off the title. "it's called so-and-so and so-and-so. And it's written by that young man over there. He wrote this book. How old are you, son?" [laughter] Although the dignity of the French people is not stiff, you know, there's always a certain formality and dignity and respect for an occasion of that sort, and that was an extraordinarily informal way of making a speech to this young fellow who had written the book. It was rather embarrassing to some of them. But, as I say, he was well understood by the French and really much liked. I don't think I ever heard him spoken of adversely by anybody while I lived there. He was also a man who was very devoted to his responsibilities, his position. His death was probably somewhat premature. I thought that his last illness was caused by attending the funeral of [Louis] Lyautey, the one-armed general that distinguished himself in World War I. But I see that Herrick died in '29 and Lyautey lived longer, so it was the funeral of some other very eminent man that I'm thinking of. I'm wondering if it is still true in a big city like Paris, that at an important funeral if you can walk, you walk. Women and people who cannot

make the trip are in carriages or in automobiles. But the cortege always consisted of a number of people who walk to the cemetery. As I remember it, Herrick insisted on walking on a winter day when it was bleak, rainy and cold, and it brought on his last illness. Ullman, a very good painter who was a founder and member of an art club in Paris. He was ambitious to form a small group of American painters to show in Paris and to have exhibitions in this country. So we organized a society; it was called the Paris-American Society of Painters and Sculptors--if I remember rightly, a rather long name. I was elected a member and became part of an interesting group of good painters we had in Paris in those days. None of them were especially avant-garde, but they were not old-hat by any means and many of them were painters of considerable interest. We tried to get along with as little formality as possible, and we just had a secretary. He was presiding officer and general factotum as far as any official mechanical business of carrying on the group was concerned. One year I was elected secretary of the society, and we had a meeting to decide on an exhibition. Somebody was successful in getting a very good gallery in the Place Vendôme. It's quite a famous gallery--for the moment I can't remember its name--it handled very important works. It was quite a feather in our cap to have as important a place as that for our showing. The next thing that came up was the matter of publicity. Somebody suggested that we get the ambassador to open the exhibition. Well, that seemed a little bit too ambitious. Some of them said, "Well, you're going a little too far. After all, it's pretty hard to get the ambassador to even more important things, and here we are, a small group of painters having a show in a gallery he doesn't know anything about." But I said that there's no harm in trying, all we could get was a refusal. So they said, go ahead. So I went to the embassy and asked to see the ambassador. Of course, they wanted to know my business. There was quite a little red tape. They said the ambassador wasn't very well and wasn't seeing any more people than was necessary, but they'd take my name. He sent word for me to come in. I went into his office. He was sitting at his desk, and he rose up and shook hands and wanted to know what I had on my mind. He said, "By the way, your name is Myron, too. Where'd you get that name?" And I said, "My father was Myron." "Where did he come from?" "Well, he was born in Ohio." Of course, Herrick was a former governor of Ohio, and so that broke the ice--my father was from Ohio and his name was Myron. So I sat down and chatted. Then he said, "I hope you don't mind. I don't feel too strong these days. I haven't been too well. I'll stretch out on the couch." So he got up, went across the room and stretched out on a big couch and said, "Now, what can I do for you?" So I told him we'd organized a society of painters and sculptors and were going to have an exhibition at the Place Vendôme, and we thought if he could spare a moment to pass by for the opening of it, we would be very grateful indeed. He said, "Oh,

I'd be glad to, but you can understand how it is. I'm a very busy man. I haven't the time and the strength to do too much." So I said I understood perfectly, but that I just felt there wouldn't be any harm to ask him if by chance he could do such a thing. Then he went on and talked about something else and he came back and said, "By the way, when do you have that exhibition?" And I told him the date of it. And he said, "Where is it?" And I said the Place Vendôme. "Well," he said, "I'll come around. What do you want me to do?" "Well," I said, "if you just can drop in for a very short time and give it the éclat of an opening, that's all we would ask for." "Oh, I can do that, I think." So sure enough, we had the show. I went down scared to death because I never had a good memory for names--as you see, it's not getting any better. [laughter] I had the job of meeting the ambassador and introducing him to everyone. There were about a dozen of us artists, and then I had to take him around the exhibition and see to any other introductions that had to be made. Well, it was a whole bunch of photographers and when the car drove up and the ambassador came in, the flashbulbs went off. He walked in, and I remembered everybody's name. I presented everybody in our group to the ambassador, and also the other important people there who hadn't met the ambassador. He walked around and looked at the pictures in a very dignified way, and at the same time was quite warm and cordial, although he looked a little puzzled at some of these things. Some of the modern art was a little bit more than he had any experience of. We got all the way around the room and then I escorted him out to his car. Out in the hall, there was a big picture of hunting dogs. He said, "That's the kind of a picture I like." I said, "Yes, that's very well painted, very well painted, indeed." It was a very corny sort of a thing, with dogs lying in the grass and maybe some ducks around or something, but he liked that picture. Then he got in his car and we shook hands. Things went off very nicely. So that was my experience with the ambassador. I don't think I ever saw him again. The exhibition was very successful in the sense that we all got quite sympathetic notices. There was one thing about having exhibitions in Paris--you get many more write-ups there than you do in this country. The papers seem to have more space to spend on exhibitions. All kinds of papers and magazines will notice exhibitions and make comments and sometimes give some very good criticism. Anyway, it was so well received that we were encouraged to be a little more ambitious. I think probably Ullman and some of the other painters who were better known (two or three of them were very well-known painters) used their influence with the result that we got an exhibition at the museum in Brooklyn and also in several other places. I must have some records someplace of what really happened to that show. But I remember that we sort of joined forces with some of the New York painters for a show in the galleries--the "Paris-American Society with Guests," or something to that effect. The guest exhibitors with us included

Pascin, and Rockwell Kent was also one. There were two or three others. We also invited some guest Frenchmen whose work we admired. So they had a chance to exhibit in this country, which they hadn't had before. It so happened that I made a trip to New York at the time of the exhibition and had a chance to see it. I was very much pleased with it. We also got some quite good notices in the New York papers. The society didn't last very long. Several of the painters left Paris and came home, and we didn't succeed in really holding it together for any number of shows. As a matter of fact, that show took place not too long before I left Paris myself, a couple of years before, I think. So it died a natural death. But in its short career, it was interesting, rather successful, and I always enjoyed my memory of Myron Herrick. I think we had a very nice picture of him. One of the interesting figures of Paris in those days, mentioned in both Shakespeare and Company and in Hemingway's book, *A Moveable Feast*, was Natalie Barney. I've forgotten how we met Natalie Barney, but she had her afternoons and she gave us a very cordial invitation to come whenever we wished. The first time that I went there was rather surprising in the sense that it was different from most salons of that sort that we had been experiencing in Paris. She had a very beautiful seventeenth century house, not a very large place. I understood at the time that it had belonged to Adrienne Lecouvreur, but it seems according to Sylvia Beach, it was Laclos. Anyway, it was one of the early famous French actresses. In the beautiful garden there was what the Italians call a *tempietto*, which Hemingway speaks of. The first afternoon that we attended one of her salons, she was unwell with laryngitis or something, so there was some servant always walking around telling people not to smoke in the salon. If they did wish to smoke would they go out to where the drinks were being served because madame was suffering severely from her sore throat. She walked around dressed all in white and had a feather something around her neck. She didn't seem to be very attentive to her guests, but I suppose largely on account of the fact that she wasn't well. She wasn't especially talkative. What was unusual about the afternoon was the company. Some of the most interesting people in Paris were there. One of the first people to arrive was Salomon Reinach. He was a historian, a member of the institute and a famous name in France. His books are used as textbooks in school, in art history and things of that sort, I think he wrote *Apollo*, didn't he? It's a small textbook, and it's an excellent thing--a compact history of art. Well, to have a man like that come in, you think you're going to have an afternoon of very erudite conversation of some sort. But when the next person comes in, Paul Poiret, why, you feel a little bit mixed up. Then the next person who came in was an English poetess who didn't know French, apparently, so she had to go around finding people who could speak English. The conversation got started, and who should come but Raymond Duncan. Well, Raymond Duncan is certainly a

contrast to Poiret and Salomon Reinach and some of the others, because Raymond, as we know, always wore this Greek costume with his hair done up in the back over this fillet. He wore sort of a mantle, bare legs, and feet in sandals. So that was a rather unusual figure to enter a salon. I've forgotten the order in which they came in, but it was interesting to watch the contrasts between the various people who entered. I did talk to Fernand Léger, the Cubist painter, quite a bit and enjoyed him very much. Well, the afternoon was very pleasant in the strange mixture of thought and character and fields of activity. In a French gathering, the conversation is nearly always extremely interesting. They had a little program in a way. I remember Paul Poiret and somebody else did some readings. Apparently, Paul Poiret fancied himself as having considerable dramatic talent, and he and some women did some reading of some important thing. This English poetess read her own poems, which may have been rather good, but she read so badly that I couldn't make up my mind whether they were good or not. I believe she had some recognition, though I didn't know her work. We did not see Natalie Barney very much. Only on very rare occasions did we go to her salons, although we had the invitation to come at any time. I don't know exactly why she accepted an invitation of ours. We had an evening in which Jan Hambourg promised to play for us. Jan Hambourg was one of three brothers who were musicians. Mark Hambourg was a very successful concert pianist. I don't believe that he had played in this country very much, but his regular tours in England and on the Continent were always very successful. His brother, Boris, afterwards was connected with the Conservatory of Music at Toronto. Jan was the violinist member of the family. They were all sons of a musician. Jan was a pupil of Ysaye and a very accomplished violinist, but he never made the grade of being a really successful concert violinist, although he did work very hard. Mark seemed to have been the really talented one and he really made a place for himself. Although having Jan play was not like offering a famous virtuoso for entertainment, at least he was very accomplished and played very beautifully. So Natalie accepted the invitation and we told her that we would have Jan playing some of the things that he had been working on. I don't remember very much about the evening, but one thing--I think my wife noticed it more than I--was that Natalie Barney was a true society woman. Her sense of timing was excellent. She knew how to manage things in a social way that would be successful. She managed to come in at just the right psychological moment after our party had been started and at just that interim when everybody was happy and had their drinks. Then it was time for music and, at that moment, Natalie Barney came in. The way she swept in was like a stage effect. You felt she had some spy outside to give her her cue. [laughter] Aside from that, my memory of her is not too strong. I don't want to be at all disparaging in describing her that way, because she was a very

interesting woman and she had talent in writing in her own right. Remy de Gourmont's Letters to an Amazon were addressed to her, which are writings of some importance. I have never read them. In fact, I don't remember reading Remy de Gourmont very much, more than simply dipping into his work. So that was another little picture of my Paris life. Anyone doing any research in the literature of the twenties will undoubtedly have found the Little Review, the magazine that was published by Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap in New York. It was one of the first ones to try to publish Joyce and some poems of Baroness Freytag von Loringhoven. Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap seemed to think that the baroness had some very genuine talent, and maybe she did. I haven't looked at her writing for a great many years. She was such a remarkable person herself, such an individual, that I imagine with any talent at all as a writer her poems may have some real quite genuine interest. She turned up in Paris and obviously was impecunious. One of the first times that I saw her, she posed at a sketch class of the Grande Chaumière. I went one afternoon, as I did frequently, to draw from life. At the Grande Chaumière, they would change the model at certain hours. They would have a model from a certain hour to a certain hour, maybe for a long pose, and then another model from that hour on would have maybe shorter poses. The classes were always quite full. They were what the French call cours libre. There was no teaching. It was simply a place to go and work and study, and you could do that in the afternoon and up until about ten o'clock at night. Many students would go to the art schools and work all day, and then work up into the night at the cours libre. They put in an immense amount of work that way. One afternoon, I was finished with one model and sat back to wait for the next one to come on and that series of poses started with the most strange-looking creature. She was dark and rather thin. Ordinarily, a model has no costume at all, but she did, to the extent that she had big, heavy bracelets on. I don't remember, but she may even have had anklets on and big earrings. So here was this strange, wild-looking creature with all this hardware on her. Then she struck the most dramatic poses with the most passionate gestures. And it was the Baroness Freytag von Loringhoven. I didn't know her at the time, but afterwards, I met her at the cafe because George Biddle knew her very well in New York. Apparently, he liked her quite a lot. I guess she was quite a sterling person in many ways, in spite of being so strange. I've forgotten how it happened, that she took to coming around to see me. The concierge didn't like her very much and he used to try to steer her away. He thought she was rather a strange-looking creature and didn't want her around. She had some problems on her mind--I've forgotten what they were--about getting along in Paris, and she had come to talk about them. Once when she came and was sitting opposite me, I noticed she had a huge garter on just below her knee. I couldn't help looking at it once in awhile. She noticed it and

said, "Do you see my garter?" And I said, "Yes." She said, "Don't you admire it?" I said, "Why, yes, I think it's extremely interesting. What is it?" And then she showed me what it was. She had gotten a watch and had taken the back off it so that you saw all the works. Then she set the watch as an ornament on her garter, which made a very modern-looking design. It was interesting, rather good. She seemed to have a flair for strange things like that. Then she came around one day with a small package. She said she had written a letter. I've been trying to remember who the young people were she had written to. They were writers who afterwards became fairly well known. She had known them in New York, and they were in the south of France. She'd written them a letter and thought that they might be able to help her and would I read the letter? I said that I'd be glad to read it. She said, "You read it and see what you think of it." I said, "Very well." Instead of handing me the letter, she undid this package which was wrapped up with a coarse string and wrapping paper and here was about a half-inch of manuscript. It wasn't folded; it was a little stack of writing in blue and red ink. It would be in blue and then change to red and then go back blue. I couldn't figure it out exactly. Well, I was rather appalled, but I started reading. She wrote very clearly, and there wasn't any trouble reading her writing. But it took quite a lot of time to read it, and she sat there patiently while I read this long letter. I wish I had made some notes on what she talked about in that letter, but it was about everything imaginable. The final idea was to find some solutions for her difficulties. Well, of course, I couldn't do anything for her. I said what I could about the letter, that maybe she could clarify points that weren't quite clear, but on the whole, I thought it was excellent. So she wrapped it up and went away. She apparently liked to talk to me about things. She didn't really tell me her troubles. She wasn't neurotic in that sense. She seemed to take her problems philosophically and liked to talk about them. But my wife didn't like her to come around for a very earthy reason. She didn't use the deodorants that are advertised on TV, and when she left, we knew she'd been there. [laughter] It was rather curious because she dressed neatly. Finally my wife put her foot down. She would not have that woman around any more. That pleased the concierge very much, and so she and the concierge got together to say that we were out of town for some time. Anyway, she was discouraged from coming any more--somewhat to my disappointment, because I found her interesting in a curious kind of way and enjoyed her talk. She wasn't in Paris too long. She went on from France to Germany, and the next thing that I heard was that someplace in Germany--Munich or wherever it was--she decided that she had had enough and turned on the gas. Our neighbor in the same hall was for some time George Biddle, the brother of Francis Biddle. George was the painter member of the family and also a writer. One interesting thing, so far as my life in Paris was concerned,

was that the first car I ever owned was one I got from George Biddle. Up until the time that he left Paris, I never owned an automobile and didn't know how to drive. That seems surprisingly late in the day--nowadays all teenagers can drive--but it so happened that I had never had a car and knew nothing about driving one. When Biddle left Paris, he had a little Citroen car which he sold to me quite cheaply. I took lessons and passed my examination and did my first driving in Paris, which was certainly a very severe test because in those days just after World War I, traffic regulations were almost nonexistent. They had a certain degree, I suppose, of traffic control before the war, but due to the lack of gasoline, during the war there was very little motor traffic and it was very easily handled. One of the first things that happened after the war was a tremendous increase in the number of automobiles. Citroen who had been a manufacturer of war materials converted his plants into the manufacture of automobiles. And the first man to take on publicity for Citroen was our friend, Richard Wallace. Well, one of the first cars that Citroen put out was a little car, a sort of convertible, very small. It was a cinq-chevaux, a five horsepower. But it was very practical, and we had a great deal of fun with it. So that's one of my memories of our relationship with George Biddle. He was a very interesting man. He was a Harvard man, a man very broad in his interests, and he was distinguished both as a painter and as a sculptor. He played the flute, and while he was living down the hall from us, we used to spend evenings together playing flute, violin and piano. My wife played the piano, and we'd play trios. We'd drink the dark, Jamaica rum and play these trios the last thing in the evening before going to bed. He was also a very hospitable man, and he used to have very interesting dinners and parties with interesting people. I was instrumental in getting some of the contacts with people that he was interested in. Joyce was one. Joyce was a very hard man for people to meet, and in the latter part of the twenties, of course, everybody wanted to meet him, especially people who were interested in literature or in writing. But Joyce refused invitations except from a very few people and his parties at his own house were always very small. But, finally, I did arrange for a meeting with George Biddle at a restaurant called La Biche in Montmartre. La Biche was quite a good little restaurant, and it was rather distinguished because the painter Jacovlev, about whom I spoke before, did some tempera decorations which were really very brilliant. He didn't skimp on the job at all. He did a beautiful job of decorating the dining room with paintings in egg tempera. One of the reasons I liked to take my friends to dinner there was because the dining room was very pleasant and Jacovlev's decoration so good. I always liked to see it again. So we arranged to have the dinner there. It went off nicely, although I don't think it was any special success. Joyce didn't scintillate, but at least George got something to put into his memoirs, which he did. It was not too much, but at

least it was one element of them. George Biddle was then married to a very charming Texas girl, who also was trying to draw--and did draw quite well. That marriage didn't, last. He's now married--and has been for many years--to an excellent sculptor, Helene Sardou, a woman with a fine talent. One extremely interesting evening that we owe to George Biddle was spent at the apartment of a man who had been ambassador, as I remember, to Russia, William Bullitt. He was a young man, it seemed to me, for that post. Apparently, he had been a friend of the Biddles for many years. That's one reason that George took us both there. It was a musical evening. Walter Damrosch was there and [George] Antheil. I've forgotten what was done, but one of the most impressive things was Antheil playing a composition on a mechanical piano. He had perforated the roll himself, or else he had it done from his music, so all he had to do was to sit there and pump away on this mechanical piano and out came his own composition. He had a bug about mechanics. At one concert he gave there, he had airplane propellers and typewriters, and the typewriters were rapping away, and the airplane propellers were blowing a good, stiff breeze onto the audience. The audience turned up their collars in derision at this kind of music. It was quite delightful and interesting to see the way that Damrosch took this sort of thing and the other thing that he played. Damrosch would smile and seemed to be enjoying it and having a big time. You'd think that he might be more critical. At least I had an idea he might, because Damrosch's conducting, it always seemed to me when I was young, was something very conservative. You'd think he would be shocked to have anything so sacrilegious as a mechanical piano brought in in the name of music. But, no, he enjoyed it. The whole evening was quite delightful, and the people were very interesting. The Ludwig Lewisohns moved from our building to a larger apartment; Thelma found that the studio apartment was rather too small for her, and they found a very nice place just before the holidays. We were invited to a New Year's party without knowing exactly how to find them. I remember going to the address, and it was a building that seemed to be occupied mostly by Americans. But there was no concierge to tell me what apartment to go to. At least I couldn't find the concierge, so what I did was to knock on doors and ask if they knew Ludwig Lewisohn. At every door I knocked on a party was going on and they'd say, "No, no, we don't know the Lewisohns, but come in, we're having a wonderful party." Sometimes they started to drag me in. Any American who was loose in Paris, why, they'd haul him in to join the party. And that happened several times. I'd barge into these parties and then have to escape from them. I finally found the Lewisohn apartment. His party, of course, was not as riotous as the ones that I had been passing up coming to his. The first thing I remember about that evening was Ludwig taking me up to a splendid ham. He said, "Have some ham, Myron. I

think it is a most estimable ham." I thought that was a funny word to apply to a ham, especially at that time. He'd been raised an Episcopalian, but he'd gone back to the faith of his father quite vigorously. He was studying Hebrew, and I think that he was keeping up the Jewish celebrations. And to be offered an "estimable" ham by him struck me as rather quaint. What I remember most vividly about the party was Elmer Rice. Elmer was there and full of fun. During the evening, he got in the middle of the floor with a lot of people sitting around him and started singing. And it was amazing the number of American songs that he knew, words and music, all the way back--it seemed to me--to Civil War days. He would lead the singing of song after song. A good many of the people there knew most of them or knew some of a song or they at least knew the tune. It was a lot of fun. Thelma Lewisohn was having one of her tantrums in the next room. I am sorry to say that Thelma could at times be embarrassing to her husband--and to the rest of us--especially after an extra drink. Anyway Elmer, completely oblivious to anything but his songs, kept us absorbed through it all. Elmer and his family were in Paris, it seems to me, for about a year. They were very delightful people. I remember very vividly what he told me about starting his career as a playwright. Usually you would think that it's absolutely necessary that you go through a long apprenticeship and refusals of manuscripts and all that sort of thing, but to have somebody suddenly become a successful dramatist seemed to be almost unbelievable. I wonder exactly how he managed to do so well. He must have had an interest in his work and have been working at it years before he actually appeared as a playwright. He said that his father wanted to put him into business and he tried that and hated it, so he studied law and threw up the idea of business. He went into law quite seriously and went so far as to be admitted to the bar. And then he said, "For the second time in my life, I did a fool thing. I threw up law." [laughter] First he threw up business; then he threw up law. He said, "I didn't want law." I said, "What did you do then?" "Well," he said, "a friend of mine and I for some time had been interested in writing plays. I got the names of agents and I picked out two, and I left a copy of my play with each of them. Shortly afterwards I got a letter from one of the agents who said to come down for an interview. I went down expecting just to get my manuscript, but they said that, no, they liked the play and they wanted to talk it over. The result was that he made a deal with this concern. Then he went around to the other agent to get the manuscript that he sent to them and that agent was furious because he also wanted the play. The play was *On Trial*, and it went into rehearsal in New Haven, was produced there and was a success. The first play that I saw by Elmer Rice was performed in French, curiously enough. It was *The Adding Machine*. I never spoke to Elmer about it, but I often wondered about it. There's a funny thing in *The Adding Machine*, an anachronism, and it was translated into French. Why it

was kept I can't quite see, because if the scene is medieval--isn't it?--it's pre-Columbian. It speaks of the European peasant digging potatoes. As I sat in the audience and heard that, with all this atmosphere of medieval life, the peasant digging potatoes rather startled me. The last time I saw Elmer Rice was many years after in New York. He saw us across the room in a restaurant and came over to chat with us. He seemed well, heavier than when I had last seen him, in spite of the loss of a kidney in the meantime. One of the most vivid personalities in Paris in those days was e.e. cummings. He too was not there for very long, but I don't think that anybody who ever met him could forget him. For one thing, unlike Joyce, he and his writing seemed to go together so well. I don't think anybody just having a conversation with Joyce or listening to his humor would think that he was a writer of the sort of things that he wrote. But cummings had that same whimsicality and inventiveness of language in his conversation and actions that you find in his writings. There were little comments that he would make when you'd say something. He, too, had one thing in common with Joyce--he didn't like to go out where there were many people. You usually met him at some little cafe at some distance from the center of things. He was not, unlike a great many of the writers, much of a drinker. I won't say that writers were given much more to drink than other people, but for some reason, at least among the people that I knew, writers were more inclined to drink to excess than painters and sculptors. Some people only did on certain occasions. Joyce had the reputation of being a drinker, but in as much as he really never lost control of himself and he was always extremely, as the French say, "comme il faut," and because of the fact that he seemed to be able to remember everything no matter how much he had the night before, you can't say that he was really an alcoholic. I don't suppose you could say that Sinclair Lewis was either, even if he went on a binge when he got through work--and he could drink quite heavily. When you get a drink at a cafe in France, they serve it on a saucer that has the price of the drink on the edge of it. If the waiter brings you a beer, for instance, he picks up the saucer that has the correct beer price marked on the edge of it and he brings the beer on that. So when you get ready to go, you have a stack of saucers in front of you. It depends how long you've been staying there and how much you've been drinking, as to how high these saucers would be stacked. That one night cummings and I had been at a cafe quite a long time and the stack of saucers got more and more mountainous. It was quite a tall stack of saucers. I think we wound up with a very tiny little liqueur glass on the top. And cummings looked at that and said, "Well, Nutting, I guess there's only one thing to do. You take one stack and I'll take the other, and we will run like hell." So that was the reaction to his drinking. I told him where I lived. I don't know why that little phrase seemed to fascinate me, but I was trying to tell him that, although we

lived on the third floor, he mustn't be surprised if the elevator apparently went up to the sixth floor. I told him the reason was that the studio apartments really had two floors, an upstairs and a downstairs, and that the front part of the apartment had a door on each floor, whereas the studio itself really occupied two floors. So I said, "When you go up in the elevator, you seem to be going much higher than you would otherwise." He was listening and he said, "Yes, yes. Lights passing rapidly." I don't know why that "lights passing rapidly" got into it, but I could see myself in the elevator with these electric lights going-- tick, tick, tick--you know.

1.16. TAPE NUMBER: VIII, Side Two (December 14, 1965)

NUTTING

We always planned our summer vacations rather carefully because we wanted to get the most out of them. As I said, we never in the least bit felt ourselves to be expatriates. We always expected that probably next year we'd be going back home, but we kept putting it off and putting it off because things were so interesting, so exciting, and also because we could manage to stay longer. So one thing was to make the most of some summer trips. Some of the parts of the country I imagine have changed a lot. I see quite a lot of reference to St. Tropez now as a summer resort, which is quite a fanciful place. When we were there, it was still a very simple town. It was a fishing village, and it was known by the fact that the painter, Paul Signac, had his villa there. Of course, for that reason, St. Tropez was known in the art circles. It was in a part of the country where painters such as Signac and afterwards other painters would take up residence. And one summer, we decided on St. Tropez. I've forgotten exactly why. We had a friend, Gillian Fothergill, whose husband was quite a scholar, quite an eminent man, in his field in England. She was divorced. Gillian was living in Rome, and she knew St. Tropez quite well. I think it was because of her that we decided to visit St. Tropez. After our stay in Rome, she was also in Paris a great deal. She was one of the people that we didn't lose track of. We saw her off and on quite often. So we went down to St. Tropez and we found it to be really a delightful place. There was a very simple hotel, a very inexpensive one, and the people were congenial. Gillian Fothergill also came down at that time. Among the other people who joined us was a very eminent art critic, Roger Fry. Roger Fry not only was a writer, but at one time he had been curator of paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I believe he was the one who was instrumental in the Metropolitan Museum acquiring that quite famous group portrait of Renoir's, *Madame Charpentier and Her Children*. At the time that he acquired it, he had considerable difficulty because Renoir was not looked upon as being very important and they didn't want to spend too much money for his

painting. I may be wrong, but I have a vague memory that he didn't find it easy to get the consent of the directors for the investment in that very fine example of Renoir's portraiture. Roger Fry was there with his sister. His sister was in some educational work--I've forgotten exactly what--was it prison reform? They went about in very simple attire. Of course, it was quite thrilling for me to know Roger Fry, I had been reading his books, and they had quite a lot of influence upon me. He also was an industrious painter. He was not an especially good painter in the sense that he made much of a name for himself, but he was an able painter. He spent all his spare time with an easel, especially painting out-of-doors. He did a number of canvases. There was a very charming, middle-aged woman, Mela Muter, of Polish origin, who was quite a well-known painter at that time. She was also part of that crowd. And there was a young English woman who was very ambitious and industrious and turned out quite a number of good canvases. So there were many painters visiting St. Tropez that summer. There was a nice little beach not far away where we went for swimming and bathing. I imagine now it's changed much, but at that time, you could go to quite simple stretches of beach that weren't too much inhabited, just a few houses and pine woods. One day, I was taking a walk of a couple of miles or so down the beach, and I ran into a man by the name of Paul Hirtzel. In Paris, we always called him "Disciple Paul." He was one of the followers of Raymond Duncan and he and his wife and his youngsters always wore the Greek costume--just a simple tunic and sandals. In Paris, I used to see him around on those foggy, cold winter days with a roll of posters under his arm and a bucket of paste and brushes, going about putting up posters for Raymond Duncan. Raymond Duncan used to have demonstrations in a theater in Paris of his rhythmic exercises and his readings and things of that sort. Well, Paul Hirtzel and his wife and youngsters were there living in the woods in a house that had more or less fallen to pieces. There were only one or two rooms left, and they were living quite a primitive sort of Homeric life. The way I discovered him was that as I looked into the woods I saw this figure moving back and forth in the sunshine. He was doing rhythmic exercises. They were done without music. All of Raymond Duncan's following there in Paris would spend so much time a day doing this sort of thing. We did them ourselves. We used to go down and join the group and learn them. They were very simple, very good and rather interesting. Both my wife and I at one time could do them quite well. They would give you precision and control of movement. So he was down there with his wife and two youngsters, and I used to visit with him quite often. One day I was out in the water, and I lost track of their little girl. Her name was Terpsichore. Little Terpsichore disappeared. I looked around and couldn't find her, and all of a sudden, I noticed her little topknot floating on the surface of the water. I made a grab for it and pulled her out. She'd gone under

and didn't seem to be able to come up again. I took her ashore. But she was a brave little thing. She sat down and spit and gurgled for a minute and whimpered, but pretty soon, she forgot all about it and went on playing. It didn't seem to frighten her, which rather surprised me. Psychologically the kid seemed to be in pretty good shape. She was not easily frightened. The children would sit there and crack pine nuts on little stones. They were little nudists, ran around quite naked and were quite charming. I didn't do too much work that summer at St. Tropez. We used to take long walks, and I was interested in talking to the people like Roger Fry and a painter by the name of Lespinasse. He was a fine wood engraver and a very bright fellow. I did quite a lot of sketching, but not very much serious painting. In fact, the only really serious painters I think were Mela Muter and Roger Fry and this young English woman I spoke of. She would do quite large canvases. She'd do one canvas a day practically, rather complete and rather handsome things, too. There are a few things that I remember quite distinctly about St. Tropez. One is the feeling for style that the French have. I mean people have an idea of taste and that sort of thing, but they're not especially struck by a feeling about dress. There was an Englishman there, apparently quite well-to-do, and he made quite an impression on the French people at the hotel by his dress. What he did was simply to go out and buy the cheapest kind of clothes. He'd get a straw hat (I think he got his hat off a barrow) and some simple garments such as a fisherman wore at St. Tropez. But what impressed these French friends of ours was the fact that he seemed to have more style, more dignity, in the way he wore these simple things than others could get by spending a lot of money. And when they mentioned it, I could see that they were quite right. The old gentleman seemed to have a certain cachet about him, don't you know. In his quiet dignity, wearing simple things, he gave things an elegance. We'd look around and see people who had spent money trying to look chic and they simply looked foolish by comparison. That summer had a rather unfortunate ending. As I said, St. Tropez in those days was rather a simple sort of a town. It was a fishing village, and although the hotel was quite neat and comfortable and nice in every way, sanitation wasn't perfect as evidenced by the fact that on our return my wife was quite ill with paratyphoid. They didn't call it typhoid, but she was ill with something that was analogous to typhoid, which was rather a bad ending for what was on the whole a pleasant and interesting summer. Another summer we made Brittany our field of exploration, and that too was delightful. My wife found a newspaper ad placed by a Professor Therond who had a villa in a little town on the coast of Brittany. He gave you pension and French lessons. We weren't doing too well with our French and thought if we could go to a place like that and get regular lessons and take it a little more seriously, it would mean quite a lot to us. It turned out to be a successful

investment. Professor Therond and his wife had this very delightful villa, and they had the day all mapped out quite nicely. They had about a dozen people at their villa, and they gave you private lessons at certain hours. In the morning you got up and had your lesson and did your study and one thing and another. Lunch was rather later than we ordinarily think of it being. After that, we'd all go out and take a long walk. Then we'd come home for dinner. You were not supposed to speak any English, especially at mealtime; you were only to speak French. The company was very unpleasant. They were mostly Scandinavians. There was one Danish boy and some Norwegians and Swedes. They worked very hard and studied quite seriously. I think the European student gets accustomed to harder work, even as a youngster, than our kids do. We're always worried about our kids being overworked in school, but they never seem to think there is any danger of that with the European youngster. As a matter of fact, I think that probably they do overwork, but at least, if they survive, they get the habit of real study and it's rather stimulating. It's interesting the different difficulties that we had in languages. For example, in the Scandinavian language there is the "j" sound. Of course, we're used to that in the Swedish dialect. "We had a very 'yolly' time," and they would call a man "Yack," you know. I didn't realize that it's really because they don't hear our "j" sound. This girl used to go out and sit on the edge of the cliff and look out over the sea. She liked to do that because she thought it was "so cozy." She had a funny idea of the word "cozy" in English. She spoke quite good English. They all did. And this girl would work with a combination of the French words like "j'ai chaud," which means I am hot. But she found that very difficult. She'd say, "Zhay zho--shay show--shay zho." [laughter] She'd have to struggle and struggle. Finally she got so she could sense the difference and pronounce the two words. They were well-brought-up young people. They were all young people; we were the older ones, even then. One variation in the routine there was provided by a woman whose name I've forgotten. She was in her way, very interesting. She was a movie actress and had apparently been in show business ever since she was a child, and she was the type of a person who had grown up in show business. Her work out here in California had been as a stand-in. She substituted for actors when there were dangerous things to do. She was a fine rider. As a matter of fact her nose had to have some reparation. It had gotten damaged in some stunt that she'd tried that didn't quite work, and she was hurt. So she was there. She'd taken a vacation, and apparently she was doing very well. She also thought she would learn a little French, but she didn't learn any as a matter of fact. She had no talent for language whatsoever. But she was very jolly and full of fun, and I think may have at times somewhat scandalized these rather nicely brought-up Scandinavian youngsters. [laughter] But they enjoyed her very much. Most of the time we spent there was pleasant and

profitable. We left after about six weeks and explored more of Brittany, which has more interest than I think people realize. It's a country with a culture, more or less, of its own. It's a very Catholic part of France. It surprised me that a country no larger than France should have such a great variety of cultures. I was out walking one evening along the lanes and roads and I got completely turned around so that I didn't know my way back to the village. An old lady came along; so I spoke to her and asked her the way back to town and she looked at me blankly. So I tried again, more slowly and more clearly, and she shook her head. She didn't seem to know what I was talking about. And I thought, "Well, I know my French isn't perfect, but it's rather surprising that I can't even get that little simple idea across." But no matter how slowly and how carefully I asked the question, she didn't understand. Then I discovered she didn't know a word of French. She only knew Breton, the old Celtic language of Brittany. I wonder if that is still true. Of course, all the youngsters have gone to school, but when she was a child, she never had learned French. We found a young fellow in a bookshop at Quimper who was interested in our exploring Brittany, and he came along just for the pleasure of the ride, because he refused to consider himself a guide. He was an excellent guide. He knew the country and history and the archeology and was a very delightful fellow. We enjoyed him very much, and he helped us quite a bit in getting the full advantage of our stay in Brittany. That summer was quite successful. The fact is, all our summers were interesting. I don't remember any upsets except certain things like Helen's getting ill at St. Tropez, which, of course, was unfortunate. Otherwise they were all extremely profitable. One summer we had a friend, a Belgian painter, Kvapil, who was a very excellent painter and was then gaining a considerable reputation and life was getting easier for him. He'd been in the army during the war, was married and living in Paris. For a long time he had rather a hard struggle. His wife had a job in a government office; they had a little studio, and he was working extremely hard. When we knew him, he had had some quite successful exhibitions and his work was selling. He talked of Corsica a lot and was quite anxious to go there. He had been there once before. He had a friend by the name of Lemercier who wanted to go down. A couple of other friends also decided they would like to spend their summer in the same way. So we went down to Corsica. Corsica is another part of the world that I imagine has changed a lot because of the increased facility in traveling. I suppose you can fly over there in a few minutes now, but there was no means of getting to Corsica by air in those days. The boat that went to Corsica from Marseille was very slow, and I think purposely slow. They would leave in the evening and dock the next morning by daylight. So they went slowly--at least that was the idea that I got--so as not to arrive at night. It's a delightful island. It's mountainous. There's hardly a flat spot on the whole island. What they call

the maquis, the shrubby growth on the hills, is rather aromatic. You can get a whiff of the islands out at sea, if the wind is right. It was very pleasant. These people, and I think especially Kvapil, who had been before, had found at Cap Corse, which is the narrow part of the north portion of the island, in the little town of Rogliano, a hotel where you could get pension very cheaply. It was a little hotel that had had a certain degree of prosperity in the horse-and-buggy days because people touring the island would stop over. It wasn't doing so well then, because with a motor car, they could make a whole tour of the Cap Corse in a day; whereas, in the old days, it took several days to do it. So they were very glad to give us a pension very reasonably. We spent the summer, a rather long summer, at Rogliano. We had the whole hotel to ourselves. There were three other couples who were painters and then two unmarried young fellows who came down and joined us. They were all industrious painters and hard workers. In fact I never did so much work during a summer as I did that summer, because the rest of them just shamed me into doing it. They'd get up early in the morning and stretch canvases and put on heavy packs and climb the hills and paint like mad all day long. They would come back, unstretch canvases and get the stuff ready for next day, then drink cocktails and have dinner. They would have great fun in the evening but would go to bed early. Next morning it was back to work. It was a great vacation to them, especially for Kvapil, who had spent years in the army and then lived in Paris without the means for vacationing. He loved it. My wife did quite a lot of drawing and painting, but as I said, her interest was also very much in language and literature and she was fascinated by the language of that part of Corsica. There are several dialects on the island. There's even one colony--it's quite an old one--where Greek is still spoken. At Cap Corse you can get along quite easily with Italian. The dialect there was so close to Italian that in conversation you don't have very much trouble. On the other parts of the island it's a different mixture. It's remarkable how quickly a dialect will change in a small distance; I noticed that very much in Corsica and in places of that sort. People only a few miles apart could hardly understand one another. Somebody told me (I didn't look it up historically) that one reason for it was that a lot of the people of Cap Corse had come over from Lucca in the early days. Well, Lucca is a part of Italy where a good Tuscan language is spoken, so it hadn't changed too much. There were many customs still surviving on the island that were very interesting. The one that especially impressed my wife was a sort of extemporized eulogy for the deceased that was spoken at funerals by an old lady who was a specialist at that sort of thing. They were called voceri. That fascinated her. My wife wrote quite good verse herself as she was very much interested in poetry, not only the classics but also modern poetry and the developments of poetry or any new manifestation of poetry, and she felt this was something she'd never heard of

before. She found a small paper-covered book by somebody who had collected some poetry in the Corsican dialect and had it printed locally. So with the help of a schoolmaster there, she translated these voceri into English. They were afterwards published in the Bookman, a good literary magazine in its day. These voceri were illustrated with some very nice woodcuts. It was nobody that I knew. In fact, we didn't know they were going to be illustrated until after they were published. So, that was her special project that summer, and the rest of us, as I say, painted industriously. One pleasant fellow, Lemerrier, came down later and brought a little Ford with him. That added to the pleasure, and we took some little trips with him. Otherwise we had to depend on local transportation or walking. Lemerrier had been an aviator in the war, and he was a rather good painter, but he also had a real gift for mimicry and pantomime. He was quite talented. He was rather an aristocratic sort of a boy. He had the finer qualities of the French who had background and breeding. But with him came a man who was quite uncouth in his way. It was not because of any natural uncouthness, but rather because of a certain willfulness on his part to be somewhat of a barbarian. There was also a very talented painter by the name of Favory. Favory, I think, would have become one of the very well-known French painters, but he suffered a head injury afterwards in a motor accident, and it was one of these prolonged, tragic deaths. His painting was more inspiring to me than that of any of the other fellows. They were all quite different, but Favory, I think, was really a talented painter. I have a red-chalk drawing of Favory, one of the few things I have of that period. I used to go down to the cafes in the little town, and just like in Italy, they'd say, "Are you an American?" I'd say, "Oh, yes. I'm an American." And they would say, "Oh, I have a relative. He's in America. He lives in Buenos Aires," or someplace. [laughter] They didn't seem to have any idea that North and South America aren't as close as two islands in the Mediterranean. Also, we met quite a number of people [who had lived in the United States]. That was true in parts of Italy too. Italians would go back home after having made enough money to live on. And in some little town up in the mountains, you'd find a barber who perhaps had lived in Chicago for twenty or thirty years; there he was in a little barbershop in a village up in the mountains. In Corsica, there sometimes were some very nice homes owned by Corsicans who had made their fortunes in this country or in South America, I say their fortune--that is, they had made enough to go back and invest in a nice piece of property and live the rest of their life comfortably. There was one property, for example, that was for sale for well under five thousand dollars. It had a nice old house, with vineyards and quite a bit of land--I've forgotten how many acres--and the buildings that went with the house were very nice. So one could see that if a person had made some savings in this country and had something to live on, they could be much more

comfortable in Corsica. However, at that time, the part of Corsica that I saw was depopulating. There were villages that were falling into ruins and so were the terraces. They would terrace the hills with stone walls, as they do in Italy, for the vineyards. Hardly anybody would be living in the village but old people. One old man that I met was lamenting the fact that his country was going down so badly. He said the reason for it was that the principal crop raised in Corsica was the "cap of the fonctionnaire." That is the cap of a postman or a policeman or somebody in the government employ who wears a uniform. He said that the great ambition of a young Corsican was to go to the Continent and to get a job in the government. So they would leave the island as soon as they possibly could in search of some such work that offered the cap of the fonctionnaire. One of my memories of Corsica--it happened every once in awhile--was the surprise of finding time telescoped, so to speak. You'd meet somebody who, as a child, knew somebody and it took you back a century or so before. I met one old gentleman who had been an editor of a newspaper in Bordighera, and one day he said, "Did you ever hear of an Englishman by the name of Edward Lear?" And I thought for a moment and I said, "Why, yes, of course. Edward Lear." He said, "I knew him very well." And I said, "You did?" I really was surprised because Lear was Queen Victoria's drawing teacher when she was a young woman. Besides his nonsense verse and nonsense drawings, he was a very fine topographical draftsman and he traveled and did watercolors of scenes and landscapes and views of places, the sort of things that were done before the days of the camera. He did them very beautifully. But, of course, he's famous for his limericks and for his nonsense verse and drawings. And this old gentleman said, "I knew him very well. But he was a very strange man," And I said, "Why? What was strange about him?" He said, "well, usually he was very nice. He was very polite and I liked him very much. But sometimes I would meet him on the street and he'd walk right on by me and say, 'Oggi non parlo!' ('Today I don't talk!') and he would go right on by." [laughter] He would give him the brush-off. Two things that impressed me. One was this funny picture of Edward Lear and the other was to know somebody whose memory went back--it seemed to me--to ancient times. Of course, it wasn't so terribly far back, but I always associated it with quite another era, another period. And to actually talk to a man who knew this man gave a feeling of time being telescoped so much. One trip was an extra dividend. It happened in 1926 when they had the exposition of decorative art in Paris. My wife happened to see a notice in a paper or art magazine or somewhere that Paillard, who was a manufacturer of artists' materials among other things, was offering a prize for a mural painting. They were going to put up a pavilion at the fair and they wanted canvases of a certain size as panels in this pavilion. And she said, "why don't you enter this competition?" My first idea was that it wasn't especially

worthwhile; then she pointed out that you got excellent Belgian linen canvas and the best materials that Paillard had at cost. At least you had that much to the good, which was perfectly true because, after all, if you want to do a large canvas it does run into a little money. At that time, I did feel like doing large canvases, so I entered. It was a very fair competition. You had to make a special sign and seal it up. I've forgotten how, but it was done some way so that nobody would know who did the picture. It was absolutely anonymous unless, of course, members of the jury recognized the style or the handiwork of a painter. So I got this large canvas--I've forgotten just how big it was, but it must have been about six feet by eight--and set to work and did a composition of three figures. It was not exactly monumental, but at least it had a decorative spirit and was rather richly painted. The pictures were shown in the Pavilion Marsan, a gallery in the section of decorative arts at the Louvre. They had all of the things for the competition shown there. There was a very good jury; Jean Forain, the painter, was chairman of the jury. I was having breakfast with my wife when there was a knock at the door and a young fellow came in with an envelope. He took out of the envelope this sign that I had made and wanted to know if that was mine. I said that it was. "Well," he said, "then I have the honor to inform you that you have won First Prize." There were two first prizes and I had gotten one of them. I was rather dazzled and surprised. I was very appreciative, of course, because I received several thousand francs. With this extra money, I took a trip. I had a friend, Paul Burlin, one of the most interesting of the American painters of very modern tendencies that was living in Paris, and he wanted to make a trip through Belgium and Holland. He wanted to know why I wouldn't come along. My wife didn't want to make that trip, but she urged me to go, because it was a very good way to get some benefit out of my prize money. So I went with Paul to Brussels and to Antwerp and up through Holland. We stopped off at all of the important towns and saw everything that was of special interest to a painter, besides a lot of other things. We made sidetrips to see the countryside and would go down to the seashore to see what the vacation spots were like. We finally wound up in Berlin, where my money ran out. So I skimped back to Paris. That was one of my exploits outside of Paris that contributed interesting and valuable experience as an artist. As everyone knows, one of the interests of traveling in Europe is that the minute you cross the border, you seem to be in a different atmosphere, a different culture. It's quite surprising how quickly it changes. For example, in Belgium, when I stepped out of my hotel, one of the first things that I saw was a woman cleaning the pavement in front of a shop. She wasn't sweeping it, nor did she have a mop. She had a bucket of water and a brush, and she was down on her knees scrubbing the walk in front of her little shop. She had it spotless. I won't say that the whole spirit of Brussels was quite as neurotic when it comes

to cleanliness, but it certainly wasn't something that you'd find in southern Europe, by a long shot. The fact is, for people who go from places like Germany and Belgium and Holland to the Mediterranean countries--especially parts of southern Italy, for example--it must be a shock to encounter the smell, the dirt, and unsanitary conditions. Maybe the contrast is not so great now; I don't know if travel has somewhat equalized the spirit and habits of the people or not. I imagine that it's still true in places where they're still struggling with poverty, like Calabria in southern Italy and in parts of Sicily. But the neatness and sedateness, especially in Holland, is quite a contrast to countries further south. Paul and I would go out in the evening to see what we could find in the way of some diversion, and maybe what was advertised as a night club would have quite a nice orchestra. A few young people might be dancing and the older people would be sitting having their refreshment very quietly, but there would not be any noise or confusion. We took some kind of an excursion to see something of the country. We went by boat on the canal. We got off here and there to see things, and one stop was to visit what was supposed to be a typical Holland farm. Well, again what would come to my mind would be the Basque country, which is all very neat, with nicely whitewashed houses and neat farms. But in Basque country, the first thing in stepping outside of the farmer's front door that you would see would be one of his prized possessions--his manure heap. It would be in the front yard, right near the front door. And it was something that he was quite proud of. But, of course, in Holland, it's a different atmosphere altogether. This farm that we visited was a very old farm. The building was square. One corner was the dwelling part and the rest of the building was taken up by the barns and stables and storage. There was a square opening in the middle--I don't know exactly how to describe it--but it was a hollow square. You could walk all the way around and through the dwelling, and it was absolutely immaculate--the stalls, the cows. One of the first things I noticed was that the stalls that weren't occupied had been washed and scrubbed out carefully, and then there was a large heap of sand pressed down into a kind of a mound. This, in turn, was decorated with seashells and one thing and another, so the thing looked very pretty. But the most surprising thing to me was looking down the stalls and seeing the lines that went from near the base of each cow's tail up to a pulley in the roof. There was a weight at the other end of the line that equaled the weight of the cow's tail. It was well calculated so that the cow could swish her tail quite comfortably when she wanted to, but when the tail came to rest, the tail would rise up gracefully and hang in a kind of a reverse curve. [laughter] And, of course, that contributed greatly to the neatness and cleanliness of both the cow and the surroundings. Scheveningen was the resort town that we visited, and it wasn't too different from the seashores in other parts of the world. In those days, there was hardly any honky-tonk or that kind

of thing. People were pleasant. Probably the most important painter that Belgium has had in modern times lived at Oostend. In Amsterdam we met quite a well-known dealer of books and art and prints in New York, who knew Paul Burlin quite well. He took it upon himself to show us Amsterdam, which was great for us because he visited Amsterdam many times and was very knowledgeable about the life and spirit of the city. So that finished our trip through that part of Europe. Berlin was still pretty much in a spirit of depression after the war, and we got this feeling of tenseness and depression. We were there for a very short time and spent all of it we could in seeing things like the work in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum and other places. I had seen it once before and was glad to see it again before I returned to Paris. There is one tremendous advantage in seeing things in the original. I don't think that is realized by most people. They think, "Oh, yes, I know Michelangelo very well." They may have a beautiful book on Michelangelo, but walking into the Sistine Chapel and getting the tremendous thunder of the old boy coming from above is not the same thing as opening a nice book lying on the coffee table with beautiful color reproductions. Several times I have had tremendous experiences that only could happen in the presence of the work. I think the first one probably was the work of Giotto. I thought I was fairly familiar with a man's work, such as Giotto, then found that the originals rush on you with a strange power. The work of Giotto was a case in point, but the same thing happened at Colmar when I walked in and saw the altarpiece of Grünewald. It just knocked me all in a heap, and maybe still more impressive was the Burial of the Count Orgaz in Toledo by Greco. That thing left me quite breathless. There were quite a few occasions in which that sort of thing would happen in Holland. There were a number of real revelations. There was nothing as breathtaking as the Burial of Count Orgaz, but still some were tremendously impressive. I think of the old boy, Frans Hals, and the group portrait that he did of the old women who were directors of the poorhouse [Lady Regents of the Haarlem Almshouse] in which he was an inmate at the end of his sureness of touch that some of his earlier things may have, but it is probably as powerful, if not the most powerful piece of portraiture of his whole life. The old boy, impoverished with these old witches running his life for him, to still do a thing like that is unforgettable.

SCHIPPERS

I don't remember if you mentioned what specific work of yours won the prize at the Decorative Arts Exposition?

NUTTING

It was a figure composition of three figures. I won one prize and an American girl won the other prize. I think it is rather surprising for two Americans to win both prizes. As a matter of fact, many things were sent in, works which from

the point of view of technical ability were superior to mine and superior to hers. Her thing was much more ornamental than mine. Mine was a more realistically painted thing of three figures. I afterwards destroyed it. It's funny because I've never been happy with any of my work that got any recognition. In that case--it being rather large--I didn't know what to do with it. I thought, "Oh, heck," and so when I left Paris, instead of going to the expense of having it packed, I simply painted it out and sold the canvas to a secondhand man, because a lot of painters around the Quarter would buy up old canvases as material for their work that had been used by students. In this case, it could be scraped down and used again, because it was an excellent heavy canvas. So that was the fate of that picture. Afterwards, when I came home from Europe, Paillard for a while advertised in American art magazines and they used a reproduction of this picture in their advertising. I was never especially proud of it. It wasn't a very good thing really.

SCHIPPERS

Do you paint out or scrape down your canvases often?

NUTTING

Oh, yes. Oh, I save very little. It doesn't look that way if you see my storage room--there's so much rubbish there--but, as a matter of fact, I save very little.

1.17. TAPE NUMBER; IX, Side One (December 27, 1965)

NUTTING

If I remember rightly, we got to Paris in February 1919, on a snowy day and eventually got ourselves settled in a studio right near Gare Montparnasse. In the meantime, the Wallaces had settled in Paris, too. Of course, before his marriage he had been a resident of Paris and had made his career and his living in Paris. So, of course, we got together. Dr. Joseph Collins had a way of going back and forth between New York and Paris. He used to go to one of those spas in Germany for a vacation to get rested up. He was always complaining of his digestion (he was very particular about his eating), so I imagine it had something to do with that. Anyway, I met Wallace one day, and he said he had a letter from Dr. Collins and that Collins thought that James Joyce was one of the really top contemporary writers, that he'd written a book called *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, which he thought was excellent. Collins had learned that Joyce was now living in Paris in poverty and was going blind and was in rather serious straits, which was, of course, somewhat of an exaggeration but understandable. He asked Wallace to look him up and arrange a meeting. The next time that I saw Wallace he said, yes, he'd found Joyce and that Collins would be in Paris on a certain date and he had made an arrangement to meet him and have lunch together. So we did. I've forgotten where the lunch was, but

it was a very nice place with quite a pleasant, sunny dining room, and a very nice table setting. Being a very successful doctor, Collins didn't stint on entertainment. We met at this restaurant and Joyce turned up. That was the first time that I'd seen him. Joyce was a rather slender, very erect man. The photographs that you see of him don't give you a very good idea of the man. I've been trying to analyze [the reason for] that. I think that what happened with photography in those days, especially newspaper photography, was that the ordinary emulsions that were used had very little correction for color. So your blues would come out white and the reds would come out black. That resulted in this rather reddish little goatee and moustache of his coming out much darker in a photograph. It very often gives him a slightly comic look, and I can't remember ever getting that impression of him. You see this funny little man with these little black spots on his face, you know, and it doesn't look at all like Joyce to me. He had a lot of dignity in his looks and in his bearing. In fact, he had more of what the French would call *comme il faut* in his behavior than anybody I ever knew. He had a very particular manner and speech and politeness. Some people rather make fun of him for it. Joyce apparently didn't have very much of an idea why he was invited or who Dr. Collins was. Joyce had a strange way of clamming up and not saying a word if he wanted to, but that luncheon was very successful--Joyce was very affable, very talkative. It lasted between two and three hours; Collins asked him questions about his work and his writing. Collins was then writing his books, such as *The Doctor Looks at Literature*, and he fancied himself as quite a literary critic. Joyce answered his questions very nicely and gave him a sketch of his life, of his experiences in Trieste and how he taught at the Berlitz school there, of his experiences in passing examinations for a position of teaching and going to a bank in Rome and other experiences he had in trying to make a living for himself and his family in Trieste. Well, as I say, the luncheon lasted quite a long time. The conversation was very interesting, and I regret very much that I don't have any notes or any recollection of specific things discussed. Mostly, though, it was about himself and his life, and to a certain extent his ideas. It was more biographical than anything else. He didn't get into any arguments on literature or anything of that sort. Finally, the meeting came to an end. We were walking down the street together and Joyce said, "You live near the Gare Montparnasse, don't you?" And I was rather surprised. He said, "How do you think I know?" I couldn't think, but just through some chance remarks, he had put two and two together--that any person who had said those things must be a resident near Gare Montparnasse. That was the first evidence I had of his extraordinary awareness of moment. He already had had serious eye trouble, which with these thick glasses gave him a faraway, absentminded look. But he certainly was not, and never was. He lived every moment to the fullest. He

knew and observed and stored away and would take out his little notebook and jot down a word wherever he was. It was very characteristic of him. Joyce brought around copies of the Little Review which was publishing Ulysses at that time before it was suppressed, and he loaned them to Collins to read. The next day I went over to Collins' hotel. He was sitting up in bed with these Little Review magazines on the bed beside him. He had been reading these magazines since the night before and throughout that morning. And he said, "Well, Nutting, I'll tell you. I have in my files any amount of writing by insane people that's just as good as this is." Collins got up and went to the bathroom to take a shower and commenced to talk about how tragic it was for a great mind to deteriorate so and become perfectly crazy. He really felt this man had extraordinary talent and that this was really a very sad case indeed. Well, he was the first person I had talked to that had knocked Joyce as much as that. Of course, Joyce was very controversial, but he already had a very enthusiastic following. Ezra Pound was in Paris then and was doing a great deal for him. A lot of the young writers looked upon him as one of the great writers of the period and were already trying to imitate him and were influenced by him. Collins didn't feel that way. Well, fortunately Collins didn't publish anything of that nature and little by little he came around and decided, after all, maybe there was something in his work. I think that later he did write some things that were quite appreciative of some of the valuable work. I found his work extremely puzzling, but my wife, who was much more of a literary student than I was, appreciated his work from the beginning more than I did. It was only after quite a lot of reading that, little by little, I commenced to really enjoy his work. For a long time, it did seem to me that it was unnecessarily difficult, and I could sympathize with an English writer, Arnold Bennett, who said it was reserved for James Joyce to make novel reading penal servitude. [laughter] And I must confess I never have read Finnegans Wake through. It's a little bit stiff for me, but my wife enjoyed it very much. She used to read it and reread it and quote from it, and she got more fun and interest out of it than most people would from some of his simpler works. We met the family--Nora Joyce and the two young children, Giorgio and Lucia. Lucia was a very charming girl in those days. She had two great enthusiasms--one was Charlie Chaplin and the other was Napoleon. She was just crazy about Charlie Chaplin, and she came home one day just all aquiver. She'd been out in a park along the Champs Élysées, up toward the Arc de Triomphe, and every afternoon there'd be crowds of youngsters sitting on benches watching the guignol, the puppet theater. As she was standing, watching this puppet show, she looked up and happened to glance at someone standing beside her. It was Charlie Chaplin. So, of course, she got a tremendous thrill out of that. She had clippings and all sorts of things about Charlie Chaplin. And, for some strange reason, she had this enthusiasm

for Napoleon. So if people would see little busts of Napoleon at five-and-ten-cent stores, they'd buy one for her. Or if it was a new picture of Napoleon, they'd get it for her. She had a great collection. Giorgio was older than Lucia--they were both teenagers then--and he was a very correct sort of a boy. His manners are rather hard to describe. I might imagine it being the influence of the Austrian court or that sort of behavior, you know, punctilious. The family was awfully hard up then. You can read in Ellmann's book about his experiences in Zurich and about Mrs. McCormick who had financed him for some time during that war period. It was a double reason--partly the fact that she felt that he was a very great talent and also because the period was extremely difficult for people, such as writers or artists, with a career that would be seriously interrupted. Even his teaching was hurt by war experiences. So Mrs. McCormick financed him in Zurich. She was, I think, undergoing analysis with Carl Jung and she wanted Joyce to be analyzed, but he refused. As I say the story is in Ellmann. One thing that the experience did was to turn Joyce against psychoanalysis, although he was quite a good analyst himself in a way. He was very clever in seeing associations in dreams. You could tell him a dream, and he could remember things and put two and two together in a way that was very good. But, of course, one of his puns, when he spoke of the Americans, was, "They are a Jung people, easily Freudened." [laughter] And the one time that I ever heard him use any really strong language was something apropos of psychoanalysis--I've forgotten what it was. He wasn't given to exaggerated speech or any violence in his language whatsoever; he was always quite sedate. Well, being in straitened circumstances, they were in this old hotel down by the river. When I got to know him better, I used to go down to call on him, and eventually, I used to take him around in my little car. He would be working on a suitcase, sitting in an armchair. A suitcase would be resting on the arms of the chair, and that was his desk. They only had the two rooms, and that was a very difficult situation for a man to do very serious work. He was working very hard on his book. He finally resorted to going to a cafe. It was a cafe over on Rue de Université. And he would sit at the back of the cafe and write. He would get himself a coffee and stay--as you can do in a French cafe. If you buy even a small drink, you can stay there all day if you want to. He became good friends of the proprietor and the waiter, and during most of the day, they kept this quiet corner for him where he wasn't bothered. There he'd have his books and notes and the manuscript, and he would work. I started speaking about Giorgio and his manner. He was also extremely neat in his dress. I imagine he probably pressed his own trousers and kept his clothes in as good shape as he could, but the poor kid didn't have very much in the way of clothes and they were getting pretty worn. You could see where cuffs had been neatly trimmed, you know, and the collar showed a little bit of wear. But it was

always clean, and he always looked very, very nice. Giorgio was a much more reserved boy than most, and I don't remember him letting himself go except in impatience. He was quite an impatient sort of a boy sometimes. He'd break out in protestations of one sort and another. Lucia was quite full of fun, and she used to love to come to our place when we had evenings, especially one year when my wife sent for her niece, Helen Kieffer, to give her a year in Paris. We had a studio and the upstairs sleeping quarters and also another little room that up to that time we had used for storage. That was cleaned out and Helen made it quite a nice place. Helen Kieffer was named after my wife, so they both had the name Helen. Helen Kieffer got along very nicely with Lucia Joyce, and they used to go places together. They both went to the same school, and Helen Kieffer learned French very well. Helen Kieffer was a quieter girl than Lucia, but they both had a lot of fun. They went to a camp that summer. My wife found a place--I've forgotten whether it was in Normandy or Brittany--that had been highly recommended by some friends for the girls to go and get some experience of country life in France. The Joyces let Lucia go; so the girls shared a tent in this camp. They had studies and exercises, and I think we have a photograph someplace of them throwing the javelin. They were doing something of that sort, I've forgotten what. The principal excitement was when the camp was visited by King Alfonso of Spain. For some reason he was brought around to inspect the camp, and the girls all met the king. Of course, that was quite thrilling. Evenings at our place were quite a lot of fun. One thing that used to contribute to it was that Lucia's passion for the art of Chaplin went so far that she imitated him. She would borrow her father's or her brother's shoes and clothes and put on a little moustache and practice the walk and swing this little cane around. And she did very well, too. So on these evenings, that was one of her contributions to the gaiety. There were other games of one sort or another that were part of the festivities that we had. The Joyce kids were multilingual, of course. Having lived in Trieste, they knew Italian. The fact is, they only spoke Italian in the family. It always seemed so funny to hear this Irish family chattering away in Italian. And when living in Zurich, they learned German very well. They were just at the age they could learn rapidly. Their French was excellent and their English was perfectly good except for little things that once in a while would pop up that would show that it wasn't their native language. Lucia was trying to guide my wife to some shop or someplace, but she made some sort of a mistake in the direction--she thought she knew exactly where it was--and she wanted to apologize for what was promising to be some sort of a wild goose chase. She said, "Mrs. Nutting, I don't want to make an experience for you." [laughter] Of course, it is a French construction, it's not English. She was funny, too. Somebody loaned them an apartment, but the furniture wasn't in very good shape, and Lucia warned my wife not to sit

down on a chair, because she thought it wasn't safe. She said, "All the furniture in this place is just stuck together with spit." [laughter] Then she felt she had said something very crude, and she apologized for it. Of course, the tragedy in the Joyce family was that Lucia lost her mind, some sort of a dementia praecox. She's now in a sanitarium in England. Giorgio was married and remarried and lives in Munich. Well, that was the Joyce family when we first knew them. They were in the hotel and they had apartments loaned to them throughout the whole history of their stay in Paris. Ellmann seems to have run down every place where they lived. All I feel I can contribute, because so much now has been written about the man, are footnotes to what has already been much more completely described by other people. As I say, Joyce was a man of great decorum and dignity of behavior; I don't think I can cite an instance in which he--within human reason--behaved in an undignified manner. What I have in mind is the contrast of his behavior to a lot of other young fellows around Paris in those days, even very, very talented ones. One idea comes up again and again when people speak to me about the man. First they say, "Oh, you knew Joyce," and I say yes. Then, very soon, out comes the idea that Joyce was a terrific drinker, that he was very much of a drunk. It seems to be a very common idea, and which isn't at all true. I say it isn't at all true, because although he did have very frequent evenings in which he was bibulous, it wasn't every night, by a long shot--and it was never in the daytime. I don't think I ever saw him do any, what you might call "serious drinking," in the daytime. If it was, it was what the rest of us do and that was to have a cocktail before dinner or something of that sort. But he wasn't fond of cocktails. The only drink that he really liked very much was a very dry white wine--a Swiss wine that he liked, one French wine and an Italian wine. He had special ideas about wine. He didn't think that the French idea of a very highly cultivated wine was in the spirit of wine. He thought that wine should be good wine--and for everybody. Of course, this is really the Italian idea. The Italians don't have any famous wines from vineyards where a certain few square feet are cultivated and where the wine then is kept until it's exactly right and at a certain age, where the wine made from them is perfect and becomes extremely valuable and is sold for quite a lot of money a bottle. The Italian idea, so far as I could see, was simply to make a good wine. If you got Chianti, it was good Chianti. There was lots of it and it came in big fiaschi. Something that was very *recherché* was foreign to their idea of wine. Joyce also thought that wine was one of the blessings of life and there should be plenty of it and it should be good and unadulterated. That's what must be asked of it, not something that was supposed to be super-fine and for a very highly cultivated taste that could tell differences in the superiority of the wine. But, as I say, I don't feel that you can think of him as being the drunkard that people are inclined to think of him as, because being really under

control, he was a dedicated artist. He had enormous capacity for work, more so than any other person that I have known. For other writers that I've known, a few hours of application is about all they can stand. Of course, there is all the other work you do in connection with writing--your research and reading. But Joyce seemed to have the idea that he should be able to have the ability to sit down and work very meticulously hour after hour all day long. He had his dinners at an hour which for us would seem rather late, never before seven o'clock or about eight o'clock. We'd meet for dinner; we ate out a great deal in those days. A lot of our meeting with friends was at dinner at a restaurant--much more so than we do now. Joyce would turn up for dinner, and you could see that he really was very tired. He wouldn't know what to order, and he would sit and he would always sigh. He was a great man to sigh. He would heave a deep, melancholy sigh. He apparently had no appetite whatsoever. But after we had a little cocktail or something of that sort and a little conversation, he commenced to brighten up; then he'd think of something he wanted to eat and he'd order that. Then we'd have dinner. On occasions when the evening was prolonged and extra bottles of wine were ordered, he would be quite himself again. And no matter how much he had to drink, he was always a marvelous talker. You could listen to him for hours. Another thing, he had a certain control of memory which others did not have. He always could remember even when it seemed to me he was quite befuddled. I know that the next day I wouldn't have the foggiest memory of what happened, but he could tell you everything and quote what everybody said. And he seemed to be just as observant and just as able to collect impressions and ideas after two or three bottles of wine as he was before. It was fantastic. Then, the other thing was that even though the evening would sometimes go on till one or two o'clock--and by that time it would be two or maybe three bottles of wine--he would still be up at a fairly good hour, by eight o'clock or so, and at work. I don't know how he did it. It was beyond me. He didn't seem like a man of very strong physique. He was slender, and he was not in the least athletic. I never knew him doing anything that was athletic, except that he liked to dance. He liked to do fantastic dances, pick up his coattails and do an Irish jig. He had a lot of fun in him, and quite a capacity for enjoyment. There are all sorts of stories in a community of that sort, and it's so easy to tell stories if it's a good story, whether it's true or not, and a lot of them were told on Joyce. They had an idea that he'd get up early in the morning and rush down to take a plunge in the Seine. As a matter of fact, I don't think he ever took a tub bath. He was very clean and very neat, but he wasn't fond of getting himself in the water very much. He washed, I guess, by sponge bathing and I don't think he was at all a swimmer. His son, incidentally, was. Giorgio distinguished himself in school in Switzerland as a swimmer--won a prize or something. I can't think for the moment what it was.

But, anyway, the boy was quite a good athlete, a very bright boy. His father was anxious for him to cultivate his voice. He did make a very good start at it, but apparently nothing ever came of it. I can see all sorts of little pictures of the man that are very vivid, and if a person were writing a novel, these little snapshots of him would be interesting. They haven't any special importance, biographically, but if they were put in relation to the picture of the personality by a talented writer, they could be very interesting. I'm not sure, but I think it was the evening after one of his birthdays that we had dinner together. We then went to some little cafe down in the very old part of Paris where there was that feeling of the houses coming together over the street, that medieval style. Each story of the houses, as you went up, would become a little bit bigger, and they got more room in a house by making the top floors larger than the bottom floors. So the result was that the street would be a sort of a canyon with a tendency for the roofs of the houses to meet overhead. Especially at night in a street like that which is ill-lit, it gives a very medieval kind of a feeling. You could imagine you were back in the days of Francois Villon or some such spirit of life. As we left the cafe on our way home, Nora was expostulating with her husband about something--I've forgotten what, I guess he didn't want to go home--and he was very quiet about it. Then he did one of the really impulsive things that once in awhile he would do. The street was deserted and rather dark, and all of a sudden, he leaped out into the middle of the street and went dancing down the street in this semidarkness. He wasn't very steady on his legs, which gave a strange jumping-jack effect to his movements as he went from side to side and disappeared into the darkness. And he was shouting, "I am free! I am free!" That picture of him--that voice out of the darkness. "I am free!" and that marionette kind of a figure disappearing down through these little old houses--is one of the things, as I said, that has no special significance except that it shows a certain amount of personality and character of a person that you have known. So he didn't let himself go in that way very often. There were a lot of funny stories told about him because people didn't know him very well, and they couldn't verify things. So all the gossip and rumors--his being a dope addict and this, that and the other thing--were very easy to spread, because although he was not at all unsociable--he was very fond of his friends--he was not the kind to go out and be among people. The Montparnasse grew very rapidly after World War I. When we first went there, two rather small, insignificant, very ordinary cafes, the Dôme and the Rotonde across the street were very much patronized. But, as the population, especially of foreigners, grew in the quarter, these two cafes enlarged; they took on adjoining stores and broke down partitions and became big cafes. Then another one started. It was a sort of a coal and wood yard and somebody built a huge cafe there--I've forgotten now what it was called. Some of the older cafes were quite well

known. The Closerie des Lilas wasn't very far away, and it was quite a rendezvous for literary people. We lived quite near. We first lived in back of the Gare Montparnasse, which was a short walk, and afterwards in another direction up the Boulevard Raspail, where we finally got an apartment. Especially for painting, one had to economize on daylight quite a lot, because in wintertime the days are quite short and decent light is only available until early afternoon when it begins to get rather dark. Then the interesting thing to do is to go out for a cocktail or an aperitif and wander down to the Dôme or Rotonde. There you'd invariably see some of your friends, and you'd have an hour or so of conversation before dinner. Sometimes after dinner, there'd be quite large gatherings and maybe we would have a lot of discussion and arguments. I always thought that was quite a valuable part of life over there. You didn't have to have any special meeting place or club or form a society for it. You could just go out at certain hours of the day and meet people; and a certain group of artists would get together and in another place, there would be writers. Their talk was good. They discussed their problems and had great debates. Of course, that's obvious in the story of the Impressionist movement in Paris--the meetings of Degas and Pissarro and Monet and others at that famous cafe in Montmartre. So it's very characteristic of life there. When you speak of why this activity occurred in Paris, I think that cafe life contributed a lot to it. I felt it to a certain extent in Munich, but not so much so, and still less in Rome. But in Paris, I think it was a really very important part of it. You had this chance to talk to people, to meet people, to exchange ideas; and I think that was one of the great attractions that brought a lot of people there. There were other reasons, of course, in that period of the twenties, especially for the Americans being there. The exchange was so much in our favor that many Americans had a chance for a trip to Europe that otherwise might have been impossible. And living was still quite reasonable. So they went there partly because of the fame that the life was having at that time and partly because it was possible for them to do so economically, which, incidentally, was the reason I went to Europe in the first place. It was basically a money-saving device; I could get more for my money over there. Of course, I was crazy to go, so that was also very much a part of it. And, while living in Paris, although I always felt I was very soon going to come home, I was very glad when I found we could stay one more year. In some ways, it may have been a mistake, but at the same time, I don't regret it. Joyce never went where there were crowds of people. Of course, after the beginning of the publication of *Ulysses* by the Little Review, his fame and notoriety increased, and people were more inclined to throng around him if he showed himself than when he first went to Paris. He didn't like that sort of thing. I think he was a shy man in lots of ways. He was a very, very courageous man, but at the same time, there was a certain shyness. So we were always

finding some little place where we'd congregate that was unknown to other people. And as soon as it was discovered, we'd move and find some other little place. I won't call it a coterie, but he had a certain group of friends. There was Ezra Pound, and an Irishman by the name of Arthur Power, a man we all liked very much. He and Joyce got along awfully well together. And there were a few other friends that he would have at his apartment. Afterwards when he had a nice apartment, he used to entertain very nicely with little dinners. We'd be there for Christmas or New Year's. It was interesting to see him enjoying a really comfortable life. The apartment wasn't large, but it was a very pleasant one. It was rather commonplace in its furnishings, but it was very comfortable and not untasteful at all. The last years that we knew him, he had on the mantelpiece a copy of Narcissus, a bronze that came from Pompeii. It's a little nude that stands a couple of feet high. It's a boy holding up his fingers this way [gestures], and I think his one hand is on his hip in a kind of listening attitude. It's quite a well-known Roman bronze. Somebody had given him this, I imagine--I doubt if he had bought it. Anyway, it was standing on the mantelpiece and in this arm that was crooked was a bunch of little Greek flags, and each flag represented a new edition or translation of Ulysses. And they were quite numerous; so, by that time I think his income must have been pretty good. For the publication of Ulysses, one thing that he wanted was to have the cover of it blue (it was a paper cover), and he wanted it the color of the Greek flag. I said, "Well, Joyce, that's all right. The Greek flag is just blue. That's all. It depends on how they're making the flag. If they want a dye that is permanent and will stand the weather and the sun, why, of course, it's an expensive color because ordinary blue pigments and aniline colors are rather fugitive and vary somewhat in quality. We have a cobalt blue, which is very nearly prismatic blue; ultramarine, which goes very slightly to the violet side; and Prussian blue, which can be used in juxtaposition to its complementaries to bring out a certain greenish quality in it. But when they're making flags, they simply dye it blue according to the quality of the dye they happen to have." "No," he said, "I'm sure they have a very definite blue for the Greek flag and not other flags." So sure enough, he comes around waving this little Greek flag and he says, "I want you to match this color for me." So I got busy with the blue pigments and pointed out that the blue was a color of this sort and maybe just a little touch of Prussian with ultramarine would give it something of that sort. But one thing he couldn't see was that the flag was silk and that you put that same color on paper and it doesn't look like the same blue as the silk. He couldn't understand that. He thought there was something wrong with my vision because I couldn't make that piece of paper look like that silk flag. [laughter] However, as we know, the first edition of Ulysses came out with its blue cover, which didn't take too long to fade and get rather dull. He was not interested especially in the visual arts. I

think that he rather gave up on the idea of painting as being anything very serious. The only art work I ever heard him really get enthused about was the Book of Kells. The manuscript illumination, of course, is of an amazingly complicated design, and that fascinated him. He'd get out his magnifying glass--he had color reproductions, or at least some plates somebody had given him of the Book of Kells--and he'd look at them with great pleasure. He said, "I think the reason I like it is because of the intricacy of it." It's the first time I'd ever heard that pronunciation, and in one of my letters to Ellmann, I mentioned that pronunciation. He said, yes, that Yeats also was inclined to use that pronunciation--intrícacy for íntrícacy. But Joyce always felt himself a watchmaker, a man who would work with infinitely small bits and put them together with great precision. He felt that was one of his great characteristics as an artist. On the other hand, there's one thing that always rather amused me about Joyce. He calls himself Dedalus in the Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. He's an artificer; he's a workman of precision. And I don't think I'm wrong, but I think he probably was as helpless with his hands as anybody I ever knew. [laughter] But, of course, that's not entirely fair, because what he did was to handle words and language with the same enthusiasm and the same love and meticulous care that the artist would do--what Cellini would do, for example, in a fine piece of gold work or engraving or something of that sort, with a great precision and great delicacy. So he wasn't wrong in calling himself Dedalus. His evenings at home, as I say, were always very enjoyable. They never had in a large group, only a few friends at a time. I doubt if they entertained very many at home. Unless they were people that they really felt were in the family circle, they took them out to a restaurant to dinner and gave them hospitality of that sort. His entertaining at his home was very informal. When we gathered there for dinner or for some evening, Joyce wouldn't appear until the guests were all there. Then he'd come wandering out of his study--he had the luxury now of a study, a little room where he could really work--and he used to come out in his white coat, which should have given him a look that rather suggested a doctor or a nurse, but it didn't. And he would wander in quietly and sit down, and he joined the conversation and then we'd have dinner. Afterwards he'd go to the piano and sing some of his songs. He had written songs using the melodies of other songs. "Mr. Dooley" was one thing he used to sing quite often. "Mr. Dooley, Youlee, You," is a satirical sort of thing to the song of "Mr. Dooley." We had radios in those days, but he didn't have one, and they weren't especially good yet. Somebody would play the piano. And he loved to dance. He always danced in rather a quaint, funny way, like he was doing an imitation of an Irish folk dance or something. I never saw him dance formally--doing the waltz or ballroom dancing. He just liked to skip around and really have fun, always in a very serious sort of a way. He never, never laughed. He'd break into

a rather charming smile once in awhile if something amused him, but I don't ever remember him really going "haw-haw" and really laughing. About the drinking that I spoke of before, we did have in the Quarter, in those days, some boys who were rather hurting themselves in the way of drinking. Speaking of this reputation that Joyce has of being a drinker, you never hear of Sinclair Lewis spoken of as a drunk. I may be unfair to Lewis, but I saw him very often in Paris while on his vacation, you know, and when he was traveling and having a good time, he began drinking pretty early in the day, it seems to me--and showed it. He showed it by not being a very pleasant person very often. Joyce, however, was always very polite. One time he did get so far along (just he and I were together) that it came closing time and the proprietor insisted he had to shut up the place and that we had to go. And I said, "Well, Joyce, they're going to lock up the place. We really have to get out of here." And he looked rather distressed at that, when he got up, I found he really couldn't stand on his feet. I had to put my arm around him and half carry him out into the street. Well, out in the fresh air, he sort of straightened up and he got a little more strength, but he was quite wobbly. He and I started to walk slowly down the street--I was trying to find a taxicab--and quite a nice-looking Frenchman passed by and saw that I was in somewhat of a difficulty. He stopped and said, "Can I be of any help?" In French. And I said, "No, thank you. I can get along very well." Joyce drew himself up with great dignity and invited this man to come and have a drink with us. I've forgotten how he expressed it, but it was very politely done and in a very dignified manner. The other Frenchman said, "Oh, no. Thank you very, very much indeed." And so Joyce said, "Alors allez-vous-en!" ("Get yourself gone!") A very cold allez-vous-en! "Oui, monsieur, oui, monsieur." And he went on down the street. So I got Joyce home. I wasn't making any effort to be abstemious at all in those days, but I think that Nora rather liked for me to be out with Joyce because she was rather sure that at least he could get home without leaving his overcoat someplace or have some kind of a mishap. It was not because I made any effort to stay sober, but just because of a physiological peculiarity that has always been with me. Up to a certain point I drink very enthusiastically, and then I get a sense of paralysis of my insides and I just can't swallow anymore. I just don't want it. [laughter] All I want to do is to keep very still for awhile. If you leave me alone for about an hour, I will then feel right. But the unfortunate thing is that in not being able to join the party in the spirit in which it is going, I get rather dismally sober. So if it goes on too long, I'm just cold sober and want to go home, while the rest are having a whale of a good time. Well, that would be true when I was out with Joyce. I'd have all I wanted, and I'd stop, you know. He'd polish off another bottle, and by that time, I'd be sobered up--and he wouldn't have--and I was in a position to guide the party home and pick up the belongings and take care of

things. I think Nora got onto that. Afterwards I felt that she was never reproachful if he came home even early in the morning. She was always very nice about it.

SCHIPPERS

How often did you see Joyce?

NUTTING

Oh, very often. For one reason, Nora Joyce was very fond of my wife and she used to come over a great deal. She wasn't a complaining woman at all; she didn't come over to weep on my wife's shoulder, but she liked to have somebody to confide in. She liked Helen very much, and for that reason, she'd be over quite a lot. And we used to be at their place quite a lot. Also what was common with most of us in the Quarter in those days was that we ate out a great deal. We used to have our favorite restaurants and we used to meet in small groups, and very, very often it would be with the Joyces. It was usually either a restaurant down near the Beaux-Arts or down on the St.-Germain-des-Prés, or a restaurant in the Quarter. There was one called the Trianon. It all depended whether we wanted to have a very simple meal or felt like splurging a little bit. Sometimes we met at an extremely simple little restaurant where we would meet by prearrangement. Then we took trips out to Fontainebleau together and to do things of that sort, little excursions. In the wintertime, we'd meet at least once a week, either for dinner at each other's house, or we would go on an excursion to places outside of Paris and spend the day. Of course, in the summertime, we went our various ways. We used to go south a great deal, and they would also go places. Everybody's great ambition in Paris is to vacation someplace in the summertime.

SCHIPPERS

About how many years did you know the Joyces?

NUTTING

Well, it was during the twenties. We left there in '29, and they had been in Paris about a year before I met them. If I'm not mistaken, they arrived in 1920, so from '21 to '29 I knew them. My wife corresponded a little bit with them after we came back to this country. Joyce had a phenomenal memory for people's birthdays. He never wrote them down, but he remembered them. He had a great love of birthdays and he used to send my wife a telegram or something on her birthday. He congratulated me on my birthday once, only he got the month wrong. He got the day right, but he made a mistake on the month. [laughter]

1.18. TAPE NUMBER: IX, Side Two (January 5, 1966)

NUTTING

Another man that I met through Joyce was Wyndham Lewis. I was already somewhat familiar with his writing. Wyndham Lewis was an extremely talented draftsman, a painter, a very able writer and, in some ways, quite a brilliant thinker. He wrote a small book called *The Caliph's Design*. At that time it interested me quite a lot. And when Joyce said Lewis was coming to Paris, I asked if we might not have dinner together and I'd have a chance to ask him some questions concerning some of the things in this little book of his. Joyce arranged a dinner. I went, but instead of just the three of us as I had expected, there were also other guests. One was Robert McAlmon and also a young sculptor by the name of Moore. Well, the dinner was quite successful but I was rather disappointed because when I started asking Lewis some questions about his book--I told him I'd enjoyed it, and I wanted to talk about it--the others didn't want any very serious conversation. So it turned out to be just a good-natured sort of a dinner. Bob McAlmon perhaps had been celebrating a little too much or something. We had quite a few drinks at dinner that didn't agree with him, and he became ill. So after dinner, he went home and left Moore, Joyce, Lewis and myself to go on to a cafe and have some more talk. Well, it resulted in our being out, really, all night. I've forgotten where we went. We went from place to place and talked. Finally we wound up going to Les Halles in the early morning, down in the Paris marketplace. It's quite a nice place, interesting, too--at least, it used to be--I believe it's either being taken down now or is gone. In the early morning, you would see great wagonloads of produce coming into town to feed the city of Paris, and in the vicinity there were lots of restaurants, some very simple ones and some more ambitious ones, all quite good. Winding up down there for breakfast was rather a usual thing if you were out all night. So we went down there and had breakfast and then started leisurely going home. Well, Lewis and Joyce had been drinking rather continuously all night and though they weren't too intoxicated, they had become rather uninteresting. Moore drank very little; he was very sober. And I, as usual, about that time of night was tiresomely sober. [laughter] It had been hours since I had had the slightest desire for anything in the way of alcohol, I enjoyed my breakfast and coffee and then wanted to go home, but when I mildly suggested that it was time that we break up and go and get some sleep, Lewis leaned over and put his arm around me and said, "My darling Nutting, I won't go home and you can't make me go home." Well, I wouldn't remember that except--as I said before--the interesting thing about Joyce was that he always seemed to remember everything. At that time, he didn't seem to be especially aware of the world around him. One of my worries, knowing that he had so little to spend, was that he was buying a drink maybe for one franc and giving a five-franc tip. So I was trying to salvage these five-franc tips and would instead put down a respectable tip, with the idea of giving the money

back to him later. I didn't think there was anything especially wrong with that idea. It seemed to amuse Moore no end, though. He caught me doing it, and he laughed and thought it was a great joke. Afterwards Joyce could mention things up to the very end of the evening and described Lewis' state and his saying, "Darling Nutting, you can't make me go home." He quoted him verbatim and showed that there was nothing in the whole evening that was in the least lost on him. There were one or two things that were very Joycean. One was superstitions. I could never quite make out whether Joyce was really superstitious or not. He enjoyed superstitions, especially old ones, and sort of played along with them. He had his own idea of what was good luck and what was a good portent and that sort of thing. One time, early in the morning, we were at a cafe and I lost Joyce. I looked around and found that he was sitting with a Greek sailor and having a wonderful conversation with him. Well, it wasn't because the boy was an especially interesting companion--I'm sure of that--but it was the fact that he felt it was a good omen to meet a Greek. Anything Greek was a good omen to him. To have the evening wind up with a contact with a Greek seemed to him something that really meant good fortune and led him to become very friendly with this fellow. Well, it's unfortunate that those two men, who were very unusual men, very different, disagreed with each other. Even then, Lewis was very critical of Joyce and disagreed with him. They were disagreeing on a lot of subjects, and it was very unfortunate that I can't remember about what. Why I did not make some notes of what the talk was about I don't know, but I didn't, so it just remains as these mild memories. Then about this young Moore, afterwards I saw notices and pictures of his sculpture in art magazines. So, of course, I said, to myself, "So that was the boy. That was Lewis' friend that he thought was such a genius." And I always supposed that it was he. But Ellmann, in his interview with Henry Moore in England, said that Moore claimed he never met Joyce, and I'm wondering whether that's really true. It seems very much of a coincidence that another sculptor who would be admired by Wyndham Lewis and one he felt was representative of very modern art, as Wyndham Lewis was, would also have the name of Moore. I think it's rather strange. I'm rather wondering if at that time the boy paid much attention to whom he was with. He didn't talk; he didn't seem to be too much interested. He was mild and a very pleasant young fellow. I think maybe he just tagged along with Lewis and didn't especially notice who he was with. That's just a possibility. It doesn't sound too intelligent because by that time Joyce was quite well known. I'm sure Moore would have known, and if he paid any attention to his guests, he would certainly have remembered him. So that was one of the evenings. It was the longest evening I ever spent with Joyce. Usually we got home at a much better hour. That was the only time I ever met Wyndham Lewis. I found him a much more interesting man in his

writing than he was personally. In Ellmann's book, there is quite a vivid description of Joyce and Giorgio. In its way, I think it's very true. It's very good. Of course, when you speak of the way people were impressed by Joyce, I think you can understand it in terms of their personal feeling. Clive Bell didn't like him especially. Some people would call him arrogant. I think that speaking of him as being arrogant is rather unfair; I don't think he was at all an arrogant man. I think he was shy. He didn't seem to enter easily into a crowd. In spite of all the people who really admired him and were willing to like him very much, he much preferred to be with very few people and keep his distance, but not because he was snooty. It was because to suddenly become well known after a life of hard work and neglect was a bit heady for him. He couldn't quite take it. I never knew anybody who really disliked him, and I certainly never knew him to be offensive in any way or give any reason for someone to take umbrage. I always thought it was rather ironical that he should use the name Dedalus, meaning himself. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is, of course, roughly autobiographical and in *Ulysses*, too, it's himself he's writing about to a certain extent--Dedalus, the artist. Joyce had the limpest handshake of anybody I ever met. There were just no nerves in his hand. He'd hold out this object, you know, and you'd take hold of it and wobble it, but there was nothing in the way of a clasp or a handshake. I don't think it was any lack of warmth or feeling. I just think that his hands were not parts that he expressed himself with. I can never imagine him doing anything mechanical or fixing an electric fixture or doing the little jobs that so many people do around the house as a matter of course. I had an idea he'd be quite helpless. I have no special reason for feeling that except that his hand seemed so inefficient in the handshake. One time I went down to get him on an appointment, and I found him struggling with a package he had wrapped in a very childish way in black oilcloth. He had a cord which wasn't at all appropriate to tie it with. If he'd had good twine, he could have made quite a neat job of it, but he had gotten this rough hempen cord which was hard to handle anyway and was too big for the purpose. He was trying to tie a knot, and the cord was slipping off the package. I've forgotten whether I finally helped him out or not. I rather imagine I didn't because I didn't want to imply that he wasn't capable of wrapping a bundle. But he finally got this bundle tied and lifted it up, and it held together. And he said, "Do you see this? This weighs twelve kilos and it's the notes that I have not used in writing *Ulysses*." [laughter] So, I don't know how much the bundle of his used notes would weigh. Of course, as I said before, he was a continual maker of notes--even in the hospital. I went to see him the day after an operation on his eyes--one of the many operations--to see how he was getting along, and they told me I could go up and see him if I wished. So I went to his door and it was ajar. I looked in, and here was Joyce lying on this bed with enormous bandages

over his eyes, like small pillows bandaged over both eyes. He was lying flat on his back. I said, "Hello, Joyce." And he didn't move. He lay there perfectly quiet, perfectly still, I felt rather embarrassed. I thought they had let me see him too soon after the anesthetic and operation. Then he reached under his pillow and pulled out a notebook (a composition book such as we use in schools) and a pencil. He held the notebook up and very slowly traced something by touch onto a page. Then he shoved it back under the pillow. Then he held out his hand and said, "How are you, Nutting?" Even then, he had this awareness of watching his thoughts, his feelings and his ideas. Ordinarily, he kept a very small notebook in his vest-pocket. Walking down the street one day while carrying on quite a lively conversation, all of a sudden, he pulled out this little book and wrote something in it in his funny little tiny hand and put it back. Of course, it caused an interruption in what he was saying, so I looked at him rather inquiringly--I wondered what idea had suddenly popped into his mind. So he pulled the book out again and held it up, and on one page were simply the words: "carriage sponge." [laughter] Then he put it back. Afterwards, I saw his method of working. He had great big pieces of wrapping paper and colored pencils and a chart of his work. This note probably--I don't know--would have a number and would go to department so-and-so and so-and-so on this big chart. All of the material related to Ulysses, which he was then working on. But that very methodical way of working and that inveterate taking of notes was to me most striking. Everything was mapped out in colored pencils on the chart. He carefully preserved all his material so that even after it got through with his material, he'd wrap it up and weigh it and it was ready to be filed away. Well, I think I mentioned the fact that when I first knew him, I did catch him working one morning. I found him in his room in a rather cheap little hotel with very little heat. It was quite cold. He had his coat on, and he was sitting in an armchair with a suitcase resting on the arms of the chair. That was his desk, and he was in this little room working. I think they had two rooms in this hotel. I think it was on the Rue de l'Université, down by the river. That's the only time that I ever saw him actually engage in his work. Ordinarily, he wouldn't talk too much about his work except after dinner, after a couple of bottles of wine, and then sometimes he would. I remember once when he was working on the wandering rocks episode, he told me various ideas he had for the form of it. One of them was what I think Ellmann describes in his book here. He got the idea from some childish game he played with Lucia. I won't say childish because Lucia was then thirteen and she was not at all a child; she was mature for her age. It was a game, though, for young people. In playing this game, it gave him an idea for the wandering rocks. And I also remember, for example, he was concerned about the last episode which is about Penelope, Molly Bloom, just before she goes to sleep. It has enormously long sentences, and he

said at first his idea was to do it in the form of letters that she had written. And then he got this other idea of simply a flow of her thoughts and reveries as she drifted off, eventually, to sleep. That to me proved to be his masterpiece. I think it was a very marvelous piece of writing. The contrast between that and the style that he invented for Bloom is startling. To some people, it's a very dull episode, but to me, it's very fascinating. Have you read it?

SCHIPPERS

Yes.

NUTTING

You remember that cold mathematical style he uses? To me each episode in the book is sheer music, and the book as a whole is a great symphony. Following that wild Walpurgisnacht, the Circe episode, one moves into a quieter movement, the one of the cabman's shelter, leaving the tumult behind. Then comes the fascinating movement when the pair are homeward bound under the stars and where Joyce makes scientific and mathematical exposition sheer poetry. Finally Bloom is in bed, he dozes off. "He rests. He has travelled with? Sinbad the sailor and Tinbad the Tailor and Jinbad the Jailer and Whinbad the Whaler and..." I just said, he was always writing things down, making notes of everything. You can see that all of his writing is based on very real, very concrete experiences. Probably every mite of it he could trace down to its origin. It's not a thought-up fantasy or a dream life, however, the dream form may be used. It's anything but that. Undoubtedly, all of the people who knew him are in some way in the book. In Ulysses, at least, sometimes it'll be obvious. Well, when we had that little dinner on his birthday, when he got out his first copy of Ulysses, one of the first things that he did was to open it and show my wife where her name appeared among the trees. And once, by accident, I discovered something else. Molly Bloom in this long reverie of hers says to her husband, "Roll over for the love of Mike." When I read that, I was surprised because I always thought "for the love of Mike" was an American expression. So the next time I saw him I spoke about it. I said, "Well, Joyce, I didn't know that 'for the love of Mike' was an Irish expression. I thought that was something that was quite American. Do you say that in Ireland?" He said, "No." "Well," I said, "where did you get it from then? And why did you use it? Where did you get it?" He said, "From you." [laughter] There is also the saying my mother used in greeting a friend: "How does your corporocity sagatiate?" Once we made arrangements to meet the Joyce family for some performance--I've forgotten what it was now--and we went in and the Joyces were already there. I walked up to him and I said, "How are you, Joyce? How's your corporocity sagatiate?" And he looked puzzled for a moment, and then he smiled. But I didn't ask him if I had contributed that or not. I rather suppose that I did, because he didn't take it as an expression that he was familiar with. It

turned up in *Ulysses*, so I sort of imagine I contributed that. Another thing was a little song. I was with him one evening--I've forgotten what episode it's in now--and he sang it. He first recited the words, and then he said "The tune goes this way," and he sang it--this little verse. And I said, "You ought to have the music with the words when the book is published." And he said, "No, we can't do that. You can't go to the extra expense. Illustration and that sort of thing is something that we can't afford." But I said it wouldn't cost anything. And he said, "Why wouldn't it?" And I said, "All you have to do is take a piece of music paper and write it out in black ink, and, for very little, you can get a cut made from the engraver and the printer will put it in for you." That seemed to be news to him and, sure enough, that was what was done. So I made the contribution of having the music of the verse appear. Otherwise, it would have been simply the words of the song, nothing else. Well, undoubtedly, as I say, everybody that knew him would be surprised how much in some way or another they contributed, because nothing was lost on him. Well, of course, the trouble over *Ulysses* began right after I knew him. Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap had published a certain amount of *Ulysses* in the *Little Review* in New York, but then it was suppressed. Finally, the ban was lifted. When we came to this country (I left Paris in 1929), I brought with me two copies. One was the copy of his first edition, a signed copy that Joyce had given us, and I'd also been given another edition in a smaller format and very beautifully bound. When I got to New York, they searched my luggage and they found the second edition, but they missed the first. So it was sheer luck that I salvaged my valuable copy, which now is in the library at Northwestern University. It was one of the first copies to arrive in Paris from Dijon, where it was printed. Just a small number were printed. Of course, I suppose everybody would admit that Joyce was a very impractical sort of a man when it came to worldly affairs and money, but he was very conscientious about it. He didn't hesitate to ask for a loan of money when he needed it, but you were quite sure of getting it back, and sometimes very quickly and very promptly. At least that was my experience. So far as I know, it was always true of him. He wasn't a sponger in the least. I met him one day, and he spoke of the next day being his wife's birthday. He said, "I have nothing to give her." So I loaned him a hundred francs. A hundred francs then was quite a little bit. The exchange fluctuates so, but it wasn't a small sum. He bought her something in spite of the fact that they were down to practically nothing, as his wanting the loan would indicate. In some way, a very short time afterwards, he repaid me. But, he was quite capable of borrowing money from you and deciding that, instead of groceries, he'd buy flowers. It had more meaning to him than food would have at the time. So he would spend it in that way.

SCHIPPERS

You previously mentioned something about a standard joke in the Joyce household having to do with Irish humor.

NUTTING

Well, that was apropos of Nora Joyce. Nora was--I always felt and I think my wife did, too--really quite a grand person. She was always very dignified, very quiet. She was very much puzzled by her husband and also very much impressed when she found that all this crazy work that he was doing really meant something after all. Instead of making a good living for his family and all that sort of thing, he'd spend all his time writing a book that people thought was terrible and was censored. I suppose it was something that was pretty hard for her to understand. She never read it, of course. She was not an educated woman. Curiously enough, she had a great love and a good appreciation of music. She'd go by herself sometimes to a concert of her favorite composers. She was especially fond of certain works by Wagner. They seemed to mean a great deal to her and some of Wagner's things she'd hear again and again, even if she had to go alone. It was something that had real meaning. So far as understanding her husband's work, of course, that was just nonexistent. There was no understanding at all, and I don't think she was especially interested. I think probably the favorite joke of Joyce in speaking of his wife was that Nora would say to him, "Jim, have you any book of Irish humor in the house?" And Joyce would reply, "No." [laughter] Family life in the Joyce family was really excellent, very quiet, simple. The deep affection that Nora had for her family held them together marvelously. She was really very patient. Once in awhile I'd hear her get rather scolding, but it wasn't too serious and it seemed to me that they really were very devoted. The relationships in the household seemed to me excellent. Speaking of that--of the family, the children--Lucia was a very lively, imaginative, intelligent girl. Her brother was not at all like his father or like his sister, and least of all, his mother. He was maybe a little bit stiff, a little punctilious and inclined to be rather argumentative. And the family would burst forth in Italian, which was a very impressive language to carry on an altercation in. You can make more noise and sound more ferocious--it seems to me--in Italian than you can in most any other language. When Italians get to really laying down the law to each other, they can make a tremendous racket. Giorgio had quite an ability along those lines. Most of the time, he was very quiet and very sedate. I don't think the altercations really amounted to anything at all serious; they were just a little noise in the family. At that time, I still was interested in doing portraits. Temperamentally, I never have been a portrait painter, but I like to paint people. I like to paint from nature, and I like to do portraits if I'm not bound too much by the whims and fancies of the sitter and the sitter's family--that gets to be quite unbearable. I asked Joyce to sit for me, and he seemed to be pleased to do so. Nothing very much came of that, partly

because he was working tremendously hard, very hard, and also because his eye trouble was always more or less present. Sometimes he'd be laid up for some time with it. I no sooner got started in my painting when an illness would put a stop to it. Then I realized it was kind of an imposition. If I'd felt more sure of myself as a painter, that I would do something that was of great value, I might have pressed the matter a little bit, but I imagine I was somewhat intimidated by my own work at that time. I wasn't too satisfied with it. I did do some drawings of him. A crayon drawing is now owned by Paul Kieffer in New York and is mentioned by Sylvia Beach in her book, *Shakespeare and Company*. She said, "I wonder what became of that drawing that Myron Nutting did of Joyce? I've always liked it." That pleased me because I thought she would be pretty sensitive to what sort of things were done of him. I also did one of Nora. Of course, Nora had plenty of time to sit, and she was a very placid sort of a person. She was a marvelous sitter. That portrait of her I always rather liked, and it's reproduced in Ellmann's book. I also did some of Lucia. She used to like to come around and sit for me. One of the pictures I did of her is now with the one of her mother. Incidentally, the beginning of one of Joyce is also in the library at Northwestern. It's there along with some odds and ends of Joyce's writing and some drawing I sold to Northwestern University, some time back. Most of the things I don't think I kept. The one of Lucia is, I think, all right. It's quite nice, and I wasn't at all ashamed of it the last time I saw it. The one of Nora I thought was very good as a portrait, and I think everybody else did. They always seemed to like it very much. It had some sort of qualities of painting. It wasn't just a "spot knocker," as we used to call them when I was a student. We used to divide portraits into spot knockers and real paintings. It seems to me that Ellmann's book is really a masterpiece, a wonderful piece of patient research. And he has used the material amazingly well. I, not being a man who's been up against that sort of a problem, wouldn't be one to really be critical. I think that a lot of my personal impressions of Joyce would not be of any historical importance. How should I put it? Even though the person had the experience with the man, he might not have any deep understanding and could not present something that's memorable and interesting. I could cite quite a number of examples. One is of the painter Redon, who knew the painter Delacroix. He went to an evening where Delacroix, the painter, was present. He was a great worshipper of Delacroix. Delacroix left the party alone and walked through the Paris streets. Redon and his young friend, who were both quite young, followed him at a distance and watched him as he was walking in a meditative sort of way through the streets. Then he suddenly stopped, turned and went in another direction. They knew what had happened. He'd recently moved to another studio--the one he occupied when he died. But when he left the party, he automatically started walking home alone to his old quarters. Then

he came to, and changed direction. That's a very slight thing, but I notice when I read about interesting people, a little thing like that will stay in my mind. That's one reason why I am encouraged to give things that might by chance be interesting, although they are really very, very slight. I mean, I'll never forget that night when Joyce went leaping into the darkness down this medieval-looking street. It may have nothing to do with history, but, at the same time, it had overtones to me because I knew the man. Like that picture of Delacroix walking home, it increases my feeling of the reality of a very great figure. That's very little to go on, but I'm glad that Redon recorded it. Joyce was always interested in people. Sometimes he'd listen very attentively to some story about something he'd never heard of. You would tell it rather casually, and then, all of a sudden, he'd start asking questions. For example. I mentioned that my first violin teacher wanted me to read Homer. Not only did Joyce sit up and take notes of this little anecdote, but he wanted to know what my teacher's name was and every detail about my first violin lesson and a whole description about the violin teacher. Again, it was this thing of the Greek--Homer--coming into the picture, and for some reason, he snatched onto that little fragment and took it all apart and examined it from all sides.

SCHIPPERS

You've mentioned that you cannot remember the specifics of discussions that you had with Joyce, but in general what were the tenor of the discussions?

NUTTING

Among other things, they always centered around what he was working on, what he was thinking about at the time in his writings, like when he talked about the problem of presenting the significance of Molly Bloom in this last chapter and how he had at one time decided to do it in the form of letters. He would talk about what she meant, and how she was the Penelope, the weaver of the tides, the moon and space, turning the night around the earth in interminable revolutions. He would think out loud and describe the significance of the things. That's why I'm so extremely, extremely regretful that I didn't make notes at the time on what he was actually saying while he was working, because, very often, it would be that sort of a problem. Then there was the wandering rocks episode, but those were the only two incidents that I actually remember. He had an idea of what he wanted the wandering rocks to be, but it finally came to him when he was playing a game with his daughter, some little game that he bought to take home to amuse her. Just what the relation was I never could quite figure out. But, in some way, it clarified things for him, and he found out what to do in the formation of a style for that episode of Ulysses. He was never gossipy and he was never argumentative. He would very quietly express opinions or advance an argument, but he never got warmed up to defend a position. It was always a rather cool dialectic, as I remember. He'd say

something, and then if you would disagree with him he'd say "but that," you know. He was rather unemotional, even under the influence of alcohol. He never got excited about anything--at least when I knew him. He was always very controlled in his thinking and his feelings. Oh, he'd feel very strongly about things, yes. I think that one of the most marked characteristics, so far as his feelings were concerned, was his hatred of violence. I know that he liked Wallace very much. I don't know if he cared very much for Wallace's wife, Lillian, but she appears very decidedly in *Ulysses*, and quite often. The use of the word "yes" in the last episode has to do with her. The episode begins with yes and ends with yes. Joyce said that yes is a feminine word. Joyce was out at the Wallaces' little country place one weekend sitting in the garden and heard Lillian talking, and all through the conversation, Lillian would start with yes, and then she'd end with yes. He was dozing in the garden and heard Lillian's continual use of the word yes. From there it got into *Ulysses*. At the time, I was rather puzzled that he didn't seem to be interested in politics or world events. Of course, he was very much aware of them and very well informed. But, working on a book which was set on a certain day many years before (June 16, 1904, I think, is Bloom's day), it seemed that he was out of the world of present events. But, I feel that he wasn't really at all out of the world of present events. He was keenly aware of them, but he also had a sense of things that were eternal. What at the time seems so tremendously important, when seen later in perspective, perhaps hasn't as much meaning. This is rather a crude way of expressing something that I ought to give more thought to, because I think there's a kernel of truth in it. I know that Joyce several times said that he was very much influenced by the philosopher [Giovanni Battista] Vico. I never read Vico, and so it was never quite clear. There's something about a recurrence of an event that's almost like the Oriental idea of the spiral, a returning of things at a different level. I took it to mean that the Trojan War and the sixteenth of June in Dublin are the same, only in a different place in the spiral. Maybe he was seeing world history truthfully. And though the scene was not laid in the Paris or Trieste or Zurich of those days, years before, the reality was in Zurich and Trieste and Rome and Paris and, above all, curiously enough, in Dublin, from which he was an exile, and also in Gibraltar, a place that he never visited. I think I told you about this man who could not be convinced that Joyce had never seen Gibraltar, had never been there. Joyce sat down and talked to this man about Gibraltar and talked and talked about this characteristic of the town or the life. Finally this man said, "When were you in Gibraltar last?" And Joyce said, "I was never there." And he wouldn't believe him. But the reason that he knew so much about Gibraltar was that was where Molly Bloom came from. He familiarized himself with everything from the apes, to all the streets and shops, and apparently every detail that would make Molly more real. Speaking

of Joyce's hatred of violence, he was quite fond of Wallace and was very much grieved when Wallace died. He died in the mid-twenties. But he was frankly critical of him because Wallace was very fond of prizefights. He followed the French boxers all his life and found a certain drama, a certain poetry and a certain significance in fighting that he thought was very wonderful. And Joyce couldn't see that, for a moment. A lot of Joyce's conversation and some of his witticisms were on violence. His words to "Mr. Dooley, Mr. Dooley-ooley-ooh," is a case in point. War, violence, and cruelty were a special anathema to him.

SCHIPPERS

Did he often give opinions of people?

NUTTING

Not too readily. Not too readily. When he did, though, he was very frank and very exact in what he'd say and what he felt about the person. It was the same way with anything else--books and writers--he always epitomized his feeling very, very well. You knew exactly how he felt about talents. I think what he said about Bob McAlmon was rather good. Bob was writing then and was trying very hard to become a good writer. I asked Joyce what he thought of his work and he said, "Well, I think he has a disorderly sort of talent," Apparently he said that to somebody else, too, because Ellmann quotes somebody else as saying it. But it's what he said to me, when I asked about Bob's ability. At the time, I didn't know whether Bob was just a playboy or really a serious writer. Of course, he married a wealthy women, which was very nice for Joyce because she was very generous in helping out the Joyce family when they had difficulties. One thing was somewhat peculiar to Joyce. I think that most people who have accomplished anything or are trying to, when they're asked to say a few words, will at least get up and attempt to speak a little bit and make themselves agreeable. But Joyce never would. For one thing, he would never explain his work. They'd say, "Why don't you explain what you mean by this? Here you have a book you call Ulysses. You say you get it from Homer, but the only clue is the title of the book. I can't see how you find that all this gloom and all these people in Dublin have anything to do with Homer. Why don't you explain?" No, he wouldn't do it. We had in Paris a little group which was very much like the Severance Club here. We had a name for it, but I haven't been able to remember it and I can't find a record of it. It was formed by Madame Ciolkowska (that's with the Polish ending to her name). Her husband was an artist, somewhat of an Aubrey Beardsley type in his drawing. But not being able to support himself with his art, he was doing journalistic work. He spoke excellent English, and he was writing in French on English subjects. His wife, Muriel Ciolkowska, was also a writer, a correspondent. Among other things, she was correspondent for the American Art News. She was a very interesting

and very energetic woman, and she formed a group, a little dinner club, and was very successful in making the meetings interesting. They had some excellent writers as guests. André Maurois was our guest one evening and talked very well, and J.H. Rosny, a novelist, was also an important and interesting guest and gave a very interesting talk. Then we had a dinner devoted to Joyce and that, of course, was quite well attended in the sense that it was an invitational affair. Each paid--as we do at the Severance Club--for his own dinner, plus his share for the speakers. Joyce was the guest and other people were quite willing to talk, but when they asked Joyce to speak, he wouldn't say a word. I never heard him speak before an audience. I wonder if he ever did; I can't imagine him doing it. He was peculiar that way--at least, to me he was.

1.19. TAPE NUMBER: X, Side One (January 10, 1966)

NUTTING

Apropos of that painting of Nora Joyce that's reproduced in Ellmann's book, Mrs. Nutting asked me if she was a big woman, because the picture gives the idea of a very large person, at least she felt that. And I said, "No, she wasn't especially large." Then I told her about a woman who was sort of a guide in Paris. She made her living by getting together groups of people, usually fairly small groups, not a very large crowd--I think they probably paid her rather well--and she would take them to the Louvre and then to various places of artistic interest. She also had the idea of taking them to artists' studios, so they could see something of the artist's life in Paris, get them right into the atmosphere. She called me up one day and wanted to know if she could bring her group over to my studio. Well, I didn't care much for the idea, [laughter] but I knew her rather well, and I felt I couldn't refuse her. So I straightened up the place, and the next day when she came with ten or twelve people, not a very large group, she commenced her little spiel of what the artist's life in Paris was like, and how Paris was a great center of art. Then she commenced to try to explain my pictures, which was [laughter] rather strange. I don't know if some of the comments she made illuminated my work to me any more than to the group, but among other things, she commented on that picture of Nora Joyce which was there. She looked at that and said, "Look at that picture. I want you to observe that very closely. Do you remember yesterday when we were in the Louvre looking at Andrea del Sarto, I said that one of the most outstanding qualities of his painting was the quality of bigness? Now that picture has it! That picture has that quality of bigness!" [laughter] So it's been quite a joke in our family ever afterwards that that picture of Nora Joyce has a quality of bigness. Sometimes the guides were really very well informed and well worth listening to, but other times they were just simply people who'd take crowds

around to amuse them. One of my most vivid memories of going to the Louvre has to do with crowds. One of my Sunday jaunts was to go down to the river and browse along the cafes and the bookstalls and then cross over and drop in and see one gallery or another in the Louvre, something that I especially enjoyed. Everything would be still, and you'd be enjoying things, and then there'd be a sound in the distance like a storm approaching, a kind of rumble. The sound of the crowd would grow louder and louder, and the first thing you'd know, the galleries would be full of people. The guides would be shouting out explanations right and left, and these people would helplessly gaze at these things and try to understand them to absorb culture. They would stand around and get in your way for a while, and then they'd move off and the noise would die down in the distance and you'd be left alone again. When I had a vacation, except for one or two summer vacations--such as the one spent on Corsica and the one in Brittany--I looked forward to seeing important things in galleries. Last time I think I spoke of seeing Edmund Jaloux at the opera. I stood up and went through the motion of looking around at people, and I hadn't the slightest idea I'd see a soul I knew. So I was surprised to see that Edmund Jaloux was a few rows behind me. I had just met him, and he was a very pleasant person. I went over and talked to him, and I told him I was going to Spain, and he urged me to be sure to see the Pateniers in the gallery at Madrid. That surprised me because writers don't go as far afield, usually, especially American and English writers, in art interest as to know Pateniers from Al Capone. But I think largely that the French, as young people, grow up with more feeling for the arts than they do in some other countries. I've noticed that they seem to absorb it naturally, and they get a familiarity with it--both ancient and a familiarity with modern art, too. We went down to Spain shortly after that, and, of course, seeing the Prado was a great adventure to me and also getting a little bit acquainted with Spain. [tape off] We spent about ten days in Madrid. My real interest in going down there was to see Velázquez and Goya and Greco, especially, and the people you don't see in any great quantity outside of Spain. And it was a tremendous adventure. As I was saying, I also very much enjoyed the spirit of the country, getting acquainted with it. I think the thing that I remember most was the typical thing about the Spanish feeling. I always had a feeling that a Spaniard was a person with great pride and a sense of dignity, as that old joke about the tourist in Spain indicates. He was accosted by a beggar, and he turned to him and said. Aren't you ashamed of yourself, a good strong man like you out begging when you can easily earn your own living?" And the beggar drew himself up and said, "Sir, I asked for alms, not advice." [laughter] I was reminded of that spirit one day while having lunch at a restaurant in Madrid. We had a table next to the window and were looking out, watching the passersby, and an old couple came up the street across on the other side. The

man was blind and was being led by a woman, presumably his wife. They looked like a married couple, and they could very well be. He was very simply, very plainly dressed, but very neatly dressed. The building opposite had buttresses that made kind of a niche in the wall, and she put her hands on his shoulder and backed him into one of these places where he'd be out of the way of the traffic but still close to the passersby. She got him placed there, and then I saw he had on gray gloves. He pulled off one of these gloves and put it in his pocket. Then he took out of his pocket what looked like a little tin plate, or a silver-effect dish, and he stood there holding out his little plate for alms. I was wondering if in any other country in the world you'd see anything of that sort. In southern Italy the beggar, of course, plays the game of being a beggar. He looks like a beggar and he looks helpless. He can pretend illness or anything to excite sympathy, whereas this man didn't do a thing. He maintained his dignity and his pride, but he needed alms, so he asked for alms. That to me was a pathetic and a rather startling thing. We all feel that spirit--whatever it is--to a very large extent in Spanish painting. It's not so much in Goya, but in Greco and in Velazquez there is a certain authority, a certain dignity, a certain pride. And it goes all the way down to the poor and all classes of society. Seeing the Prado is really an adventure, because even though in other places you'd see very good things by the Spanish painters--a good Velásquez here or a fine Goya someplace else--there you had whole rooms full. And it was breathtaking, Goya especially. I never realized the amazing versatility of the man and that so much of the very finest painting of the nineteenth century was anticipated in Goya's work. It might be Manet, for example, which you would see well represented in a Goya, very much Manet's spirit and his sense of painting. I even found Whistler among Goya's things, that same search for subtle tonal relationships which you find in Whistler's work. Ordinarily, the person who is not too familiar with Goya is inclined to think of him as a rather fantastic painter with a certain amount of violence in his work or his etchings, like the *Desastres de la Guerra*. His war pictures and his very grotesque things do have a certain interest from the point of view of iconography and literary interest. But to realize the sheer genius of the man as a painter, you really have to go to Spain to see his work. That was, as I say, an adventure and a great revelation. Along with the paintings, downstairs in a gallery at that time was a large collection of his drawings. He was an inveterate draftsman; he did hundreds of small drawings. And, of course, he did his famous lithographs very late in life. But besides doing those, apparently he must have painted all day and drawn all night, according to the amount of work that he produced. Lots of the discoveries that I made about the painters down there would be interesting to talk about to a person who is interested in that sort of problem. I don't know that it's especially germane to our problem. One thing I've always been

interested in, speaking of Goya's drawings, is the use of drawing by painters. Some painters were very prolific draftsmen and did a great deal, and others did none at all--Velázquez, for example. I only know of three or four authentic drawings of Velázquez, and they are very slight things, just sort of notations, ideas. They're not part of his verve, of his output. But a man like Rubens, for example, you can follow through from the very first sketch to the final work. There are first drawings and sketches, studies from models, from life, studies out-of-doors of a landscape, and then a small oil painting in which the general scheme of his picture is laid out. In the case of a very large thing, it was thrown up on the canvas by assistants, and when they got the basic structure of the picture on the large canvas, then he would come to finish it up. In the case of Velazquez, and to a certain extent in the case of Titian, you don't find very much drawing. In Veronese you find a great deal, and in Tintoretto, a great deal. But there is a very strange thing about Goya--and I think, maybe, the person even with a casual interest in art might find it somewhat interesting, and to me it was quite fascinating--is that although Goya, as you can see in his etchings, had a very fine knowledge of figure, sometimes his figures are rather badly drawn. The Maja Desnuda, for example, certainly wouldn't win a prize in an art school for figure drawing--in an academic art school, at least--because the figure doesn't fit together. The head doesn't really fit on the body and things of that sort. But as a painting, it's quite fine. It's a superb thing. But it shows that the immense amount of drawing does not seem to have been preparatory to these things. Usually, you find quite interesting work where the painters, especially in the case of Rubens, would go to nature. He would draw from a real hand, and you will find a whole sheet of studies of hands to be used in a final painting. The same with a figure or a drapery. He'd do it again and again, experimenting, and finally it would go on the final canvas. But in Goya, I only found one drawing that had the evidence of being done from life, from nature. All the others were just sheer improvisations. How he acquired this ability to draw the figures as well as he very often did, especially in his etchings, in those Disasters of War, for example, or the fantastic series, is hard to explain. But there was no evidence in anything I've ever seen of his, except in a very few cases, of it being done directly from life. The one that I did find in the library in Madrid was a red-chalk drawing for that portrait of the Duke of Wellington that was recently stolen and then returned to the National Gallery in London. Apparently that was not painted directly from life, but he first made this drawing from life in red chalk, and then from that he painted the portrait. This is also somewhat true of Greco. I tried to find some original drawings of Greco. We know from early documents that he modeled a great deal. After his death, there was discovered a large piece of furniture, some sort of a wardrobe with shelves, that was full of plaster studies that he'd done. But in Madrid, I

only found one authentic drawing (that was also at the library in Madrid), and there are very few others. But, it may be that he didn't keep his drawings. Michelangelo, after all, left instructions that all his drawings be burned. For a long time in Spain, I don't think that there was any special attention paid to drawings and studies that weren't made into pictures for exhibition. Collecting that sort of thing began fairly early in Italy and in France, but in Spain, they probably weren't valued and were lost. So, although I think the point is rather interesting from the point of view of a painter, it's not very conclusive as to just how. The mystery of how painters work is sometimes rather insoluble. I found that especially true of Velásquez; I simply couldn't figure out how he could do it. I didn't know what the procedure would be to accomplish that sort of a thing. It just looked as though he all of a sudden had an idea, and then it appeared on the canvas. [laughter] There is no evidence of any process of the struggle that goes into the making of it. [tape off] Of course, one of the first things that I did was to look up Patenier. He was Belgian, from the Low Country, and you'd expect to find any number of his things, but I had only seen one here, one there, and one someplace else. He was one of the first real landscape painters. His paintings have a little biblical incidence going on in them someplace to give them a reason for being, but what he was really interested in was landscape. He was a genius at landscape. He really made a great contribution in the development of landscape as a form of art. I looked up the Pateniers and, sure enough, there were seven magnificent Pateniers all in a row. So I was grateful to Jaloux because I would not have thought of Patenier if he hadn't told me about them, and I might even have missed those. So, I was grateful to him for putting me wise to their presence there. We spent about ten days in Madrid, every morning at the Prado and in the afternoon going about to see what else we could find of interest and to enjoy the city. From there, we went down to Toledo to see the El Grecos. When I was a student in Boston, there was quite a fine Greco portrait in the museum, that I liked very much. The other students couldn't see very much in it. That was before the days when Greco had become as famous a painter to the student and art historian as he has since become. At that time, his paintings were available at prices that were not too great; they weren't very expensive pictures, even in my youth. Zuloaga owned some very fine Grecos and was a tremendous admirer of Greco. Velásquez, incidentally, was an admirer of Greco and appreciated his talents as a painter. But that picture in Boston was the first one to make me quite enthusiastic about him, and he has always been one of my heroes ever since. So going to Toledo to see a great deal of his work was another very enriching experience of that summer's travel. Toledo is, as we all know, an old town. It has a Moorish atmosphere with little tiny streets and it's a place where you can get lost very easily. Usually in traveling I do not depend on guides; they disturb me too much. Even

if they know their subject very well, the talk and conversation distracts me from absorbing and enjoying things. I always try to find out as much as I can before I see the thing and then simply go to complete an experience already begun. In Toledo, though, I found that I could not find the churches and the convents and the places where things were to be seen. Even with a map, it was a perfect maze of little streets and a hopeless proposition. So I had to wind up by employing a guide. But, in one way, I compromised because I was careful to find a guide who did not speak English. [laughter] I could struggle with a little bit of Spanish if I wanted some information, but the rest of the time he could leave me to quietly look and enjoy things. One of the great Grecos in Toledo was the Despojar, Christ Despoiled of His Garments, which is an early thing and has a lot of the spirit of Venetian painting still in it which gradually left his work. There is a certain richness of color and a certain Venetian opulence in feeling. His later work got more and more austere. But in his very fine period there is a huge thing in a chapel called the Burial of the Count Orgaz, and it simply knocked me for a loop. At the times I saw it, a big iron grill closed the chapel, but that was all right because the painting was very large--and you couldn't get very close to it anyway--you could still look through the bars of the grillwork. To me it was one of the tremendous adventures in painting of all my sightseeing over there. The first one, I mentioned it once before, was the Giotto's in Padua and afterwards those in Assisi. They were very much of a revelation and a tremendous thrill. Another one that was a surprise and gave me quite a lot of excitement was the Isenheim altar at Colmar of Grünewald. Another topnotch experience was the great Grecos in Toledo. The Burial of the Count Orgaz, with its very marvelous row of portrait figures in the lower part of it and its wonderful movement of figures up above, has a sense of realism and a sense of mysticism, but above all it has that strange, indefinable thing--a sense of painting. It's interesting that Spain has not produced any schools of painting. You haven't families of painters, like you had in Italy. You haven't any special school in which other painters are confused with the master. You do have these great individuals who stand out, and for quite a long period, they had a very fine sense of painting, partly because of their contact with the Low Countries, Flanders, which in a way is almost the home of this sense of painting that I'm speaking of. Also they could acquire things from Italy at a period when some of the finest things had been done. As a matter of fact, Philip tried to get some of the great French painters and Italian painters to come to Spain, but the only one that did that I can think of offhand was [Giambattista] Tiepolo, and that was in the eighteenth century. He died in Madrid. He did the ceiling of the Royal Palace at Madrid. But Greco being born a Greek, hence his name El Greco, his real name being Domenico Teotocopulo, was educated in painting fairly late in life, considering a painter's training in those days. He studied in

Venice and from there, he went to Spain and spent the rest of his life there and became one of the great Spanish painters. He's somewhat of an anomaly, but he did it very convincingly. There's something about Spain that seemed to have been exactly the country for him to give expression to what he had in his art. So that was our Spanish vacation. Oh, yes, the other important thing that we saw there was the Escorial. I would like to have gone down to southern Spain and the region which is more associated with people like Murillo, but we spent as much as we could afford by that time, so we came back after seeing the Escorial. The Escorial, of course, is extremely impressive. You can see it from the train window. It seems isolated, away off there in the hills; there are no cities or little towns around it--this special building, this great mass of somber structure. But it contains not only things of tremendous historic interest from the point of view of Spanish life and history, but also a number of excellent Spanish works and of other artists. [tape off] In dealing with material of this sort, the great difficulty--at least I find it so--is to decide on what is important to say. If I were trying to write this out, my method would be simply to spill out everything, to make notes knowing that I would want to use very little of it. But I would get a flow of material and not evaluate it until afterwards. Then, out of that, maybe I could make something to write about. I feel the same difficulty here because there are masses of things that I enjoy talking about, but immediately my critical mind comes to the front and I say, "Well, this is not of historical value and this is not interesting to people, unless it happens to be a special occasion or special person. If you can do it, of course, even a very slight anecdote can be extremely interesting if told by a man who has great ability in telling a story. But my mind keeps running across things, as I say, that are to me quite enjoyable memories, and on the chance that maybe they are a facade for something that is more interesting later, I feel tempted to talk about them. In this case, I have in mind the people in Paris, and I find it's amazing how many people I knew. [laughter] I have some quite vivid memories of them, and good many of them are quite important. A couple of our very warmest friends were Jan and Cora Gordon. We found them not only extremely enjoyable friends but also extremely interesting. They were both English. Jan's uncle, I think, was a bishop and Jan had what I suppose you'd call a good upper-middle class upbringing. I don't know whether he went to what the English call public school or not, but he was a very well-read man, very highly cultivated. But as a young man, he had an ambition to become a painter, and he went to Paris to study. He entered a school--I've forgotten what school he said it was--but after a week or so there, he decided that that school was not for him. But he had paid his tuition in advance, and it was against his idea of thrift to spend money entering another school, so he spent that term working by himself out-of-doors. He'd go over to the Luxembourg Gardens and around to other places in Paris

and paint out-of-doors. In his various serious studies, there were certain qualities of painting. I remember he said he was especially under the influence of the Impressionists and of painters like Velázquez, and he wanted to cultivate as fine a sense of tonal values in his painting as he could. He did a great many studies out-of-doors with that very definite objective. Then he met another art student in Paris, a girl, and he painted her portrait. That portrait got into the Salon, very much to his surprise and satisfaction, and it gave him a certain amount of success. He married his model, Cora. Well, they also wrote. They were both musical; I think she had studied the violin quite seriously as a young person, and he understood music quite well. They had an adventurous spirit which seems to me especially frequent with English people. They wanted to go out and see the world and didn't mind roughing it and taking all of the difficulties in stride. They didn't write ahead for reservations and that sort of thing. They couldn't because they didn't have the money. But it wound up that they lived--it seemed to me--a very interesting life. They both did quite a lot of drawing and painting, and he was a good etcher. They both made use of their drawings and paintings as illustrations for their travel books. Also, in their travels, they would collect folksongs and other music. They would hear a tune, he would write it down, and when they got back, they arranged these things for two instruments--a guitar and a Spanish lute. It doesn't sound like too good a combination, because both instruments are lutes, as a matter of fact, but he did a very nice job of it. It made a very fine, colorful background. Though they weren't accomplished singers, they could sing well enough to make it quite an interesting evening. They'd get out their collection of folksongs and folk music from the country that they'd been traveling in, and it was really quite worthwhile. They would pick out a country that they wanted to do; one year it might be Portugal, another year it might be Finland. They'd select very contrasting parts of the world and culture. The wintertime would be spent in getting the rudiments of the language of that country. They'd study quite hard. Also, that was the time when they did their writing and would put their previous summer's notes and material into shape for publication. They painted a sign which they hung on their door: "We Like to Work Till Four O'Clock." [laughter] And so they put in a good day's hard work. After that, they were very sociable people--they liked to have their friends in--so after four, you could drop around and be sure of a welcome. One of the most amusing afternoons that I ever spent--it certainly was unique in the sensations that it evoked--was at the Gordons. I dropped in to see them. My wife wasn't along that time. She'd gone someplace else, so I went around to see the Gordons. It was after four, and in the English custom, they had the tea table set up. A few friends of theirs were there, and Cora introduced me to a writer (I think he was a Bulgarian). She thought he was quite an important talent. Some work of his was going to be

produced in Paris. So I sat down next to him, and he was very talkative, and in his speech, he got along quite well. Apparently, he knew English very well, but his accent was rather difficult. But with close attention, we got along very nicely indeed. He was a very interesting man, and we discussed all sorts of things. Then, all of a sudden, he was saying something about one of his plays, and he reached into his coat pocket and pulled out a manuscript. He said, "I have something here that will illustrate what I mean. I will read to you this scene from this play of mine." So I was pleased to hear a sample of his dramatic writing. He started to read, and--well, it's no exaggeration--if that man had been speaking his native tongue, I wouldn't have understood it any better. [laughter] I tried to find some simple words like "of" or "the" or "and" that sounded English, but none of it sounded a bit English to me. He was declaiming this stuff to me, and he apparently thought he was doing it in beautiful English. I guess the expression on my face must have gotten rather curious, because I looked across the room and Cora was trying to keep a straight face. [laughter] When he got through he wanted my opinion, and I didn't have the slightest idea, of course, of what to say. In this sort of paralyzed condition, the situation was saved for me in another strange way. All of a sudden, there was a crash as though the house had fallen in. The door to the courtyard was open and a cat, who'd been snoozing off to my right, flew through the air and out this door. Then there was more dust and clatter, and I didn't have the slightest idea of what had happened. Everybody, of course, was very much startled. This studio was on the ground floor and opened directly onto the court and next to it in this court was a wall. What had happened was that several square yards of plaster had fallen off the side of this building and had come down through the skylight. You can imagine what a racket that would make and what the disturbance would be. Well, that left the studio in a semihabitable condition because of the glass and plaster and dust. Fortunately, it didn't do any special damage. I guess the glass broke the fall of the stuff to a certain extent and no other damage was done, so we collected our wits. Then Cora went and made some more tea and got out some more cups and things. Jan took the little table and chairs outside into the courtyard to finish our tea. Well, we no more than got settled and collected ourselves, and started a little conversation again, when from behind me came the weirdest sound that I'd ever heard up to that time. I hadn't much idea of what a banshee sounds like, but this was about as close to the wailing of a banshee as I think anybody could invent. Well, that kind of froze my blood again. [laughter] I didn't know whether somebody was being murdered or what terrible distress they were in, but I noticed that nobody else seemed to be the least bit concerned. And there was no reason to be because I heard this strange sound quite frequently afterwards. There was a poor little old woman who they said had been quite a successful

singer in her day, and she was going around and singing for coppers. She was a beggar. But her voice, though it was strong and had a certain resonance, instead of having a modest kind of vibration which would be acceptable, had a strange kind of fluctuation of sound that sometimes I have heard in sirens--a wow-wow-wow sound. It would rise up in this courtyard where the acoustics made it resonant, and this sound going up to the heavens was scary. It was the kind of an afternoon that a writer simply could not invent. [laughter] No amount of fantasy, it seemed to me, could describe the atmosphere and the succession of feelings that took place during that teatime. [tape off] Among other people that we knew in Paris, although in a way he was sort of outside of the general circle of our acquaintances, was Raymond Duncan. My wife and I found him really very interesting. He had a place down near the École des Beaux-Arts on the Rue Jacob, and passersby could look in the window and see them weaving and carrying on their occupations. Raymond had an idea of living a very simple and rather austere sort of life. He and his disciples, as we called them, dressed in this very simple costume modeled after the ancient Greek. They wore sandals and this very simple costume with a cloak for the rainy and foggy weather. Raymond always had a sort of a band around his head with his hair rolled up tightly in back. They got up very early in the morning and worked very hard. They studied, did crafts, wove things, and did woodcuts and paintings. Then part of the day, they spent doing exercises. There was also a man, Gurdjieff, who had somewhat the same idea of living a rather austere life and doing a lot of hard work. He incorporated the idea of a dance with exercising. Raymond Duncan also had dance groups, but they did not gather at his place. They met in a hall once a week, and you could go down there and meet with them. My wife was quite taken with his exercises. They were done without music, and it seemed to me, these things were somewhat inspired by--even maybe copied from--Greek vase drawings, sculpture and things of that sort that showed the dance. I don't know how much authority he had for some of the movements. They were simple and rather archaic, but when you would practice them awhile, you realized they were excellent because they gave you a certain control, a certain precision of gesture. You could do rather interesting things. If you should happen to fall, for example, there was a certain sequence of movements that allowed you to rise up without rolling over and shoving and pushing and that sort of thing. You'd see the ones who were practicing suddenly throw themselves on the floor and then almost float up because of a certain coordination of movement. I found it quite fascinating, and for awhile we used to go down and practice these things. Also he put over in the corner of the hall some easels and charcoal and paper and drawing boards so that any artist coming in could take advantage of this true Greek life that was going on around him and make some studies. So I used to go and make action drawings

from these things. I never met Isadora, but everybody else knew her. I went to see her dance and I have someplace a collection of some twenty-five or thirty pencil studies that I did in the theater from her dancing. But, of course, she was a very different sort of a person. She was much more of a sybarite than her brother; I don't know whether they saw much of each other or not. I used to hear a great deal of her when I first knew Gordon Craig because she and Gordon Craig were amis. But the things that Raymond Duncan did were interesting. They were always extremely active, all day long. They'd have Socratic conversations. We didn't join in very much, but it was rather interesting to listen to them discuss and argue things, sitting around in their Greek costumes. [tape off] There was one year that we saw a great deal of Saxe Cummings and his wife, Dorothy. Saxe at that time was writing. He was working on short stories, and he used to read them out loud to get our opinion of them. His wife was a very accomplished pianist, and she used to pose for me. I did some drawings of her and also started a large canvas of her sitting at her piano. I don't have it now. I've forgotten what became of it, but I suppose I destroyed it because it wasn't too successful. One or two drawings, though, I thought were quite good. I still have those. Saxe's aunt was Emma Goldman. She was in Paris for awhile, and I found her to be quite a grand old lady. There was something very impressive about her. The way she talked, the way she told stories showed a certain strength of character and a quiet sort of dignity that was quite impressive. She was only there for a fairly short visit, but while she was there, we met her quite a number of times. We used to go out evenings with the Cummings and with her other friends and enjoyed them quite a lot. I wish I could remember some of the stories she told. She was a very good storyteller, not in the way of anecdote but she could recount an experience of her childhood or girlhood or some scene. It suggested to me that she could have been a very fine novelist in somewhat a Russian style, with a little touch of Dostoevski in it or something slightly Chekhov. [tape off] Fritz Vanderpyl was a man that Joyce enjoyed very much. He was a very hardy sort, a talkative critic and writer. I didn't know him very well, but I used to see him very often when I was with Joyce. His talk was very good. Once in awhile even I would get into a bit of an argument with him. He had some curious ideas about certain things. He was a very good art critic; I think probably that was what we had most to talk about. I would defend some man's work he was averse to, or vice versa. But he was a good man to talk to because his discussions were not argumentative. They really were profitable kinds of talk, which the French have maybe more talent for than most any other nation.

1.20. TAPE NUMBER: X, Side Two (January 10, 1966)

NUTTING

Among our friends in Paris that we enjoyed most were the Gordons because they were really good fun. They had a sense of fun and also were highly cultivated people with interests in all sorts of things. They were good musicians. He was well educated and could discuss any subject, and he saw the humor of life. They were very interesting because they were very creative people. They were not producing anything of any vast importance but they enjoyed doing their work, which was writing. They made their living with their books, and every year they got out a travel book. Also he wrote on art very well, and only recently, I saw one of his books on art quoted. They may seem somewhat out of date now, because they were written more or less for popular consumption, and there's been so much of that sort of writing done that I imagine he's forgotten. But I suppose that his books are still available in the library, and maybe sometimes they're read because they're quite enjoyable and he was very articulate. As I said, they both loved adventure and they really enjoyed their work. They'd spend their winters writing and working on their drawings and illustrations for their books. She especially did a great deal of sketching and did some rather nice things of their travels. They also were very good etchers, and he was a good painter, not especially a distinguished one, but he had a thorough understanding of his craft. The last time that I saw him was when they were planning their last big adventure, and they were really excited about it. They were going to explore the United States. And it was quite amusing, because they would do a great deal of talking about it in anticipation of the trip. You'd think they were a new Columbus discovering a country that nobody had ever seen before, and they'd tell us things about our own country as though we hadn't been born there. [laughter] Incidentally I think that is something that a real traveler will do. He anticipates certain things; then he is interested in finding out how the real thing doesn't jibe with his anticipations. I remember that Besnard said that one of the first things he always did before he went on a trip--he made some trips to Africa and other countries--was to sit down and make a lot of sketches of what he thought he was going to see and what he was going to experience. Then he would get a revelation when he found that his anticipation didn't jibe with what he anticipated. I have the same sort of feeling. If I'm going to see some new region, I like to find out about it. Well, this is going to be so-and-so, and I expect so-and-so. That's especially true in great works of art. When I make certain pilgrimages--as I have done--to see a Greco or a Rubens or something, I try to learn as much as I can about it from reproductions. When you see the work eventually, it can become a terrific revelation because you've done a lot of preparatory exploration in the subject. That was especially true of Giotto, for example. Well, if I had simply walked in to see Giotto for the first time in the Arena Chapel at Padua--it was the first

things I'd seen of his--I would have been very much interested, but I don't think I would have gotten the enthusiastic reaction that I had when I finally saw them. Because above and beyond what I knew about him, all of a sudden I saw that there was a great deal that I hadn't experienced in his work. So, although it was rather funny when the Gordons were describing my own country to me and what we did and how we ate and all the funny ways we had, I was quite sympathetic because I knew that they would bring a freshness and sensitivity to their experiences and have a willingness to revise their opinions and ideas and impressions which would make it much more meaningful than if they went in perfectly cold. Well, it so happens that that was in 1927--one of the few dates I can remember. I also went to New York, the first time that I had come back to my homeland since going to Europe. My wife didn't want to make the trip; she didn't want to come back until she came back to stay. She hated ocean travel because she was always very ill and, of course, travel in those days was by boat (obviously so, because in 1927 when I was in mid-ocean, Lindbergh landed in Paris). Well, I met the Gordons in New York. We had dinner together one evening and off they went. Apparently, they had quite a wonderful time. They got a little old Ford and went down South, and from there, they went on a regular old-fashioned showboat. That seemed to give them a lot of experiences they enjoyed. They were on the showboat for some time and then took off across country. I don't know whether their writing on that was ever published or not, because when they got out to Los Angeles, Jan had a heart attack. The only way they could get back to Europe was by going through the Canal. They didn't dare cross into higher altitudes; they had to keep more or less at sea level for his safety. They made the trip through the Canal. He died not long after. I never saw the book published or heard about it. I didn't correspond with him after that trip. I know that Cora lived in London and that she was a writer for the Studio magazine. In the old days it used to be the International Studio. It was quite a luxurious magazine and she did art news and writing for the Studio for quite a number of years. I saw her name. She wrote quite well, not in a critical way. It was more of an art news sort of thing. So that was the end of our experiences with the Gordons. There's one thing I was especially impressed with when I was living abroad: it seemed at that time that I knew a greater variety of people than I ever have since coming home. It has been my experience that you get into a certain circle of friends and acquaintances and your contacts aren't as varied. Maybe it's because I grew older and that as a young man, I was out sort of banging around and hunting up experiences more and was more excited by variety. But one thing that I realized--especially after I talked once with Ludwig Lewisohn about the people who were most interesting and meant most to his life--was that they are by no means always the people who are the most well-known talents. [tape off] It seemed to me that people

who had special gifts or talents seemed to give everything they had to their work, and really the art of living suffers to a certain extent from it. I think that you could realize that--or at least it seems to me that you can--in most biographies. The art of living is itself a great art, and if everything of your life is put into your work, your life sometimes can easily go haywire. The life of Edgar Allan Poe is an example, and it may have been to a certain extent true of the poet Rimbaud. They are people who have left very precious work for us in their art, but people whom we wouldn't especially enjoy as companions. Whereas, the all-around people are enjoyable. And I think it's one reason I remember the Gordons so warmly. They weren't great. They weren't geniuses, but they did a good job. They gave it enthusiasm, with joie de vivre and a sense of adventure, that makes the Gordons very happy memories of our life in Paris. And I had quite a number of other friends in the same category. There was a man, Lambert, for example. I think he was a French Swiss, if I'm not mistaken. I don't think he was born in France. And as a young man, he did drawings for Simplicissimus. Simplicissimus has a lot of very remarkable draftsmen and illustrators for what we would call a cartoon sort of drawing, marvelous caricatures, like [Olaf] Gulbransson and some of those men who drew for Simplicissimus. Jules Pascin as a boy was very precocious. Simplicissimus published the first work of Pascin before he went to Paris and became a painter. His early drawings are really quite amusing, not at all like the drawings that we know of him later. Lambert was not a genius, but he was a very interesting man in his enthusiasm on any subject. As an artist he was very accomplished. One has to have some understanding of the difficulties of working on copper to appreciate what really wonderful work he did, how he managed it technically and with what precision. His drawings were of a decorative sort, rather illustrative. When he came to Paris, from the work that I saw, I imagine that he made a pretty good living at it. In those days, there were quite a few artists that worked for publishers. I don't know whether it's done now or not--I don't think it is--but at that time, they would buy a copperplate from an etcher and steel-face it and publish it in quite large editions that they could sell cheaply. Once in awhile in this country, I run across some of those old things in secondhand stores and places. They had the advantage of having a certain quality of richness, a print quality, that especially in those days could not be had in photographic reproduction. They were real etchings, real copperplate prints. And being printed by some means--I don't know how they could do it economically, but apparently they did this from the steel-faced plate--they could publish them and sometimes a print would get popular and have quite a large sale. The publisher would buy the plate outright or else the man would get a royalty. Well, Lambert did very handsome plates of Spanish subjects. He was very much interested in Spain. His other hobby was Latin. He

was a very good Latinist, and there was a concern in Paris that published a book of his of the poems of Ovid. It must have been a very limited edition because it was a very deluxe sort of a work. He made the book in quite an amazing way. Every line in the book was printed from a copperplate. There was no type used at all. Every letter was drawn with the precision of a type-printed letter. It didn't have the carelessness or imperfections of a hand-drawn letter. It must have taken a long time when you think of drawing a beautiful letter precisely on copper. Then it had to be bitten and maybe worked afterwards with an engraver so that the plate was as perfect in design as it could be with type but at the same time still have the richness of a copperplate print. So with the illustrations to Ovid, with all of the verses done in Latin and his translations of the Latin, it must have been a terrific job. But it was quite a marvelous performance. Well, here again was a person who was a very real artist. He wasn't a great artist; he wasn't part of a modern movement; he didn't represent anything but he did a very beautiful job. It was commercial work, yes, but it was tasteful, sensitive sort of stuff. Among other things, he did very nice bookplates. I think he got a great many commissions for bookplates, and naturally his technique was perfect for that sort of thing. He could make a beautiful copperplate of a bookplate for a nice library, and he could probably get well paid for them. One of the amusing things that happened was that an ex libris society from this country wrote to him, and they wanted to get samples of his work for a collection of bookplates. And he got this letter which was written in English. He knew French and German and Spanish, but he didn't know English; so he had the letter translated. Then came the problem of answering this letter. So he had an idea that Latin ought to be the universal language. He thought Esperanto was all nonsense, for if you had a beautiful language like Latin, why do you have to have Esperanto? And so he decided he would answer this letter in Latin, which he did. I imagine it was probably quite elegant and perfect Latin. But that was the last he ever heard from his correspondents about the bookplates. Apparently they couldn't find anybody to translate the Latin for them. He had quaint habits which were rather enjoyable. One peculiarity, among other things, was that he had quite beautiful penmanship. He wrote somewhat in the style of an old Italian hand, something like the chancery script. I think I have notes of his someplace. I haven't been able to find them yet, but I don't think I've lost them. And they're rather worth seeing because when you see this letter, it looks as though it had been in the mail for the last couple of hundred years. When he was out browsing around at the flea market or someplace and there was an old book that was of no value but was old enough to have the handmade paper with the texture of the screen that you get on real handmade paper, he would buy the book and save the flyleaf. He used that paper for his drawings and sketches and very often for correspondence to

people that he cared for. He would never use an envelope; he folded it as they did in the old days and used sealing wax. So when you got this piece of yellow paper with this sealing wax and written in this brown ink, which he made himself, and looking as though it had been done with a quill pen, why, you had a feeling that it was something that had been delayed in the mail from the days of George Washington. It was very noticeable but a lovely thing to have. It was really quite charming, and he always expressed himself in a whimsical, interesting way. I think I still have one or two of his letters, and I hope I haven't lost them. Among my painter friends, a man that I really saw the most of, curiously enough, was the painter Paul Burlin. I've forgotten when I met Paul, sometime in the mid-twenties. I got into a conversation with him someplace and shortly afterward there was a ring at the back door. I went and here was Paul Burlin and his little dog--I've forgotten whether his little dog was named Michelangelo or Vincent Van Gogh. He came in, and from that time on, we saw quite a lot of each other. He was a very interesting man. Paul lived on the third or fourth story of a building with a balcony in the Latin Quarter, and the dog, in tearing around the house, dashed out into the balcony a little too rapidly and tumbled off the balcony and was killed. Paul felt very sad about that. He seemed to be quite fond of his pup. Paul Burlin is one of the most interesting of the painters representing the modern movement, although he never attained the distinction that a lot of his contemporaries did. When I won the Paillard Prize in Paris for a mural, it was sort of a windfall, and whenever I had some unexpected money of one sort or another--which would happen occasionally if I got a portrait commission or, in this case, a prize--I'd spend it in some special way. I wanted very much to visit the galleries of Belgium and Holland. My wife didn't feel like doing it, but Paul Burlin was very much interested. So we went off together on the trip to Belgium and Holland. We went up as far as Amsterdam, and then from Amsterdam to Berlin spent two or three days more. When my money gave out, we came home. It was really a very valuable, a very interesting trip. And he was fun. In a way, the contrast between us--temperamentally and looks and everything else--was very much like the contrast between Ramon Guthrie and Sinclair Lewis. I think that was one reason why I found him very interesting, and maybe that's one reason he liked me because [tape off] I was so different, in life and experiences and in the way I reacted to things. In many ways, of course, we had things in common--our interest in painting. He had a very broad and very excellent feeling for painting. Very often an artist is inclined to see very little outside a certain field. If he's a modern painter, other periods will bore him unless they have something very definite to contribute in terms of what he's thinking at the time. I often wondered how some of these boys--I don't happen to know any of them personally, but I would like to meet them, a pop artist, for example--how he

feels about Titian; or a pop artist, how he feels about Rembrandt. Is there something that is the same, or is it an entirely different world? I mean has he broken completely? But staying in one field was not true at all of Paul Burlin. He was even inclined to defend people that other of our confreres would run down; he would find merit, interest, and talent in their work, and for that reason he was a very interesting man to go around the galleries with. It was my second trip to Brussels and Antwerp, but they are both extremely interesting towns. Brussels has a reputation of being a little Paris, and in a way it is, but it's also very, very different. It has its own character and, of course, some wonderful galleries. We got to Amsterdam. We had stopped off on the way to see the galleries in that town which was destroyed completely during the war, a town in Holland, Rotterdam. It's been rebuilt rather beautifully in the modern way, at least that's how it looks from what few photographs I've seen of it. That destruction was tragic because it was a charming Dutch city. It was more than just a town; it was quite a good-sized place. Amsterdam, of course, is tremendously rich. We saw things like The Nightwatch, and in Haarlem, we saw Frans Hals. The day or so that we spent in Amsterdam was especially interesting because we met a dealer from New York. Weyhe began as a dealer in books and rare editions and from that went to prints and eventually became quite an important dealer. His career in New York was quite a bit like Jake Zeitlin's here in Los Angeles. Jake started with hardly anything, just a few books and a hole in the wall, and now he's an internationally known man in the book world and also to a certain extent in graphic art. And Weyhe was the same way. And his place in New York, as I knew it afterwards, was a fascinating place. But he happened to be in Amsterdam; he was buying some things. I remember he had found quite a collection of old maps, quite a valuable collection, and he was quite excited about that. At the time, he commenced to travel a great deal in Europe while buying things, and he knew the cities very well. He was a very interesting man to be with. He wasn't just a bookdealer. He was a man of quite broad feeling, a very interesting man to talk to and a cultivated traveler with an appreciation of the things to see. So he took us around to show us things in Amsterdam, and he was a marvelous guide. I got more feeling of the city from being with him than I could possibly have gotten alone unless I had spent a good deal of time in the town. And, in spite of the fact that I don't like guides, but he wasn't a real guide. He was just an enthusiast, and he wanted to share his pleasure of the old city and to point out things of historical interest and artistic interest and interests of other sorts. Then we went from Amsterdam to Berlin. Berlin was, of course, still in a depressed condition. We didn't stay there very long, just about a day and a half or so, but that was time enough to see the gallery there and a little bit of the town. I had been there once before, but only for a very short time. Then we went back to

Paris. Another man living in Paris at that time was Adolf Dehn. I don't remember how many years he spent there, but he lived and worked there for quite a long time. Adolf Dehn was doing lithographs. Afterwards, probably his watercolors of the American scene made him as much of a reputation as his lithographs did. But he made a very decided reputation for himself with his lithographic drawing. And it was rather courageous of him, I think, to try to make himself a reputation in lithographic drawing because even etched plates, which up to that time was the quintessence of the printmaker's art, had fallen in market value. Lithography to most people was looked upon as a commercial art, which seems rather strange because Whistler did some quite beautiful drawings on stone and there were quite a few people whose work on stone was well known. But people didn't think that a lithograph was something they could spend very much money for or would have any great value as a collector's item. Most people still use the term lithography in speaking of what is really commercial lithography, which is simply offset on metal plates, and it's not true lithography at all. The actual work on stone hasn't been done commercially for a good many years now. The true lithograph is done on a block of Bavarian limestone, which is smoothed and grained and you can draw on it. It's a very delightful method of drawing, because you can prepare the grain, a coarse grain or a line grain, according to your taste. Also your crayons, which are greasy in the sense that they are rather like a marking crayon instead of a graphite crayon, can be used in a great variety of ways. Also there is what they call tusche, which is the use of lithographic ink and a brush. Well, it's a thoroughly autographic method of making a print because you work on a stone and the proof that is pulled can be modified afterwards. So it's by no means a method of reproducing a drawing. It is autographic as an etching. But in those days, that wasn't realized. So I always felt that Adolf was rather adventurous in spending so much time on them when he had his living to make. But he was justified because he not only developed a beautiful technique in lithographic work and a nice sense of the possibilities of the stone for various qualities in the use of the inks and transparencies and the use of brush and the handling of the crayons so that the thing had a beautiful print quality. But also he was rather lucky because he had quite a sense of humor that showed especially in his lithographs. You don't feel it so much in his watercolors. They always had some little note which was illustrative but didn't destroy the aesthetic value of his print at all, and it helped to make the work more saleable. And Weyhe (I'm not sure that I'm even pronouncing his name rightly--I'll have to look that up) became interested in him and handled his lithographs and kept at him to do watercolors. For a long time, he wouldn't do them, but finally when he did do them, they were very successful. Well, those two fellows were among the people I probably saw as much of as anyone else. One day Dehn decided to go

out into the country, down to the valley of the Chevreuse and spend the day. I had acquired a little Citroen, cinq-chevaux, automobile, and we had a wonderful time with it. (I've forgotten just what year that was.) I bought the car from George Biddle when he left Paris. He had been using it, and I bought it. I learned to drive in that little car. [laughter] Helen and I made quite a number of trips in the summertime with it. On this outing that I had with Adolf Dehn, we went out into the valley of the Chevreuse. He didn't do any very elaborate sketching from nature; the fact is that he couldn't seem to draw very elaborately directly from nature. He would make notes and memoranda, and quietly at home he could build a thing up. He'd get all the data and the material necessary for even his watercolors. Then, in his studio, he would make quite a successful picture. So he made notes and memoranda of life in the little villages that we passed through, of the people and that sort of thing. I always will remember one place that we stopped at for lunch because it was one of those times when you come to a certain conclusion about some problem that you've been working on. In this case it was the problem of taste--what is good taste? We went into a little place by the roadside and the first thing that impressed me was that it was a very charming place. It was so immaculate, and the proprietor and his wife and family were very neat, very cheerful, very friendly. We had a very nice lunch, and as I sat there and looked around this room--which, as I say, was very pleasant, very agreeable--I realized that there wasn't an object in the place that you could consider in good taste. I think everything was what the Germans would call kitsch. There were little porcelain figures on the shelf, the sort of things you get at the dime store. There also were several vases made from shell cases. There were, apparently, quite a number of people in the French Army who were very good metal workers and discovered they could amuse themselves very quickly with the .75mm shell cases by working them into some kind of an ornamental object. They very seldom were very good design, but very often were very well worked. They'd turn this shell case into a certain spiral with fluting around it. Then they'd open up the top of it and bend it back into petals and one thing and another. From the point of view of craftsmanship, they were all right, but as objects of beauty, there was quite a lot to be desired usually. [laughter] Well, there were some of these things around, and the pictures were the same sort of thing. At the same time, I came to the conclusion that there isn't any such thing as simply "in good taste," that's measurable. Those objects in that relationship had a certain beauty, because you felt that the people loved their life; they loved their home; their cooking was good, and it expressed an enthusiasm for what they were doing. But if you would suddenly try to convince them that this was very bad taste, that in turn would be in bad taste. [laughter] And if you put a Picasso or some Matisse in there all of a sudden, it would be a sore thumb. Well, I think that's something that could be

discussed ad infinitum. At the same time, it was one of the little things that did have quite a bit of influence on my thinking about those problems afterwards. Well, after lunch, we pursued our trip through the Valley of the Chevreuse and went through a little village. Then the adventure of the day happened. It wasn't anything of any special importance, but we went up a very narrow little street in this village that had a stone wall on each side. When I came to the top, I very unexpectedly found myself in the middle of a mud puddle. It hadn't been raining, but apparently someone had thrown water out or something and that mud puddle happened to be in the middle of a right-angle turn of the road. So when I hit it I had to also turn, but it was invisible until I was right on it. So here I was in the middle of a mud puddle having to make a sharp turn to the left. Well, you can imagine what happened. I skidded wildly and slid over into a house. I didn't do any damage to the house other than a little scratch. But in getting away from the house, before I could straighten out the car in this little tiny narrow street, I ran into the stone wall on the other side and crushed my fender. Finally, I got straightened out. Everybody had rushed out to see what was going on; we had quite a little crowd around us. I investigated and found that the fender was crushed, but the alignment seemed to be perfectly all right. So both of us got hold of the fender and pulled it away from the tire. We had quite a little struggle, quite a little pulling, but we finally managed to bend it away from the tire so the wheel would turn and so I could steer the car without too much trouble. Dehn seemed to think we ought to go straight back home, but I didn't see any sense in that because the car would run. So why shouldn't we finish out the day, which we did. Well, the fact is, we wound up at the Fontainebleau, and then from Fontainebleau we went back to Paris. Everything went fine. Well, when I left Paris, I found I had a reputation. I've forgotten who was to blame for it. Both Dehn and Paul Burlin were awfully good talkers and awfully good storytellers, and they could make a good story about things. Now, Paul Burlin was a man who simply hated to be bested by anybody; he was a very ambitious guy and very unhappy if anybody could do something he couldn't do. There was one thing Paul couldn't do--he couldn't drink. After one or two drinks, he had to call it off. Well, I didn't even try to drink excessively, but I knew that after a certain time, I could get along quite well if I had another drink. I had got it pretty well figured out how long I'd have to wait if I had two double-martinis, for example, before I would drive. Looking back, I could evaluate my behavior and reactions and could say, "Well, I'll be more careful next time." But due to the storytelling abilities of Adolf Dehn and Paul Burlin, I left Paris with the reputation of being the wildest driver and a drinker who could hold more than anybody else in the crowd. I don't think I had that reputation with many people, but they apparently conveyed the idea to a few people that I was a bottomless pit when it came to alcohol, which wasn't the

least bit true. That trip through Belgium and Holland was my first one with Paul, and then he was coming back to New York and wanted to know if I didn't want to come with him. My wife didn't want to; she didn't want to make the trip until she came home to stay. But all this time, of course, in my life in Paris, I'd been concerned about going home but without much idea of exactly what I would do, because I hadn't equipped myself with some moneymaking means. I hadn't won a reputation as a portrait painter and gotten a clientele, and although I had done a certain amount of commercial work of one sort and another, odds and ends, I did not have contracts to really look forward to so I could settle down to a job or have some means of income. Of course, what happened was that I eventually took a job of teaching and I have done quite a lot of that. But we discussed the matter and decided that it might be a good idea to make a sort of exploratory trip back home and meet people and maybe get some idea of how we could reestablish ourselves in our home country. So I finally decided to make the trip with Paul Burlin. He was doing it because he did have contacts in New York, and he was taking back quite a lot of work. He had a very good reason for doing it, but I had a rather more tenuous plan of what I would do when I got to New York. What I was saying about the contrast in our way of reacting and behaving towards things was brought out quite a lot in that trip. As I say, he was a very ambitious fellow who hated to be bested in anything. He played checkers with me, but I beat him so badly that he swore he'd never play a game of checkers again. [laughter] Well, it just so happened that I had played checkers a little bit and he hadn't. It was quite unreasonable of him. Once we were sitting at the bar on the boat going over and just for fun (I think he started it) we made sort of a little pass at each other. We got to talking about boxing or something. I didn't know anything about boxing, but his passes got a little bit more serious and he really tried to reach me. Well, he was a short man and his arms were short, but my arms are long, so I discovered that all I had to do was to push him away and his passes would be in front of my nose but wouldn't reach me. Well, that drove him quite frantic. Each time I would shove him away, and they would pass in front of my face. None of them touched my body at all. Of course, he could have hit me if it had been really serious, but it was rather funny that just in that little thing he couldn't get anywhere because of the length of my arms. He got so winded that I was disturbed. He kept at it until he was panting frantically. (I think he's still living, and he'd be over eighty now or just about eighty.) I don't think he had any special heart trouble or anything, but he suddenly got winded in that little game. Well, I think it was the day before we got into New York that he said, "Myron, do you know anybody who can get you a room at the Harvard Club?" I said, "At the Harvard Club? What do you mean?" He said, "I think we ought to stay at the Harvard Club." I said, "Well, I'm not a Harvard man and neither are you." "Well, that doesn't make any

difference." "But why in the world should we go to the Harvard Club?" "Got to have a good address, got to have a good address." And I discovered that is one thing that he'd knock himself out to have, even if he had to sleep in the cellar. If it was a good number or a good name of a hotel or something of that sort, that was very important. Well, my only idea was to go around and find a reasonable room and make myself comfortable. I was only going to be there for a short time anyway, so what the heck. But no. "Oh well," I said, "I'll see." So in New York I asked Paul Kieffer who was connected somewhat by marriage and a Harvard man. He said, "Yes, that's all right. I'll get you a room at the Harvard Club." I rather demurred because it seemed rather silly. "Well," he said, "you stay there for a day or so and then find yourself a place." So sure enough we did. The reason Paul could go to the Harvard Club was because his first wife was of the Philadelphia Curtis family, and he too could get an introduction.

1.21. TAPE NUMBER: XI, Side One (January 31, 1966)

NUTTING

The trip over to New York in 1927 with Paul Burlin was rather an adventurous one in a way. In connection with Paul Burlin, I often think of a friend of mine Boris Glagolin, who had been an assistant director, I think, of the Royal Theater, of what was then St. Petersburg. He was an actor and a writer and a very highly cultivated man. Apparently, he had quite a hard time in the Revolution, because he was on the wrong side. He didn't tell me much of his experiences, but a few of them are quite vivid that he just brought in once in a while in the conversation. One was about when he was in prison. It was in the wintertime, and looking out through a little window of his prison, he could see a bit of the courtyard. The prisoners were dying in large numbers, and what they did was to lay them out until they froze solid and then stacked them up like cordwood until they got ready to take loads away for burial. Well, he finally got out of Russia and came to this country. One thing that I always remember quite vividly, because it seemed to be a little point that one does remember in the case of people who feel keenly about belonging to a minority group. Sometimes it's ennobling, very often it is and brings out great spirits, but it also can have a very bad influence on them. On Glagolin's way out from Russia on the train and during this long trip, he got into conversation with a Jew. They enjoyed each other's company very much and became quite good friends in the sense of good traveling companionship. But they got to a border and there was an examination. The police or authorities were checking over these people that were going out and picked up this Jew and said, "You are so-and-so" and accused him of this or that or something. And the Jew got quite excited and denied it emphatically. He said, "No, I was not the one. It was this

man!" And he pointed to my friend who had been his warm traveling companion across the country. It also reminds me of a conversation I had with a Jewish friend of mine that impressed me quite a lot. We were discussing what people would do under certain circumstances, and he gave a very interesting talk that the great characteristic of the Jewish people was the will to survival, that came first, and when a decision had to be made it was in terms of survival. The question that brought it up was that of a woman who had to decide whether to sacrifice one of her children. Should it be the boy or the girl? What would you do in a situation of that sort? And he said that it was not the Jewish idea that they should all go down together, but rather that somebody must survive. They'd pick out which one would be the most important member of the family to survive. That would be the only question. A man who in some ways reminds me very much of Paul Burlin is Lorser Feitelson. He also has that feeling that they're quite wonderful friends up to a point, and then if they get at all suspicious of their status, all of a sudden you find they will turn on you without apparent rhyme or reason. And Paul, I must confess, was a little bit that sort of a guy. He was a man of tremendous energy and ambition. Obviously, he came from the East Side, from a poor family. I met his brother, and he was just a common Jewish boy. He was making a living in a clothing store or something in New York. But Paul had very genuine talent and great ambition. In his boyhood he had lived for a short time in England before he came to this country; he had even gone to school in England. He didn't have very much schooling, but he was a reader. I don't think he read for the love of reading. It was so he could talk about the right things and be a good conversationalist in whatever company he found himself. For the same reason, he cultivated the ability to tell a story, and he worked very hard to become a good raconteur--and he was a good one. He had a rather bitter wit which was very amusing, and it helped to make him good company in a group. It was always enjoyed. And he had a rather sharp mind. I've run across several references to him in things I've read since, by people writing on the art of that period and personalities. One man spoke of him as having a legal mind, which may be true. He had quite a good capacity to reason things. But in his life as a whole, he could be a very warm friend, but you were never quite sure of him. We got along very well together, though I think there was the same sort of a contrast between us, except in degree, that there was between my friends Ramon Guthrie and Sinclair Lewis, in temperament and attitude towards life. I think that's one reason why I found him very interesting, because so much that he thought and did contradicted what I thought and did. It gave me a chance to be conscious of and to defend certain points of view that I wouldn't have otherwise done. And for some reason, he seemed to like to be with me. I don't know why; I don't know what I had to give to him at all, because I had no pretensions of being a

good storyteller, and I wasn't especially ambitious in society. He was. He wanted to know important people; he wanted to go to important places; he wanted to have a good address. He wanted to be somebody--and he wanted it desperately. Well, I think I told you how we got to playing a little bit and pretending to box, but he being a very short man with short arms and I having long arms, all I had to do was to keep pushing him away, which infuriated him so. He wasn't nasty about it, but he got completely winded. I got worried because he was panting so. I thought they'd have to lay him out on the couch or something before he would come to. But he stopped panting after a while and that was the end of that. There was also that little incident in the hotel lobby when there was nothing else to do but to pick up a checkerboard and play. He had never played checkers, and I knew a little bit about it, not very much, so none of the games lasted very long. Finally, he got up and walked off and swore he'd never play checkers again as long as he lived. But the drive and energy of the man was rather impressive. He certainly lived a full day in every way. He worked very hard, and he always had projects and plans on which he was working. He decided to go to New York to contact some dealers and to take over some of his work and wanted me to go too. Well, as I've said before, during all the years I spent in Europe, I constantly had this idea in mind that very soon I was to go home and find myself in my own world. But it was put off and put off, and this seemed to be rather of a good idea, that I should go with him, because he grew up in New York and he knew lots of people there and knew all the galleries. I thought maybe I could see how to find myself and what sort of work to go into, how to look for an occupation, what to do for an exhibition, and find dealers that might be interested in my stuff, although I didn't take over very much. So I decided to go with him. My wife said she would not go; she didn't want to go home until she came to stay. She hated sea travel. She was always very ill and, of course, there was no plane travel in those days. So I came to New York with Paul in 1927--one of the very few dates that I remember of my life over there. The reason that I remember the date was because we were in mid-ocean when Lindbergh landed in Paris. We got the news and, of course, that was quite exciting. Well, Paul and I got aboard the ship. He always dressed very carefully for dinner because he didn't know who he might meet and he would spend any amount of time and adjusting that and brushing his hair until he was quite satisfied with his appearance. Then we went to dinner, and the first thing he did was to look all around the dining room to see who was there. In the meantime, he had read the passenger list. Once he said, "What do you think of that woman over there?" So I looked over at the table that he indicated and said, "She looks very nice. A very attractive woman." He said, "She seems to be alone." Well, he didn't lose any time after dinner in getting acquainted, which he did rather successfully. He was quite

skillful in that sort of thing. She did turn out to be quite a pleasant and quite an intelligent woman. She was on her way home from a rather extended stay in Europe and was going back to New York. She had gone to England alone and then after that to the Continent. Well, the upshot of the conversation was that she should come to our stateroom for a highball before we turned in. And she did. [laughter] The stateroom was very small; it was an ordinary old-fashioned steamer stateroom with two berths and a sort of a couch under the window. There wasn't very much room for us, and so he and she sat down below and I got up on the upper berth and stretched out and carried on the conversation very nicely from there, without crowding the space down below. Well, I never saw anything happen so fast in my life. I didn't pay too much attention to the conversation; there didn't seem to be too much to lead up to it. But the first thing I knew, the light went out. There were windows opening out onto the deck that had wooden shades that pulled up from below and latched. So they were down there speaking in low whispers, but I couldn't hear anything and didn't pay any attention; so I dozed off. All of a sudden, there was a bang, and it seems that one of these shades, or whatever you'd call them, had fallen down. [laughter] The latch hadn't quite latched. So I saw the silhouette of Paul struggling with this thing. He finally got it latched, and it was all pitch darkness again. Then I heard a little rustling and very faint whispers, and I lay there and waited and, guess, to a certain extent dozed off. Well, it wasn't very long until I heard the door open and some whispered good-nights, and it was all over. [laughter] It had been accomplished, and he was very satisfied with himself. Well, I wasn't too much concerned about that except that the next day, although he was quite polite to her, it didn't seem to me that he was as nice to her as he might have been. He seemed to have somewhat lost interest to a certain extent. So I tried a little bit to make up for it, and I sat on the deck and talked to her. As everybody knows, there are lots of people who while traveling will just tell their life stories and all sorts of things that they'd never tell in their home town because they feel that they can talk to people they'll never see again. They just open up, and you get to know all about them. And she told her story, which was rather interesting. She was of a Jewish family, and she was married and had a couple of children. They lived in New York and I don't know what her husband's business was or how he made his living, but whatever it was, he lost his job. It was knocked out by the war or for some other reason, and he was going through a bad period and having a very, very hard time. And she gave quite a vivid description of her life and what it was to be so poor. Her husband would go out every day to try to make some money, try to find a job, try to find some way to get along. She said that one thing that made it especially hard for her was that she knew--although he didn't know she knew--that he had some pills in his briefcase and she knew what they were. The idea was that he was

going to fight it out, but if worst came to worst, why, he'd bring an end to the situation. This situation lasted for some time, until the man got an idea, that now would be nothing at all but which at that time wasn't too common. Some people that he knew were having trouble with a typewriter in their office. Well, he knew typewriters and he said, "I'll take care of it," which he did for a small fee. That gave him an idea, and so when he took the typewriter back he said, "You have got so many typewriters in this office that have to be taken care of. How much does it cost you to take care of your office machinery?" Well, the upshot of it was that he made an agreement to look after all the typewriters--I don't know whether they had any other machinery or not--for a fixed sum. And it worked out very well. He built up a business of that sort. What would you call it?

SCHIPPERS

Service repair.

NUTTING

Service repair for office machinery. Well, he got so he could hire help--I suppose maybe specialists for certain jobs and that sort of thing, I don't know. But, anyway, she said that he really found himself in this work and it wasn't too long before the pressure was eased a great deal. They were living quite comfortably and in quite a civilized way. Well, he went even further than that, for he became rather prosperous in the business and it became something more than just a decent living. Then to her amazement, that although during this period of trial and tribulation and holding up the spirit of the family there'd never been any letdown, but when it came to having the pressure taken off, she found herself in a rather peculiar state of mind. Probably a psychologist could explain it rather clearly, and I think the rest of us could understand to a certain extent. What I felt was that a certain amount of responsibility had been taken away; she wasn't as useful a person in keeping the family going as she had been, and the children were growing up and they didn't need her so much. So she found herself in a curiously nervous state of mind, in somewhat of a depression, aggravated by the fact that although she had been extremely loyal to her husband and had done everything in the world to keep their little family going and had done all that she possibly could, that basically she and her husband didn't have very much in common. What he liked and enjoyed was rather boresome to her, and she commenced to take an interest in things that to him seemed rather nutty. I imagine that he liked just good plain bourgeois living--good food and card playing and that sort of thing. For one thing, I know she was very musical because she talked about music and would also comment on a girl's voice that she happened to hear singing. She said, "There's a voice." And she apparently understood a good voice the moment she heard it, or at least its potentiality. That probably was a field that he wasn't interested in. So it

got to the point where she felt that she had to do something about it. And she got the idea (that was in the day before people went to psychoanalysts to get counsel) of going to Havelock Ellis because she had read some books of Havelock Ellis, and she thought he must be a very grand person and that he would understand what her trouble was and would give her some advice. Her husband was agreeable; so she went alone to England and apparently had some conversations with Havelock Ellis. I don't think she saw very much of him, because as far as I know, Ellis didn't make a profession of counseling neurotics. But she found him extremely helpful, and before she went back to New York, she decided that while she was over there, she would cross the Channel and take a trip. Apparently money was not too much of an object any more, and there was no reason why she couldn't do that and get the full benefit of her trip to Europe. So she went to France and then she went on down to Italy. She said she had a marvelous time and enjoyed everything enormously. In Italy she met a young Italian officer. Well, apparently, that experience with this young officer was just too wonderful and too beautiful for words. She went back with a very, very happy feeling--what with Havelock Ellis and an affair with this gorgeous boy. So she was going home now, and she felt that for the rest of her life she would understand and she would live and everything would be all right. Well, that was all very interesting, but as I say, this thing began practically before we left port. And I think it was about the third day I spoke to Paul Burlin about something and asked him what was on his mind. It turned out that he was fit to be tied. He had to go to the doctor, and the diagnosis was the worst. He was furious--and he was rather brutal about it. Well, I thought it was rather unfortunate for Burlin, but the person I really felt sorry for was this little woman, because here was her wonderful trip marred in this very gruesome way, for she had passed the trouble on to Burlin without the slightest suspicion that she could be guilty of it. But it worked out that way; there was no other explanation. So then I was worried about her because she lapsed into silence and would stand by the rail and look out over the ocean. Once, very soon after that, I was going down into the main saloon from the upper deck (two great big stairways curved down into the main saloon) and she was coming up. She looked at me, then she fainted and tumbled down the stairs. I had to pick her up and lay her on a couch. She came to all right and wasn't hurt. At first, I thought she had injured herself but apparently not. So that was all right. The rest of the trip, with Burlin in his state of mind and his ruthlessness, was rather distressing. My concern for her (I've forgotten her name completely and, of course, that doesn't make any difference) was rather considerable because if she was a neurotic, I was wondering what steps she might take. However, she seemed to think things out and come to. When we got to New York, her family met her and she seemed very cheerful then. I had a letter from her afterwards, a little

letter, and that's the last I heard of her. I can only hope that everything worked out for the best for her. But that impetuosity and that ruthlessness--I don't say especially of this particular man but of a type that I think we all know--was one of the most vivid experiences I have had of that type of a person. Lorser Feitelson was the same sort of man in some ways. He was a very delightful person, very intelligent, a very good talker and good storyteller, but once that he turns, he turns on you with a viciousness that is infuriating. I don't mind a person turning on me if they'll tell me what it's all about; and if I can do something about it, I will or if I can't, I can't, and that's the end of it. But to have someone just turn on you without any discernible rhyme or reason I think is one of the most unpleasant things one can have happen. It's very seldom happened to me, and it never did with Paul Burlin. We always got along very happily. In New York, he was an interesting fellow to be around with, but again you could see how he was making the most of every moment. For one thing, he was rather lucky because he had a man who was a rather renowned GU doctor in New York, a very brilliant fellow. I enjoyed knowing him. He was highly educated, and he had known Paul for quite a long time and took care of him. He knew some interesting people and we went to some interesting evenings. One evening was with Freud's nephew, Bernays (I've talked about him before, but for the moment his name has slipped my mind). He was a very, very successful public relations, advertising man. We both met him in Paris first, then met him again in New York, and he invited us to dinner. He had some very interesting people, and it was quite a delightful evening. And the fact is, every evening Paul seemed to manage something that was quite worthwhile. But in his life and his business and his contacts--everything--that same energy and calculation that characterized him, since I first knew him was there. He had friends down in Charleston, South Carolina, and I didn't want to spend the money to go down there with him, but for some reason I decided to. I've forgotten now what I had in mind. Maybe I had been somewhat influenced by his idea that if you're going to be at all a success in the world, you must know people, which is to a certain degree right. It doesn't mean that you've got to chase after them, but if you know them and make a good impression, from a practical point of view that's worth thinking about. So I went with him. We stayed at a place in Charleston where they took paying guests. It didn't call itself a motel or a hotel or anything of that sort. It was really a family that had rooms. It was very nice and some rather interesting things happened down there. In some ways, I'm rather glad that this was part of my education. One thing was the instinctive feeling that very simple people have. I've often thought of it in other connections since; especially when I did my jury duty here, I was again impressed by that same thing. People who are uneducated very often by sheer human sensibility would sense something that a person who does too much thinking won't be aware of.

Paul Burlin certainly knew how to get around very well with all sorts of people. And the fact is, he was always trying to kid me, you know. When we got down to Charleston, he was always asking me--would I do this with colored people, how would I behave? He knew that my ancestry was part Southern, and he wanted to bring it up continually and razz me about it. He always claimed that he understood people thoroughly and could get along with anybody very well indeed. He wasn't a snob like me. He was a real adult human being. Well, I rather resented the idea of being called a snob. But in this house where we got a room, [something happened that showed another side of him]. We unpacked our suitcases and, naturally, our evening clothes were somewhat wrinkled. In those days, we never went out to dinner except in a tux. Paul called for the darkie who did the chores around the house there. I think his name was Oliver. (It's funny I should remember his name, but I'm pretty sure it's Oliver.) When he found out his name, he said, "Oliver, do you see my evening clothes there? They're badly wrinkled. Will you press these for me? As far as I could see, he asked him very nicely. And after all, that's what the boy was supposed to be doing there, taking care of the guests and the chores of that sort. And Oliver said, "Well, no, sir. I'm awfully sorry. The missus she's given me an awfully lot of work. I won't have one minute. I'd be glad to help you, but I just haven't got the time." Well, that made Paul rather sore, and Oliver went off. I unpacked my clothes and examined them carefully and found out I was in the same fix. Whether I hadn't packed them very well, and in spite of all sorts of care, they didn't look too good. Oliver happened to be coming down the hall and the door was open, and so I said, "I am in the same fix as my friend here. My clothes need pressing pretty badly." And he came over and looked at them and he said, "Yes, they sure do. You give them to me. I'll have them back in no time." [laughter] So he went off with my clothes and pressed them nicely, but he wouldn't press Paul's. And I still never have been able to figure out what turned that colored man against Paul. There always was something that caused him to be willing to do it for me and not for anyone else. There was something he resented about Paul, and something he accepted from me. It's one of those little mysteries. [tape off] Burlin's friends in Charleston proved to be very charming, interesting people. They were old Charlestonians, and one was a well-known writer, whose name I've forgotten at the moment. I think with short stories, especially, he was quite successful. How Paul would know such old-fashioned Charlestonians, I don't quite know, except that his first wife was a Curtis of the Philadelphia Curtises. She was a very accomplished musician. Well, I gathered from remarks that Paul made now and again that the Curtis family didn't think very much of the new addition to their tribe. I don't think they especially disliked him, but they didn't think he was quite up to the family tradition for one of their girls to marry. Natalie Curtis had studied to be a concert pianist but

had injured nerves in her hands or her wrists through overwork, and so devoted the rest of her life to collecting folk music. That was rather a laborious job, because that was before the days of tape recorders and the means that we have now of collecting things of that sort. A tape recorder would have been a godsend to her. She would learn folk airs of the South, and then she went out West and did the same thing with Indian music and wrote them down. Of course, in many cases, when she could, she collected the words. And, apparently, she was on the way to accomplishing quite a lot when she was killed, I believe, in a motor accident in New York. When I first knew Paul Burlin, he wasn't married. He was married, though, at the time he made this trip. He was married in Paris to a girl who was a buyer for a big Chicago department store, and she was a bright, nice woman. The marriage didn't last too long. But the wedding breakfast was rather interesting. He wanted me to be best man. Well, to be best man simply meant to go down to the mairie with him and picking up the legal papers for the marriage. But, of course, at the wedding breakfast, he called upon me for the toast. Well, usually I'm not fussed by that sort of thing; I can get away with something. But for some reason he sprung it on me. I didn't realize that somebody had to propose a toast, and I was completely unprepared. I felt that on an occasion of that sort you had to do something a little more than simply hold up a glass and say "Here's to you." So, finally, I passed the buck. There was a very nice French boy there and he gave a toast in French. It was very short and quite dignified and quite all right. But it was surprising the number of important people that he had at that wedding breakfast. They were people of accomplishment of one sort or another, musicians and writers and so on. And it showed that he had made a certain degree of quite warm friendships with a great variety of people. I remember Leo Stein was there. Leo Stein gave him a beautiful book of very fine reproductions of all the engravings of Albrecht Dürer as a wedding present. Others gave him quite nice things, and the affair was really quite distinguished. I've seen Paul once since. He came out here to give a course at USC, and I went down to see him. I was quite flabbergasted because when I asked where to find Mr. Burlin, Mr. Paul Burlin, I was told, "You mean Dr. Burlin?" And that rather took my breath away, because neither he nor Lorser, I think, had ever got into high school. He was a self-educated man and, in a way, quite successfully so. But "Dr. Burlin" certainly sounded very funny to me. [tape off] Besides meeting these friends of Burlin's in Charleston and attending some rather interesting cocktail parties and dinners and affairs of that sort, we filled in our day by exploring Charleston. We hired a cab, a colored man and a horsecab, and explored the town pretty thoroughly. We also drove out into the countryside and made sketches. If we had had more time, we would have done some painting down there, but we both brought back quite a lot of material in

the way of notes and sketches on the life and landscape about Charleston. [tape off] I, of course, couldn't do very much in New York in a short time. For one thing, I didn't bring over a substantial enough amount of my work to have an exhibition, and I had no idea how to get one. The whole idea of the trip was more for reconnaissance so that when I did go back, I'd have some sort of a plan for starting life over again in my home country. However, I was kept fairly busy in one way. Dr. Collins was then back in New York and practicing as a psychiatrist and neurologist. He was very nice to me, and he had a friend who wanted some kind of portraits of her children. He said, "Why don't you do them?" "Well," I said, "That would be very nice." So I did drawings of these youngsters and that was a terrible job. I'm not especially good working with children. Some people have sort of a knack of getting something of children that people like, but I want an adult sitter who'll sit still. Then I can get along fairly well, but these restless children just about drove me nuts. However, they liked my things very much and then they had some friends and they wanted some things done. So during all of my stay there, I was sort of passed around here and there. I think if I had stayed, I might have built up kind of a little business, a source of income doing portrait drawings. They weren't all children; I did quite a few adults, too. I did them quite reasonably. I think it was seventy-five dollars, something like that, for a drawing. As a matter of fact, I did enough so that it went a long way towards paying my expenses in New York. It didn't pay the expense of the whole trip by any means, but it helped very decidedly. Also it gave me a feeling that if people liked my work or certain aspects of it, I might be able to do something with it.

SCHIPPERS

How long were you in Charleston?

NUTTING

About a week, I think it was.

SCHIPPERS

And then you returned to New York?

NUTTING

And then to New York. Yes.

SCHIPPERS

And how long was your stay in New York?

NUTTING

I was trying to remember. It wasn't very long. A month or six weeks. I would say about a month. [tape off] The return to New York was rather thrilling. I'd been away for a number of years--quite a number of years! I left in the autumn of 1913 and then didn't see it again until 1927. And what impressed me wasn't so much how it had changed, but how I had changed. When I went there first as a boy thirteen years old, things looked so tremendously grand, not only because

it seemed outwardly rather grand but because they represented grandeur--a great art museum or a big library. Per se, it was something awesome to walk up the steps of the Metropolitan Museum. Knowing that these great masterpieces were in there magnified your feelings and impressions. When I was studying in New York, I used to go down to the library, and I always had great respect for the building. I never stopped to criticize it, because it represented a certain amount of dignity and grandeur. And to go in and be able to get the books that I wanted and spend the hours of the evening there was one of the most delightful parts of my life in New York as a student. So when I got to New York, I took a cab to my hotel. I kept looking right and left, and when I saw this dingy, squat building, I thought, "My God! That's the library." When I first knew it, it was fairly new. It wasn't dirty; it was still rather pristine. When I saw it the second time, the smoke and the grime and the way the surrounding skyscrapers sort of crushed its magnificence, was to me unbelievable. That happened several times--things I remembered with a certain magnitude seemed to have shrunk amazingly. That was my first feeling about New York. The second feeling was how amazing it was that in a city as large as that you kept running into people you'd met before. I've never found that true of any other city. I went into a cafeteria in New York for breakfast and looked at the boy next to me, and he was one of my fellow students in Boston, way back in 1912, I suppose it was. I went into a bookstore and the first man who walked up was a man that I had known years before, I've forgotten where. The ease in getting around New York, compared to Los Angeles, and the fact that you were always bumping into your old friends always impressed me and surprised me. Also the ease with which you could get together in New York is much more pronounced than in any other city I've been in, even a smaller place like Milwaukee. It seemed to me that with a few telephone calls, all of a sudden the gang was all there. I mean they jumped into the subway, and they were there in no time. Whereas, elsewhere, you have to make plans if you're going to see your friends, especially out here with the big distances involved and where you depend on your car. [tape off] Well, the time I had budgeted for the stay in New York came to an end, and first I was going to go back ahead of Paul Burlin. I decided that I had done all I possibly could unless I would come much better prepared than I was then. It wound up, though, that Burlin decided to go back first class. I didn't see any sense in it. There was no point in first class that I wanted especially. Second class was excellent, and so I went to get my ticket. And there was a fellow ahead of me who was having some kind of an argument about his stateroom. I got my ticket and looked at it, and I said, "This isn't the stateroom that I thought that I would get." He said, "No, it's much better. I just had a scrap with this guy ahead of you and decided to give you this ticket instead of him" [laughter] I don't know what it was, but for some reason I came

out with a ticket for a stateroom I hadn't paid for. I don't suppose the difference was too much, but it was very nice and was much better than I would have had otherwise. So I went second class and Paul went first class, and I found it really didn't make any difference anyway because if you dressed for dinner and wandered around, you could wander into first class without any trouble. So I did that all the way over and didn't pay any attention to whether I was in first place or second class. Of course, I didn't eat first class. But I had met nobody in the first-class section that I cared to talk to. They seemed to be the dumbest lot, whereas I met quite a number of people in the second class who were much more interesting people. They were teachers or professional people of one sort or another and interesting to meet. One of my artist friends in Paris was Jean de Bouchere. (I'm not quite sure of the spelling of his name; I'll have to look up the spelling.) He was an illustrator, and anybody getting books from the library, especially ones published in the twenties and thirties, will find any number of classics illustrated by him. In a way, his work was very good. It was good book illustration and also very decorative. He was a Belgian by birth and very articulate and a wonderful man to talk to. He was well read, well educated, and an author of a book on drawing, which he called *The Dialectic of Drawing*, which promised to be quite a good book. He complained that the publisher had cut it down, but even as it is, it was a book that I enjoyed reading. I still have it in my library. He lived in the country. There were several things about him that did not at all bear out the popular idea of the artist. One was his amazing ability to organize everything in his life. Apparently, he bought this property in the country which he loved, but he had to spend a certain amount of time in Paris. He had a very small room as a studio in Paris. You'd go into it, and you'd think it wasn't big enough to do anything in at all. But then you would come to find out he did an immense amount of work there. He must have been a mathematical genius, because there wasn't a square inch of that room that wasn't put to use. He could pull out a great number of canvases, rather large canvases, and you couldn't believe there was any place for them there. But there would be a slot which would hold so many canvases, and all of a sudden, this piece of furniture would yield up pictures for a whole exhibition. His worktable was absolutely immaculate and in such amazing order. He used inks, various inks. Even in doing black and white, he'd have inks of various densities, and he had a funny little keg, that I think he must have made himself, that was inset on the desk with a little spigot so that he could get ink from this and this and this spigot. He took things of that sort off the surface of his desk and put them up into little pockets and holes. In sort of a guest book I have, he did this drawing, and he described how he came to do it. He said he was sleeping-out-of-doors in the summertime, and he heard a tree toad. It seemed to be quite near; then all of a sudden he looked up in a tree, and through the

branches of the trees he saw a full moon and the pattern of the tree branches across the moon. And in a crotch of two little branches sat this tree toad. He said the whole thing made a perfect design. This little thing in my book is a sketch of a moon, branches across the moon and a little tree toad silhouetted against the moon. He always had a certain whimsy, a sense of spotting charming things in that way.

1.22. TAPE NUMBER: XI, Side Two (February 6, 1966)

NUTTING

Jean de Bouchere was a prolific illustrator of books, especially of Greek, Latin and Renaissance classics, many of which were enriched with his work in line and color. I found him a most pleasant and interesting friend. In looks, he was rather like a character out of an early nineteenth-century novel, say from Balzac. He had a quaint old-fashioned appearance, and his whimsy and fantasy were always delightful. One picture I have of him was when we were leaving a party one evening and a number of people were standing about at the head of the stairs talking, conversation was being carried on which ought to have been finished before the party broke up. I looked around and Jean de Bouchere was standing with his face to the wall and with his hat upside down in the crook of his arm. I wondered what in the dickens he was doing. I discovered he was spending the time very carefully plucking the rosebuds from the wallpaper and dropping them into his hat one by one. [laughter] Another person that I appreciated very much knowing (I don't know where we should insert these various little reminiscences; we will have to organize them eventually), was Paul Robeson. Very often among other people at Lewisohn's evenings were some of the Negro writers who were either living in Paris or passing through Paris, and they would spend an evening with him. Paul Robeson was in Paris for a while, and he and Lewisohn seemed to be quite warm friends. Paul Robeson, himself, I found delightful. He was quiet, rather slow-spoken, dignified in his manner. With him was his accompanist, Mr. Brown, who was very lively and full of fun and a good musician, of course. In many ways, he was quite a contrast in manner and appearance to Paul Robeson. One thing about Paul Robeson that is not too common, I think, with musicians and people in the performing arts, was that he was happy to make his contribution. One of the delightful things of being in company with him, even though there might be a few people--maybe a half-a-dozen or so of us--Mr. Brown would go to the piano and Robeson would sing magnificently. He was a man of broad interests, and fine education, a good talker on many subjects. His singing was not only that of an accomplished artist but impressive because of his interpretation of such things as Negro spirituals which he sang simply and with deep feeling, not

concertized or made sentimental. I saw him years afterwards in Milwaukee where he gave a concert; after the concert I went back to speak to him, and he remembered me very warmly. He had a quiet, very charming smile, and he seemed to be pleased to see me again. I just noticed in a new encyclopedia that I got recently that Ludwig Lewisohn (my biographical dictionary is rather old, but the Columbia Encyclopedia is up to date) was one of the founding professors of Brandeis University. He was a professor there, I knew, but I didn't know that he was one of the first ones. The last time I saw Ludwig was in Milwaukee. He came there to give a lecture, which I attended, and afterwards we got together. I asked him up to our apartment, and he said he would be delighted to come providing nobody else was there but ourselves. He said "I'd like to spend the evening with you, but I really haven't the energy to see other people." Well, of course, I agreed to that, very much to the disappointment of some friends who unfortunately knew that I was going to ask him up. They didn't know, of course, whether he would accept or not. I just happened to mention that I hoped that after the lecture he would come up to the apartment, but after I promised Lewisohn that I wouldn't have any guests, I had to explain to them. In spite of that, when I looked out the window, I saw they were driving up and down the street, apparently, in hopes that they might get invited in. So we had the evening together. It was very pleasant, and that's the last time that I saw him. [tape off] Of course, one's life is not made up by any means of simply your experiences or observations or of people you've met or anecdotes or that sort of thing. I feel so strongly that the interest of living is also in the life of the mind. I think for most of my life I've had the very definite sensation or feeling that we live between two worlds. We have a Januslike structure. We're looking to two directions--the outer world and the inner world. The meaning is dependent upon a rich experience in both directions. The magnitude of that sort of an approach began to almost appall me when I came to the consciousness that I could put it into that form, that figure, that the two are so absolute in their mystery and profundity. The few times that I have suggested that idea to other people, I seem to get little sympathy or understanding. I think everybody would agree that they have certain experiences, certain revelations, something that all of a sudden becomes real to them and from then on through their life has meaning. I believe that people have that without realizing the importance sometimes. They think it's slight and maybe a passing thing; whereas, if they grasp it, really would discuss it, they might find it to be an opening wedge to some new development or new line of thought or something important. Something happened the other evening which is rather a case in point. It's the sort of a thing which I think may be somewhat analogous to Joyce's idea of an epiphany. We were at a Phi Beta Kappa dinner, and I was talking to Stephanie Holton, Mrs. Cyril Holton, our hostess, and she was speaking of Henry Forman

and regretting his loss because he was a charming and valued friend. Among other things, she said "I think he was a very balanced man, don't you?" And I didn't say anything. For some reason that remark seemed to stir up something I didn't know exactly what it was, so I didn't answer right away. And she said, "Are you there?" [laughter] I said, "Yes, I'm here. I agree. He was a very well-balanced person." But what happened was that, like a projection on a screen, that word "balanced" seemed to stir up something almost like resentment. The first thing I saw in this amorphous sort of vision was the balance in this use of the metaphor and it went back to childhood where the statehouse had a woman with the handkerchief tied over her eyes and holding a pair of scales in one hand and a sword in the other. The scales made me think of other simple mechanisms that have played such a vastly important part in the history of any culture, such as the wheel. But the first things that came to my mind on this movie screen were things like the plumb line, a weight on a cord. It might at first be some natural cord like a horsehair or vine to form a string or a thread, and on that put a weight; so you had the plumb line and the plumb bob. And another thing that came to mind was the spirit level. It occurred to me that the spirit level was a pretty advanced instrument compared to the other two, but then I could see that it wasn't at all difficult from the very beginning--to construct something quickly and fairly easily which would establish the horizontal right angle to the plumb line. So the ideas of the vertical and the horizontal and balance become metaphors that enter into our descriptions and our evaluations of other people. We say that he is an "upright" person, or he's "on the level," [laughter] and, of course, he's "well balanced." But recent events really enter into this. Supposing you were to take a trip to the moon someday or maybe to some greater distance in outer space. What meaning does verticality have out there? What meaning does being on the level then have? And how are your balances going to work out there? The metaphor has disappeared, and we have got to think in different terms. In the first place I feel that imbalance is more interesting than balance. Man gets an "insane desire" to fly. Then when he succeeds nothing will do but he must keep going to "the ends of nowhere." His obsession, imbalance, leads him to harness a terrific amount of energy which in turn enables him to create a fantastic imbalance that thrusts him on his way. Another subject I would like to mention, Stephanie Holton talked about education. She has always been deeply concerned about the education of her two daughters. Conversation turned to philosophy. She said, "Oh, that's a very hard subject." And I said, "No. It's not at all a hard subject." Then it was time for the speaker, and our conversation ended. I don't suppose we would have carried it very far anyway, but I would have maintained that from early childhood the sense of wonder and hunger for understanding causes us all to "philosophize," and is not in essence working for a doctorate. I recall a

quotation that for many years has interested me. It's from Goethe and he says: "He who has not art and has not science, let him religious be. He who has art and has science, religion too has he." That's my memory of the quotation. I don't know if it's always translated that way. I don't know why I suddenly think of it. As a teenager, I was interested in religion. My mother was also, but my father was not so much so until much later. He had become rather agnostic. I had to go through the struggle of thinking my way out of religious problems. I feel I was fortunate in that I never completely threw religion out the door and simply said, "Well, it's all nonsense, don't you know. I'm an atheist and that's the end of it." That seems to me to evade the problem. I think that in this quotation from Goethe is a clue to an approach which I have found meaningful. Of course, the result is that in discussions some people put me down as a rank atheist and others say, "Well, after all, Myron, I think you're rather a religious person, aren't you?" So far as thinking of subjects themselves as being difficult, I think that is a very harmful attitude. Take philosophy, which in the Western world has become to such a large extent in the minds of many people an academic subject, something that you have to take courses in and get a degree in and you have to read things that are abstruse to explain it and expound on it. It seems to me it's ruinous to what ought to be a very valuable feeling towards thought. Take any experience that you have. To go back to my extremely early childhood, one of my earliest memories is that I was rather disconcerted by the apparent automatic movement of my feet when I had learned to walk. I can remember distinctly toddling along with these gigantic figures of my father and my mother behind me. And what was happening then was to be continued and is being continued through my life. In other words, at two and a half or three years old--whatever I was--I was already a young Cartesian. [laughter] In other words, I had begun to wonder at the relation of mind and body, of spirit and matter, though I had no words for it. But I was experiencing something that would eventually lead to verbalizing the problem and sometimes to talk about them. My father was an excellent man to discuss things with. He might not have the slightest idea of what I was talking about, but he was patient in trying to find out what I was driving at, and in that way he contributed more to my education than anybody in my life. He cultivated a feeling for dialogue. But in any other form of thought or experience, the same sort of thing would happen. You'd have mathematics or sciences or mechanics. I can remember when I was a child, I saw in my picture book an illustration of some little Indians out with their bows and arrows and I thought that was fascinating, but I couldn't quite make it out because I'd never seen a bow or an arrow; I didn't know anything about them. The Indians apparently had some strange object which they could shoot with. So somebody explained to me that that was the arrow and that they put it in a bow and the bow being springy, why, it made the arrow fly through

the air. That was a fascinating idea. I wanted to do that myself, but I had no experience in bows and arrows and only had a very slight conception to work with. It had this strange shape. One part was curved, and apparently the string bent it into an arc. And they said the substance of the bow was springy wood. Well, that idea of springiness seemed to convey something, so I hunted around the place and eventually I found a piece of very stiff wire that was springy. I tied a string to the ends of the wire, and sure enough, it bowed out. But the placing of the arrow was a bit of a mystery to me. It's curious what a struggle I had in getting the principle of laying the arrow against the bow and then pulling it out and letting it go. Once it was shown to me, I felt like an idiot, that I hadn't seen it in the first place. But after all, I was working on very little experience and information and nothing but a diagram of shapes to work on. Well, of course, mechanics and mathematics are extremely difficult, but it's far more important that you experience them than to just know about them from a book. I felt that deeply in my teaching. Some years ago, I started a monthly talk on art. Well, if you have slides, it's not too hard to keep people interested in an art talk, with a little good sense and sympathy. But I wanted to go a little bit further, because even people to whom I talked and who had taken courses in art appreciation were in the same boat as people in many other fields. In other words, they are learning about something. They're not learning the experience. The only thing that I can liken it to that seems to convey much of what I have in mind is that there's a great difference between reading a cookbook and eating a good dinner. If you have somebody who can prepare a fine dinner for which you have appreciation, you have something that is important. A cookbook is a fine thing, but you can read a cookbook till the cows come home, and you won't know a good food from inferior food or have a taste for good cuisine; and you're still hungry. You only know about the subject. In literature and in art, many people suffer in this same way. Again I think that is something in which they have not outgrown their school experiences. So they say, "Well, you know Coleridge said this about so-and-so. Or a contemporary critic said so-and-so about this work." "But how did you experience the thing?" Very often, in extremely simple people, you have revelations; if you only could forget what has formed you and simply in all innocence watch what's going on. The fact is, I paraphrase the saying of Jesus, "Unless you become as a little child, you shall in nowise enter the kingdom of art." When it comes to the creation of art, I also claim that it is a kingdom that "cannot be burglarized." As Emerson says, "It's better never to read a book than by so doing be warped from your own orbit." Years ago I served on a jury in Los Angeles. It was composed, excepting myself, of women. It was an experience I'm glad to have had. It gave me an insight into the workings of a court and the law, justice, and so forth in this country, which I hadn't had an opportunity to see firsthand before. The jury was

composed of intelligent women, most of whom were well-to-do and well educated. In every way you could feel that they belonged to a class well above the average. But there was one who was a very simple woman. She was middle-aged, and she apparently was not a native because she still had some accent. It may have been a German accent. She was quiet-mannered but in the jury room, as the discussion and the argument went on I realized little by little that several times the person who really understood this case was this woman. She didn't belong to any privileged class whatsoever, either in education or from the point of view of money. But she had understanding. She had feeling. She had humanity. She had a sense of what is right and just. She stood out little by little in this sophisticated group. There were several cases in which Negro lawyers represented litigants, and I was impressed by their self-control, their dignity. They were articulate and good thinkers. You're inclined to think of their talents running to theater and entertainment or to fields that are not characterized by qualities you think of as necessary to being really a fine lawyer. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

Many times you've mentioned off tape--why you saw so many writers in Paris instead of artists.

NUTTING

Yes. Of course, it's not quite as true as the talk so far would suggest, because after all I was working, and naturally I went to exhibitions, to schools, to gatherings. I was one of the founders of the Paris-American Society of Painters and Sculptors, but I didn't belong to any other art society. I think I told you about that and about getting our American ambassador to open a show for us. But I think I had less of that sort of thing than my artist friends. I don't know exactly how to explain it except that I liked the contact with another world. I liked my thought to impinge on fields of thought that weren't in common with the one in which I was working. I found it very enriching. But also there was another reason, and [that has to do with] what I said about attitudes towards school and the effect of school and how I think that we ought to really outgrow our school. It shouldn't dominate us as much as it seems to with a great many people. They stop [growing] after they've graduated, and their thought seems to go around too much in circles. There should be more courage in exploring your ideas, even if they don't seem very sound. At least it's more wholesome, I think, to live a creative life. One of the experiences that I had as a boy was getting used to an idea that I found rather difficult. I always had great respect for people who knew things, maybe sometimes a little bit too much. A few times I suffered by trying to be a follower and not trusting my own intuitions enough. If I had brought up my own feeling and intuition and given it expression, I'd have gotten more out of my teacher than by simply saying, "Oh, well, I don't

know anything yet. I must follow him. I must understand what he does, what he says. That must be right, and he knows more than I do." But along with this respect came another development, along with my religious struggles, as a teenager and also with my ambition to have as well developed a mind as I could attain within my limitations. Up to that time, I had gotten the idea as a youngster that in some mysterious way, education was something in itself. To this extent--that a person who was learned or experienced in one field would have some sort of a natural overlapping into other fields of thought. A little bit of that, of course, is in the old-fashioned idea that you should study things just to train your mind, just for sheer discipline, that's that, and you became educated. Of course, that is obviously not true. I even thought at one time that religion must be something more than theology and ethics, that it must be a development of the spirit in some way that would lead to deeper understanding and make you a greater soul in every way, which meant that your sense of values in other fields would be much more worthwhile--more correct, if you like--more accurate. When I discovered that that was not at all true, I was very much disappointed. Well, another thing rather impressed me early in the game. It was that in the field of literature you apparently have the expression by the great writers of all facets of life, all forms of life, which to a large extent is true. But when I discovered that because you could appreciate Homer and Shakespeare, it did not mean that the work of Rembrandt and Michelangelo automatically also became open books, I was really quite amazed and felt that there was something wrong about it. I think to a certain extent there is, but not too much. I did begin to feel that a writer had a wonderful medium as an artist, that you get a vision of life, insights, which are impossible to get in any other way. But they're not the only ones. One mustn't be at all disturbed because they may be extremely common and ordinary in their reactions to things that you think important and that to you have meant very much. Some of the writing, even of the criticism of their own work, will say things which as an artist, to me, don't hold water at all even as writes. When Chekhov says that the way to describe moonlight--I've forgotten just how it goes--has something to do with the reflection of light off a bottle lying in the water, it's suggestive, but it's only a technique and out of some context easily becomes absurd. It has little to do with moonlight. If I see the glint of a beer can in a creek, I don't think it necessarily means moonlight. If I'm walking out at night, it may be moonlight, but it might be something else quite different. It's symbolism that is really not of any great value. But I think it is quite suggestive to the young writers, that you don't go on trying to exhaust your vocabulary on the qualities of moonlight. It is a very definite experience. A book I haven't read for a great many years--and I think I'll have to reread it because, I think, to a certain extent it has value, maybe more than I think--is Tolstoy's book on art, *What Is Art*. I

think it illuminates Tolstoy probably a lot more than it does any question of art, especially when he talks about the visual arts. Russia, with very few exceptions, has had little influence in painting and sculpture comparable to her contributions in literature and music. Her Kandinskis, Chagalls and Soutines found themselves in foreign climes. Of course, the book was written after he'd gotten a certain bias. So here was a man with a tremendous insight and a great artist, but not a man who could contribute very much to the thought of a person who was practicing an art which was not his own. So I learned to accept my limitations and be resigned to a place at best on the periphery of things. For instance I have to sadly admit myself an outsider in much of modern music. I said that I entered the field of drawing and painting, not altogether willingly, because I was questioning and somewhat skeptical, largely because I did not know people who valued it very greatly and who, at most, thought that it was something that was all very nice and a good thing to know about and that it represented some refinement of culture which is important to people with education; but it wasn't of vital importance in real life. And I think that has really been the American tradition up to fairly recently. Now, it's much less so. So my interests as a youth were, and to a large extent still are, diverse. I still think that it's a very wholesome idea to consider the artist fundamentally as a maker. Unless you feel that his primary function in life is as one who makes things, you can't get very far in understanding what he does beyond that. It is the central objective--the experience of making something, of making something grow, of putting materials together, or of constructing something. Any activity begins that way. Joyce, in spite of being helpless with his hands, called himself Dedalus and likened himself to a watchmaker, and I feel he was quite right to do so. But it began not because he was fond of watches but because as a child there was a [sense of the] magic of words and a love of fitting them together with infinite patience and great finesse. Most children have it, as a matter of fact, and there's something that I really can get quite warm about. That is the atrophy in the growing child of his sense of metaphor and his sense of graphic symbolism. The youngster has them, but little by little, his language flattens out into stereotype expressions and his drawing, which might be full of vitality and excitement becomes blighted. As a child he happily "makes" things in line and color. This happens along about the age of nine, ten or at most eleven, then you'll find that all of a sudden he becomes timid. And when they become adults and you try to teach them something about drawing, they say, "Oh, I have no talent." It simply means that they have buried their talent and forgotten where they left it, but it's there all the time. But so far as any use of it is concerned, it's more a question of atrophy than anything else. Extended, it becomes simply a commentary on civilization and education, which gets you into some very fascinating but awfully deep water. Well, there

are, of course, exceptions. There have been many writers who have lived a very rich sort of life and who have even had ambitions in the other arts. Thackeray's ambition to be a painter is evident in his writing. And although he didn't draw so awfully well, he drew very interestingly, and I think it's too bad they didn't allow him to illustrate his own books as he wanted to. But the most they would let him do was for him to make his sketches. Then they'd get somebody else to do the drawing from his sketches, but his own sketches were often delightful. I think nowadays he would illustrate his own books just as Thurber did. Other painters have had ambitions in graphic art and in music and in the sciences. To me, it's rather impressive the extraordinary number of writers and even musicians who began in fields like medicine. Fritz Kreisler, if I'm not mistaken, was a graduate in medicine, and he maintained an interest all his life in it. All artists--although it may be simply the art of using and putting together of words and the fascination they have with that--are makers and very often are very fine makers in other fields. They can use their hands; they love to build, to make, to construct--a certain contact with the outer world. But by and large I think that American and British writers have not had too much feeling or at times even respect for the painter. They don't feel that his medium is one which means too much. As in the case of Tolstoy, they looked upon the painting as an image, as an illustration in which you took actual things from nature and in some way made them a symbol of something else. But that strange ambiguity which the painter has always been conscious of--the difference between the appeal of the image and the appeal of the thing itself--is something they very seldom understand, and yet it's vastly important. It's quite obvious in some forms, like music, for example. It's not at all difficult even for people who are not too musical to realize that music is something which is of intrinsic appeal and that program music is not of the highest order. They may not feel that way, but they can see the argument and admit it. But it cannot be so easily understood in the field of painting. When you look at the image, you're not looking at the painting, and when you're looking at the painting, you're not looking at the image. That is pure nonsense to most really very highly cultivated people who have not been too much influenced by a field such as that of painting. They may feel it to a certain extent in more abstract forms and in qualities of architecture, of good taste in furnishings and other things. But the relationship between what the picture is about and what the picture is, is something that, once it is recognized, one feels has been the struggle of the artists through the ages. It derives from the fact that like all the activities, it must have some sort of social value, and people want pictures; and they want pictures of things. So on that basis, the artist will go ahead and find a field. Some of the Renaissance painters, for example, were not even religious, but there was a demand for the religious painting; and they expressed religious ideas very well. But the

fundamental drive or stimulus to become a painter, was not the fact that it was religion that they were interested in, but it was simply because they loved painting. That was all. I think that somewhat the same is true of a surgeon. Although he does wonderful work for us in the field of surgery and his contributions have been invaluable. The doctor is often one of the highest types of mind in the devotion, sacrifice and dedication to their work. It began not with the idea that they wanted to help somebody, but with the thing itself, which is so amazing. As a boy, when his pet cat or dog or little animal broke a leg, maybe he found that he could put a splint on it. "Isn't that wonderful? If I'd do that, the bone will grow together. It's fascinating. I must know more about that." And maybe for the time being, he forgets all about his little animal in the miracle of this thing happening. Or if he cuts into the form and finds a tendon and how it pulls here and there, he thinks, "My this is an amazing mechanism. How astonishing." Then when it gets in disorder, like a kid who wants to fix his car or something, he wants to put this together again so it will work. And from that will grow some activity on his part of tremendous social value, but basically it's an extremely simple wonder at something that is happening in one world around us. A person who is musical will find a very deep experience. Santayana said something about the composer and the musician. How did he put that? It's something about the composer being one who philosophizes in music, and the musician being a philosopher in sound. That wasn't the way he put it, but that roughly was the idea. If I remember rightly, Robert Burns, who had a fine sense of word rhythms and combinations in his verse, was a person who couldn't tell one tune from another. I remember reading once that he was very unmusical, which seems very strange because poetry seems so closely allied to music--it's the music of words as well as its appeal through imagery. Well, I think the interest that I've always had in writers and people who were interested in literature was, to a large extent, because I envy them. Although I scribble memoranda and notes on all sorts of things, I promptly lose them. As we have observed, I really ought to have a vast amount of material from the period I have been talking about, but I don't seem to be able to find it. I find all sorts of worthless stuff that I can't make any use of; a little bit of organization would have meant quite a lot. It does lead one to understand that sometimes an activity which may seem very shallow to a person in one field is really a very, very deep experience to another. The field of painting is especially that way. For the vast majority of people, it's a picture; it's a piece of wallpaper. I don't object to that because it's something that pleases them; it symbolizes something. But there is no realization that as the musician philosophizes, the painter does too. If one could respond, if your receptivity to art and to thinking were sufficiently delicate, I think you'd very likely find that Spinoza and Rembrandt, who were somewhat contemporary, were also somewhat alike in

stature and significance. It's one of the ways, one of the paths, the tao of experience. That is the reason why I always argue that it's not some sense of values you can set up for the thing itself which are independent of the man who made it, because it's an activity or a product which is really a by-product of what is really important--that he has traveled through a country and, as it were, has left a record of it which makes us realize that he sometimes traveled in a marvelous country. It's a country that we don't see--he did! But when we read what he wrote, when we hear what he plays, or when we see what he makes a symbol of, in some strange way we get reverberations from this far-off world that's very exciting, very thrilling. And it may be something that to one person seems very unimportant. When a man like [Jean Henri] Fabre, a country school teacher, went out to watch the ants, many may have thought him crazy, but maybe he was having a tremendous revelation through that. To a small-town mind, he must have seemed an unmitigated nut.

1.23. TAPE NUMBER: XII, Side One (February 14, 1966)

NUTTING

Besides the introductions that we had to people in Paris through the publication of *Atys*, I found that there was a club in Paris called the American Art Association in the Rue Joseph-Bara and I met an American painter who was a member. He took me around one evening and proposed me as a member. So I took down a canvas to show, as they asked me to do, with some others who wanted to be members of the club. And I was voted in. While in Paris I was a member. It was a very nice place. Frederick Frieseke, the painter, did the most in keeping it going nicely because he was a friend of Benjamin Altman who owned the B. Altman Department Store. Altman was very generous in supporting the association. It was a very nice apartment with a billiard room and comfortable furnishings. It had a place not only large enough for meetings but also large enough for small exhibitions. Most of the members were older painters, somewhat to the distress of Frieseke. He wanted to get in more of the younger artists, but the older ones were interesting to me because some names I had known since my early boyhood. One was Alexander Harrison. I used to get from the library in St. Paul the volumes of Richard Muther's *History of Modern Art*. I would read one volume, take it back, and get the next volume. And I think I must have gone through that history two or three times, and among the American painters that he mentioned was Alexander Harrison. At one time the painting of his in the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, called *The Wave*, had made him famous. Also he had won quite a lot of acclaim at one time in Paris where he spent most of his life. His brother, Birge Harrison, came back to America. In his day, he was a well-known landscape painter, though pretty well

forgotten now. As a matter of fact so is Alexander Harrison. However, to be sitting next to Harrison at dinner, I found rather exciting. Here was a man I had read about and I had seen his pictures in books and in art magazines. To know him personally I found quite thrilling. I asked him what he thought of modern art. Well, of course, what we speak of now as modern art--the influence of the Fauves and the rise of such men as Picasso and Derain, Matisse and others--was very far along its way. So it was interesting that the old gentleman would say, "Oh, yes. Yes. I think there's some very remarkable work being done in modern art." I commenced to wonder what in the world he would find interesting in it, because his success went way back to about 1890, maybe the eighties. He said, "I myself don't use broken color, but I've seen things in broken color I've thought were very interesting." So the Impressionists were the last word in modern art! From then on, apparently he wasn't aware of anything happening. I'd ask him if he was painting anything. "Oh, yes, just touching up some old canvases." Everyday he would walk past our place to the Lion de Belfort which is quite a long walk. Another man who was at that time--or had been previously--a very successful painter and was looked upon as one of the most important of our painters was Frederick Frieseke. Again I doubt if his name is known to many people now. He received, I think, a gold medal or something in San Francisco and he had gotten other big prizes. At one time, he was looked upon as one of our most important American painters. But his reputation was also commencing to dim as he was replaced by other rising generations of Americans. He lived in Paris and had a very nice apartment there. He also had a country place in Brittany. The Negro painter, H. O. Tanner, was another who in those days was very well known. And before World War I, I suppose he was by far the best known American Negro painter in this country. He was a pupil of Benjamin Constant and had an austere academic training, but it developed some quite nice qualities in him as a painter. He got away from the old salon kind of painting into something that was really painterly, fine in color. He was fond of doing biblical subjects. He did other things besides. One of his canvases is owned by the museum here in Los Angeles, Daniel in the Lions' Den. I haven't seen it for a good many years. Apparently, they keep it in the cellar, which I don't think is altogether right because for that sort of thing, it is very good. And I think if you're going to have pictures on show, you should have [those with] intrinsic interest and value, but also [those that] will give a person an idea of the development and history of American art. And the paintings of men like Tanner should be represented by at least one work. A good many other painters, of course, are in the same category, and the museum may own many that from my point of view ought to be accessible to the public interested in American art. The Irish painter, Roger O'Connor, was also a member. He was a friend of many writers--Irish writers, English writers--as

well as painters. He lived in Paris. When I told Roger Fry, sometime later, in St. Tropez where we stayed in the same hotel. (I used to have conversations with him and I mentioned O'Connor), Roger Fry seemed to have quite an admiration for his painting, though he didn't represent anything especially modern. It's just very genuine, very good work. And I told Roger Fry that O'Connor had decided that Derain was a very talented painter. Roger Fry said, "Oh, I'm so pleased." [laughter] That was a funny way of saying that O'Connor had come around to recognizing the talent of someone so modern as André Derain. Another extremely able painter, and a very interesting man, was Eugene Paul Ullman who had had quite a lot of success in the days before World War I. He was living in Paris and painting. He interested me for more reasons than one. Most painters can talk about painting and its theory, but Ullman happened also to be a man who loved the craft, the technique of painting, more than most anyone that I knew at that time. He understood all the processes that had been used, for example, the various ways in which egg tempera could be combined with oil painting as a preparatory process in the making of a picture. It is an ancient idea, revived later, and now it's quite common. But, then, painters apparently didn't think very much of doing it. So I painted a couple of large canvases more or less using techniques suggested by Ullman. Ullman also loved the idea of the club. He enjoyed the club and was a regular attendant and a great talker, but he thought that we weren't doing enough in the way of exhibitions. He said we had enough talent in Paris among the American painters to have much more important representation than we were having especially in group shows. The result was that we formed a small association; the Association of Paris-American Painters and Sculptors, I think was the name we gave it (it was rather a long one). That was towards the end of my stay in Paris. It was about three years that we kept it up; I came back to this country and others went elsewhere, and I don't know that it was kept up as a club. It may have been reformed, reorganized. I know they have an American artists' club there, and it may be very much the same thing, in idea at least. I already told of the opening of our first show of the society when I got our ambassador to come down and open the show. Well, that was my principal chance of associating with mature painters, and in many ways it meant quite a lot. Among other painters was Harold English. He was also a member of this group that we formed, a Los Angeles painter who died here some years ago. But he was quite prolific and in many ways an able painter. I did not become a member of any French society that I can think of or, at least, nothing of any importance. Small groups, temporary sort of affairs would be formed. There was one that had, I thought, a rather silly name--the Arc-en-ciel, which means the rainbow. Why a group of painters should be called the "Rainbow" I couldn't quite see. But somebody had some idea that the promise of better things, a

rainbow in the sky after the war, and that sort of thing would be symbolic and that we should sort of herald the dawn of better times. The group that formed the Rainbow was not especially important, but I enjoyed showing with them at a nice gallery. Most of my contacts were with what might be called sort of constellations of people, most of whom were literary people. Probably Lewisohn represented more of that sort of thing to us than anybody else, because he seemed to have many more people at his evenings, not only the ones who were living in Paris but those who happened to be passing through would be invited up to his apartment. The first apartment that he had was exactly like ours, which gave a very large room. It was through him that I met a great many people that I wouldn't have otherwise gotten acquainted with, at least not so quickly. I met people like Sinclair Lewis and Theodore Dreiser and some Europeans--[Josef] Hoffmann, the Austrian architect, and Joseph Wood Krutch. I didn't know Joseph Wood Krutch's writing at the time; afterwards I did, and I admired it very much. But he was a stimulating man to meet. I had a really very delightful conversation with him. I've forgotten the subject, but the flavor of that talk I have never forgotten. Hoffmann, the architect, was very interesting and his ideas of painting seemed to me so very good. He tried to present the idea that a good painting had a certain consistency of make or of texture that will go through the whole thing, and the lack of that was one of the first things that one felt, even without knowing what might be the fault of a bad painting. It has since been expressed, and I think quite well, as "equalized tension." Well, I've met people who quarrel with that because it's borrowed from physics. But I think it suggests very much what Hoffmann had in mind, and what I find to be a very sound idea in the consideration of painting per se and of a man who has a sense of painting and who says something directly through the medium of painting and not simply through the representation of a symbol, a landscape painting, a still life, a group, a scene, or historical picture in which you have a substitute for seeing the thing in nature. Those things can be very marvelously rendered and have been done by people who make very fine illustrations. But then you come to the thing which is the real painting and this quality, which I speak of just now as equalized tension because I can't find any better expression for it than that, was one of the things that I got from Hoffmann. Another of the marvelous things about those gatherings in Paris at places like Lewisohns and Victor Llonas and Galantière and others was that people seemed to get together to exchange ideas more than I've ever experienced since. Now we have some quite interesting discussions at gatherings here, but we haven't that sense of everybody trying to throw some ideas into the ring and let them impinge one against the other as one would have at those gatherings in Paris. And we got into that quite quickly, curiously enough. There is one man whose name I've been trying to find, but I can't find

it. It'll come to me because I remembered it a while ago, but I forgot to jot it down. Oh yes, it was Mercereau. He was in the literary world as a critic; I don't know if he made any fame for himself as a creative writer, but in publishing and in book reviewing, criticizing, he was well known in Paris. His apartment was small, and I think that's the most vivid thing I remember about it. The people who used to come to his weekly afternoons were extremely interesting people and just listening to the talk going on around you was well worthwhile. But the apartment was so small and the gatherings sometimes were so big that you never had a chance to sit down. They weren't cocktail parties. At the home of one of our friends, it was always simply tea, and hers was a successful salon. At others, Italian vermouth and seltzer water and a cracker might be all you would have in the way of refreshment. People didn't go to them to drink. They didn't expect cocktails; they went because they wanted to see people, and they wanted to exchange ideas and get together. I didn't experience that so much in Italy, and in Germany I was too much of a stranger to know. By the time I got to Paris, though, I got some understanding of European life, and probably in some ways entered into it much more easily. But I did notice that the great difference, for example, between England and France is that in England you haven't the same chance to know interesting people. The Englishman is more dependent upon his club, and he's also somewhat more aloof in his social relationships. But in Paris, you did meet people, partly due to habit of having afternoons in which you received people without any obligation to extend any expensive hospitality. If you wanted to drop in, it was fine, once you had the entree to somebody's salon. The other habit we had there, after a day's work, especially around the Quarter, was wandering down the street to get an aperitif at the Dôme or Rotonde or the Closerie des Lilas or wherever you liked. You wouldn't be sitting there very long before you'd see a friend pass by and he would sit down and have a chat. You might wind up with a group and would have a wonderful time before dinner, talking things over. So that and these gatherings in people's homes contributed a great deal [to knowing people]. There was more of that sort of thing, as I say, than I have experienced before or since. The principal homes to visit that I can think of offhand would be those of people like the Victor Llonas, the Joyces, the Lewisohns and the Galantières. They had larger gatherings than most people, except the Joyces, who never had many. Joyce did not seem happy with many people around. If he had an evening in their apartment with a half-a-dozen people, he was content. He enjoyed himself and he made everybody else enjoy themselves, because in his quiet way, he was full of fun. He liked to dance a jig, and he loved to sing funny songs, and he loved to listen and make funny comments. Speaking of the American Art Association, our art club in Paris, the fact is that many of the members were or had been very well-known painters. One member, though he

didn't attend gatherings too often, was Waldo Pierce. Waldo Pierce seems to have made himself quite a fixture as a really significant painter in American art. I notice whenever he has any exhibition or mention in the art magazines, there's considerable respect. Although he's not representative of any of the modern movements, he's felt to be a very genuine and certainly a very amusing man. He was very witty. He was, if I'm not mistaken a classmate of George Biddle's at Harvard. And he wrote ballads that were very colorful and quite a lot of fun. For some time probably the most interesting gatherings--at least they were most varied--were the ones at Ford Madox Ford's studio. He also took a studio apartment which gave him a very large room and a nice place to have gatherings. I never was there when there seemed to be any complications, but after coming back to Paris, I found that he wasn't having his parties in his studio anymore. He had made arrangements with a bistro. I've forgotten the address of it; Sylvia Beach may have possibly mentioned it in her book. I forgot to look that up, but it seems to me she did. Maybe Hemingway also mentions it in his book. Well, some of the boys sometimes would drink a little too much and then get a little out of hand and it was annoying to the Fords, I suppose, and I don't suppose the neighbors liked it too much if they got noisy. So having this place on the off-night that they were closed made it quite nice. It had a little balcony upstairs where they had French accordion music, and they could dance or simply talk or do as they pleased. I have described one of his parties when he had the Grand Duchess Marie present, one of Ford Madox Ford's parties that I especially remember because of meeting a very interesting person. We got to the party and Ford came up and said, "Look here, Nutting, you've got to dance like hell. There are hardly any men here and so many women." (It was early in the evening and the guests hadn't all arrived.) "Come over here. I want to introduce you to a genuine grand duchess." So he introduced me to this slight, dark little person, and we danced and talked for a while. She said that she, too, was trying to write, and I said I thought that was a very interesting thing to do indeed, and, was she writing in English? I believe she said yes. Her English seemed to be very good, and I gathered that she was being helped by Ford to put her ideas into words. That wasn't a new thing, of course, for Ford Madox Ford, because he and Conrad collaborated, and I have an idea he must have been a great help to Joseph Conrad in the beginning of his career as a novelist. Well, I supposed that her writing was a novel or something of that sort, but I discovered afterwards she was the Grand Duchess Marie and that her book had quite a lot of success, although maybe not because of literary merit but because it was a very valid and interesting document. It gave her quite a lot of fame, and from the way she spoke, she needed the money. Whether she really did or not I don't know. Ford Madox Ford's wife, Stella Bowen, was an accomplished painter. I don't know whether she was a student

at the Slade School, but her drawing was good and was somewhat reminiscent of Slade School draftsmanship. Stella used to come around and we used to share the expense of a model and practice drawing in the evenings at my studio. Then after she and Ford Madox Ford parted, she kept the apartment, which was also a studio apartment. But she did not have as large gatherings. If I remember rightly, it was Wednesday afternoon when she was at home and she had very few [people in]. Ramon Guthrie and his wife and ourselves were usually there, and there'd usually be two or three other people. The Russian painter, Pavel Chelishev, was nearly always there. Pavel Chelishev was one of a group that called themselves the Neo-Romantics, the chief members of it being Eugene Berman and Christian Berard and Pavel Chelishev. Whether there were any others that exhibited with them, I don't remember, but they were the ones who were by far the best known. Chelishev was quite an interesting man. He used to bring Stella a drawing once in a while, and I used to talk to him about the problems and the sort of thing he was doing. Well, once, one of the guests was Edith Sitwell, who had come over to Paris to give a lecture, and she could talk of nothing else but this lecture and the reception of it. I got the idea what disturbed her most was that her readings and her talk hadn't stirred up any conflicts or noise. I think she rather enjoyed having some kind of a succès de scandale from the way she talked, which seemed rather strange because she didn't look like that sort of person. And, in the way she discussed things, it wouldn't suggest she was out to scandalize people. Well, she wanted to leave early, so I went out with her to help find a cab. I walked with her over to the Boulevard Montparnasse. As we were walking to the boulevard, we passed an art gallery and a beautiful Renoir was in the window. I made some remark about it--"What a beautiful canvas that is of Renoir that's in the window there." To my disappointment, she didn't even turn her eyes to look at it. I have often wondered since whether [it was because] she didn't have any special feeling for painting or whether she wasn't going to have her attention directed by this uncouth American to what he thought was art. I don't know if she thought me uncouth, but sometimes you have a feeling English people think all Americans have something strange about them. Hemingway makes quite a lot of Ford Madox Ford's idea that an American cannot be a gentleman. I think Robert Graves also has some such idea in some of his writing, which isn't so offensive as it sounds--at least I didn't find it so. Our own place was quite a favorite; we used to have a great many visitors on our days at home. Paul Burlin also used to have interesting people. He was a witty talker. People enjoyed him, I think, not so much for the benefit of the conversation as it being so amusing. He had a good critical sense in many ways, though, and his discussions could be quite interesting. One of the most amusing things I remember at his place was a gathering of people (I think we were all going to a costume ball someplace,

which were then so popular), and Paul had a meeting at his studio before we went on to the ball. I think the most striking figure in the party was Sholem Asch, the writer and dramatist. He was a tall, Oriental-looking person, and he had on an Oriental costume of some sort, which was very becoming. He looked as near like King Solomon, I think, as you can make up a man to be for that sort of character. Sholem Asch's son became a successful writer, but I don't remember meeting him, although I met Sholem Asch several times. He was articulate, pleasant, and loved to talk on all sorts of subjects, which, incidentally, I think is sometimes not true of talented people. Some don't always talk easily. Joyce, for example, was often rather difficult to talk to, just to sit down with and have a conversation. If he felt in the mood and it was the right time of night, his conversation might be wonderful, but then again, he could sit with company by the hour and hardly say a word. Joyce was once at Mercereau's apartment, where we used to have to stand up because there were not enough chairs, and if there were enough chairs, you wouldn't have room enough to bend your knees because [laughter] we were so close to each other. I don't think Joyce did any talking at all, but he did have a chair in the little room in the apartment. And this man's apartment was full of books on bookshelves and there were stacks of books on the floor and stacks of books on the chairs. He also had a large collection (apparently it was something that interested him very much) of all sorts of little objects that are used in the church services, which included bits of embroidered vestment and utensils of one sort and another. Joyce sat and gazed at all these things, apparently in considerable puzzlement. I couldn't make out exactly what he was turning over in his mind, but apparently the fact that this stuff which had been used in churches and in sacred ceremonies of all sorts and of a very serious nature should simply become objects to decorate the walls of a critic's [apartment] for some reason seemed to make quite a deep impression on him. "Do you realize," and then he went on in words to the effect that these had been associated for years with the holy offices, and how here they are just objects of curiosity for people to use as conversation pieces, or so they seemed to him. [tape off] Another writer I knew was a Rumanian. His name was [Konrad] Bercovici, a Rumanian by birth but an American writer. He lived in Paris for about a year, if I remember rightly. They were neighbors of Jan and Isabel Hambourg, so we got to know them through the Hambourgs, because we were quite warm friends of Jan and Isabel. We met the Bercovicis at one of their evenings. Afterwards, we went to the Bercovicis for an evening, and my wife left her umbrella. The next day I went to get the umbrella, and I found Mrs. Bercovici out in the kitchen having coffee. She invited me to have coffee, and we sat down there in her kitchen, which was a very disorderly kitchen. The remains of breakfast were all over the table. She poured out some coffee, and we sat there and had a long chat. The

Hambourgs really had a small group of friends. Like some others, their home was rather restricted, but they gave delightful dinners. Isabel Hambourg was, I think, a schoolmate--at least she was an old and very warm friend--of Willa Gather. I always regretted that I never had a chance to meet Willa Gather, but so often people would come to Paris when we were out of town. We always went away in the summertime, and very often interesting people would visit Paris in the tourist season or too late in the spring for us to meet them. Also, I never met John Quinn, and I would have liked to very much. I had heard a lot about John Quinn before I knew Joyce, because my first wife's sister had married John Kieffer, whose brother was Quinn's law partner. So she used to hear quite a lot about Quinn in the early days when buying modern art was a much more remarkable thing than it became afterwards. But it made Quinn famous. He had all these strange pictures he bought in Paris. Afterwards Quinn became sort of a patron of James Joyce, I would liked to have known him, but I never had the chance. And that's true of quite a number of people. Genevieve Taggard I met in New York and got to know her quite well. I did a portrait drawing of her. She and her little girl were living in a very simple, very cheap little apartment at the time. Her husband, Bob Wolf, whom I afterwards knew in Paris, apparently was a man of unusual gifts. He graduated, I think, summa cum laude at Harvard but he lost his mind, and the last I heard I was told he was in an asylum, leaving Genevieve Taggard and her little girl, Marcia, to take care of themselves. Well, of course, she did very well. She taught in women's colleges, and her writing brought her distinction. She came to Paris and was there for a short time. I think what impressed me most about her was her lack of being especially thrilled by or impressed by what she saw, on what, I think, was her first visit to Europe. To me everything was very exciting, but she took everything so very calmly. She wasn't going to stay in Paris; she was going to be there a short time and then she was going to go down to the south of France to live with somebody for a period to do some writing, do some work. Except for letting herself get outrageously cheated by a taxi driver, you'd thought she was an old-timer in Europe. She was rather blasé about what I thought were really thrilling things to see and do. Richard and Lillian Wallace, of course, were our oldest friends in Paris. We had become good friends during our Roman days, and then during our stay in Paris, we probably saw more of them than anyone else. I never knew anybody who was more liked by as great a variety of people as Richard Wallace was. People of all temperaments and social grades took to him. He had something about him that was extremely attractive, and he was also a very helpful man and was very kind. But that wasn't especially the reason. He had something about him; there was a sort of magnetism that seemed to influence people right away in his favor. He was quite helpful to the Joyces in many ways, and they thought a great deal of him.

Gordon Craig too profited by his good sense and business experience. It seemed to me Craig had a genius for snarling up his affairs. I don't remember that our circle of acquaintances was especially enlarged through him...oh, yes, I can now think of several instances. When I first went to Paris and didn't know exactly what I wanted to do, whether to enter Julian's or to go to some other academy, or what steps to take to become a bona fide art student in Paris, he said, "Why don't you go around to see Besnard's son-in-law, Avy? I know him very well." So he gave me an introduction to Avy, who was really an ex-son-in-law because he and Besnard's daughter were divorced. But Avy, apparently, had considerable success. He was a graduate of the École des Beaux-Arts and a well-known painter. So I went, and he was quite gracious. He told me about student life in Paris and what he thought one ought to do. He wanted me to bring some of my work around and let him see it. Well, I'd just gotten to Paris, and all I had was a portfolio of drawings and figure studies, and odds and ends--small ones. But I took that around to show him, and he looked at them. He said, "Yes, they're good but too clever, far too clever!" [laughter] That rather surprised me, because I didn't know they could even be called clever. He said they were not only clever, but were far too clever. Well, afterwards I knew what he meant. He got out a big portfolio of reproductions of the drawings of Ingres and showed them to me and said that was what I should strive for as a model of draftsmanship. If I could understand what Ingres was doing in those drawings, I would then understand what I had to do to become a real artist. That was not bad advice, as a matter of fact. I accepted it and still would. The Wallaces had a little place with a garden out in the country for their weekends. We used to visit them there quite often on weekends, and sometimes he would have other guests. But as I say, I don't feel that many of our friends really enlarged our circle of acquaintances especially, but once in a while you'd meet somebody who really would. There was one little Englishwoman who would have her afternoons and teas and was very fond of having us come. She lived on the Ile de la Cité and just down the hall in the same building was a man who in his way was important in the modern art movement, Emile Bernard. He was one of the first to put in practice theories developed by Gauguin of linear pattern and his flat color to build on that. He was always there and was very pleasant, and I saw some of his drawings, which were very good but not especially contemporary in style. They were rather old-fashioned views of Paris and so forth. I never knew that he had been a friend of Gauguin's and of Van Gogh's and had corresponded with them. His letters have been published, and now we see an increasing interest in him. There was an exhibition, not long ago, of his earlier work, and a critic pointed out that this young fellow in his early twenties was in some ways way ahead of the other members of the Pont-Aven group. [tape off] The sculptor Émile Antoine Bourdelle I got to know

because I had occasion to call on him when a salon of painters was founded, and he was vice president of the group that started it. It was called the Salon des Tuileries. I didn't know whether to submit anything or not; from what I heard and read about it, it seemed they were going to have a somewhat exclusive salon. They seemed to have an idea that so many of the exhibitions in Paris were so enormous that people got lost in them. So I had an idea at first that this salon was going to be so restricted that one would have little chance of acceptance. However I called on Bourdelle and took some of my things and asked him his honest opinion--was I in the category of somebody for whom it would be worthwhile to submit to the Salon des Tuileries? And he was very nice about it and said he thought they would be interested and would like to see my work. He suggested that I submit anyway, which I did, and I got accepted. The first exhibitions of the Tuileries were really very fine ones. They showed many excellent painters. It wasn't especially advanced. It was just modern painting which was good without being what people usually speak of as experimental. Another sculptor who lived near us was Jo Davidson. Jo Davidson was a very vital sort of a man. He was not very tall and he had very bushy black whiskers which looked fierce. But looking out of these bushy black whiskers, his eyes had a gentle, almost sad sort of an expression, and yet he was full of fun. He was a tremendously energetic man, determined to be successful, and he was successful. My mental picture of Jo Davidson is of a man with one hand working vigorously modeling clay and with the other hand holding a telephone receiver to his ear [laughter], because he not only worked, but he was in contact with every source that might be of any benefit to him. He had a dealer in Paris, but the dealer wasn't finding commissions fast enough for him; so he fired the dealer, jumped on the boat and went to New York and came back with a whole raft of commissions. He did the whole thing himself. "Stick to me, kid, and you'll wear diamonds," I remember him saying, when he took a girl out on the floor to dance.

1.24. TAPE NUMBER: XII, Side Two (February 21, 1966)

NUTTING

One of the things that occurs to me more and more as we go on with our work on this project is the fact that there's a great deal of material which, if it were put in the right place and the right context, would be interesting. The problem seems to me to put it in such a relationship so it forms part of the atmosphere and the picture we're trying to present of Paris in the twenties, and of our life there. If it were a book like Stuart Gilbert's *The Last Time I Saw Paris*, you would have an artistic problem, not this rambling "stream of consciousness" sort of thing. But, of course, we're not doing a work of art exactly; so it's bound

to have, it seems to me, more or less, the monotony of such things as diaries and journals. I noticed a long time ago that when you start to read a diary or a volume of someone's letters for a time, they're rather boresome, but little by little there emerges an atmosphere of a period or a personality comes to life such as with the letters of Van Gogh, or Pepys' diary, or Delacroix's journal. All of them are fascinating if you have the patience to really get into them, and then they become really interesting. Well, that's, of course, a digression. Before we went to Paris, we had a letter of introduction to an English painter, Lowes Luard. I suppose it was a French name originally--it doesn't sound English. But he was very much an English gentleman in every way, in education and manners. There was a rather amusing thing, which I suppose is something that is dying out in England, at least I gather it is. The person who gave us the letter of introduction to him spoke of both him and his wife as being warm friends. But what impressed me--although I was more or less used to it--was that she was somewhat apologetic about Mrs. Luard because her family was not as good a family as her husband's because they had been "in trade." [laughter] And that use of the expression "in trade" I never quite got over, the feeling that that should put you in a certain class. You might be a very superior person and very nice, but you weren't quite up to a person in another class. Well, anyway, the Luards did turn out to be delightful people. They had a grown daughter who was studying art in one of the government schools of design. The things that I saw that she did at that time were mostly textile designs. The schools apparently gave very broad training in art history and theory as well as in techniques. Our own art schools, of course, have departments of that sort, such as the excellent one of industrial design at the Art Center here in Los Angeles. Well, Mr. Luard was an excellently trained painter and draftsman, and his especial fondness was for horses, not in the sense of the hunting scenes and the sort of things of the Royal Academy, but he did excellent drawings, paintings and etchings of the draft horses that they used to have in the old days in Paris. He was also a very articulate man. He was a delight to talk to and to discuss things with. And he published quite a few articles of one sort and another. One contribution that is interesting to anyone who is interested in art education, especially the history of art education, was a book that he published which was a translation of some pamphlets by [Horace] Lecoq de Boisboudran, who was a teacher, not at the École des Beaux-Arts, but at another of the government schools of art. He was a remarkable teacher, as is evidenced by the fact that he had some remarkable pupils. Rodin was one of his pupils and also Lhermitte, a man who is somewhat forgotten now but who was a man of great ability. Another man who was a pupil of his and who apparently profited very much by his teaching was Alphonse Legros. Legros is an interesting man, not only because he produced some interesting things as a painter, but because he was a

superb draftsman and his etchings very definitely have a place in the history of printmaking. It would be very hard to ignore him in writing a history of the graphic arts of the nineteenth century. I think it was due to Whistler's influence that Legros got the position of instructor of drawing at the Slade School of Art in London. There he had a definite influence on the succeeding generation in art education. Education of the painter especially, in England up to that time, was under the influence of such schools as the South Kensington School and also of the Royal Academy. It was as I see it, and I don't think I'm wrong, really a German influence. It was the influence of "dear" Albert (Victoria's consort), who was interested in cultural matters, and I think he had quite a lot to do with the South Kensington's curriculum of art. The Germans of that period had their national and government schools and academies which were very well-advanced and were very influential, but the idea of drawing was one of extremely laborious copying skill and minute representation. Of course, a most interesting aspect of German art is its graphic art, ever since the days of Holbein and Dürer. They have made great contributions in engraving and printmaking. Unfortunately South Kensington imported some nineteenth century German ideas of art education. It wasn't helped too much by the teaching of Ruskin, though Ruskin himself did some rather beautiful drawing. In art school in those days kids had to sit before a plaster cast, with crayon sauce and a well-stretched sheet of paper, and they worked ad infinitum. Crayon sauce is a soft crayon rubbed onto a pallet or piece of paper. Then with the use of the stump, tones are layed on. They didn't have rubber in those days, the sort of putty-like rubber that we use now, but fresh bread is a very good substitute for it. So by squeezing a bit of fresh bread into a fine point and stippling this by the hour you get quite a close reproduction of a plaster cast. You read of students who were very proud, after having worked some weeks or maybe even months on a study from the antique, that they could still find some way to spend an extra few hours refining it. I've seen some of the work in Germany (I never saw any of the student work in England of that sort). Sometimes they'd do them quite large. We could forgive this if, in so doing, a student learned how to draw. But he did not really. In the nineteenth century, England produced many very wonderful draftsmen, but they were the people who had ideas and visions and convictions of their own and usually went ahead in their own way, more or less unsuccessfully so far as any recognition was concerned. Sometimes men who were not looked upon at that time as being especially important we now think of as really being quite important, like the draftsman Charles Keene, all of whose work was done for Punch. His drawings are beautiful and very fine in every sense of the world. Well, Lecoq de Boisboudran managed to instill into his pupils a sense of real drawing and an understanding of the tradition of true draftsmanship. One thing he stressed to

the nth degree. I say the nth degree because the results seemed so remarkable in some of the student work of a man like Legros, but which one can also recognize in the work of men like Lhermitte and to a certain extent in the work of Rodin. But what he stressed was that the tradition of drawing in the Western world, and still less in the East, is not a matter of making meticulous copies of nature. That means more than I think most art students realize, that the cultivation of knowledge and memory was vastly more important to the artist of the Renaissance than we realize. They had to understand the form that they were using. I remember once when I was a boy reading somebody's article or book on Michelangelo in which he spoke of the tremendous knowledge that the man had of the human body, but he seemed to think that that wasn't altogether necessary because all he had to do was to have a model up there on the scaffolding posing in a position. Here's Adam holding out his arm. He'd look at it and draw Adam on the ceiling. [laughter] Well, even then that struck me as absolutely ridiculous for two reasons: you cannot have a model posing up on the scaffolding when the figure is being drawn up on the wall. You'd have to look over your shoulder to where this fellow would be perched on another scaffolding, which would be absurd. In the second place, Michelangelo's figures, as any draftsman who has worked from life knows, are not copies of a figure. The knowledge that he used is very much the same sort that Delacroix used when he said that nature is a dictionary. He went to nature for his pictorial vocabulary. It wasn't to make a color photograph of nature, but to see, to understand, to feel and to translate into graphic or plastic terms. That's not so obvious in the case of the realistic painters such as Vermeer and Rembrandt, especially the earlier seventeenth century Dutch painters. Sir Charles Holmes, who was director of the National Gallery and also a good painter and an excellent writer, wrote a very interesting book on Rembrandt in which he analyzes his work from the very beginning, and one can see, as he points out, by a study of his drawings and his etchings the progress he made in his work from his boyhood on to the end, that so far as his means of expression was concerned, it was a continual alternation between the close examination of the world around him and its phenomena and a storing it away in his mind for rumination and understanding and then to be given out into his work. Although in the beginning one can see very easily the studies that he made directly from nature and from the model, and one can contrast them with those done from imagination or memory, fairly early in his life you come to a time when you cannot tell: Is this done from a model or done from memory? Is this done from imagination or was this some analysis of something he happened to see before him? It merges that completely. The subjective and objective experience of the man becomes integrated and becomes one of the secrets of his great power. This is in contrast to the faith of simply having a completely "innocent eye" and

copying nature faithfully and making it look as much like nature as possible, that it's going to be a beautiful picture because it's a beautiful thing in nature. So Alphonse Legros went to London and for many years was head of the drawing at the Slade School and made the Slade School about the finest school of drawing in Europe. The people who came from the Slade, without exception--those who made any name for themselves--draw beautifully. Augustus John was a renowned product of the Slade School. And Augustus John was, I feel, one of the last of the old masters and one of the first of the new ones so far as England was concerned. His draftsmanship is the nearest thing to the drawings of the old masters as anything that England had produced. France had gone further--usually, though, in the somewhat self-taught people like Daumier. Someone in seeing the Michelangelo frescoes in Rome for the first time said, "Tiens, Daumier!" [laughter] And he wasn't too far wrong because Daumier had done these cartoons for the Paris papers with a draftsmanship that I'm sure Michelangelo would have admired. That reminds me of one of Degas' witticisms. Somebody said something rather disparaging about Daumier's drawing and Degas said, "Well, if Raphael looked at Daumier's drawing, he would say, 'That's good, that's all right.' But if he looked at the drawing of Adolphe Bouguereau, he would say, 'That's my fault.'" Well, to go back to my friend Luard, we had talks very much along the lines that I have just outlined in my conversation. He had done some research and unearthed some pamphlets that had been written by Lecoq on this problem of drawing and the function of memory in art and its relationship to the study of nature. Luard translated these pamphlets and also found some drawings by Legros and by Lhermitte and other students. They look like good, old-fashioned art school drawings, but they are drawings that only an advanced student in the old antique class could do, directly from the object. But they had been made to do those drawings by studying the object first, then going away and drawing, then going back and learning some more, and then going back and drawing. That's how they had done those drawings. They'd done them from the antique and also from some paintings of the old masters. It was amazing how they could memorize a very complicated thing. Well, one can see right away how much that meant to a man like Rodin, for example. It gave him a marvelous language, idiom, a trained memory and profound knowledge that enabled him to do such an enormous amount of work, which is the same thing which impresses us about a great Renaissance man. Along with this translation of these pamphlets and the illustrations, Luard wrote a very interesting essay on the subject. Of course, the book *Memory in Art* is out of print, but I have seen it in the libraries very often, and I think if any art student would like to run it down, he'd find it quite a valuable little thing to study. I found Luard to be not only a valuable man to talk to and discuss things with, but also to be a very charming friend. The

Luard's were full of fun, and we used to have delightful times. One thing that we enjoyed was the charade. He made fine art of that old game. He very quickly could construct a scene to illustrate, instead of simply acting an idea out. His wife was a quiet little person and she enjoyed the performances, but she didn't take part in them. Another of our English friends was a young poet by the name of Barnaby. He was quite talented and once wrote a good sonnet in a taxi on his way to our house. At that time I was very much interested in the Russian ballet and some extraordinary decors were being done for Diaghilev by Picasso, Derain and important modern artists. The presentation of feeling and mood through stage setting was an art that I would have liked very much to practice. Afterwards I did a little of it and found it fascinating. But one of the strongest stimuli, curiously enough, was Luard's doing charades. I remember he and his daughter chose a word and it called for a pastoral scene with moonlight. Well now, just off the bat, to put on a pastoral scene with moonlight sounds a little bit difficult, doesn't it? But doggonit, he could do it! He got two of the people who were playing the game to lean over like you do to give the idea of a horse, you know, but I think the person in front held his fingers up to suggest horns and then they had a sheet over them which gave the semblance of a cow. The cow walked slowly in followed by the milkmaid. Luard had taken one of the lights in the room and tipped it over and hung a thin piece of stuff over it so it subdued the light. It made a soft sort of a glow which was very much like moonlight. [laughter] It really was quite a dramatic little scene. The milkmaid milked the cow in the moonlight and somebody did little croaks for frogs. Anyway, when they did a charade it wasn't just to make you guess something. They put on a scene, and they could do it so quickly that you didn't get bored waiting for it. They'd have battle scenes and assassinations and pastoral scenes and all sorts of things, usually with a hint at least of a decor or set. He stimulated my interest in the theater and provided some education as to what constitutes drama. A little game of that sort sets you to thinking how much is visual and how much is literature. He had some recognition in France. I know he did a mural, but I never got a chance to see it. It was in one of the government buildings someplace. The French government had commissioned him to do this mural. I have been sorry I never could get to it. I've forgotten now what the reason was that I didn't. Another one of the English-speaking friends was the Australian painter, Rupert Bunny. Several times since we've been doing this taping, I've been impressed that once a name has come up that I haven't spoken for many, many years, I either meet somebody who casually happens to mention the name or else I run across it in my reading. And in the case of Rupert Bunny, I met an Australian painter not long ago, and for the first time since my Paris days, I mentioned his name. Sure enough, this man knew him. Bunny was one of the better known painters of Australia in the old days,

but he lived in Paris. There were no flights to Australia then, but he would go back every few years, I think every two or three years. He was one of the members of our club on the Joseph-Bara, the American Artists' Club, and he played the piano quite well, which is always an asset at gatherings. His playing was good. It wasn't professional, but it was good piano playing, and when anybody wanted to have a sing-song or something of that sort, why, he was all ready to play for it. He painted, and in their way, his pictures were good. He was able, very competent, very fluent. He had a very nice sense of color. He painted a great many landscapes, but he was also especially fond of compositions of figures in a room, a little like our own painter, who was more or less a contemporary of his, Frederick Frieseke. He liked nice stuffs, and girls in flowing gowns, and gave all sorts of textures and nice qualities to these pictures. The sort of thing he did, he did very well. But like so many of the older people in those days that found themselves between two periods, he suffered from the feeling of belonging to a passing generation. We used to talk about it at the clubs. I remember him saying something that I thought was rather poignant. He would go to the Automne Salon, for example, and see very modern art, and he'd say, "Think how terrible this is. What a negation of everything that I believed in and had faith in as fine painting and good art." And he said, "I'd feel that I couldn't stand it. But that's not the worst of it. I'd go home after looking at those things and look at my own things, and I couldn't stand them either." [laughter] What it probably boils down to is that so many of the artists of his generation were in that upheaval. It wasn't so much of an upheaval except that it was rather accentuated by the Fauvist movement in which men like Matisse, Derain, Raoul Dufy, Othon Friesz and others were doing things that seemed to many of their contemporaries to be making fun of painting. I think that Bunny was philosophical about his work. He enjoyed painting--he loved painting! During World War I, his studio was upstairs in a building over in the Quarter, and he could look through his window into another large room where women were doing some kind of war work, preparing bandages or something of that sort, or maybe sewing for the war effort. The room was full of women and he did an interesting picture of the scene. He said that every time he went to work in the morning, he would stop on the landing and look down into this big room with all this white stuff and these women, and then the first thing he did when he got into his studio was to do a little work on a canvas from memory. So day after day he'd look at this scene, and little by little, the picture grew into quite a fine picture. I imagine that in Australia they probably have, as they do in other countries, a museum of things illustrating World War I, and that picture of Bunny's, I think, ought to have quite a good place.

SCHIPPERS

In your discussion about Bunny and Luard, you made comments about Bunny, having a reaction to his confrontation with Cubism. Was yours similar? And also, when you were discussing Luard, you talked about memorization and the representation of objects. Was this something that was influencing your own creative productivity?

NUTTING

Yes, it was, very much. In my own case, there was something that maybe was unfortunate. The really creative artist usually is so obsessed by what he wants to do that he doesn't let other things interfere with it. Take a man like Charles Russell, an illustrator. I have admiration for him. He's left a body of work that I think is important to us. Charles Russell had little or no schooling. As a teenager, he came out West and lived the life of the early days. First, he carried around a little box of cheap watercolors with him and made pictures; then he got some oils and made some more pictures and swapped these pictures for drinks at the saloon. He didn't think about art. He didn't think about Giotto. He wasn't worried about trends in aesthetics and what was good and was bad. He just liked to make pictures, and he learned to do them. He wasn't too good a painter, but his knowledge of his subjects was fantastic. There wasn't a bit of anything in the way of documentation--every element of the saddle to the hind leg of a horse--that he didn't know thoroughly. And one would feel that there was the same faithfulness in his characters. I mean, that's the way the Indians looked at that time; and that's what they had on. At the same time, it was done with an enthusiasm for the telling of these stories. Frederic Remington's work is more sophisticated, but has the same vitality. Well, the fact that it is going to be purely instinctive that way, of course, I don't think is entirely necessary. A number of artists, from Benvenuto Cellini on down, have had much to say about art. Cellini wrote a rousing good story of his life. [laughter] Sir Joshua Reynolds' lectures, Delacroix's journals--other painters and sculptors have been thoughtful, articulate, and sometimes philosophically interesting. At the Boston Museum School, Tarbell in criticizing my work one day--the drawing of a head and the making of an eye or the modeling of a nose or something--said, "You've got to learn to do it. If you're going to be a painter, there's only one way that you can look forward to making your living. You have to be a 'pahwtrait' painter." Well, I tried very hard to be a "pahwtrait" painter. [laughter] It wasn't so much the making of the "pahwtraits" that I found difficult, because with sufficient application and industry, one can get around to doing it with a modicum of talent. It was just that as a profession I could see before too long that I would not make the grade; it required certain things to be successful that I felt I didn't have. As a matter of fact, our most successful portrait painter at that time, and really a brilliant one, was John Singer Sargent. But practically in the middle of his career, he stopped professional portrait

painting completely. He wouldn't go on with it. He went out and did from nature many beautiful and brilliant watercolors. I feel that he and Winslow Homer will be best remembered for raising American watercolor painting from a somewhat amateur status to serious art. He left a few other canvases done in the last part of his life which are fairly good. But there is always I think that conflict. I could see it in a book I recently got, a lengthy biography of Delacroix, which is quite exhaustive. I hadn't realized that he too was torn between the classical feeling and the romantic feeling. It wasn't an easy role. He didn't all of a sudden see the light and become a great dramatic painter. It's something which you can see in his journal. All through his life it had to be considered very carefully and thoughtfully. Well, my first introduction, of course, when I went to Europe, was to the Fauve movement which had taken a strong hold in Germany; some of the famous groups--Die Brücke and Der Blaue Reiter--had been formed and were showing some remarkable talents. It was all extremely new to me and very confusing, as you can imagine from the story that I told you about my first seeing the paintings of Matisse at the Boston Museum School, when they had to unlock a door as if it were a Gabinetto Segreto of the Naples museum. In those days, there was a little knowledge of Matisse, but I remember a girl, a fellow student, saying, "After all, his things are very easy to do. We used to amuse ourselves" (she had just come back from Paris) "by making Matisse drawings and seeing who could make the most Matisse drawings. It was very easy to make a Matisse drawing, no trick at all." [laughter] But it was very, very hard to sharpen up your charcoal into a needle-like point and make a corner of an eye. That was real drawing. I was terribly troubled then, because I sharpened up my charcoal and I tried to do my "pawtrait" according to Tarbell's instructions. It was making the pieces. Then I would go over to the museum and see some wonderful things, especially a Greco. None of the other students thought much of the Greco, but I thought it was wonderful. Something about that gave me goose pimples. There is at times a definite physical sensation to be had from a work of art when it is the real thing. I think it was A. E. Housman who said that one knows poetry when he feels (he quotes out of context) "a spirit passed and the hair of my flesh stood up." There was a portrait by Rubens there that also made an impression on me. I would look at these things, and then I would go back and look at the things we did at the school, and I couldn't see the connection somehow. That's what really worried me. I thought that there must be a thorough understanding of what it was to make a painting. I thought that Tarbell knew it and [Frank] Benson knew it and [William] Paxton knew it, and I was sure that my anatomy teacher, Philip Hale, a son of Edward Everett Hale, knew all about it. This young fellow from the West must just keep his mouth shut and listen and pay attention, which I tried to do. But it didn't work too well; so on the one side, I found

myself trying to do the things I wanted to do, but not doing it with a conviction, a faith that Charley Russell had when he did his Indians out there on the plains [laughter], with nobody to bother him--if they liked it, he could get a drink for it. I felt there must be some sense of values that I didn't know anything about. What one does later is to regret that one didn't put more faith in one's "little sensation," as Cézanne called it. Even if they do lead one over the cliff, go ahead, risk it! In Germany, there were just avalanches of things that I had never seen before. They're all old hat to students nowadays, but then much was confusing. Then there was World War I, and in a way that took quite a chunk out of some of my development during my life in Italy. Though Besnard was not a great painter, he was a brilliant one, and his encouragement for me to go ahead and get a big canvas and paint a picture, I think, is one of the best pieces of advice I had. It did me a great deal of good. Modern talents had increasing meaning for me. I was a long way beyond Alexander Harrison, who thought that modern art stopped with the Impressionists. By myself, I did a great deal of work, most of which I destroyed. Not to make too big a step into modern art, I went to the Hanson Academy where Maurice Denis and Paul Sérusier taught. I didn't accomplish too much there. I felt it would be very interesting to work with someone who was really one of the Fauves, and Othon Friesz taught there. But I had not yet learned to understand French too well, and it's rather a bore to have to find somebody in class who could translate for you. They're not always available, and in the second place, Friesz wasn't at all articulate. He would rub his hands in an embarrassed sort of way before his student's work and then whisper something. You didn't know what in the dickens he was trying to say. Then he would shrug, smile in a diffident sort of way, and move on to the next. When you'd think of the vigor and force of his painting, it was very strange--this shy guy trying to teach people and seeming not to have anything to say. I was still trying to find a guide and next chose André Lhote. André Lhote was a successful teacher for many years. He died not so long ago. He was one of the few teachers in Paris that made his teaching a real project. In other words, he had a school to which he gave a great deal of attention. Most of the schools were like the Julian Academy which were run by somebody who just owned the school and the professors simply dropped in once a week for criticism. In most cases, they did it because there was more or less a tradition--at least there was then--that if you had acquired a certain amount of success or esteem among your fellow workers, you had some obligation to pass on the torch so to speak. If you had a group that thought, "Well, I think so-and-so is terrific. Gosh, if we could only study with that man, we'd learn something," the first thing you know, you'd get together and form a little committee and go down and call on this guy and tell him how much you liked his work. Likely enough, he would say, "Well, you find yourself a place to work and get a model, and I'll

come around at ten o'clock next Friday," or something like that. That would happen with the French more often than in other countries. I wouldn't say about England because my student days weren't spent in that country so much. When I think of Besnard and Bourdelle and Raoul Dufy and others, I'm impressed as I look back by their patience and friendliness that they could spend their time with some strange American barging in on them, and do it so nicely and so generously.

1.25. TAPE NUMBER: XIII, Side One (February 28, 1966)

NUTTING

The atmosphere in which I found myself in Paris seems to have been quite different from what I hear it is like these days. But I haven't talked to many people who have been living there or studying there who have had at all the same sort of experiences. Every year, friends would go over and come back, and so often they didn't find the atmosphere in France too pleasant. It certainly contrasts greatly with my own experience when I was there in the twenties. I found that people with the real French character, of both the old school and the ones who were in the so-called modern movement, were simple dedicated workers. They felt, it seemed to me, that they had work to do and they did a day's work simply and without pretense. They got up and worked all day and did their best to do a good job. The men whom I saw something of, who really had a reputation in Paris, official recognition, were never "high hat." Besnard was as warm and cordial and friendly as though I were a fellow student. Bourdelle was the same way. He was vice-president of a society called the Salon des Tuileries. Besnard was president, and he was vice-president. I understood that it would be a rather selective exhibition and it wouldn't be nearly so large as others. They had the idea that they wanted to get the best talent of the younger painters without having, as the Salon d'Automne did, the more advanced and experimental sort of things, and, not nearly so much of course, as the Salon des Indépendants did. They wanted it to be more representative of French art. So, I took my paintings around to show to Bourdelle, and I asked him if he thought that I ought to send them to the Tuileries show. He had a number of large studios very near to where I lived, back of the Gare Montparnasse. I felt rather diffident about it because in the first place, my French at that time was limited, and I'm not one to really barge in very easily and seem to try to get influence. I didn't want that I simply wanted his honest opinion whether that was the kind of a salon in which my work would be acceptable. He was cordial, very nice. He said, yes, he thought they would like my things. As a matter of fact, I did get a couple of canvases in the Salon des Tuileries. But he did it all so very simply and so very nicely and

so very warmly as was characteristic of the other men, the artists, in the art world that I met there. The lack of pretension seemed to be characteristic of all of them. Jean Paul Laurens wasn't living when I got to Paris, but Wallace told me that he used to see him and his wife very often. He was then very famous, very well-to-do. He built a beautiful home over near the Luxembourg Gardens, a big house with large studios. Wallace said he'd often see them in the streetcar going down to the band concerts someplace in that part of Paris and that they would be sitting back in the second-class section (in those days, there were first- and second-class sections of street cars). And here was this old couple sitting there looking very bourgeois, very simple, going to their band concert. I would see a similar sort of thing once in a while. I'd see a man in a funny old-fashioned, semi-military costume, riding back in the second-class section of the car, and when it got down to the Institute, he'd jump off. He had one of these fore-and-aft hats with feathers on them and braid on his coat and a little sword. Well, I knew that he was a member of the Academy who was going to a meeting in uniform. [laughter] I wonder if they still do that, because it seems so strange, especially this little sword which is a relic of so long ago. Another man that I didn't know but that I would see in the same way was a very distinguished sculptor. He is rather an indispensable figure in the history of sculpture in that period along with Rodin, Maillol, Bourdelle and the others. That was [Charles] Despiau. I didn't know him by name for quite a long time, but I knew him by sight. There was a little restaurant, very cheap, near us, but the food was quite simple and good, and we used to drop in there for lunch quite often. Here would be this man in work clothes sitting at a little table over in the corner. He looked as though he was just a workman who has knocked off for lunch like any other workman. Eventually, I discovered he was Despiau. But he seemed to be a very quiet and very modest and very hard-working sort of a fellow. When we went to Corsica with Favory and Lemercier they were very much excited about their vacation. You thought they were going to just have a lark--and they did have a wonderful time--but they were workers. I mean they got up in the morning and they went out and they worked all day. When they came in, they unstretched their canvases and stretched new canvases and then had dinner and a lively conversation. They'd go to bed and get up early in the morning. I never worked so hard in my life in the summertime, because you just couldn't help it. With such an example, you felt silly if you weren't doing something. So I did a whole bunch of canvases, and at night I used to draw quite a lot. But I was inspired by these fellows who simply and quietly did their job. They discussed art, of course, and some interesting things, but there was none of this bohemian atmosphere that is ordinarily thought to be characteristic of the artist's life. They were intelligent, hard-working, dedicated men in every way. So that was one very wholesome influence on the beginning

of my life in Paris. I don't say that it contrasts too much with what I found in New York. In Munich, my German didn't get anywhere at all. I didn't make any progress in German, largely because I was too timid about using what few words I knew. So I didn't know the German painters at all. I just had a little bit of experience in the art school in Munich. In Rome, I felt very much the same atmosphere to a large extent, but not nearly so much as I did in Paris. The first school that I went to impressed me very much, the Julian Academy, because one of the things that the "nouveau" (that is the new student in the class) always did was to treat the crowd. He was expected to. They'd knock off at the model, rest, and go across the street to a little cafe. You were supposed to buy them all a drink and have what the Italians call a bevuta. I've forgotten what the French call that sort of a thing. Well, I went with the crowd. It was a pretty big class; I think there were about twenty of us in the class that I joined at the Julian Academy. It was a painting class. At that time, on account of our exchange, the Americans had the reputation of having plenty of money. So I thought that I would be rather in for it because they'd think, "Oh, he's got plenty of money," and so they'd get themselves a good drink for once or buy themselves maybe an especially good bottle of wine or something of the sort. I had visions of my bill being rather large, but to my amazement it was very small. They didn't take advantage of me in the least. A great many of them didn't take anything alcoholic, not even a beer. They took chocolate or they took a coffee and a croissant or a little something. And it seemed to be perfectly natural. So that made me feel a little bit more at home. I wasn't quite so much of a stranger. And the boys weren't, as I say, taking advantage of the fact that it wouldn't mean anything to me if I spent more money than they were used to spending. Of the French people that I knew best, André Lhote was probably among the better known people. André Lhote was again one of these serious workers. He ran his school in a business-like way, and he was developing it into a real school, which he eventually did. When I went there, it was just after the war and he was just starting it. He had a very large studio, [and to get to it], you had to cross the backyard of the place which was often rather muddy. You went across on boards that were laid down to make a walk to the stairway of the studio. Instead of the usual weekly visit for giving criticism, he gave his group frequent attention. I think he was there several times a week, and he gave very good, very clear explanations instead of simply stopping and giving a little demonstration and talk at an easel. At the Julian Academy, it might be that only half a dozen of the boys would get a criticism, and the rest of them stood around and listened and tried to profit by what the professor said. Then the very common thing, the usual thing, in art instruction was not only that the professor would explain what was wrong with your work, but that he would proceed to show you. He would take a little piece of your work and a brush and would

commence to render a modeling of a forehead or some transition tone or color and show you how to do it. That sort of thing seems to be gone completely now. The art student is so afraid of having his personal feeling and his special talent being interfered with, that you never touch a student's work. You mustn't do anything to it. You talk about it. I can understand that to a certain extent, but I think it's rather unfortunate. In some ways the old academic teaching had a certain advantage. You weren't allowed to be an artist at first, anymore than a person learning to read and write and to spell correctly and to use good grammar was to immediately suppose himself to have the elements of a Shakespeare or Keats or a talented novelist just because he was learning his craft and his medium. I think that was the attitude they had. If you drew correctly, you were getting along all right, and if you drew incorrectly, why, you'd better get busy and learn how to draw correctly. And the same way with mastering your mediums--your techniques. You might not want to paint like your professor, but at least he showed you what could be done. It was quite wonderful when you had a man with great skill, after you had been sweating over the construction and modeling of a knee in paint and it looked perfectly horrible, and he'd pick up some color, seemingly more or less at random, and all of a sudden this thing would loom up on the canvas. I often found it a thrilling revelation. So, although I had a strong feeling in many ways towards developments in modern art, I also still had--and cultivated by this sort of an atmosphere--a feeling that a lot of them lost out because they did not really learn their craft. I had great respect for men who maybe didn't interest me too much artistically because they knew how to do a good job. I think that is fine. Use your medium with skill, ability, and knowledge. André Lhote went much further, and I went from Julian Academy to André Lhote, because he was definitely one of the modern painters of the time. He was also a listened-to theorist, but in class, work was almost entirely before the motive, nudes, still lifes or maybe from motives brought in from outdoor work. But in a way he was a very good transition, because he would use, as an illustration of what he was talking about, maybe a painter like Ingres or even David to illustrate a point, painters that seemed far removed from what we were trying to do. The pictorial idiom that he used was more abstract, but just as intelligent and just as severe a discipline as it would be with men of the academic tradition from Ingres and David. That helped me along in that sort of a conflict of feeling between the painting that I had learned in Boston and in New York, which were still completely without any influence of any of the modern movements. The very latest movement would be the Impressionist painters, and even there they insisted on the basics of drawing--the kind of drawing that I found very difficult to learn. It took me a long time to really assimilate it. But with men like Lhote, you sort of looked both ways. You looked ahead and back to what

could be gained from what had been done in the past and you applied it to what might be in the future. What I started to say was that I was rather relieved to find later, that what would seem to me a certain timidity on my part [was not uncommon] and that the ones that seemed to be doing things were simply the ones that jumped off into deep water without worrying about anything, getting out there and doing something. That has a great deal to be said for it, but in the biography of painters like Delacroix, for example, you find, it seems to me, exactly the same sort of a struggle to find themselves in relation to the current of thought and development, so that their work would not be simply a purely shallow, personal expression, and so it would have depth and meaning. Another example is Renoir. The oft common idea of Renoir as a painter is that he just painted for the pure joy of painting. That is largely true. When he was a pupil of Gleyre, Gleyre looked at his work and he said, "I see that you paint for amusement." And Renoir was cocky enough to say, "Monsieur Gleyre, I assure you that if I didn't enjoy painting, I wouldn't be doing it." [laughter] But from his learning the business of china painting at which he earned his living as a boy and then through his academic work with Gleyre and then his association with the Impressionist painting, he grew naturally, like a good healthy plant would grow, into the new atmosphere of his time and talent around him. And his early things were very excellent Impressionism. The Frog Pond, an early thing of his, is one of the classic pure Impressionist pictures. He and, I think, Monet went out together and painted this park scene of the little lake and the boats. But I think because of the simplicity and the sincerity of his dedication to his art, he, like other painters of his time, found that Impressionism, though it had so much to contribute, was in some way a blind alley. The only painter who really followed it through consistently to the end of his life, or with a certain degree of consistency, was Monet, who was an old man when he did his very powerful things of the water lilies. He had a pond made on his little estate outside of Paris and planted water lilies and painted huge canvases of these, which are quite stunning. But even there--looking at that rather wonderful show of Monet's that they had a few years ago at the museum--I was impressed that he was still trying to push further with what he was doing and really anticipated what you see in such forms as Abstract Expressionism. Whereas, a few years before, his landscape might be simply the translation of these tonal and color values as he saw them in this supposed innocence of the eye. The significance of painting, little by little, gained the upper hand so that he went from nature into a deeper sense of real painting, or at least a strong tendency toward it, although he never gave up that dedication to nature and to the immediate visual experience. The other experience that I had was with a very fine, teacher, Maurice Denis, again a man of very superior intelligence. Although he was a little colder we really became quite good friends. With Lhote he used to come

around to my studio and have tea with us, and we'd chat and discuss things. He was the only one of my teachers with whom I really established a friendship outside, largely because he was the only one I stayed with for any length of time. [I would stay with] the others for only a few months, and then I would want to get some other kind of experience, so I'd go someplace else. Maurice Denis was not only an important mural painter, he was also an excellent writer on art. I didn't learn too much from him, but another teacher who was at the Ranson Academy at the time was Sérusier. I didn't know it at the time, but Sérusier was a far more important person than I had reason to know. Maurice Denis advised me to study with Sérusier. Probably if I had a few months with him, he would have given me a quicker understanding of Cézanne than anybody living, though his own work is more influenced by the Pont-Aven School--Gauguin and that group in Brittany--and also by the Gothic. His woodcuts and illustrations show much of that influence. I used to watch the work of his students. His class painted still life and did things very "Cézanne-ish," in compositions and style. I think that I really ought to have worked with him. I would have gotten insight into the significance of Cézanne's art much quicker. There were three Russian artists in Paris in those days. I think all three of them were persona non grata in Russia. Jacovlev was in China on a scholarship from the St. Petersburg Academy when the Revolution started, and I think that Jacovlev and Shoukaiev also were prize students who were traveling at the time. They were associated with the government on the wrong side of the fence, so they were expatriates. I think Jacovlev, especially, felt rather keenly his expatriation. He was a remarkable draftsman. I never knew anyone with such dazzling facility. He went down through Africa after he came back from China. The Citroen automobile people financed an expedition to advertise their cars. They had a caravan of all sorts of cars, and they organized a group of anthropologists and botanists and people who would study Africa from various points of view. It was a long trek from North Africa and down. In those days, I don't know how far they could go with cars, but it was quite a long trek and gave the automobile a tremendous amount of advertising. Jacovlev came back with a great number of large drawings and tempera sketches of natives and landscape, mostly of people. He could do these Conté chalk drawings very quickly. I met him quite often. He used to be at the teas of the Ciolkowskas. Muriel Ciolkowska was the art correspondent of the American Art News and for some American magazines. Her husband was an artist, more or less of the Aubrey Beardsley sort, but he also wrote for art magazines and did correspondence. They used to have afternoons, very small groups, and Jacovlev was there quite often. I asked him once how in the world he could do these things of these natives--he did them from life; he didn't do them from photographs as illustrators very often would do--I asked him if he had difficulty

getting natives to pose, and he said it wasn't difficult. These drawings (which are quite large, on about 20 x 24 inch sheets of heavy drawing paper) were so complete. They weren't fussy; they were done very directly with great completeness. Not only were they beautifully drawn, but they were superb as documentation. If a native had scars or welts on their bodies, such as they make for decoration, he had a way of suggesting it, you know, without tickling it up or trying to render this minute detail. So they were fine illustrations, but were also thrilling because the man could handle his material so easily and so directly. He said he had no special difficulty in getting natives to pose. I asked him how long he'd take to do a drawing like that. He said an hour and a half or two hours. Heavens, for most of the people I know, it would be two or three days of work to do one of those things, but he had a technique which he developed and was very effective. He used a hard-rubber ink eraser that he could buy there (they were in little squares), and by putting the broad side of his crayon on the paper, he could then swipe this eraser over the tones, and it was amazing to see him model a form. He didn't use it as a stump, which gives a more opaque tone, but this gritty eraser would give beautiful transparent tones to the red chalk. The only one other man that I knew who used that technique was Shoukaiev. Maybe the two of them invented that on their own, because I've never seen it before or since. He could also use pastel as simply and with an effective and very fine quality. I wanted to find out more about that, and after studying with Maurice Denis, I went to this Shoukaiev School. I say Shoukaiev because Jacovlev was then gone on some other expedition or was traveling somewhere, which he was always doing. He spoke English fairly well, in a deliberate sort of a way, and I asked him if he'd learned English in Russia. And he said, "No, I learned it in China." [laughter] He was only in China for a year or so, but he learned English very satisfactory. He said, "I-am-a-too-rist-paintaire." [laughter] He was very modest about his work. His Chinese things are quite fascinating. He did a number of large compositions in tempera. He was very fond of tempera. He thought that he was using the original Byzantine technique of tempera painting of the icon painters, which may have been true. He certainly had great facility in using it. Very few of his things I saw were in oil. But tempera was very finely suited to his way of working, because, after all, it's more of a draftsman's medium than a painter's medium. He did large decorative things on Chinese scenes, of Chinese characters, and an immense number of small drawings in his sketchbooks. I always had a feeling that he had a nostalgia for his own country and regretted very much that his work couldn't be shown there and that he couldn't be represented in the future by having works in Russian museums. I don't think that they ever gave him any recognition. He came to this country afterwards (I didn't see him after I left Paris) and was head of the Department of Drawing and Painting of the Boston

Museum School of Fine Arts. He died in Boston not long after. Shoukaiev, as I say, also drew in that same way and I was glad to have a new and interesting experience. There was a very large colony of Russians in Paris in those days and from all classes of society. Everyone in the class working with Shoukaiev, with the exception of myself and one other, were Russians and that in itself was an experience. Some of the boys--and girls, too--were doing quite good work. But my most vivid memory of that short stay there was an almost Dostoevski sort of a scene. You know how Dostoevski will start with something, and then there's a little more trouble, and then further in the story you find a little more. When you got to the climax, my, there's a whole lot more; then, all of a sudden, there's a terrific uproar and then it dies down. I can't think of a specific instance, but I remember years ago when I read Dostoevski that was one thing that impressed me--the way he'd develop an emotional situation until it got out of hand, and then all of a sudden, it would die down. Well, that exact thing happened in the school one day. A girl came in and nobody paid any attention to her. She looked very sad. She sat down on a bench over near the door, and the students kept working away, drawing the model. When the model rested, one or two of them went over and talked to her, and she started to cry and sniffle a little bit. Somebody sort of comforted her and apparently gave her a little word of advice, and then the model rest was over and they went back to work. The girl sat there, wiped her eyes and blew her nose and looked very sad. During the next model rest, more of them went over and they started talking. They talked a little louder, and then they got into quite an argument. They argued and she protested, and then the pose was called again. They all went back and worked hard again through the next session. At the next model rest, they went over and started the argument again. It got even louder. During the course of the morning, heavens, it was the most emotional scene. She cried and she wailed, and they bawled her out, and they disagreed with each other-- "Yes!" "No, no, no!" "No, no, no, no!" [laughter] And they all got noisy and so emotional. After they had worked off all their steam they went back very quietly to work. By and by, she got up and blew her nose and wiped her eyes and went out, and everything was calm again. But, without understanding the words, just to watch that scene was like seeing something on stage. [laughter] I did have a few Russian friends, and, of course, there was also a great deal of Russian talent in Paris at the time. There was Pitoeff and his little theater which was quite fascinating. They put on Russian plays in French. It was very interesting. His wife was especially talented. Then I used to have models knock at the door, and sometimes they'd be Russian. One time there was a rather interesting looking middle-aged woman and I engaged her. Model fees were very modest. One could afford to use models then, about as much as one pleased. It didn't amount to too much. She turned out to be the wife of

somebody who had been high up in the navy. He may have been an admiral, I don't know, he was apparently somebody of importance. She was a very cultivated and interesting woman. There was another strange little creature that came one day, and she wanted work. She was Russian, and I engaged her. She had learned English in Constantinople. Her English was very limited, but unlike me, she was not at all timid about using what few words she had. I got over that to a large extent in Italy. In Germany, as I say, I made no progress in German because I was afraid of mispronouncing a word. Why that should be any special sin, I don't know, but it intimidated me. In Italy, I got along more easily in Italian and eventually in French. I didn't do too well in French, but enough to enjoy life among the French people. Well, this girl was Russian and was a dancer. I don't know how much training she'd had, but apparently she was quite good. She hadn't been well, and she was trying to tide things over by doing some work as a model so that she could at least eat and pay her room rent until she got back again into her work. She was very funny. It was a hot summer day--speaking about not being timid in speaking a foreign language--and she looked at me and saw that I was suffering somewhat from the heat (I had on my painting blouse), and she said, "Are you hot not? Take your dress off." [laughter] I wasn't as hot as all that! [laughter] Down the street there was a little Russian eating place run by a Russian family. He had been a colonel in the Russian army, and he and his wife and daughter were very cheerfully running a very nice little eating place. One thing that impressed me about those people, the ones that I met, was that they were so uncomplaining. Whatever their past had been, they never seemed to bewail their fate or talk of their misfortune. They seemed to plunge in and make the most they could out of life. One boy told me about a boy that he knew who had been very wealthy. He came to Paris with the remains of his fortune and stayed at a fine hotel, threw parties and went to the opera and enjoyed life up to the hilt until his money was all gone. Well, he didn't shoot himself. He got work. He got work as a servant in that same hotel where he'd been spending his money. He went, from having everything done for him, to getting up early in the morning and going around and blacking the boots of the guests. (The people in Europe put their shoes outside the door at night to get them shined for next morning.) And he went on cheerfully leading that sort of a life. I don't know as that would be especially a Russian characteristic, but it seems to me it was very impressive. Among a large proportion of the ones that I knew, it seemed to be characteristic. They weren't given to melancholic states of mind that one maybe would rather expect from one's reading of Russian literature. Of course, that's very much of a digression from what I started out with. It's a phase of the atmosphere, though, that surrounded me at that time. [tape off] I don't know whether this impression that I had at that time was because it was a period of transition--probably not--

but it was one of being impressed and rather saddened by artists who had outgrown their period. I think the first time that I felt it was when I was at the Luards one afternoon and there was a painter by the name of Devambez. Devambez was very well known in Paris then. I think he had a sizeable public for his work. But after talking to him I felt he was a disappointed man, his youthful dreams ending in a wasteland of potboilers. He had found a certain form that was popular, and it sold rather well. Well, Devambez had been a Prix de Rome. When I was a boy and used to read everything I could about artists' lives, the École des Beaux-Arts and the Prix de Rome always seemed to be marvelously romantic sort of things. Here was the competition for the Prix de Rome which always sounded thrilling, how you made your application and eventually so many were accepted. Then you had to go in for a preparation which consisted of being given a subject for a picture (in the old days it used to be either the classical sort of subject like the Judgment of Paris or something allegorical or historical), and in something like three hours you had to do a composition. That was then stamped. I think you could have a tracing of it, but the original sketch was then put away in a safe. I've forgotten all the rigmarole. Then you were given a loge, as a studio, and they provided you with everything you needed in the way of models and accessories. Everything that went in out of the studios was very carefully examined so that everything would be on the up-and-up and to make sure your painting was completely original. You had to hold to the composition you had made with little or no modification. All that sounded exciting. Then, finally, the great day would come, and one young fellow out of all of France would get the Prix de Rome and go down to work in the Villa Medici for four years. So that was the aura the Prix de Rome had for me, and when I'd meet somebody who was a Prix de Rome, I felt he was really somebody. Claude Debussy was a Prix de Rome. Otherwise I can think of no well-known man in anyway connected with the École des Beaux-Arts. Oh yes-- I believe Georges Rouault was a Deuxième Prix de Rome. He competed and won second place. And then here was this very quiet, modest man who was doing rather anecdotal sort of pictures and being a little bit apologetic about himself. He said, "I was born too late; I was born too late." Well, of course, that's often true of our American painters. Frederick Frieseke, as a young man, had great success in this country. He was one of the American painters when I was a kid. When I knew him, he was living in Paris and was still painting beautifully, but you felt he was sad. He couldn't quite figure out what happened. The most tragic figure, it seems to me, was Frank Brangwyn who had at one time great success. He spent a lot of time and energy in doing some big panels for the British Parliament building, and then they refused to accept them. And from then on, for the rest of his life, he was really kind of a forgotten man. They had a big retrospective exhibition of his work at the Royal

Academy, but he wasn't interested. It didn't seem to mean anything to him at all. I rather imagine he was a rather embittered man when he died. I was in Besnard's studio once when Aman-Jean walked in. He had just gotten his election to the Academy and Besnard and Aman-Jean embraced each other in French fashion. I suppose the old gentleman was pleased to have a youthful ambition realized. But, again, I think he must have felt he was living in a world that had passed him by even though he had won this high honor. Léon Bonnat died while I was in Paris and I remember my friend, Richard Wallace, who had lived many years in Paris, saying that he believed that had he died twenty years earlier he would have been given a state funeral. Of the academic painters another man who was an influential teacher was Lucien Simon. And Lucien Simon was still teaching at the Grande Chaumière when I went to Paris, and he had quite a lot of influence on many young Americans. I often wondered why he didn't get more official recognition. Only long afterwards did it occur to me--I don't know that I'm right or not--that the Dreyfus Affair may have had something to do with it. In other words, did anti-Semitism enter the picture? It's a Jewish name, of course, but I didn't think of it at the time. He was an instructor in drawing at the École des Beaux-Arts as well as having a large painting class at the Grande Chaumière. I heard him give criticisms a few times and found them well worthwhile. So those were my influences both in the modern way and the academic spirit, and those were the French painters that I came in closest contact with. I met sometimes just casually in conversation, like the time I had a conversation with Chagall and not knowing it was Chagall until we parted. I went to see Raoul Dufy when we were still publishing *Atys*. Raoul Dufy's woodcuts were quite stunning, beautiful, decorative things. The woodcuts that he was doing at that time were used as book illustrations and I thought I'd at least try to borrow a block from him. But we weren't in a position to pay anything for it, and that made one rather diffident about going to a well-known artist and asking for his work. At that time, of course, he was not nearly as well known as he became. I went and the same sort of thing happened again. He received me quite cordially. Obviously he had a lot of work to do, but he took his time, sat down and we chatted about what we were trying to do with the magazine, and he was very sympathetic. Finally he brought me a little block and he said, "Would this do?" And I said, "I'd be delighted." He didn't hurry me out and say, "I'm sorry, but I have an appointment" or "I have a model coming," or anything of that sort. He opened up some portfolios to show me many of his drawings, and he really gave me a sort of lesson that I wish I had profited by. His studio was in perfect order and all his work was in perfect order. His drawings seem very often to many people careless scribbles, and they would think that if some of them were lost, why goodness, he had done so many more that there wouldn't be any great loss. I remember his taking a drawing from a

portfolio which was rather large, one of these pencil things of crowds of people at Longchamps. Then he happened to see one little place where it had gotten a bit rubbed. He got so concerned about that spot where the pencil had been touched and rubbed a bit, that he immediately got an eraser and carefully cleaned it. Then he very carefully put the drawing back in the portfolio. I only wish his example had influenced me more. [laughter] If I had gone out and done twenty or thirty of those in a day, which I think would be quite possible, and they got rained on or something, I'd think, "Well, that's all right. I'll save a few of these things, and the rest I'll burn." But with him, if the drawing was worth keeping, it was worth caring for and to be treated with respect. I think that was the most impressive thing about my conversation with him, besides seeing his work. At that time, he was working for Bianchini Frères in Lyons, and he had great influence on silk designing. And designing was his first way of making a living after he got back from the war, I believe, and he was quite successful. From that he went on to do some book illustration, etchings and woodcuts. He also had an exhibition of things he had done in collaboration with a ceramist--little miniature gardens that were quite charming.

1.26. TAPE NUMBER: XIII, Side Two (March 7, 1966)

NUTTING

In the last session, if I remember rightly, I was speaking of certain conflicts which, I think, are very evident in the work of all artists. There's a very popular notion, apparently, among people who think that art is rather a decorative adjunct to life, that it's all very nice but nothing too important and that the artist is simply a man who likes to make pictures and who has a very happy life if he can make a living at it because he doesn't have to work. It is one idea that, to me, is so difficult to understand, yet it is so prevalent, that art is a product of some degree of advancement in a culture beyond what is ordinarily thought of as among the practical things in life. Very often people will be somewhat apologetic about American art and say, "Oh, well, we're a young country. We've had to do this and had to do that and we had to settle the land and we hadn't time for things of that sort, but now that we are more prosperous and we have more leisure, why then, we'll have more art." Now that idea is expressed by people, it seems to me, who have given it no thought and by people who ought to at least question the idea a little. With a little knowledge of history, history in the form of the monuments that have been left in various ways by various cultures, it seems to me to point to something quite different. In the first place, it's very hard to imagine that Homer appeared on the scene when Greece or any of the ancient world was especially comfortable to live in. Of course, I admit that a certain amount has to be granted to the idea that has been pretty

well expressed by Toynbee, that the advancement of a culture and these plateaus that he speaks of are dependent upon a certain balance. If life is too easy, there's no advancement, and if it's too hard and austere, as with the Eskimos, for example, you don't have a rising to another plateau. But even admitting that, art of any form, if of any value, it seems to me, is not the product of a sort of a hedonistic activity. It's the meaningfulness, conscious or unconscious, that things or an expression has to a culture. If it were true that affluence and a chance for the better things of life would automatically bring on worthwhile art, then all we'd have to do is to have some more Morgans and Vanderbilts and Rockefellers--patronage in short--to provide it. But we found it can't be done. An enormous amount of money has been spent for art that has had official recognition but that we now feel has no very great significance, and that the writers, painters, and composers who have contributed most to the country have been all too often men who have been very badly treated by circumstances. If it were true about affluence, then it must be that the artist, as well as the culture, must have a certain comfort and affluence before he produces good art. But that is not at all true. The artist who has been deeply dedicated very often leads a life that is anything but what we would call a happy one. It's not enough a part of the desire of society for him to be completely happy. I think for that reason that the scientist, the physicist, the chemist, the engineer has more chance of what we would ordinarily call a happy life than the creative artist. Well, cite Bernard Shaw, I am simply calling attention to the fact that fine art is the only teacher except torture." As I mentioned, he is one person who'll give you a hint that the artist is fundamentally a subversive sort of a person, that society has a certain amount of justification in suspecting him. And we can cite Russia as being not altogether wrong, from their point of view, in clamping down on the artist because if you give him a free hand, he's liable to set off a conflagration which would be very dangerous to the status quo or to the efforts that the Soviets are trying to develop. Democratic countries are not altogether free of similar fears. [tape off] I don't know if a really talented, honest, dedicated student in the arts would think about this too much. I think he feels them; and although he may not verbalize them--if he's not a writer--he may do it in his work, and he does undergo this conflict between what are the needs of his psyche and what he can get from tradition, from his relationship to society. Neither one of them must be violated, because it's the impact of the inner world and the outer world that will cause a spark to ignite something, and then we have a poet or a writer or a painter or a musician. If it's all on one side too much, you have the academic and the sterile, and you have an unhappy man, even though he may do quite good work. The commercial artist, for example, I discovered is often, not always, a discontented person. I mean the man who simply does the thing for

money, who manufactures a certain thing for a certain purpose. Even though he's quite a good craftsman, as he grows older, he can do the job, and if he's got a job, why, he does his work. But he doesn't do his work as an artist. He does his work like a carpenter or a workman who simply goes out and gets a job and is content to earn a living. But very often, of course, the men who began with aspirations and had dreams have been crushed by a certain routine of work. On the other hand, the person who has no sense of society and relation to his fellowman, and simply reverts into himself is very dangerous too. And that brings up another thing I feel is true. The life of an artist is an adventurous life and has its dangers. Among people I have known personally, and among others I have known only slightly, there have been seven suicides. The last one was Hemingway. Ordinarily we're inclined to think--"Well, something became unbearable, don't you know." I don't think that is necessarily so. They come to a point, and we don't know what it is. I was quite impressed the other day when I saw Tennessee Williams on TV. He was asked, "Why do you write plays?" And his answer I found rather startling. He said, "It makes life bearable." He said it very quietly, and it seemed to me that was the truth. I mean he wasn't trying to be smart; he was confessing a simple fact, "It makes life bearable." Of course, it does more than that for a man of his intelligence and his ability and his talent. An activity such as his, though it may be a very important part of being a means of a living, does not broaden that great area, or what ought to be a very wide area, between where life is bearable and where it's not bearable. Biographically, I think we can find countless examples of that sort of thing. One rather little one, which I think is rather touching, is Honoré Daumier, who we feel now to be one of the greatest artists of his period, but who in his time was looked upon simply as a cartoonist and not at all a serious painter. I suppose he must have done several thousand lithographs for liberal papers in Paris, and he got himself thrown in jail a couple of times, I believe, for his cartoons. He didn't make very much of a living. His life was an extremely simple one; it was among the poor people of Paris. Among his friends was Corot, who was very nice to him. Well, when Daumier was old and blind, Corot told him he had a little house on his property that he didn't know what in the dickens to do with, and that he wished Daumier would come out and live there and sort of look after it. There'd be somebody in the house and that would be a help, or words to that effect. Corot was not only kind, he had beautiful tact. As we all know, his paintings and his drawings are of simple people--the poor, washerwomen and saltimbanques and people in third-class railway carriages. To him, the whole drama of life was in it, not because he was preaching about poverty but for sheer sympathy for human beings in that strata of life which he knew so well. And walking down the street with this person one day who said that it was tragic so many people had to live such hard lives, Daumier said,

"You and I are more lucky. We have our art." At first, I suppose some people would say, "Oh, your art is sort of an escape mechanism, a means of going off into your dreams and getting away from all the trouble and reality of life." But it's not that, of course, at all. Just now I also think of Goya as a person whose work contains much bitter satire and commentary, but there's nothing preachy about either of those men. Their work is not propaganda, nor do they point to roads of salvation. The artist in his wonder is like Kepler and asks, "Why are things as they are and not otherwise?" That understanding in itself--which the artist is so deeply in search of--is what will have influence. And I think great literature and great art have proven that. Coming down to the influence and function of the arts these days, the other day I watched that long line of people going to see the Matisse show at UCLA. It's hard to know just what Matisse means to the average person. And the Van Gogh show some years ago at the museum was also jammed. It took us an hour to get into the show. We just inched along with this long line of people. I suppose that is largely because it had been so well publicized, but he seems to have meaning for people. A man that surprises me is Chagall. He's a very popular painter. It's curious that he's also a very good painter and a good artist, a very genuine one. But he seems to have a very definite meaning to a great many people. Now they're bringing out reproductions of his work. I don't know how they'd rationalize their interest in him, but in the great movements and changing forms of our present living--which I find rather disconcerting to put it very mildly--it seems to me that to a large extent people are searching unconsciously for a certain compensation that will restore a certain balance. C. P. Snow, of course, has dealt with that in his novels--the conflict between the scientific and the more intuitive mind. And, a long time ago, Jung pointed out that whenever that sort of thing happens, something else is happening at that very time that will restore a balance of the psyche. One case that I remember, which was an argument of that sort of thing, was that at the very time that the Goddess of Reason was being crowned in the Pantheon, wasn't it, there was a young man in India translating the Upanishads. [laughter] And then we think of the influence that Oriental thought has had since those days, that the stress in this way automatically brought out the spirit in the other direction. So I think to a large extent our interest in art seems to be extremely slight, at least among the people of my generation and somewhat younger. In your generation it's probably with much more understanding--it certainly is in your case. There is a feeling that somehow there is there something worthwhile, and every once in a while you get a certain reaction. Otherwise they're rather antithetic to what's going on, even though we have it spread around us in lots of beautiful books and fine color reproductions. Even in magazines such as Life and Time, you can get quite a review of art, much more so than when I was young. And it's much more accessible. André

Malraux's "museum without walls" is certainly true, to the extent in which the museum can have a powerful influence. In those days in Paris, we had so much that was available. We had the Louvre. We had the salon. The official salon was very large, and in its way was very successful still. I wonder how it is now. But at that time the Artistes Français and the Société Nationale, the two big societies and huge salons for painting and sculpture, got a great deal of attention, and any success in the salon still meant a lot to many painters. And, of course, at the same time that I was there, the modern movement had already become history to a large extent. Certain phases of it had been accomplished and had gone by. Synthetic Cubism and analytical Cubism had all been worked out, had its influence, and so forth and so on. But the artist (at least it was my feeling there) was being continually torn between the influence and a certain admiration which in spite of myself I might feel for something that I might think was not too good, and I might reproach myself for it. I don't anymore because I think that very often when something has meaning it may be in something that's not too important. A Swiss painter Arnold Böcklin, for example, was enormously popular in his day. I suppose an art historian realizes, but I'm sure that the average person who just loves Giorgio di Chirico doesn't know how much influence Böcklin had on him. They will go and look at these very romantic pictures of Böcklin, and Canaday in his history of modern art makes fun of Böcklin. But it simply meant that there was one facet, that there was something in the work of Böcklin that had meaning to the young di Chirico and sparked something that gave him as a young man a remarkable development for a time. Di Chirico himself, of course, is a very strange person because he seems to have lost that talent very early in life; all his good work was done when he was quite young. And among the people that I mentioned, Raoul Dufy, just to take one at random, was not a man who suddenly thought, "Well, I will capitalize on making something that's very chic and decorative." He started out with Impressionism, and from Impressionism to being one of the Fauves, and then he was very much excited by Matisse. I'm sure he didn't kid himself that he was a very great artist, because although he was always a very delightful and a very charming one, he was not one of the great ones, but he knew he had a certain serenity in being himself and in making the most of his talent. After the war, he began first of all in making his living as a designer of textiles, of silks for the Bianchini Frères. Then he did some beautiful etchings and woodcuts for the illustrations of *Bestiaire* by Guillaume Apollinaire and some other books, and from then, to great popularity of his watercolors and painting. That a person simply pours out art without any trouble is a fallacy, as in a little satire I read once of Elbert Hubbard. He spoke of having this colony of artists where they all "worked without toil and achieved beauty." Even for a man who seems to be as spontaneous and fantastically productive as Picasso,

all he has to do is to pick up his materials and start working at a moment's notice and with everything just going fine. He just pours things out and in an almost volcanic sort of a way throws out canvases and etchings and drawings and pottery and all sorts of things. But Man Ray, who was out here for some years, knows him quite well and said one day that Picasso really had periods of complete inactivity, when he was completely stumped. He was in a sad state of mind, but finally he'd pull himself together and would go back. And the struggle that Renoir had when he found himself in an impasse with Impressionism would be quite a typical experience of the creative mind. [tape off] One memory of my life in Paris was meeting Durand-Ruel. And anybody who has read the very fine book of John Rewald on the Impressionists [The History of Impressionism] will know what I mean. He did a very wonderful job for modern art and was one of the great dealers of modern painting. It came about in a rather curious sort of a way and a rather amusing one. I went to the George Petit Gallery to see an exhibition of the watercolors of Cézanne. They had quite a large exposition of his watercolors. Maybe it is not known to most people, unless they're especially interested in Cézanne, that he did a great many of his studies in watercolor. Many of his researches in color were done in watercolor; he left quite a body of work in that medium. As I went into the gallery, I spoke to the man in charge there, and I said that I understood that Monsieur Durand-Ruel would admit visitors to his apartment to see some of his collection of Impressionist paintings. At that time, he owned some quite famous ones, some that are now in important museums. He was quite liberal in letting people come. I believe, at the time, they could get a card or something from the gallery that would introduce them if they didn't have other introductions to him. Well, the director of the gallery was very nice. He said that, yes, ordinarily it wouldn't be too difficult to arrange a date to be admitted, but he said he was sorry that Monsieur Durand-Ruel was ill, and had been for some time, and had ceased having any visitors at the apartment. And so I thanked the man and I said I understood perfectly and that I was sorry. Then I went on to look at the exhibition. As I went from one watercolor to another, I came to one that rather puzzled me. Then I realized why it was puzzling. It was upside down. I looked at it again and, sure enough, it was upside down. And just then this man passed behind me and I stepped over and spoke to him. I said, "Monsieur, this watercolor is upside down." He said, "Oh, no! no! That's impossible!" And I said, "I assure you, it's upside down." And he walked over, he looked at it and he looked at it very carefully, and he said, "It's not upside down." I said, "It's upside down. Now, the articulation of the branches of a tree into a tree trunk run a certain way and this would be impossible if the tree were not pointing upward. These lines should be going upward instead of downward, no matter what kind of a tree it is." He said, "I think you're right." He took it

right off the wall and went off with it and said, "I'll have this reframed. I think you're right." Then I went on with the exhibition. On the way out, he stopped me and said, "I telephoned the apartment of Monsieur Durand-Ruel and he'd be glad to see you on a certain date." So I thanked him very much for that. It was quite a surprise. So at the appointed hour, my wife and I went over, and we were received by a young member of the family in an officer's uniform. I think he was a lieutenant. He was a very charming young fellow, and he showed us all over the place, and we discussed and talked about things, and it was very pleasant indeed. There were paintings all over the house--in the bathroom, halls--the walls were covered with masterpieces. I think that famous balcony thing of Renoir's was in his apartment at that time. It really was quite a thrilling collection of the paintings of that period. There were Renoirs, but there were also other great Impressionists that he owned. So it was quite an afternoon of seeing fine painting. After we got through, he said, "I'd like to have you meet my father." I said I'd be delighted to, so he took us into a room. The old gentleman was in a wheelchair and a nurse was pushing him around, and he said, "You are a painter?" And I said, "Yes, I am a painter." He was very pleasant and wanted to know what I had been doing, where I was studying and so forth and so on. He was quite cordial. So I left with quite a nice memory of a great man in French art, and I think Durand-Ruel was. He supported the Impressionists; he believed in them; he nearly wrecked his business with the Impressionists. A very courageous, very understanding dealer of the finest type. [tape off] Rather naturally, the painters that I knew in those days were not the famous ones. I met a few, but the people who really influenced me had not yet made any very great success. A few of them later did. I only think two or three times have I been suddenly inspired to call on a man whose work that I liked specially. I never did it very easily. It always seemed an imposition on a person for me as a perfect stranger to go and say, "Hello, I like your work. I thought I'd like to come around and meet you." [laughter] But sometimes the impulse was strong enough, so I would do it. And one day in the salon I saw this painting by someone who, to me, was quite an unknown painter. His name was Bosshard. There was something about it that made me think, "By Jove! I'd like to know that man. He has something. We have something in common." It's not that in an exhibition my work would look at all like his work to an ordinary person. But I could feel in the way he was making this thing, and things he was searching for--the relations of form and color and design and a sense of nature--it was something that I was also working with, quite seriously at the time; and I thought he was very genuine and that we would have feelings in common. I looked up his address and thought it wasn't far. He lived on the Left Bank, not far from the Gare Montparnasse, as I did; so I dropped around. And it happened as in the very few times that I've done that sort of thing, that it was very

successful. I was quite right. And we got along beautifully. Bosshard was a young Swiss painter, and I won't say that he had any direct influence on me any more than anybody else did, except the stimulus that you get in the exchanging of ideas, in seeing each other's work, and in the criticism that goes back and forth. He interested me not only because of his ability (he had a very good training in Switzerland), but because he had developed a style which was his own, quite his own, in Paris. He said he had done this to the extreme disgust of his teachers back in Switzerland. But they were very wrong, because they had no reason to be disgusted. He wasn't a person who was simply jumping on the bandwagon of Cubism or Synchronism or some other kind of an "ism." He had evolved a feeling that was not especially impressive from any point of view. It was just sincere and good and had a very genuine charm. It's rather a dangerous word to use, but it was winning in its honesty of decorative qualities and color and accomplishment as a painter. He stands out among a lot of artists that I knew in one rather curious sort of a way. It was very obvious that he could not paint without a feeling that there was a cooperation between himself and his motif. At that time, he used a figure a great deal, and that's when I first noticed it. But it would be true, I think, no matter what he painted--still life or anything else. It's not simply something out there, out of which you'll make something, but rather that he and this landscape, or he and this motif, or he and this model must have a rapport. The only way to explain it was that in the case of nature, he had almost a pantheistic kind of a feeling. I don't think that he would admit that himself; it's just that you got that feeling from the way he reacted. I used to meet him quite often after his day's work. We'd go down to a little cafe and sit there and have an aperitif, and he'd bring his model along with him. Well, he didn't have too much money, and I don't suppose he could pay as much for the use of a model, but he needed to use them a great deal in his work. And so he'd have these poor little creatures that were rather undernourished and rather wan. He didn't have any sentimental attitudes towards his models, but he always gave the girl the feeling that she had a certain importance in his work. And he'd turn to me and say, "Don't you think that she has beautiful hands? Just look at that line of her face." The poor little creature was probably very unattractive--a very good model very often isn't especially attractive in the ordinary sort of a way--but she'd come to life, and she felt that she was important and contributing something to a great artist's work (he'd do it in a very nice, nice way; there was nothing phony about it at all); that he enjoyed his work and was doing good things; that he wouldn't be doing good things if she hadn't helped him, cooperated, done her work well; that he was appreciative of it and so forth. I think that that feeling about him has stuck with me. He afterwards did quite a lot of decorative work. And as a great many of the artists in Europe do, more so than in this country, he did book illustration. Ambrose Vollard made

book illustration something really worthwhile in France. To a certain extent there has taken place here a definite split between commercial art and fine arts. We put them into two categories, and then we forget that one of the greatest influences in poster design, for example, was Toulouse-Lautrec. There has been in Europe much more of a continuation of a tradition that really goes back to the Renaissance. The Renaissance artist had his bottega, and he did what was asked of him. If they came into the shop and they wanted a painting on the wedding chest, why, he did a beautiful painting on the wedding chest. If they wanted a fresco in a chapel, and if they had a reputation for that sort of thing, they got the job. Hans Holbein, for example, did some very fine designs for metal work before he became a portrait painter to Henry VIII. And it wasn't something that was separate. I don't think they had any idea they were doing something that was not as much a work of art as anything else. They had a certain modesty about making a good thing, whether you did a little woodcut for a book or a huge fresco in a church. A certain job had certain problems. And that spirit is more prevalent in Europe than it is here, or certainly it was at that time. Here the feeling is that--and it is true, too--if you do too much commercial work, as many of the boys have had to do to make a living, or even illustration, which can be something quite superior and fine, you have to be very careful or you'll find yourself in a rut out of which it's very hard to extricate yourself. [tape off] Another man I knew in Paris when I first went there was Díaz. At that time, I knew no French, and my Italian, which is more or less nonexistent now, at that time was fairly fluent. This man was in Paris for a while, but not very long. I've forgotten how we met, but we hit it off quite well under certain difficulties, and that was the one of language. He was Spanish, and he could speak Spanish, of course, and French. I said, "Do you know Italian?" And he said, "No, I don't know Italian." But we struggled on. I could understand Spanish to a certain extent, and I could sometimes use a Spanish word. The rest of it, I spoke in Italian, and we found we understood each other well enough to have really quite a lot of fun and interesting talk with one another. After our first meeting, walking down the street with him, I said, "I thought you said you didn't know Italian." Because in a curious sort of way, I could understand him quite well. It wasn't Spanish, and I knew it wasn't quite Italian, but there was no difficulty, and we talked about all sorts of things. And I said, "You said that you don't know how to speak Italian, but you're speaking Italian now." And he stopped in the middle of the street and in his enthusiastic and loud way of speaking, he tossed his hands up in the air and shouted, "No. Non parlo Italiano! Improvise Italiano!" (I don't speak Italian, I improvise it.) [laughter] He was another one of the very genuine painters that I fortunately met quite a number of. He was unpretentious and very much dedicated. He had a lot of sketches that he brought from someplace where he had been staying in

the south of France. He had been spending the summer there and was stopping off in Paris for a month or so before going back to Spain. His work at that time did have an influence on me. Up to that time, I felt that in working out-of-doors, you didn't get anything out of your study unless you really produced a canvas. I would spend hours and hours to really produce a picture. Well, those were still the days when it was taken as a matter of course that every painter would do a certain amount of work out-of-doors. I don't know when I've now seen a painter painting out-of-doors. They do it, I know, but it's been quite a long time since I've seen much of it. But in those days, part of your education as a student you felt was lost if you didn't get out before nature and paint directly from the landscape and things out-of-doors. This son-in-law of Besnard's that I spoke of, Avy, when he was giving me advice about drawing and showing me the works of Ingres, he told me of his own student life and how he used to go to the Beaux-Arts at eight o'clock in the morning, and then when the days got longer in spring, he'd leave his classes at four o'clock and jump on a bateau mouche (the little passenger boats that go up and down the Seine), to some place in the suburb, and get in an hour or so before sunset of painting from nature before he went home for dinner. But Vasquez Díaz gave me rather of a different feeling--he was one of the first ones to do it. He had a great variety of studies from nature, but most of them seemed, at first glance, to be rather slight. But then you saw in them the continuity and analysis of nature. He didn't try to spend his summer painting salon pictures; he was really using his mind as much as his materials. That changed my thinking. I don't know why I had that idea up to that time, but I think, probably, from the people that I knew who made it part of their regular work to budget their time and get out and paint from nature, and when they didn't bring home something which was exhibitable, why, it was time largely lost. You had to do that, which was, I suppose, for them a certain practical point of view. I didn't see anything more of Díaz after he went back to Spain, but then I'd see his work reproduced in the art magazines; so his success grew. The last thing I saw was what looked like a very excellent portrait of the king, Alphonso. Apparently it had been commissioned, and it was successful in a special way. Almost inevitably a commission portrait of that sort is a kind of a "spot-knocker"--as we used to call them. It's the sort of thing you have to do. Official portraits and portraits of royalty are often typical examples that you see in the Royal Academy catalog. But this had all the virtues of characterization, of fine portraiture, and also you could see from the reproduction, a very good painting. Since then I don't know what he's done. I haven't seen his work in magazines anymore. [tape off] Two sculptors were young men at that time and were just getting a reputation. One was Lipchitz. (We had that wonderful show of his out here not long ago.) In those days, he was just making a name for himself, and I used to meet him at

Lhote's. I used to go to Lhote's afternoons quite often; he made me welcome along with some of his other students. Then his friends would drift in, and sometimes they'd be very interesting people. Lipschitz used to come in to see him, and although I didn't talk with him myself very much, I found it very interesting to listen to him talk with Lhote. They would look at things, discuss things, criticize works and bat ideas back and forth. I wish I'd had a little of the Boswell in me in those days and filled some notebooks. The other sculptor, Zadkine, I used to talk to a great deal. The most important thing I know of that Zadkine has done is a big monument at Rotterdam, a monument in memory of the destruction of Rotterdam. In those days, he was a very ambitious young fellow and spoke English very well. Apparently, he had been sent to England as a boy for part of his education, so maybe that was one reason that I remember him more, because in my first years in Paris my French wasn't very fluent and his English was very good. We'd argue and discuss things. He seemed to think that his career was going to be very short. Somebody said something about, "Well, I'm thirty years old now--getting old." "Oh," he said, "don't mention it, don't mention it." He seemed to be in terror of growing old. He had to hurry up and get something done before he'd die. His life was going to be short and all that sort of thing. Well, I know he's still living. I guess he must be about eighty now and he's still working.

1.27. TAPE NUMBER: XIV, Side One (March 21, 1966)

NUTTING

I think I spoke once before of the fact that as a boy I had this enthusiasm for painting but that it rather puzzled me, and in a way, I resisted it. I don't think that people generally realize what a great change there has been in the attitude towards the work of the artist. The feeling persists to a large extent in many people today, which is more or less a survival of something that was much stronger at one time. Various things occur to me that rather illustrate what I have in mind: some of the stories of the early experiences of American painters, in which one feels that art was looked upon in the nineteenth century in this country as something that was rather superficial, something that was all very nice, but not a serious part of life. I remember a boy in my class was not very bright and of considerable concern to his family. Like numberless kids he liked to play with a pencil and his father, thinking he wasn't good for anything else, thought maybe he could become an artist. There was, maybe, a certain puritanical idea towards luxuries. The evaluation of art among people as a whole can be expressed or understood in some of the expressions that were used. For example, an expression that's never heard nowadays but that was very common when I was young: the thing was "pretty as a picture." [laughter] Now

it doesn't have any special meaning. We don't think of a picture essentially, as being something "pretty." Of course, in colonial days and through all the history of this country, there have been people who had a certain nostalgia for European culture and wanted nice things and even had quite a fine feeling for them. But the rank-and-file American felt that a person who went in for anything of that sort was wasting his time. It wasn't real living; it wasn't serious. It was something rather superficial. I remember a friend of mine speaking of a painter that he knew, a young fellow who went out in the summer in New England to paint landscape. He worked terribly hard, and he was a very serious painter. He'd get up very early in the morning and work all day, knocking himself out to accomplish something during the good weather. One day he was painting and a thunderstorm came up. It loomed on the horizon, and there was the lightning and thunder; and a farmer drove by and saw him painting (he had his easel set up near the road in a field), and he called out to him, "Well, son, I guess you better pick up your playthings and go home." [laughter] That just about epitomizes, I think, the attitude of a lot of the people in the early days. For that reason, it's all the more remarkable that we did produce such excellent talent--boys who had so little chance to see anything or to be inspired by. They had no galleries or exhibitions. The only chance they had of seeing a good painting would be in the home of some wealthy person who had things that they had brought from Europe. That would give a certain stimulus, and even if they were to be seen, they were probably at some distance. Rarely could they see anything of importance. For a man to develop as much as Benjamin West did, I think is quite fantastic. There are all sorts of apocryphal stories about his getting colors from the Indians and making brushes of hair from the tail of his cat--it makes a nice story--in his efforts to learn to paint. He had poor engravings, mediocre sort of things, that could inspire him to draw and to paint, but in spite of it all he accomplished really a great deal. He became president of the Royal Academy in England and received great attention. Nowadays, we find his work pretty dull and not too competent. But that the drive should be so strong [is surprising]. Another painter who really led a fantastic life was Chester Harding, a man born in the latter part of the eighteenth century. He died about the time of the Civil War. It's just an illustration of how much meaning an art can have when it's genuine, what a force it can be in a man's life. Chester Harding was a backwoods boy who lived a hard life on a farm and practiced various trades. He made chairs, I think, at one time; he tried to keep a saloon. He had a dickens of a time making a living. Nothing seemed to succeed very well, until one day an itinerant portrait painter came through. Those were the days when people wanted likenesses, and they were provided, to a large extent, by people who traveled around. They'd take a canvas and paint a figure in costume, more or less, a

general sort of idea, and left a blank place for the face. You'd pick out the pose you wanted [laughter] and have the clothes somewhat modified and the face painted in, and there you had a picture. I suppose that was the sort of a painter he was, and the first one that Chester Harding had ever seen, and he was bowled over by the fact that you could actually take some paint and make something that looked like somebody. That was a very exciting idea to him. I am not sure, but I think that among the other things that he tried to help him make a living was sign painting. Those were the days in which you could teach penmanship and paint signs and give a few lessons on the flute or something, maybe throw in a few lessons in dancing, and in that way you could get by. If I remember rightly, he had his materials for sign painting--paints and brushes and equipment--so he tried a portrait of his wife. And to his amazement, it looked something like her. His own words were the equivalent of simply going wild with joy. He was so excited; it opened up such a new world to him. It was fantastic. So he spent all his spare time painting portraits, and before long he could get five dollars apiece for them. That helped quite a lot, and then he went to bigger towns. He went down the Ohio to cities and got some commissions. Gradually he increased his prices because he got more and more proficient, and it's surprising how proficient he got. His things aren't too good, but that he could do anything at all with so little training or inspiration is amazing. When he went back home, quite pleased because he was getting fifty dollars apiece for a portrait and was really making a rather decent living, his father, instead of being pleased, was scandalized. He thought he was asking fifty dollars for some kind of a bunco game or some kind of a fraudulent enterprise. [laughter] He was very much ashamed of him. He seemed to feel his son had turned out little short of being a common swindler. Incidentally, Harding went on to England and really made a success of portraiture over there. He did some fairly good things, likenesses at least, of some of the political figures of the day. It is not that we didn't have some successful landscape painters, and painters of other sorts, but a good portrait painter had the most chance of a livelihood. At least that was sort of the spirit of the art school that I went to. So I struggled at being a portrait painter but without too much success. I think I could have done much better in a somewhat different atmosphere than I was in. The Boston School, though in its way excellent, was for some reason not sympathetic to me. I think it was because I took it too seriously and worked too hard. I really did work hard. They used to have these four-hour stretches of drawing from the model, which is a pretty long pull, and then the rest of the day I spent working and studying. So I didn't really have the energy to put into my work. I had a sort of breakdown and couldn't work at all for a week. Nothing was wrong with me. I simply seemed to be exhausted. And then I went back and whaled away again. But it was inching along where it ought to have been much plainer sailing. At

the same time was this feeling of the career. From my earliest interest in painting after I commenced to know more about it, I would absorb all the art books in the little libraries that I got in contact with. In St. Paul, they had quite a good art library and books that I thought were perfectly marvelous. I'd never seen anything like them before, and I used to rush down after dinner and spend my evenings in the library pouring over these things. And the idea of mural painting seemed to me the grandest career that one could embark upon. I got more and more enthusiastic about mural painting. My only contact with real mural paintings were the paintings in the capitol at St. Paul. They have those of Blashfield and some other painters. What are their names? I've forgotten now. And in the supreme court [room of the capitol], big lunettes of John La Farge. The room wasn't very well lit. The light was rather weak in there, but in a way, it gave a certain mystery and majesty to these huge things of La Farge. I thought they were perfectly marvelous, and I believe they are quite good. So for a long time, I dreamt of mural painting. But there were certain difficulties. One is the fact that there was a period, inspired by the Chicago Fair of 1894, in which sculpture and painting was very much used by the architects. That really was the beginning of the spirit of mural painting that was exemplified by the work of Edwin Blashfield, Kenyon Cox, and half a dozen others who made a reputation for themselves doing things, especially in public buildings and the new courthouses and statehouses. When we were students, Puvis de Chavannes was looked upon as one of the great men of the period. He's somewhat less known now, but he seemed one of the great ones at that time. The fact that he had a sense of the wall and didn't paint big realistic historical pictures, such as we see in the Capitol at Washington [which were done] by some of our earlier painters, seemed to be something extremely modern, rather revolutionary. As a boy I enjoyed Puvis de Chavannes very much and I used to look at his murals in the library in Boston a great deal. I wasn't altogether happy with his work, I think, for the reason that although they were very beautiful in design, and certainly from the point of view of decoration they functioned very well, they seemed to me not paintings. On the other hand, in the library upstairs was Sargent's famous prophets and there are big panels by Edwin Abbey, who was an excellent illustrator and who painted some fine illustrations on the wall. But that again didn't seem to be quite right. So I would look back to the things that really inspired me and could not figure out exactly what was ahead, what I could shoot for. When I got to Europe things clarified quite a bit. Certain artists were terrific experiences to me in the way of wall painting. I think probably the first one was Giotto. His work I had known since a youngster through a bunch of Perry pictures I bought. So I knew the pictures quite well, but I was quite amazed, and it was a revelation to see the real paintings. Then I did see things that were the quintessence of what I would like to do. They made me long to

have been born in the days of the late Renaissance, in Venice, for example, when Tintoretto and Titian and the real painters could do these magnificent big canvases. At the same time, the days of Blashfield and Cox were drawing to a close, and there was nothing very much to inspire one to become a mural painter until the influence of the Mexicans--Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros. And it is interesting that in spite of a lot that I find quite tiresome about [Diego] Rivera, he did have a sense of fresco painting. Although quite a few things have been attempted, especially under the Federal Art Project in pure fresco, the ones I've seen seem to fail from the point of view of being painting. But Rivera's good things have really a nice sense of painting. He could often use the medium with real feeling. In fact, unless you're really born in a period of great fresco painting, such as the Italian Renaissance, I doubt if you could do too much with it. And there's no special reason why we should, because we have the technical means of getting so many effects now that in the early days was limited to pure fresco, but now you can work in other ways. [Jose] Orozco had a definite sense of the painter. But outside of that, what distressed me was that, from what little I could see or learn about, architects were not as interested in mural painting as they had been. They wanted pure architecture, and that was disturbed by stuff being put on their wall. And if they did, they wanted it to be flat and decorative, and not at all the work of the real painter. I always feel that Giotto was a real painter; Grünewald was a real painter; and El Greco certainly was. That big canvas of his in Toledo, The Burial of Count Orgaz, is a wonderful thing on a wall, in that architecture and in that setting. It combines everything one could dream of. So what I was suffering from was a yen for the monumental, which in the case of a Rubens got full expression. And Rubens, although he did quite a number of small things (some of his most beautiful things are his sketches for his large canvases), he said he did not enjoy doing what he called little curiosities, and he spoke of the easel picture as a "little curiosity." Well, I think the painter all along has felt a little bit the sense of the easel picture as somehow not being quite the real thing. But in spite of that, of course, some of our greatest things are quite small, and they're really sort of "little curiosities." Rembrandt's Supper at Emmaus in the Louvre, which I think is one of the most terrific paintings, as a painting, a small picture that could be carried around and hung any place in the house quite nicely. So, to a certain degree, I felt that, after all, there are plenty of fields without going into anything on a very large scale. I enjoyed painting portraits, but it didn't take me very long to feel that as a career it was something that I would not be too successful in. I mean I didn't have the temperament for it. The profession of a portrait painter is felt just now, I think, to be more or less a commercial art. When I was a boy, we never saw an exhibition that didn't have portraits in it. Portraits were quite an important part, especially in the shows in Minneapolis-St. Paul. If they had portraits by

[Robert] Henri and [William] Chase and other of the well-known portrait painters from the East, we felt they had something really worthwhile in the show. And now, of course, we never see anything of that sort at all. That doesn't mean that we haven't some excellent portrait painters, and we have a great many portrait painters. It's interesting that there's as much of a demand for the portrait as there is, but people love the painted portrait for some reason. And if you can do one halfway decent, you can usually find a public for it. And if you can do them very well and like to do that sort of thing, you can have quite an interesting life. But it involves being with people much more than some painters like to be. You have to be socially agreeable. I noticed in Paris some of the painters that I met there who were portrait painters--and not very good ones--did very well. They were sociable fellows. They liked to be out. They liked to meet people. They were good storytellers, and they could give nice little parties. And the first thing you'd know, somebody would give them a commission for a portrait. Sometimes it's quite difficult to understand. One case I remember was in Sicily. There was a man there who had a very nice old place which he fixed up and he put in a billiard room. He was a watercolor painter, a rather amateurish one. But for some strange reason everybody who went to his parties would buy a watercolor [laughter], even though they'd swear they didn't like his work, and they wouldn't have one of them for anything. But the first thing you'd know, you'd meet them, and they'd rather shamefacedly confess that they had bought one of his watercolors. I wondered how he did it, but I could never figure it out. He never seemed to use any salesmanship; he didn't talk them into it or anything. But, you know, he hypnotized them into going away with it. A lot of portrait commissions, I think, are the same way. Of course, that was something that didn't fit in too much with my ideals of the life of an artist, no matter how pleasant it might be. Another reason that I found difficulty in practicing as a portrait painter was that more and more I found it difficult to work if I couldn't work alone. The presence of other people, even of the sitter, I found disturbing. If I could freeze the sitter and make him unconscious for a few hours [laughter] and then bring him to life, why, I think we'd get along beautifully, because then I could work in complete solitude. Sometimes in the history of art you can recognize people who had this same difficulty. George Frederic Watts, who was a much better portrait painter than many people recognize, would not let the sitter see what he was doing until it was finished. Well, I think that is rather hard on the sitter because they're curious to see how the thing is coming along, you know. And they're sympathetic if you're in difficulty. So I don't see any special reason why you should try to isolate yourself in that way, but that was his way of working. And so they'd come sitting after sitting and they'd have the boredom of sitting there and then go away without knowing what had happened. The story that I rather

like and really brings Watts to mind as a portrait painter is his portrait of Carlyle. It's quite a fine portrait. Finally it was finished, and he turned it around for Carlyle to see. Carlyle looked at it, and it seems Carlyle used to fall back into his Scotch speech in conversation very easily, so he looked at it silently for a while and then he turned to Watts and he said, "I'm in the habit of wurrin' clane linen!" [with a Scotch accent] He saw tonal values of grays on this white shirt, which was something he couldn't appreciate--it was a white shirt and should be painted white. [laughter] Sometimes the talented people get by in another way. The other extreme was a woman in Paris. I'm not sure but I think she won the Carnegie Prize. Her work was excellent in its way. I know she did get quite substantial recognition for her portraits. I used to see her once in a while. She was, I think, Polish by birth. Boznanska I think her name was. I used to go up with some of her friends sometimes and drop in to see her. She had a big studio. What made it difficult for people was that she wanted a great many sittings. She seemed to take a heck of a long time to paint a portrait. Ordinarily, of course, that would tire a sitter out. You can go a few times, but it becomes an awful bore if a painter wants a great many sittings because for most people it's rather hard work, sitting still. But she had the ability to work with any number of people around her. So she'd have the samovar going and cookies and things on a table and people would drop in and meet each other there and conversation would be going on. I think the sitter probably found it quite amusing. He could sit there and listen and join in once in a while, and all this time, this little old lady was working away on his portrait. When she got through there wasn't too much on the canvas, after maybe months of work. It'd be a very delicate tonal sort of thing, as though seen through a haze, but with a very fine sense of character. It really was a very genuine portrait painting. Out of this mist, a personality would emerge which was very convincing, very good. That is the opposite extreme of a person like myself who likes to have silence or maybe some recorded music. But I'm not able to do my best work if somebody's there and has to be amused. And even if I had good stories or anecdotes to tell to keep a live expression on their face, why, I wouldn't be in the mood to do it. So the idea of mural painting was in the back of my mind all of the time I was in Paris. I was always thinking of it. One of my teachers, Maurice Denis (I was only with him a short time), was a Catholic and did many things for churches quite a lot. He did many murals. He did the Théâtre des Champs Élysées, which was then somewhat a new theater in Paris. Incidentally, it has some very fine examples of some of the painters of that time, including some frescoes by the sculptor Bourdelle that are excellent small panels. Then there are these large things by Maurice Denis which are very decorative. Maurice Denis and Georges Desvallières formed a school for painting, especially of a religious nature. I went down one day to the atelier where they had the school, thinking

that maybe here was my chance. They didn't seem to feel that they wanted students who were not seriously interested in the Catholic faith working in church decoration, church painting, and church art. They rather discouraged the idea of my joining, so I was rather disappointed because I might have wanted to do something for a Catholic church. After all, Chagall is doing windows for Christian churches now. How did they know that I wouldn't turn out to doing some very fine things. Some of the Renaissance things were done by some very irreligious people and were looked upon as very successful religious paintings. But that was the only chance that I had, then, of learning some of the techniques of mural painting and getting experience. The great inspiration I had for that sort of thing started with Giotto. If you know the work of a man only through reproductions and prints, you often get a surprise when you see the original things, and so it was surprising to see the beauty in color of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling. In spite of Greco, who described Michelangelo as a very estimable man but that he wasn't a painter--which was not altogether I think fair--one knows what Greco meant. Greco's early training was Byzantine. In Venice he became a painter in the Western sense. Of course, anything Venetian is completely absent from Michelangelo's painting, especially his fresco painting. The fresco technique, except for fresco secco, is not one especially in the spirit of Venetian painting. The quality of painting in Venice is really expressed much more in oil painting. I have Titian in mind and Tintoretto maybe above all. He painted the enormous Paradise in the Council Hall of the Doges' Palace. It's not just a design, it is great and profound painting. On a smaller scale, the Grünewald altar in Colmar is also an example of what painting meant to me. And, of course, the Burial of Count Orgaz of Greco bowled me over completely. The man who in those days--much less so now--was rather disparaged was Tiepolo. I enjoyed Tiepolo because no matter how many acres of wall he worked on, he maintained a spirit of the true painter. He was not just a man making beautiful patterns. It was gorgeous painting. In many ways it can't be compared to the real giants, but he was certainly fantastic. He had marvelous ingenuity in his compositions, in his design and form. His color was sometimes superb, and always with the feeling of a real painter. That spirit of painting is a rather curious thing. It occupies a country for a while and seems to move on and take up its abode someplace else. It starts in Flanders and gets tired and goes down south to see what the weather's like down there and we have the Renaissance (the techniques of Venetian painting really come from Flanders), and it visits Spain, not very long, and makes the acquaintance of Mr. Velázquez and El Greco, and it later paid a short visit, and we have a Goya. There are no great Spanish schools, but a few geniuses. But it liked France very well. It hung around France quite a lot and brought forth some wonderful things. It had no sympathy with Poland or

Russia or that part of the world, and not too much with Germany. Germans are great draftsmen--their Holbeins and their Dürers and their [Martin] Schongauers--and a few startling cases of art like the painting of Dürer and Grünewald. But I suppose that after that early period, the economy of life in Germany was not favorable to much development in the arts. Holland had a short period of great painting. Before her Rembrandts and her Hals and her Vermeers and her de Hoochs there's not too much. And then after that you get a sudden sort of a flight by the boys who trekked down to Italy and, not being Italians, they brought in a spirit which made it quite a descent from the extraordinary talent of the painters that I just mentioned.

SCHIPPERS

When did you first start doing portraiture?

NUTTING

Well, literally speaking, I sold my first portrait in an art school, in St. Paul. I did a portrait of a model and the woman who was posing was quite impressed by it, and she offered me five dollars for it. So I was delighted to take five dollars for my portrait, which I painted rather quickly, as a matter of fact. As I remember it, it was quite a long time before I did anything as good. It was quite freely done; it was nice in tonality, and the drawing wasn't bad. There was quite a bit of likeness there. In art schools, of course, I worked from the model, doing portraits. I don't remember selling any--or even trying to--until I went to Europe. I was quite surprised to find two things in Paris. I think it could have been true also in Rome, but I especially noticed it in Paris. All of a sudden, I had pupils, and I had people who wanted their portrait painted. In both cases, I don't think they'd have studied art if they'd been at home. I think that they were just traveling and thought it would be nice to take back a portrait. And would I paint their portrait? I found quite a lot of people were doing that sort of thing. I mean they really systematized it by meeting people who came to Paris and by going to teas and parties and getting acquainted and throwing a little dinner. All of a sudden it would happen. But that is something I never did. In spite of that, every once in a while somebody would want a portrait. I didn't charge too much, two or three hundred dollars for a head. So I got those to do and then someone would say, "Oh, my daughter is going to spend the summer in Paris. Couldn't you give her some drawing lessons? Couldn't you give her some painting lessons?" And somebody else would say, "Well, while I'm over here I think I'd like to learn something about painting. Would you teach me?" Here were schools with a thousand, it seemed to me, teachers and painters and places to go, but maybe there was a kind of shyness about going where English wasn't spoken or taking the trouble to find somebody who spoke English at the schools, so they'd take the first one who could. It seemed to work out quite successfully. They enjoyed themselves. It's curious that I don't even have

photographs of any of the things that I did in those days. There was hardly anything worthwhile. I have no record of them. After I left Paris, while I was in Milwaukee, I did some under the Federal Art Project. I did things mostly for schools and places that wanted a portrait of the principal or director or somebody. One time I had to do it from a lot of old photographs, which was pretty difficult. Another time I did a portrait of a professor of medicine at Wisconsin University, a charming man who used to come around. I did the portrait for the university under the projects But I didn't try for commissions; I didn't encourage it. [tape off] Another thing that rather had its implications, I think, and that is environment and relationship of a work of art to its environment. We all rather hate to show our work in a bad collection of art, in a gallery that shows poor things, or in an exhibition which is not up to scratch, because it seems to pull your work down for some reason. It looks like the rest of the stuff unless you really look at it. The fact that people don't see a thing except in terms of the surroundings as a whole puzzled me at first. Now that was one thing that bothered me about doing an easel picture. How do you do a serious thing like Rembrandt's Supper at Emmaus, a small picture in the Louvre, which Rubens would call a "little curiosity," maybe because it's a little canvas. But it's a very, very grand thing. That being used as a decoration on a wall in an apartment or something, there would seem to be a lack of ability to integrate it. You don't have tremendously serious music going all the time, and yet you're perfectly willing to have something that a man has spent a great deal of time on. Well, obviously, Rembrandt was rather a slow worker, and he obviously spent a long time on that. It was a very serious problem to him. He did it very, very beautifully. But it wasn't done as an ornament. It wasn't done as a decoration over a mantel or anything of that sort. It was a very profound work of art. Well, I got a little clue in Rome, when I noticed that I would do something and it would be on the wall maybe for a month, but nobody would ever notice it. Then I chanced to rearrange my studio, and I put this over on another wall someplace else, and people would come in, "Oh, you've done a new picture! I never saw that before." [laughter] That's puzzled me, but I find it's very common. I had people here not long ago who said, "Oh, when did you do this? I never saw that before." Great Scott, again and again and again, they sat right opposite it and never saw it. Well, I think it's rather a good thing because you can see it in terms of the environment, and then if it appeals to you, maybe you'll suddenly realize that's a great thing. I'm sure that you could take a great masterpiece and put it in a window on Wilshire and watch the crowd, and mighty few would stop to look at it. But maybe somebody would get excited, "Where'd you get that? Where did that come from?" Once in Paris-- apropos of that sort of thing, that it's when you see it in an environment in which it's not appropriate or it is appropriate--I suddenly discovered that one of

my cufflinks was broken. In those days I had sort of a fetish of never wearing anything that cost any money in the way of jewelry. Cufflinks of a good size and shape and color was all I wanted. The same way with everything else of the sort. I had few things of value. So when I found my cufflink was broken, I went into the Printemps, I think it was, a sort of department store, the Macy's of Paris, and went around until I found a counter where they had five-and-dime stuff. A crowd was shoving about at a sort of bargain counter next to it, so I edged my way into it. These women were pawing for the stuff and grabbing this and that and working their way in and working their way out. As I was looking over this stuff, I glanced up, and over in the corner, I saw a section that was partitioned off to a certain extent where there were pictures. Well, that didn't surprise me because department stores have their sections where you can buy framed pictures. I didn't pay any attention. Then I glanced up again, and I thought it rather strange. When I found what I wanted, I went over to see what it was. And here was a collection of pictures, and in the state of mind that I was in, I could not bring myself to believe that they were paintings, because in that atmosphere of this old store (I mean it was not like the elegant stores we have nowadays) and with all these middle-class women pawing over their lingerie and one thing and another, making a lot of noise, and the people milling around, the general atmosphere was anything but the spirit of the Salon Carré at the Louvre. [laughter] And so my first idea was, "My, these are wonderful reproductions. Goodness I wonder what process that is?" And I went up and it seemed to be a real painting. Well, seriously, I still couldn't believe that they were real paintings. I thought maybe I had taken too long a walk, or it was the heat or something [laughter] that affected me and that I was seeing things. I went up to the canvas. It was a jewel. One of the nicest little Courbets I ever saw. Up in the corner, it was signed Courbet. I got close and I looked at that thing and it was paint. It was not a reproduction! I went to the next picture and it was a beautiful Pissarro. They were all smallish sort of pictures, but it was a fairly good-sized collection of the Impressionists--of Courbet and of Manet--and each one of its type was just a knockout. Well, I thought to myself, I am dreaming. I went out and looked over the room, with all the activity there and the noise and the bustle and the people shopping for their goods, and I turned back and looked at these things, and they were real! I didn't know what to do about it. I looked around and here was a tall fellow in uniform standing nearby. So I went up and spoke to him. I cooked up some kind of a question, I've forgotten what it was. I didn't know what to ask him, but I said something about this collection of pictures. He said, "Yes, Monsieur, that is a private collection of Monsieur Chouchard." Well, Chouchard was the owner of the store, and afterwards, I think, he provided a special museum or endowment for the collection someplace, and it really was a famous collection of painting. But to

meet it all of a sudden in a different atmosphere was an experience that I have often thought of. I think it does have certain implications about the function of the small picture in the life around your house. In my Saturday evening group--as I've said before, it's all worthwhile--we are very willing to discuss a picture simply from the point of view of decoration, because it's going to be that first of all. It's going to be simply an object on the wall of a certain color and have a certain place. In your home it has a certain texture and quality of its own. It takes on its meaning from the way you dispose of it. You could have the finest thing in the world and you could walk into a place and feel that, the person who owns it has no feeling for the subject at all because of the way it's used and the way it's placed. But somehow another person who really has a feeling for the graphic arts or for painting can take a mediocre thing and use it in their surroundings so that it has meaning. That person understands. That person feels.

1.28. TAPE NUMBER: XIV, Side Two (March 28, 1966)

NUTTING

Although I never got to know Gertrude Stein at all well--I only met her--her brother Leo Stein was to me a very interesting man, and I used to meet him quite often, especially at the Rotonde. He loved to talk. He talked very well, and I have an idea that he's not given enough credit for the Stein participation in the modern art movement. I remember he told a story of the first Matisse that he bought, and I had the idea it was one of the first painters of the modern movement that he had acquired. And the way he told the story, he was the man who really discovered Matisse, although he didn't say so. He said that he went to an exhibition (I don't know whether it was the Autumn Salon or the Indépendants) and was very much interested in the contemporary modern painters being shown there. He saw this thing of Matisse and liked it very much, found it extremely interesting, and he jotted it down along with some other names. When he went out at the desk there, he asked the price of the Matisse painting, among others, and he was given the catalog price Matisse had set on the work. For some funny reason, the person at the desk inferred that probably he could get it for less if he wanted to make an offer. I don't know whether that was the practice or not, but I can't imagine it was. The price was very modest, as a matter of fact. So he left an offer which was something below the catalog price. He went back and found that Matisse had refused the price. He said it didn't make any difference to him, especially because the price wasn't too much, so he gladly paid the original price Matisse asked for the picture. Afterwards, he found that at the time they presented this offer to Matisse, Matisse was not well and also was not financially at all well-off. But, in spite of

that, he felt that he had put a fair price on the picture and he simply refused to come down on it. Anyway that was his story of his buying his first Matisse. He didn't mention his sister as being in on the interest or the deal at all, that he himself had seen the exhibition and made his choice and acquired the picture. So that gave me the idea--and from his conversation, too--that he was a man who had good understanding and good insight, the kind of a person who would do very well in appreciating what the modern painter was trying to do. I never heard Gertrude Stein talk, but I've read what she has to say, and she didn't have at all that kind of a mind. She may have had an intuitive feeling that was good, and a lot of feeling for it rubbed off on her from other people. And I'm just wondering, I simply don't know, if maybe Leo wasn't really the man with the brains and the understanding, as well as having a sensitivity and an intuitive feeling about modern art. Anyway, that's the impression I got from the stories he told and also from the very long conversations [I had with him]. I met quite a few people that way who gave me the idea that they were working on something, that they were writing something. I never read any of his writing, come to think of it. I'm sorry I haven't. I'd like to look it up and see what he did. But he gave me the feeling that he liked to talk if a person was at all sympathetic and a good listener. [laughter] I mean he wasn't a man to talk just for talking's sake, because in talking, he put his thoughts into words, and maybe in the conversation, he could shape things in his mind preparatory to writing. Two or three times, I've met people and I was quite sure they were doing that. I remember once, up in the Abruzzi Mountains where we stayed in a little hotel during a vacation, we met an English journalist, a writer. He was taking a little time off for a rest and staying at this same hotel. He was an interesting man. But he was apparently writing, even on his vacation, and at dinner or after dinner, he would talk very interestingly. Well, I'm sure he wasn't especially interested in informing me on world affairs, of the Balkan situation or that sort of thing. It was just what he had on his mind. He was interested, and if his talk could have been taped, I think it could have been published with very little modification or correction. I think that in a way this was one of his techniques, and Leo Stein was another one of those people. Leo Stein was one of Paul Burlin's wedding party. Paul Burlin married a buyer for Carson Pirie Scott & Co. in Chicago. She was a very handsome Jewish girl, tall, black-haired. When they were married, Paul asked me to be best man. Well, best man simply meant he wanted somebody to be a witness when he went down to the mairie to get married. But they had a very nice wedding breakfast with some quite interesting people, and Leo Stein was one of the guests. And his wedding present, I thought, was a very handsome thing. It was quite an expensive book, apparently, and it looked to me like practically all of the metal engravings of Albrecht Dürer were in it. They were very well reproduced. I remember him

giving that book, and it stuck in my mind because it is one that I would have loved to have had. But the wedding present and our conversations are about as much as I remember of Leo. [tape off] As I said, I went to Europe without any definite idea of how long I was going to stay or what I was going to do. The course of events--my marriage and the coming of the war and my war activities--put any idea of coming back out of my mind for some time. But, always, in the back of my mind was the idea that pretty soon, or in not the too distant future, I must get back home and get busy with whatever I was going to do in the way of some sort of a career. One evening at the Rotonde cafe, I met a [Jean] Paul Slusser who was head of the art department at Ann Arbor. We got into conversation, and he was staying a little time in Paris, so I invited him up and we had drinks. I saw something of him during his short stay there, and one evening sitting at the Rotonde, I talked to him about life in Paris and how much I enjoyed it and how much my years in Europe meant to me, that I always thought, from year to year, that pretty soon I would be going home, but in some way, I put it off. We could manage to stay on for another year and there were things we wanted to see and things we wanted to do, so we'd wangle another year's stay. And I said, "This can't go on forever. I've got to go back and start something, but I don't know what to do." I hadn't been showing at home, and although I started out in art school with the idea that in some way I must make a living, there were only two things that we as students thought of as a means of livelihood to be at all substantial: One was portrait painting and the other was magazine illustration. In those days, illustration was much less of a commercial art than it afterwards became. That is to say, quite a number of our best painters started out in doing work for magazines, even mural painters like Kenyon Cox and Blashfield. I remember one very excellent thing that was done by John La Farge in the early part of his career for one of those magazines. The magazines in those days that really did nice things were Harper's and Century and Scribner's Magazine. They made an effort to have really good work. The result was that the good illustrators like Pyle, and especially Pyle's pupils, could consider themselves as very real artists. They didn't want to do ephemeral things; they did the very best they could as artists, and especially as painters. Some of them were excellent. Harvey Dunn, to mention a name, was a pupil of Isle's, and so was N. C. Wyeth. Another reason my enthusiasm for Howard Pyle increased as a youngster was that when I went to the capitol at St. Paul [I saw a mural of his]. They were rather ambitious for mural decoration in the building of the capitol, and they had a number of our best known mural painters--the large lunettes of John La Farge that I admired enormously. In the governor's reception room, there was a good-sized picture, not a mural but a large canvas by Howard Pyle set in the paneled wall of the reception room--The Battle of Gettysburg. I'd like to see it again. But I wasn't

prepared to be an illustrator. I hadn't done much work of that sort in Paris. I had done some, but in a rather slight sort of way. I made drawings for a paper there. Curiously enough, a friend of ours persuaded me to do fashion drawings. I didn't do them very well, but she liked them; and the paper didn't complain, so it was one little source of revenue--the weekly drawings. She'd bring material and also take me to openings. I'd make little sketches and draw up the fashions, and I'd do a group of things that she wanted done. I also used to do things for her for other magazines that she represented in England, none of which were over in this country. That was, of course, not at all up my alley, and I was amazed that they wanted them. However, it was a good thing for me. It gave me a job, a very definite problem and technique for working for reproduction. So I enjoyed it. My friend Wallace, of course, was a very fine illustrator, and had done excellent work. What I was regretting was that in pursuing my own work, I had not tried to get some sort of a start in that field. But it is just as well I didn't, because I don't think that I would have had any very great success, especially in the magazine field. I still would have enjoyed doing things for books. I never did except for one book of poems by Edward Storer that was published by the Egoist Press, and I've lost my copy of that. I had some little woodcuts in it, but not very many. But I enjoyed doing them very much. I mentioned these things to Paul Slusser, that it would take some time if I were going to make a career of portrait painting. I didn't know exactly where to go, or how to get started, or how to make the contacts. So I said, "So far as I can see, what I must try to do, the very first thing, is to get a job teaching until I can see which way to find myself, because I've been away a long time. A lot has changed. It is a different world than it was when I left home." He said, "If you want to teach I know a job for you." And I said, "That's very interesting. I certainly would consider it." He said, "We'll see about that." He didn't say anymore about it. Well, a few days later, I got a letter from Biarritz in the south of France, from a Charlotte Partridge, and she explained that she received a letter from Paul Slusser, and that she and Miriam Frink were spending their vacation in the south of France and also that they were directors of the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee and would like very much to interview me for a position as instructor at the Layton School of Art. "Would it be possible for me to come down to Biarritz?" I wrote back, "Yes." I took the train to Biarritz and met them. I found them very pleasant people. We had a conference, and they explained that the salary wasn't very much (I've forgotten what it was now), but it was adequate. I went back to Paris and talked it over with Helen, and we decided to pull up stakes and go to Milwaukee. We started right away trying to dispose of our lease on our apartment and disposing of things that we didn't want to bring back home. Miss Frink and Miss Partridge stopped in Paris for a few days on their way back home. We went around with them quite a bit, and it

was kind of funny: I'd take them out to a cafe or to dinner or something, and as always happens most anyplace you go, if you've lived there for a long time, somebody comes in that you know. I would hale them and then introduce my friends. Miss Frink and Miss Partridge, and then I'd say, "Well, I'm leaving, you know." And they'd say, "What? You're leaving Paris? Why, that's incredible. You've been here such a long time. I can't imagine you'd ever leave Paris." I said, "Yes, I'm going back. These ladies are directors of the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee, and I'm going to teach there." Well, the almost embarrassing thing was that, again and again, they'd burst out into a great guffaw over the idea that I would leave Paris to go to Milwaukee. [laughter] It was something that they seemed to think rather grotesque. They couldn't imagine that after my life in Rome and Paris, all of a sudden I'd go to Milwaukee. With Miss Frink and Miss Partridge sitting right there and hearing their city laughed at, it was, as I say, somewhat embarrassing. Then came the job of subletting the lease. A man and his wife turned up, Garrett Sinclair and his wife Catherine. He was the painting teacher at the Layton School of Art. He had been with the school since its beginning and was taking a year's leave of absence and was going to live in Paris, so he and his wife came up to the studio, and before the evening was over, we had subletted our studio to them. He thought that was wonderful because he was wondering what he was going to do in Paris about finding a place to live and work, so he was very glad to take over the rest of our lease for the year. We were all set. After we'd disposed of everything we could that we didn't want to take back, we had the rest packed. During the packing, we had to entertain people who came in and out--they heard we were leaving Paris--so it was a very busy time. Quite towards the end of our preparations for leaving, Edward Titus, the bookdealer, came up with a friend of his. [tape off] Well, our furniture was all gone practically, and we had nothing but packing cases and the general confusion of a place that's about to be vacated. But Titus and his friend sat down, and we brought out drinks and sat on the boxes and really had a very delightful evening. Titus was a quiet but a very interesting sort of a man, and his friend was quite charming and seemed to enjoy himself very much and talked very well. Titus gave his friend's name when he introduced us to him, but he didn't make too much of an impression, and it wasn't until towards the end of the evening, or after they were gone that we realized who it was. It was suddenly made plain that he was a man who at that time was extremely well known as a writer because his novel, *The Green Hat*, had been very successful. So that was one of the last of our contacts with the people in Paris who were contributing to art and letters. In the meantime, we had been trying to find passage home. But it was the end of vacation time, and I found it was extremely difficult. We went again and again to travel agencies and offices to find some passage to get us to New York.

Finally we found that the only really satisfactory passage that we could get was from England. Well, I didn't mind that especially because I was very pleased to have one more look at London before going back home. So we went to England, stayed about a week in London and again I got to see some of my favorite things in the National Gallery--Tintoretto's Origin of the Milky Way, Velázquez's Venus, and Titian's Bacchus, and other things that I was especially enthusiastic about. We also enjoyed the city, because London is such a contrast to Paris, but at the same time it has its own charm and interests. We got a steamer that sailed from Plymouth, I believe. From New York we took the train to Milwaukee. We got to Milwaukee on a weekend and school started the following week, on Monday. I called on Miss Partridge and found that they had been in a terrific dither. Miss Partridge expected that I would be in Milwaukee well ahead of time to get acquainted, you know, and here I had arrived practically the day before the school opened. [laughter] They didn't know whether they were going to have a teacher or not. So they were vastly relieved that I finally turned up. Of course, we stayed in a hotel for a while and then we found an apartment, quite a nice one, overlooking Lake Michigan, and our life in Milwaukee began. Well, it was, of course, a tremendous change in lots of ways. I was especially impressed with the changes that had taken place in the idea of an art school. The only art schools that I knew before I left for Europe were run on what I suppose they would call the atelier system of the European academies, largely because the people who were the teachers in the schools, and who in most cases managed them, and organized them, had their principal art training in Europe; so they used the same idea. In the schools of art where you studied sculpture and painting, the course would be conducted under that idea and would especially concentrate on working from the model. The regular course would be to work from a plaster cast and then on to life drawing, and then from life drawing on to painting. The painting class sometimes would be a day's work or sometimes it would be half the day, with the morning spent in drawing, and painting in the afternoon. In the late afternoon they'd have perhaps an hour or so of sketch class, of quick poses, and then for an evening course, maybe lectures on perspective and on anatomy. There was nothing ever specially required in any of the ones that I knew very much about. In drawing or painting, the professor would have a day for criticism--usually, as I remember, on Friday. He would come and make his rounds and give individual criticism and that was your teaching. When I was shown around the Layton School, I found, to my amazement, something quite different, just what the art schools now are. The teacher did not have a criticism day. He was right there with the class during working hours. I found that a bit difficult because, although the classes were quite good-sized, once you had gotten them started, given your talk and maybe a certain amount of demonstration, why, there

wasn't very much else to do for a while. I would have liked to have gone to the library or taken a walk or done some of my own work, something of that sort, but that would have been a very bad precedent, especially at the Layton School. They were quite concerned about their teachers. They used to have another thing that I wasn't at all used to--these conferences. They'd get the faculty together and have meetings to discuss this problem and that problem and this problem kid and that problem kid, one thing and another. That was all new to me. I didn't know that they were going to take a personal interest in the psychological condition or the moral behavior of their youngsters, and I felt like I was running some kind of a kindergarten school in a way. It was strange that these adults, at least they were all supposed to be graduates of high school, should be treated in this way. Of course, in the older art schools and academies, if you were serious, you were there on time and you worked hard. And if you weren't serious, why, you came in late and nobody bothered you. In Paris, the quality of the work was measured by the monthly concours. The teacher would pick out certain things to hang on the wall, and then at the end of the month, the things that had been selected were given a grade. You'd win a concours. If you could win a concours month after month, you were really good. But it was up to you to work for it. You didn't have to follow any special schedule. The same way with other things in the school. If you could pass the examination in anatomy, you took it, but you could simply take the course and not take the examination. It all depended, of course, on what you were working for. They never bothered you. But here, heavens above, the bell rang for you to go to class and the bell rang for you to break up and the bell rang for you in the afternoon and the bell rang for you when it was over. [laughter] I had to get used to that and also to the fact that every month I had this mountain of stuff I had to go through and grade. Why, heavens, I didn't know how to grade kids' work, and I didn't like the idea. But I finally found what they were after, and I went through it more or less to their satisfaction. My work was primarily the teaching of life drawing. Then I did a certain amount of teaching of painting, but in that school, they didn't do too much painting from a prolonged pose of the model. When they got into painting, it was more compositions and things of that sort. They had, of course, as all art schools do nowadays, other things--commercial design, for example. That's another thing that I discovered when I got back, that the career of the commercial artist had changed quite a lot. You could work for advertising agencies, and there was a special life for the kid who went to the art school to prepare himself for advertising, whereas, when I was a boy, I don't remember anything like an advertising agency employing artists. I know it was true in St. Paul and was, so far as I know, also true in Boston at that time, although I don't know whether I'm quite right about Boston, but a lot of the young fellows would learn layout and lettering. Those

were the two things which gave you a chance of supplementing your income. And the way I see that it started was that the engraving houses that made halftone and line cuts for advertisements in newspapers and publications would employ people to make layouts and to do lettering, because if someone would want to put an ad in the paper and he would want to have a nice effect and he'd like very much to have a picture to go with it, a drawing of what he was selling or some sort of a splash, he would go to the engraving house to have his cut made. That was his primary reason for going there. They'd say, "Oh, yes. Now, we can give you this kind of a thing, and we have so-and-so who will do this and that for you." So either a boy who worked there on the job in the backroom making a layout for a fashion drawing or furniture drawing or something, or else someone who worked at home would come around and pick up his jobs and take them home. I knew one boy in New York who supplemented his livelihood quite well that way. He seemed to have contacts with a number of places. I'd be out with him, and he'd say, "Wait just a moment. I'm going to go in here." He'd go in and come out with some little job they'd given him. And that evening I'd be with him in his room, and he'd be sitting at his drawing table working away on some little thing. He'd take it back to the engraving house the next day. Well, that was all gone when I got to Milwaukee; I could see that there was something quite different. And here were courses in lettering and layout techniques--in other words, in commercial art. The division between fine arts and commercial art had become much more marked in the training for it. The disciplines are not the same, except in the case of basic drawing and a certain amount of work in color, but color was always studied with the idea of reproduction processes in mind. They also had a class in sculpture and modeling, that they don't have so much in schools of commercial art. The second year I was there I gave the course in art history; I gave weekly lectures. I was very well fixed for that because they got slides for me from the Art Institute of Chicago. At first, I used to make out quite careful lists of the material that I wanted, but sometimes the slide wouldn't be quite satisfactory and would be somewhat of a disappointment. But whoever it was at the Institute (I never met her and only knew her by correspondence) did a very good job. I'd tell her what my subject was and what idea I had in mind, mentioning maybe some things that I wanted especially but left the rest up to her, so I'd get a bunch of excellent slides. I enjoyed that part of my work very much, except that I couldn't do too much with the students. I remember the first year I lectured on art history. In the little high schools that I went to, ancient and modern history were required studies and I supposed any high school graduate had the elements of history, that you could speak about the Renaissance and mention some of the historical atmosphere, or at least refer to it with some meaning. So I sailed gaily in and would talk about Michelangelo

and maybe remind them of the time and atmosphere of Rome and Florence then. But before Michelangelo, they didn't know a thing. My course took two years; I had up to the Renaissance one year, and from the Renaissance down to modern times the next year. I had gotten as far as Byzantine art in Italy and was talking about that period--fortunately, it was very early in the game--when to my amazement, I discovered by accident that there wasn't a youngster in the class that knew anything about the Byzantine period of the Roman empire or art or anything else. They didn't seem to know the meaning of the word. There may have been a few, but my impression was that on the whole they drew a perfect blank. I had to back up and outline my course all over again with that definitely in mind. Also if I did refer to anything like Byzantine, I had to briefly say something about the church in Constantinople, why Constantinople was named after Emperor Constantine, the first Christian emperor, and that was why we had the Oriental influence in Italy, which seems rather strange because you would expect to find that much further east. I'd try to do that in a few words, and not simply refer to what I thought they would already know. So it was a very good discipline in teaching--to be clear and not to confuse them, not to assume that they knew. Some of the students liked the course very much. I had quite a few followers. But it's not the kind of thing the boys who went there for commercial art, for example, were especially interested in. It was difficult to give them enough information to pass an examination in art history, because they had to do that to get the certificate. For my own teaching, I also had an awful lot to learn, and that first year was really quite an experience. I sailed in quite gaily with the idea of teaching life drawing. I thought that was just no trick at all. After all, I had been more or less through the mill and thought that isn't too important--I mean, the fact that you could draw very well or not, as long as you understand it, and I felt that I did. After all, I had been looking at drawings and reading about drawings, and drawing had been a tremendous interest. Every little thing about becoming an artist was something that has always interested me. So I thought I had it all at my fingertips, and all I had to do was to go around, sit down and say, "Well, that is very good so far, but now if we'll be a little bit more logical about it, it will be much more successful." Well, sometimes that would work, but very often it would not work, to my surprise. One thing always puzzled me very much. I had always learned a great deal from my teachers when they showed me something. If my life instructor, which was quite the ideal in the old days, would make an analysis of a form or a structure on the side of my sheet or illustrate what he was talking about with a sketch, that was extremely helpful. The same way with painting. In those days, the instructor in painting would come around and look at your work and criticize it. Then he would maybe pick out some little part on the canvas, maybe a piece of an arm or hand or a bit of the side of a head, and he would

mix up some color, put it down and find this to be quite a different color. William M. Chase was quite a whiz at that sort of thing. He loved to do it. He loved to show off, as a matter of fact. It was always inspiring. You would be sweating over a canvas, and then he'd do the thing so easily, you know, just brush in this color and that value and that tone, a little turn here and a sharpness here and a softness there and here was something miraculous happening. And he'd go away and leave you all enthusiastic to try it, to see if you couldn't do it, too. That is something that's largely taboo in art schools nowadays. Never touch a student's work! That might disturb their individuality. You mustn't do that. I didn't, but I did try the demonstration. Sometimes I would even work rather hard when a kid was having a lot of trouble. I'd say, "Now, if you would only go one step at a time. Now this is the first step, and if you see you can do that with not too much trouble, then, if you have that established, you can move on, but don't hurry. This doesn't have to be a highly finished work, but it should be right as far as it goes. Do this and then go on to this, then to this, and I think if you'll do that, you'll find that it's all right." In the meantime, I'd be making this drawing. One day, I got a shock when a boy who really had a lot of natural facility looked at my work after I had gotten through and instead of being stimulated as I hoped he would be and pleased that this problem had been simplified for him, he looked perfectly helpless. "You know," he said, "I'll never be able to do that as long as I live." By Jove, I don't think he did, and he could have done it so easily. It was a psychological block that I never could break down. Of course, the really important things that I remember took place later, because I was always getting surprises and interesting problems. One was that sometimes a student will have very definite talent, but they can't use a method. All this logic that I was giving them about drawing didn't mean anything. There was one boy, especially, who was one of my early students at the Layton, and I was very much concerned about him. His life drawing from the model was pitifully poor, and I would try to explain things very carefully. It didn't need to be that. That difficulty was quite unnecessary. He was working with a degree of confusion which could be easily straightened out, and I would show it to him. "Yes, Mr. Nutting, yes. I see." He'd be so eager and so anxious to learn. I'd go away and feel, "Well, now maybe he'll catch on, and it won't be so hard for him" And I'd go back, and here he would be in the same condition that he was before. I knew that he was making quite a sacrifice to go to art school (his family was poor), that it meant quite a great deal to him. He was so earnest. He was trying and working hard. I got quite disturbed, and I used to go out in the washroom and walk up and down and smoke cigarettes and think, "What am I going to do for Al?" For quite a long time nothing happened at all. Then one day I was walking across the park in Milwaukee, and I saw Al coming toward me. He had in his hand a sheet of yellow paper--a second

typewriting sheet, you know--and so I hailed him and said, "What have you got there, Al?" He was rather shy about it. I could see it was a drawing that he was holding in his hand. He gave it to me, and I looked at it. I think that he'd been so self-conscious about his drawing up to that time that he was rather ashamed to show it to me. But I was quite astonished when I saw it. It was really a very interesting drawing. And I said, "Al, now you're getting someplace. This is all right. You just stick to that feeling that you have there and push it just as far as you can. I think you'll find everything else I said to you will clarify itself. You've got your foot on solid ground, and all you've got to do is keep on. How did you come to do that drawing?" He said, "Well, I'll tell you. I was on my way to school this morning" (I met him on his way to school, as a matter of fact), "and I started out early, so I sat down here in this park and I was thinking about my work. I felt very discouraged. I sat down, sitting on that bench there and worrying about my studies, and while I was sitting there, I suddenly saw myself sitting on that bench looking discouraged. So I kept the pose exactly without moving and started to think--how am I sitting? Here I am. I'm leaning forward and my chin is in my hand. My elbow is on my knee, and I tried to imagine what I must look like in this state of mind sitting on this bench. And then I made this drawing." Well, from that time on, his drawing did improve very much, and then he started to paint and developed very steadily. I lost track of him after I left Wisconsin; but last year I opened my copy of Time magazine, and in that column where they have all these notices, I read of the death of Alfred Sessler, professor of graphic arts at the University of Wisconsin, where he had been for quite a long time. Also, I opened an art magazine with illustrations of the work of a young fellow, quite a promising man from that part of the country, and among other things, it mentioned him as being a pupil of Alfred Sessler. So, apparently, he made a considerable success of his life and was known not only as a teacher but also as a painter and as a printmaker. But that was a tremendous eye-opener to me--how to treat a student. It wasn't just a matter of laying down your knowledge--"I know all about it, just do as I say"--and that sort of thing. Unless you have some intuition of what's in the kid and can succeed in bringing it out, you are not very much help. Another boy, at the same time, was a Kansas farmer's son, and he had so little to spend that they let him sleep up in the attic of the building. It was against the law, kind of bootlegged, but he was very poor. He was very earnest, and we were quite fond of him; so, for a while, he had a cot up there and he did janitor work around the school early in the morning to help pay his tuition. He also seemed to have a lot of trouble, very much like Al. I had the same feeling towards him because I liked him very much and also felt that he was really trying. That was the same sort of thing. I found him one day during lunch hour sitting off by himself on the floor in the corner with a little book. In those days, we could get at the five-

and-dime store little blank books called "scribblin' books," with pages of unruled paper. They were quite serviceable. They were pocket-size, and you could get them for only ten cents. That sort of thing costs about fifty cents nowadays. [laughter] But in those days, they were quite cheap and they made good little sketchbooks. He was sitting on the floor doodling away in this book, and I said, "What are you doing?" He said, "I was just doing some sketches." He handed them to me, and here were a whole lot of little drawings in ink (I think he had some kind of coarse fountain pen that he was working with), but they were all characters that seemed to have to do with the Kansas farm somehow. There was real feeling of farm life. Maybe the kid was homesick. Anyway, they seemed to be some of the characters and people he knew. They were not well drawn in any conventional sense, but with the same quality that I spoke of in Al Sessler's [drawing]. In all its crudeness, his stuff was based on real feeling and real experience. And I felt all you had to do with him was to give him faith. Whereas he felt he was doing these things on the side, but if I could make him feel that what he was doing in that book was an integral part of his work in the school, that it wasn't something different, it could be made part of his lifework.

1.29. TAPE NUMBER: XV, Side One (April 4, 1966)

NUTTING

I spoke about finding Floyd Pauly sitting in the corner expressing his homesickness by making strange little caricatures and drawings of farm life in Kansas. I found right away that there was something here that was analogous to the sort of experience that Al Sessler was having. So I looked at the drawings and told him I enjoyed them very much, that I wanted him to do a great deal of that sort of thing because it would help him greatly in the development of his talent. I was right. Instead of trying to make him base his drawing too much on theory and the intellectual, to have him follow first of all his natural feeling and intuition, and gradually lead him into solving more difficult problems of figure drawing, was more successful. Well, Floyd appeared on the scene, I think, the year before I left Layton School, but I would drop into the school ever once in a while to see what the students were doing. One day, I was in the watercolor class--the students were out, but their work was around on the easels--and I said, "Well, that's rather a stunning thing. Who did that?" Miss Partridge said, "Floyd." I was quite amazed that the boy whose work used to be so timid and cramped such a short time before now had freedom and vitality to it. It wasn't too accomplished, but you could see that he had made tremendous progress. The end of the story was that later he had a watercolor accepted at the watercolor show in Chicago. That being a rather important show at the Art

Institute, it was quite a feather in his cap, and he was very much pleased. But still more than that, the Studio Publications in London got out a book of watercolor paintings in various countries, examples of France and Germany and America and Russia and Italy and so forth, and in the section on the American painters, here was Floyd's watercolor as one of the examples of American watercolor painting. So we were very happy for the boy, because his life wasn't easy and he was getting his education under difficulty, but he was making excellent progress and was such a likeable kid. The tragic thing was that he got appendicitis towards the end of his period in art school. Apparently nobody knew what was the matter with him. He didn't complain until he was really quite ill. The operation was successful but rather late, and they didn't stave off peritonitis. He was very ill for a long time and died. So that's one of the sad notes about the boys that I knew there and worked with. Those two fellows really opened my eyes to some of the problems in dealing with talent and how one must have sympathy and understanding of various approaches. The attitude of one and the method of going at it will be quite different from another. In order to be successful, you simply cannot lay down a law and say you must do this and that problem and expect good results. So teaching became more interesting to me, more than [I expected]. At first, I thought it would be more or less routine, that you'd go in and pass on what knowledge and experience you had to individual students, that it could be nothing that you could worry much about if you felt sure of what you were saying and the value of what you were teaching. But there was something deeper than that, and it became quite a serious thing. I felt that teaching was a creative thing. It was an art in itself as much as the other arts. I knew that, of course, before, but I didn't realize that in the actual dealings with human beings, the ups and downs in feelings and strange behavior, made my work not only interesting but very rewarding. So from then on, I commenced to take a greatly increased interest in my work. I can't flatter myself as being too successful except with individual cases. I felt that I lacked what the directors of the school had, and that was experience, not only in teaching but also in theory and practice of pedagogy-- how to organize work for a large group and to get the most out of the group as a whole and all that sort of thing. The school itself, the Layton School, was started by Miriam Frink: and Charlotte Partridge. The school was in the Layton Gallery, and the Layton Gallery was next to the Milwaukee Art Institute. It was rather amusing that the Layton School was run by Miss Partridge, the art institute by Mr. Pelican. [laughter] But it made their names easy to remember. Miss Partridge had been an art teacher at Downey College, I think it was (I've forgotten really), and Miriam Frink was an English teacher. They had decided to start an art school on their own, and after World War I, they had the advantage of having a great many of what were called in World War I,

doughboys--soldiers, veterans of the army--on government educational projects and one thing and another. And the ones that took up art there in Milwaukee had this school. So it provided them with quite a crowd of boys just out of uniform. The school was started in the basement of the Layton Gallery by Miss Frink and Miss Partridge. They had it reconditioned with suitable class rooms and equipment. They got Garrett Sinclair (who took over my studio in Paris when he was there on a year's leave), as instructor. Miss Partridge herself did teaching, and Garrett Sinclair taught drawing and painting. They had quite a good course in painting and composition and art history and commercial art. I think they had some local people and one or two other instructors, none of whom seemed to have stayed very long. One was the sculptor, Boris Lorsky, who was there for a while and afterwards came out West and became successful as a sculptor. He was extremely able and seems to have been quite an interesting character. Others who taught there for a while and then left, either came out to California or went to New York, which most did. When I went to Layton School the future seemed to be rather rosy. They expected an endowment by a wealthy man who had helped them a great deal in starting the Layton School, and they expected he would leave a substantial sum of money to help them carry on. That didn't materialize. My work there at first was mostly just drawing, figure drawing, which I went there especially for. There was not very much painting, but it wasn't long before I had other courses; the one in art history I especially liked, being a subject that appealed to me, and I enjoyed preparing the lectures. One or two other courses I taught were some painting, and I started a course in industrial design. But I realized that although that was an important study I'd have to take a course in industrial design myself before I could really prepare a course for them. So I didn't go very far with that. That, of course, involves a study of materials and techniques and modes of manufacture in order to teach it properly. It's like teaching architecture: if you don't know building materials and available substances for making this, that and the other thing and sources and relative costs, how are you going to teach architecture? Just to design a building is not nearly enough. So I reneged on that course, regretfully, because I wished I knew enough about it to teach it, because it's a very interesting thing and related to architecture. I haven't been back to Milwaukee. I'd love to pay a short visit there. Apparently there's been quite a big change. The Layton School was in the Layton Art Gallery which was a rather small but rather ambitious building. It was nicely designed and of stone and with a number of good galleries and a collection made by Layton. I don't remember what his first name was. He was a successful meat packer, I believe, in Milwaukee, and he seemed to have been quite a lover of art. The galleries, of course, were full of old-fashioned pictures. Some, though, were very good for this sort. They had an excellent one by Munkacsy. Unfortunately,

Munkacsy, like many nineteenth century painters, was either careless or ignorant of technical procedure in making a lasting painting, because the thing had turned very dark, but there are passages in it that are excellent. And there was a very good Abbott Thayer--the American painter. There were a number of German paintings, quite a good Bouguereau, less annoying than most of Bouguereau's things. It was an example of very accomplished academic painting of its period and I rather regretted that the students didn't appreciate it more. They were, inclined to sniff at it. It all looked so old-fashioned and out of date that it was difficult to get them to see that there was anything in it. There were some passages in the Munkacsy that were reminiscent of Courbet, for example. The man had quite a sense of painting. Well, they didn't know who Courbet was and so, of course, it was rather a slow business of getting them acquainted with it. They'd want to do something that was either saleable or else something that was modern art. That is wholesome to a degree but rather too narrow. The school was well equipped. It was all artificial light but consisted of a good suite of rooms for the school. The office was upstairs, but the understanding was that only the basement should be used for the school rooms. But it wasn't too long before they got very crowded. So they just frankly overflowed into the galleries. Then they were all right. The school grew rapidly and really was quite a promising school. Both of the women were extremely capable. Miss Frink especially from the business point of view and organization of the place. Miss Partridge was an excellent director. She was herself to a certain degree an artist and also had a talent as an executive. It looked as though they were going to go places with the school. Then, what happened was that the Depression hit, and there was a long period of difficult struggle for the school. Attendance naturally fell off all of a sudden, and then they had to economize and it was with only the greatest difficulty that they survived. It was only the genius of Miss Frink that really kept it alive and finally got it onto its feet again. I've forgotten how long I stayed with this school, but I could see that I was superfluous in a way. I was the last one to be added to the faculty, and they were forced to keep cutting my salary rather than to increase it as they had promised they would and expected to. That was very hard on some of the teachers; so I resigned. I said, "You don't need me. You can get along very well without me and I don't think it's fair to the other teachers who have to have their salary cut. What you give me can at least put off the evil day of reducing theirs." Well, by then, I had teaching in my blood, I guess, so I looked around for a place to have an evening life class. I thought I'd at least keep that going and have some pupils. I had a certain following among the older people, some commercial artists and others who used to come to a night class that I had at the Layton School. I looked around for a place to have a class. First I rented a rather small room and had a small group of private pupils. That wasn't too

satisfactory because they were amateurs and society people who wanted to do a little drawing and a little painting and that sort of thing, which was very pleasant, but it wasn't too interesting. While I was teaching that little class, a man came to Milwaukee from Chicago by the name of Lanner and opened a bookstore. He was a tremendously energetic little fellow. (He is out here in Los Angeles now.) He had had a bookstore in Chicago, and he moved the one from Chicago to Milwaukee. He had a good selection of art books, and also he started an idea--and I don't know if it was very successful or not, but at least it was good advertising--and that was that he would rent his art books. He used to put covers on them made of brown paper. He had a very neat way of doing it. He would rent out quite expensive art books to art students and artists and they'd get a chance to take them home. That was one of his activities I enjoyed. I spoke to him one day and said I was looking around for some way I could have room enough for a life class. I believe that I could have quite a good-sized life class. "Oh," he said, "have it here in the bookstore." I said, "Why, good gracious, I can't do that. You can't move your things out of the way to have a crowd of art students, and besides there's the equipment and that sort of thing that would be necessary." "Oh, we can furnish that," he said. And by Jove he did. He was very capable in all sorts of ways. He could do electric wiring or even lay bricks. He built himself a brick fireplace which was quite handsome in his own home. He could do carpentry, and he was a good printer. As a matter of fact, one thing he started there was a little publishing business. He had an old press downstairs that clanked away and which he ran quite efficiently, and he got out some quite nice books. He said, "We'll manage perfectly well." So, he, himself, made me a model stand and something for benches which was inexpensive. He and some of my boys got together one afternoon and we made benches, which was simply a matter of cutting an eight-foot board into three pieces, putting them together with angle irons and a little strip to hold the drawing board against the upright in front. It's very practical, very simple and very good. So there we were equipped, and there was someplace out back where we could stack them up in-between times. And, to my amazement, it worked out very well. All you had to do was to move not too much out of the middle of his store, which was quite a good-sized room. He already had a curtain division between the front and back, the show part of the store and the storerooms in back of this place; so it was just a matter of the lighting, which he also installed. In no time at all, he had some excellent light for the model and for illuminating the room. So I spread the news that I was starting this life class, and I had quite a large one right away. I was quite surprised that the reputation of my night class at the Layton had spread so much. People seemed to enjoy it and got a lot out of it, so that I had my weekly life class. The first night was very funny. I met Lanner out here not too long ago, and he still tells

the story about it. At least he told it to another person who in turn said, "Oh, yes. Mr. Lanner told me that story about your life class in Milwaukee and the first night when you opened it." what happened was that we got all installed with the model, and we started work on time. Everybody had their drawing boards and charcoal and paper and the model posed, and I was starting my rounds when the proprietor of the building came rushing in, in a terrific state of excitement. I didn't know what in the world was the matter with him. He was all of a dither. Well, what happened was, when I had started the pose, I turned on the strong lights for the model. There were cotton curtains across the front of the store that were drawn, and with the ordinary light inside the room, they were adequate, perfectly all right, but once you got this powerful light on the nude model in the store, the curtain became about as transparent as cheesecloth. [laughter] And there was a very enthusiastic and admiring crowd of people outside watching our class in progress. [laughter] So we had to hastily turn out the light. I've forgotten what we did that night, but I guess we worked with a dim light. I don't remember that we broke up the class. I think we managed somehow. After that, heavier curtains were provided, and the class went on successfully. I've forgotten how long I kept up that life class. I was, however, rather ambitious to do more than that.

SCHIPPERS

Did you collect fees for this?

NUTTING

Oh, yes. I've forgotten how much. It was the normal price you would pay in an art school for evening life classes. It would seem as though I was pulling patronage away from, the Layton School, but I don't think I did too much. The people that I had were mostly older people. There were a number of people who worked on the newspapers and wanted to get in some work from a model, and commercial artists who wanted to get in more life study. They were working during the day as commercial artists and illustrators, and in this way, they'd get a chance to do some figure study. So I don't think that I really hurt Layton very much. I think I had rather of a different sort of a following. [tape off] I had the idea in mind that I'd like to have a place where I could have a broader activity, not just an evening drawing class, but a day school as well. I talked this over with my friends. I had a friend, Frank Kirkpatrick, who had come to Milwaukee from Philadelphia. We had become very good friends, and he made and lost a fair fortune in the Depression. He had done very well in Philadelphia in real estate, and, for awhile, he wanted to follow some other career. He lived on very little and started doing some writing for the newspapers. He had an idea of entering politics and didn't want to go back to the business world, but, after a while, he decided that he would, that he was not going to make a great success in politics or that he had no special talent as a

writer or commentator. At least it was not sufficient to look upon those fields as careers. He had a natural talent for business, and it was appreciated by some well-to-do people in Milwaukee who backed him, especially in property and real estate. When he started his business, he took an old building downtown. He rented the whole building, and, although it wasn't very large, there was one floor that he especially wanted for his offices. The top floor of the building had an old-fashioned photographer's studio. In the days before artificial light--it really was rather an ancient setup--they had a big skylight and did their portrait photography in daylight, using the skylight. Well, this big room and its skylight was not being used, and I made a deal with him for the use of that for an art school. He was interested in what I was trying to do, and he didn't have any intention of renting the room anyway, so that the amount that I would pay for it all depended upon my success. We made some kind of an arrangement by which I'd pay rent according to the success of my teaching. At first, it was a little discouraging, because although it was a huge room, it was used as kind of a lumber room and was a dirty and dusty and ratty-looking place. Some of my pupils, two or three boys, were quite excited about the whole thing, and they wanted to help me. There was a girl who had been in my life class who was also interested; she was a wonderful worker. We all pitched in and swept it out, cleaned it up. Then with some plywood and a few nails and good will, we partitioned off an entrance and made a little office and fixed the place up. I already had the benches from my other life class. One boy was very clever, and he made an easel very cheaply. He had all the specifications for it. The material he got from the hardware store, and he made a rather ingenious use of certain spring bolts and one thing and another. And, in an amazingly short time, we had some regular studio easels that worked very well. Then we made a number of ordinary easels, the three-legged sort of things which you use in drawing classes. The others, of course, were more practical for those who wanted to paint, because they're more upright and you could raise or lower one's work more easily. You don't have the occasion to do that quite so often when you're drawing, but usually when you're painting, you want to be able to raise and lower the canvas easily. I was really quite surprised that I had this enthusiastic support and got so much work done in such a short time. Dolly Dunn, this girl who was in my life class, offered to be my secretary and manager in return for tuition, which pleased me very much, and she was very efficient. When we got the place cleaned, partitioned and painted, I went down to a wholesale paper place and picked out some varieties of paper, and also got a few basic materials. (Students are always running out of something they need right away; so even in a small class it's a good thing to have some material that they can buy on the premises.) Dolly looked after that, and she kept the books and she took in the money. I worked out a rather different system for classes than I was

used to. As I said, I got quite a jolt when I came back and found what had happened to art schools since I went to art school. At Layton we had a tardy bell and you had to have a bell ring when the class was over and all the routine of regular schoolwork, and I decided I was going to go to the other extreme--I wouldn't do that. I had cards printed with a certain number of spaces on them that you could buy for so much, which in turn would give you so many evenings. In that way, although they paid for, say, twelve evenings, they wouldn't have to be consecutive. If for one reason or another they couldn't come, they wouldn't lose anything. So the person coming in would have the card and Dolly would punch it. When it was filled with punches, they would get another card. It worked out very well. It was a very simple way to work it. It was a good place for the class. It was quite successful and very well attended. I was the principal life teacher for a while in Milwaukee, outside of what was being done at the Layton School. But so far as the other activities were concerned, there were some people who could work in the daytime and who, for one reason or other, didn't want to take the course at the Layton School or any of the colleges there but wanted to go to an art school where they wouldn't have the requirements they had at the other places. To a certain number of them, most of them as a matter of fact, I gave keys to the place. There weren't any special hours. They came to work when they could work, and if they wanted to come down at night and work, why, they could. Each one more or less worked out his own course. We'd have long discussions about the problems, and it was up to each one to solve it in his way. It was a delightful kind of a setup. It wasn't too profitable, but it was all right. But it wasn't really a going business concern or as well organized as a conventional school would be, because I left so much up to the students. But I think that they enjoyed it very much. I didn't have a very large crowd. The group was just about right to handle properly given the facilities, and every Saturday after class, we used to sit around and have a little lunch together and everybody would talk about their work. A typical thing was a discussion we once had about the function of anatomy in the artist's work and its importance. (Incidentally, that's one thing I also taught at Layton; I gave the weekly anatomy lectures.) I said that it was up to them to decide that, and if they would read the lives of the artists, they'd find how much it varied. For one thing, in the days of the Renaissance so many of the artists had a marked enthusiasm for all scientific subjects. Da Vinci being the outstanding but not the unique example of that type of mind. You'd find they studied anatomy very seriously. In the case of a man like Michelangelo he is said to have practically ruined his health by doing it. That study was for a very good reason, because works of the figure on a very large scale, as in fresco painting, required a knowledge of the body that the painter, such as the Dutch painters, would not need to have. Rembrandt, for example, I don't imagine

knew very much about anatomy. Well, some seemed to think that anatomy didn't mean too much to them, and I said I certainly wouldn't cram it down their throats, but if they wanted to know anatomy and found it useful, I believed that wherever they find anything that's useful, they should go after it, no matter what it is. There were two or three of the girls who thought that it would be an interesting and a valuable study. So, again, I had a different idea. Before, I had taught anatomy the regular way, with big sheets of paper, beginning with the construction and movement of the body, and, bit by bit, going down to its anatomical organization. But I told them that when I studied anatomy at the school in Boston, I felt that it was too diagrammatic. I said, "It's going to be really interesting and useful to you if you feel the function of the forms, the machinery. How does it work? It's not so much what the thing is. What does it do? Then I think you'll find it interesting. At least I did. When I shifted my point of view from simply saying, 'This is located there and this muscle has its origin here and its insertion there'--to--'What is it doing and why is it there?'--then it took on more life and meaning. I commenced to enjoy it." I also said, "Anatomy is something that somebody said you learn and forget three or four times, and the last time you forget it, you know it about right for your purposes." [laughter] And I have to confess that I have forgotten. I mean it's not easy stuff to keep in your mind, and you really don't think about it. Whatever you really need seems to come to mind automatically. And I said, "Well, we can't dissect a cadaver. That's rather an impractical sort of an idea. But there's a very strange thing. In the animal world the forms are analogous. You have biceps and triceps on the bird and the whale and the horse and the dog and the cat, just as you have in our own arms. When it comes to the skeleton, the giraffe has seven cervical vertebrae, a mouse has seven cervical vertebrae, and we have seven cervical vertebrae. I think it's really very fascinating." I said, "If you go to the butcher shop and get a chicken, get a rabbit, or some other small animal and dissect it, you'll learn more of what a muscle is, what a tendon is, what an aponeurosis is and why it's there and what the body really is, than by looking at any number of charts in a book." Well, there was one girl who had taken biology in college, and she got enthusiastic and she and one or two others went to the butcher shop and got a chicken. Well, we had that chicken around the place for several weeks in formaldehyde, and they did a whale of a good job [studying it]. I was delighted. I was sorry I couldn't give them some college credits or some reward. Of course, I didn't have anything to offer but the pleasure of accomplishment. The others, by association, learned quite a lot. Another time they wanted to know if they couldn't do some sculpture. I said, "Why, I'd be delighted if you'd do some." There was one girl who thought that would be wonderful. She had seen some work in stone, and the direct cutting in stone, she thought, would be exciting. I said, "I'd be very glad to have you do it

if you feel like doing it. We'll go into this question of sculpture and look at sculpture and the history of sculpture and what the modern sculptors are doing and the technical procedure. I myself haven't done it, but I think we can get along quite well." So she went off someplace and found this stone outside of Milwaukee and nearly killed herself getting that stone back to the studio on streetcars and up the stairs. But she worked hard and did a good job. And that was another thing that was spontaneous combustion and worked out very well. In the meantime, of course, they were doing some steady work; they worked regularly from the model and direct painting from life, the study of composition and the regular things. Then someone would have a brainstorm about something else, and maybe it wouldn't go very far. Other times it would. That was a period when the enthusiasm for the Mexican mural painters was more or less at its height. Orozco and Rivera and Siqueiros were doing things that made an impact on the young American painter and his desire to do mural painting. So my students decided they wanted to do mural painting. I said, "I don't know anything about fresco, but if you want to know, I'll see if we can't find out." Well, it happened when I first went to the Layton School, a young fellow from Texas was one of my students. After he finished school I didn't see him for a long time, but when I started my school, he had come back to Milwaukee. In the meantime, while he had been in Texas, he'd worked with a fresco painter. He had been doing murals in true fresco and had learned the technique, and so I said to him, "Won't you come down and show the kids how you do frescoes?" He said, "I'd be delighted." I said, "I can't pay you very much for it." Well, he wouldn't take any money. He'd be glad to do it. He said, "It's very simple to do a demonstration," and that he would fix up everything. What he did was to put chicken wire on a frame, and then the plaster in that. The other coat came last. So he came down and set up this frame with chicken wire, and his materials and carried through a small fresco. He developed it as it would be done if on a large scale--the preparation of the wall, the preparation of the plaster, the second coat, the cartoon, then the final coat, and the painting of the fresco. It was really quite an exciting thing for them to watch. It was for me, too. I enjoyed it very much. "Well, now, where are we going to paint the walls?" That was their next problem; they just had to do something. Frank Kirkpatrick was very cooperative. "Oh," he said, "you can have the walls all the way down to the street. Why don't you do the hall walls. There are three floors. Do anything that you want." I thought that was very generous of him because they weren't accomplished artists or experienced mural painters. They hadn't even learned to draw or paint professionally as yet. But they pitched in, and each one took a different medium. They didn't do any true fresco because that would have been a big job to get the old plaster off the wall and putting on a proper plaster would require an expert. They did it in egg tempera and in oil. I've forgotten

what, but there were one or two other ways. We parceled out panels and areas on the stairway and the hall all the way down to the street, and so they painted up the place fairly well. They were very ambitious murals in these various techniques, and they worked hard. Goodness, I'd go down there and it would be getting so dark I could hardly see, but here somebody would be up on a ladder trying to finish up this thing because he or she had an hour to spare and could get down there and do a little more work. [laughter] I often wondered what became of those things. I don't suppose they lasted very long because they weren't masterpieces. Some of the kids were talented, but they hadn't arrived as yet at doing anything much worth preserving. Anyway, I think that although it wasn't maybe too practical, it was a good antidote for some of the art education they were having. If it were overbalanced in one way, at least I felt that the ordinary courses in the art schools were inclined to be overbalanced in another way. I sympathized with some of the talented boys who [in the art schools] were restless and sometimes difficult, which I think was unnecessary if they had had a setup that provided for different temperaments. I forgot to mention the name of my little school. It was called "The Atelier." Every once in a while I still hear echoes of it or get a letter from somebody--"those wonderful days in the Atelier." It's still remembered with affection.

1.30. TAPE NUMBER: XV, Side Two (April 11, 1966)

NUTTING

I was somewhat surprised to find myself in Milwaukee, and it was something I didn't anticipate because I had never thought of coming West. In the years that I lived in Europe, whenever I thought of taking up my life in my home country again, it was with the idea of probably going to New York, that being the center of things. So going to a place about which I knew nothing, though I did have a certain amount of familiarity with the Middle West, I didn't know what to anticipate. But I found Milwaukee a surprisingly charming city. I say "charming" because I have so many happy memories of it. Of course, this is some thirty-five years ago now, and I've often wondered what has changed in the atmosphere. There was change taking place while I was there. You felt much of the old spirit of Milwaukee and also something of what was happening in the new atmosphere that was developing there. The first thing that struck me was the spirit of the old families of Milwaukee. Miss Frink and Miss Partridge had very pleasant social connections in Milwaukee; and we immediately met a number of delightful people. There were two streams, it seemed to me, of thought and feeling. One was from the German atmosphere, the old German families who preserved much old world charm. Their homes had the atmosphere of Germany of the days of our grandparents, something I didn't

often see in Germany itself. Also, they had a love of good living and an interest in the arts. They were a cultivated and intelligent people. They loved the theater. They loved music, of course, as Germans do; so we always had good music in Milwaukee. And the families of English and New England heritage and ancestry seemed to form somewhat a complementary sort of an atmosphere. So, soon I commenced to appreciate my good fortune. The life had some reality to it. Also the fact was that there seemed to be surprising vitality among the young people. At the time that I lived in Milwaukee, although I didn't realize it, there was an unusual number of talented young artists and musicians, people who have since accomplished things, more so than in almost any other community that I have lived in. One of the activities there that I took part in was with the Wisconsin Players. My interest in the theater was strengthened by my friendship with Gordon Craig. It's not that I didn't have a real interest before, but he was a friend of such charm and erudition in matters of the theater and had such a creative mind in his sense not only of the drama but also in theater production that I began to have a yen to do something in the theater. Also that was largely because when I was in Paris, the Russian ballet was more or less at its height. The great dancer Nijinsky was before my time, but Diaghilev was doing remarkable things. I saw rehearsals of his work in Rome, and I met Bakst, the famous designer for the Russian ballet. Then, when his performances were given in Paris, I was quite in attendance there. He also influenced the ballet and other companies. There was the Russian ballet company called the Kamerny Theater; which had a very modern and interesting approach to the ballet, and the Swedish ballet also did some quite remarkable work. The fact that the ballet was more a combination of the talents of the musician, of the actor, of the dancer, of the producer, and of the designer than it had been in olden days was to me a fascinating idea. It seemed to me to be a wonderful art from which you could look forward to something new and vital. The work that Diaghilev did when he was daring enough to get people like Picasso, Léger and Derain to do decor for his ballets seemed to me to make a field that I would love to be working in. When I got to Milwaukee, I found that the Wisconsin Players did some quite excellent work. It was a small theater which, I think, was really backed by Laura Sherry, who had had some renown as an actress. She was then married to one of the Milwaukee industrialists. There was one young actor in Milwaukee, Edward Franz, who has since been successful. I've seen some excellent work of his filmed for TV, though he has also worked in the movies. He was in Milwaukee at that time, and I think he was the one who on a trip East met a Russian by the name of Boris Glagolin. Eddie Franz met him, I think, in New England just after he had done some work for Carnegie Tech in the production of plays there. He thought it would be great to get such a good director for the Wisconsin Players and, sure enough,

they brought Glagolin out. He gave me a great insight into what the talent of a real director is like. Hardly without speaking and with occasional suggestion, he could bring out the talent of a young person surprisingly. That activity, of course, didn't take up too much time, but the work that I did had repercussions on my own ideas of art as a whole. Experience with another art, I think, always helps one in understanding what the significance of what one's own work may be. I'm dead against this idea of an art being isolated, that it's something that you have to understand by itself. There is such a thing as a creative instinct--whether using this form or that form or this material or that material--that is common to all the arts. I think the theater is an excellent field in which to develop and broaden in. What I felt was going to be a great art of the future--the combination of the talents of the painter, the musician, the actor, the writer, and the dancer in some kind of new art form--has not materialized. Those of us who were working with the Wisconsin Players had rather special feelings for the stage as a visual experience. After all, you're looking at a stage performance; you're looking at color; you're looking at form, design, and movement. The more literary-minded person might not feel this. So the poetry and the drama might be emphasized in a way that it wouldn't get its full value because it was not well related to other aspects of good theater. The most ambitious thing that I did was Lope de Vega's *The Gardener's Dog*. We had to use quite a little ingenuity there because the theater had been a little church, and although it wasn't too small, the stage was not very large. We felt *The Gardener's Dog* ought to be put on with at least a suggestion of the opulence and somewhat the grandeur of the Baroque period. I got over part of the difficulty by bringing the decor down into the orchestra and partly by the use of what would ordinarily, I suppose, be called false perspective by the layman. By having the vanishing points of a building on the side, it looked as though you saw a long way into the distance. If you have the backdrop painted so that your horizon is way off there, even though it's only a few feet away, it can look like miles away if you can arrange your forms properly. Of course, it involves problems for the actor, because in moving to the wrong part of the stage the actor might suddenly look rather colossal, getting into a place where he doesn't fit in the perspective. But that was all worked out nicely, and I think that it was a fair success. It was a valuable experience in my own field, that is to say, composition, design, use of form and color. On the strength of that, the president of a club in Milwaukee wanted me to do a backdrop for a sketch that was going to be given for one of their performances. It was an old German club, associated in some way with similar societies in Germany. It was a club partly social and partly cultural. I was never quite clear as to what the function of the club was, but the members were mostly people of German families in Milwaukee. I said I'd be delighted to do a set. He said he'd provide the

materials for it. I went down to do it, and I was quite horrified. He had huge pieces of wrapping paper on the wall and some watercolors. I thought from what he said that he'd get me some scene painter's material, you know, and have a cotton drop and it would be all ready for me, because he seemed to know exactly what he wanted. I expostulated with him that I couldn't do very much with just some ordinary watercolors and wrapping paper. I said, "In the first place, the wrapping paper is going to get wet if I use the watercolor at all freely. It will all get buckled up. I don't think I can do anything at all." He said, "Of course you can. I'm sure you can." Anyway, there wasn't time to do anything else. I had to do that or nothing at all. So I said, "Okay, I'll try." He told me what the sketch was going to be, and we agreed on a suggestion of a landscape. I sketched out a small thing that he thought would be a good idea. There'd be a road and a field on one side and some trees and then a body of water, and beyond that, some blue hills. It was a very simple sort of thing for what I think was a musical number. When I got through, I looked at it and thought, "Well, this is certainly hopeless. He'll have to do something else." But he didn't seem to be at all disturbed, which surprised me. It turned out he knew more than I did, in spite of my now having had a little experience with what can be done with light, because when the performance was put on and I was waiting to see what in the world he had managed to do at the last moment, and expecting some sort of makeshift substitute, the curtain went up and to my amazement there was my painting and it looked just fine. I just couldn't believe my eyes. It looked so good that the audience applauded. It was the only set that they applauded. They seemed to like this landscape. I couldn't figure out how so much was made of it. Afterwards I did, of course. But that's one of the delightful things of working with a thing of that sort. You can take such extremely simple materials and make them look like a million dollars if they're used in the right context and with the right light and atmosphere. I would have been very happy to work for the theater if I'd had the training and the talent for it. To have been something like a Reinhardt or an Appia or a Craig and work for the theater would have been a wonderful experience, I am sure I would have enjoyed it very much indeed. Well, that and my little stabs at various kinds of acting were what occupied me at the theater. The theater itself, apparently, had always had very good direction and had interesting talent. Eddie Franz, for example, has since become a successful actor, and before my time, Angna Enters, I was told, practically began her career in the Wisconsin Players. It was an intelligent and talented group of people who worked in it and who patronized it. The other activity which I took part in besides the Wisconsin Players was an old society called The Walrus Club. In those days, they had quite a tradition for promoting things of cultural value--music, art, literature. But their principal activity, at least what they were best known for, so far as the

city at large was concerned, was their annual ball, the Walrus Ball. It was one of the events in those days in Milwaukee. They had a big ballroom in the Hotel Pfister, and all the artist members of the clubs would work for days beforehand on the decoration of the place, and they usually did a very good job. I, of course, contributed my part to the decoration. For some strange reason, I did only one thing, but it was rather a big job. I seemed to have more nerve in those days than I think I would have now. The motif of the ball that year was Dante's Inferno, so that gave quite a chance for the people to do rather grotesque cutouts and all sorts of fantastic things. I had an idea of painting a large thing, a sort of descent-into-Hell picture. They stretched a piece of cotton for me, the scene painter's sort of stuff. I've forgotten how big it was, but it must have been at least ten by twelve feet. I thought that would be rather nice if I could have a descent-into-Hell scene at the end of the ballroom. [laughter] Doggonit, I did the thing, and it came out all right. I don't know whether I have a photograph of it or not. But, of course, it was a job. I had a number of figures in it, and it took quite a lot of time and real work. But it was fairly successful and people liked it. My other contribution that year at the ball was a dance that somebody persuaded me to do. I loved to dance, although I don't think I ever showed off or anything, but I always liked to go to dances and loved it. So somebody said, "Why don't you do a dance for the Walrus Ball?" I said, "Well, I couldn't do anything. You have to have training and ability to perform in public, to say nothing of talent, and I have none of these." "Oh, I think you'd be wonderful." They buttered me up, and so I fell for it. I got a young dancing teacher in Milwaukee there to give me some ideas about pantomime and steps. But the better influence was from a woman who had been on the stage with a group of girls that at one time had been quite famous. I can't recall the name of it. But she had a much better idea I think. She said, "Instead of learning some pat sort of a thing which a dancing teacher will teach you, just go ahead and work up your own pantomime. It will be much more amusing and much better than if you depend on lessons." I finally agreed with her. Well, the end of that little story is that I had a number in which I made myself up as an African and did some kind of a voodoo dance effect. I managed to get my whole body coal black, put some gold around my middle and had a strange kind of thing built up on the top of my head. My face was painted in a mask sort of a way which made me look rather inhuman. Then I had a little partner, one of the members who was rather short, and all he had to do was to trot around after me with a big umbrella. [laughter] We worked this thing out with a couple of these things from a children's playground in which they slide down a chute, you know. What do you call those things?

SCHIPPERS

Slides.

NUTTING

Slides, yes. We set those two things up in the middle of the floor, and with beaverboard and one thing and another we made a huge mask and the slide came out of this huge grotesque mask like a tongue. Here was an opening of a mouth, a mask and a slide. There was a very good orchestra, and all of a sudden, what the audience saw, after the orchestra started playing the "St. Louis Blues," was these two guys shooting out of the mouth of these huge masks-- one, a coal black, naked creature and the other, a little guy with a big umbrella made of palm leaves or something. Then I went into my routine of the "St. Louis Blues," and believe it or not, it was a great success. [much laughter throughout]

SCHIPPERS

Oh, no! The greatest picture. [laughter]

NUTTING

Our appearance, I think, was very sudden. We sort of shot down and up off this slide onto the floor and went into all these strange movements. Well, my costume wasn't exactly appropriate for ballroom dancing, but I had prepared for that beforehand. We took a room in the hotel with a bath. This served a double purpose. It not only gave me a chance to get washed up and put on another costume, it also gave us a place to gather with our friends for drinks. You see, these were the days of prohibition, and we had to depend on our hip flasks when going out in the evening. It turned out that I lost quite a lot of the conviviality because I was in the tub trying to get the black off of me. I would be afraid to say how many tubfuls of what looked like gallons of black ink I emptied before I got myself looking anywhere near like a white man. I then put on a pseudo-Florentine costume, I've forgotten just what, for the rest of the evening. I still remember what seemed like hours of struggle with the black paint while hearing the laughter and gaiety of our nice friends in the next room. The following year they put on another ball, and a woman who had charge of that sort of thing [laughter] bedeviled me so to do something of that sort again.

SCHIPPERS

[laughing] You could follow a dog act. This is too much!

NUTTING

I'd thought I'd shot my bolt, so what actually happened was I happened to get a vacation along about that time and went down to Chicago to escape importunities from my admirers. I did do one once for a smaller gathering. I parodied a whole lot of dances, including a Russian dance. The way we figured the thing out was that a fellow appeared at the end from behind the wings and whacked me over the head and dragged me off by my heels. That was quite successful too, but that was a smaller occasion. [laughter] Well, let's pause in our mad career. [tape off] I arrived and started my work in Milwaukee in 1929

and everything was going very smoothly, very happily, until the banks were closed and the Depression fell on us. It was out of a completely clear sky, though I had one friend who, for some days, seemed to have some inkling of the closing of the banks and kept urging me to see to it that we were financially fixed. She said, "You know, the banks are going to be closed and you won't be able to get any money from your bank, so be sure that you've got enough money." I thought that was very strange and I wondered how she knew about it, but she didn't say, or wouldn't say. Sure enough, there was this unbelievable event and so far as we were all concerned, completely unexpected. One of the first things that happened was that the Layton School was extremely hard hit. However, I stayed on for some time. There was, in the spirit of the artists at that time, understandably, a very definite change. It wasn't so much a change as an intensification of a certain feeling that we had as a sort of a movement in painting, that is, more and more emphasis on the American scene and more emphasis on the feeling of gaining freedom from foreign influences. That thing really started with the Ash Can School, with people like [George] Bellows and [Robert] Henri and [Everett] Shinn and [George] Luks and those painters who promoted that sort of a feeling very much up to that time. But with the Depression and with the violent change in attitude towards life that people were forced to adopt, young painters developed a great enthusiasm for a "social significance." Well, I don't think that I felt that any less than they did, but I didn't interpret it in terms of art as they did. It may be that I was wrong. As I look back now, maybe I ought to have taken more part in it and thought of my function as an artist in society more in those terms. But instead of that, I was always arguing against a lot of the ideas that they would bring up. They would cite a man like Goya, for example, or Daumier, but I would try to point out that Goya and Daumier were great artists, but not because they were commentators, not because their things were propaganda or gave comments on the life of the time or the society of the time in the same way that a cartoonist's work does, for example. With all respect for a cartoonist's work, once that period is past, its interest is usually historical--the comment that was made at that time. [Sir John] Tenniel, for example, had a drawing in Punch called "Dropping the Pilot." Emperor Wilhelm is dropping Bismarck. He is going down the gangway to his boat, and it epitomizes something in history pictorially. But it's not a great work of art, though it's well drawn and a classic cartoon. But Goya and Daumier were great artists, not because the material that they happened to use were the horrors of war in Spain or the somewhat drab and melancholy feeling of the poor in Paris. That is, it was a sublimation of experience. It wasn't simply giving expression to that experience. So that may have been, as I look back now, a certain rationalization on my part for a more abstract feeling in painting, things that I had enjoyed and had meant so much to me up to that time in my

love of painting. I was interested in Michelangelo, for example, not because of what he had to say about the Last Judgment. I didn't care too much about The Last Judgment, but I found much of his work very moving. If you could paint something because of your experiences with the Depression, that's great, but at the time I wasn't going hungry, even though it wasn't a very bright prospect. But I wasn't giving expression to my sufferings, and to do it vicariously by simply illustrating somebody else's experiences wasn't something that I felt was true to my concept of art. Well, the only thing that resulted from that was that I felt out of step with my fellow artists to some extent and especially with the ones that I would have enjoyed most being more heartily in sympathy with--the younger artists. Of course, with the older ones, it was rather a different matter. So there was a certain sense of isolation that I wouldn't have had otherwise, but it wasn't really actually so much of one because I took part quite enthusiastically in activities. I sent to the annual show of the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors, at the Art Institute in Milwaukee, and I was quite impressed with the fact that I was turned down much more frequently than I would be in Paris. [laughter] I never could quite understand it. Not long ago, I happened to find an old catalog of the Autumn Salon where I had four canvases in one year. But I'd send what I would think would be my best thing to the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors, and as likely as not, I'd get turned down. I didn't feel too badly about that because I found that was true of some of the best artists who were showing. It's an experience that they have out here in California, too. Very well-known and very able and undeniably quite successful painters don't feel at all put out when their things are turned down because that often happens. The general drive [is in favor of] what is young, what is a new movement and what is significant. It's not altogether the fault of the jury. I've served on juries myself and I could see that a certain work might be superb of its kind but that it had been done before. It's excellent in a gallery where it meets its public, but to the person who goes to an exhibition to see what is germinating, what's happening, what is alive, it hasn't too much meaning. I served on juries a number of times, and I learned how difficult their work is. It didn't take long. As a matter of fact, I could see it very quickly, which is one reason I dislike very much serving on art juries. I always took it very seriously and worked very hard and was never too happy with my work after I had gotten done with it. In spite of what I said about being out of step, I must say that I had very sympathetic consideration from all of my colleagues in that part of the country and was an officer in the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors. For one year I was their president. Something happened in a funny sort of way. There was some kooky kind of a guy who used to pose at various art schools and he spread the idea that I was a Nazi, very much to my amazement. I didn't know it until long afterwards when somebody told me what it was all about. But there

was one group of young people, some of whom had been my students when I first went to Milwaukee, that formed a club at the Jewish Center. One day they got to questioning me quite a lot, but I didn't know what they were driving at. As I learned afterwards, what really happened was that they became quite convinced that I was anything but a Nazi. I mean the fact that I was a warm friend of Ludwig Lewisohn, for example, and things of that sort, became proof against my being anything of the sort. So there was nothing at all suspicious about me, and as a result, I was made an associate member of an art club in the Jewish Center. They couldn't make me a member because I am not Jewish, but some Jewish boys wanted to show their appreciation by making me an associate member. I was a former teacher of some of them. That was in the days of the John Reed Club, and I sometimes talked at their meetings. They had a section of the club made up of a bunch of young artists, and they, as well as writers and other people who were members of the John Reed Club, would get me to talk. But I never was able to debate very successfully on the relation of art to politics or on the meaning of art and its social significance. I was more of a listener than I was a debater in those things. However, I apparently did find material to talk about. They seemed to like to have me talk. I found them sympathetic. The fate, of course, of the artists was that few of them made any sales or could get work during the Depression, and many of them had a very difficult time. There was one young friend of mine, who was quite a good painter and had done quite well, and he knew scene painting. In those days they did a great deal of that sort of thing; there was a big establishment in Milwaukee for the painting of theatrical scenery. But there was no work to be had in that field, and he couldn't find any other commercial art with which to make a living. He tried opening a little grocery store to support his family and that didn't work. I was rather impressed by him. He told me about the various things he tried to do to make a living. He said one of the most successful things he did and that kept him going quite a little while [was something he did with phonograph records]. One day he walked down the street and outside of a secondhand store, some kind of a junk shop, was a great stack of old phonograph records that were worn out. He found he could buy them very cheap, and he bought an armload of these records and took them home. In the middle of them, he painted little landscapes and little scenes so that the outside of the record formed a frame for this circular composition in the middle of it. He dabbled out these little pictures, a whole stack of them, and took them out to a summer resort on one of the lakes there and set his records up by the roadside. They sold very well, and he went home with some money for groceries. That was just one example of what some of the artists had to go through. I, of course, saw this atmosphere of trouble and difficulties, but fortunately enough did not have to meet those problems so closely. [tape off]

Of course, there were two projects that were inaugurated very soon. Miss Partridge was the head of the work in Milwaukee. One was the Federal Art Project and the other which was related to it (I don't know exactly in what way), was the American Index of Design. They were both projects that meant quite a lot to art in this country subsequently. The Index of Design was rather an unusual one. It's not the sort of thing that many would think of. I don't know exactly who first had the idea. I think that the painter Henry Varnum Poor was one, but I'm not sure about that. The history of it is something by itself and worthwhile to study for anyone interested in art in this country. What it primarily did was to give a living, especially to commercial artists who were out of work, but it also made a very genuine contribution to art history. First of all, somebody had worked up the techniques for doing the drawings which were mostly in transparent watercolor with maybe some opaque color, depending on the motif. Then they searched the countryside for tools and all sorts of things that had to do especially with the crafts. One very interesting part was to run down all the figureheads from old ships (in the days of sailing ships, they had a carved figure on the bow), and they made watercolor renderings of these things. My grandfather, as I have said, was trained as a toolmaker, and I have a couple of planes that he made. They are beautifully made, and they borrowed one of those planes and that was rendered by one of the workers in the Index of Design Project. You'd think it would have been much simpler to take color photographs of a great many things, and, of course, color photographs are invaluable and in their way cannot be surpassed, but there was something about the work that they did in the Index of Design that could not be gotten from the color photograph, very much in the same way that you cannot get from photography exactly the documentation that doctors want for a medical illustration. By rendering it, they could get into it and give you the make of it in a way that you can't get even with the best of lighting. Very often you get obscured images and things are lost in shadow when you have to deal with the effect of light. By rendering in watercolor you get the complete make of the object and not its effect under a certain light. Now it requires a great deal of skill because these things were very highly finished. It didn't take them too long. The experienced ones could do them fairly rapidly. At the same time, to look at them, they had almost the effect of a color photograph in the completeness of detail, the grain of the wood, the textures. One girl was especially good at rendering old samplers. In the days of our great-grandparents, little girls had to begin learning their needlework right away by making a sampler of "God Bless Our Home" or something in letters and little flowers on it. They learned to use their needle that way. So the people on the project got a hold of all of the samplers they could find. They had boys out ranging the whole countryside of Wisconsin for anything of that sort that would

be interesting from the point of view of design. They'd borrow them and these renderings would be made, and this girl could do the sampler so well that when you saw it on the wall, it looked like the real thing was pinned up there. She did a beautiful job with a combination of transparent watercolor and Chinese white. Well, offhand you would think that's very interesting documentation, but it has rather more than that. I don't know how much of the Index of Design has been published. I did see a book on the figureheads from the sailing ships. But it is material that ought to be accessible to all designers, because it showed the evolution or the changes that took place in certain forms and certain designs. It seems to me quite analogous to what's happened to folk music. A tune that's known in one part of the country, you'll find in another part of the country with a certain difference, and you can trace it back to an early version. From that it goes back, and maybe you'll find it in England, although it might be barely recognizable. In this way, you can trace some of the artistic influences in this country that came from the various countries--for example, how a Scandinavian design for painted furniture will be found in some other form in New England. Then the family moves West or goes South and some other idea is added so there's a certain change of style. The history of design in this country is beautifully documented by this work. Then, of course, the artist was put to work. They had paintings, and he simply produced a certain number of canvases and got so much a week. Then there were other things that were done, but the doing of murals, of course, was the most ambitious part of the project. There was a lot of awfully bad mural painting done. We have to confess that. But also it did a great deal to revivify the idea of mural painting and to get people to think about it very seriously, both the artist and the public. There was at that time a strong influence in this country from the Mexican artists--Diego Rivera and Orozco and Siqueiros. The young fellows who believed in the idea of social significance were especially keen on their work and were influenced by them. I did some murals, but although I began as a boy with the ambition of doing mural painting, the thought about that field more or less lapsed during my stay in Europe. I hadn't entirely forgotten it, but I hadn't given it any very serious consideration. The only time that I did sort of think of it seriously was when Maurice Denis and Georges Desvallières started their school of religious art, which would be painting for church decoration. I had an idea that I'd like to join the school, but both Denis and Desvallières seemed to feel that it was a school which was really not done primarily for profit. It was really a project on their part for the benefit of church art, and they wanted students who were Catholic or communicants that would really make a career of ecclesiastical art. But aside from that, I hadn't thought about it, and when all of a sudden I was asked to do a mural for a school, I was quite nonplussed. In the first place, with all my admiration for Orozco and Rivera, I didn't want to do any Orozcos and

Riveras, and I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do except that I did not like the idea of simply making a colored pattern on the wall. What I had felt as being great wall painting can be seen even in a fresco such as Giotto's. As early as that you can see his talent as a painter. And what is most vivid in my memory are the great Venetians--the Veroneses, the Tintoretts, the Titians. Even on large scale work, they were essentially painters. But to make mural painting real painting is a difficult problem, and I felt that it had not often been solved in modern time. So I didn't enter on the subject too enthusiastically, but I was glad to have the chance at least of doing something and having it in place. A school in Wisconsin wanted a panel of historical significance. Well, of course, you know what they wanted. They wanted a big illustration which would make a very nice background for some part of the auditorium, something of that sort, and I'm afraid that that's more or less what I did. I tried to give my composition a certain monumental quality so that it would not be just an illustration, but at the same time, it could be read as one with costumes, characters, figures that would be plausible to the general public. I did a frieze for a high school in Wauwatosa, near Milwaukee. Then the Museum of Natural History in Milwaukee had an idea. The director was very keen about having paintings to illustrate history and archeology. The idea was not uninteresting; I liked the idea. He had a German who had been working there for a good many years. He was a little old man who came to this country when he was young. In those days, they used to do big panoramas, very realistic, huge pictures as in cycloramic form, and he stayed in Milwaukee and was spending the last years of his life at the museum doing these very bad paintings of Indians and Custer's massacre and one thing and another. They wanted to know if I would do some things for them under the project. Well, again, I was pleased with the idea of doing big canvases, but it didn't work out too well. I did two or three things, and then I had this disagreement with the director of the museum. It was not because he criticized my ability, but because he always wanted to have something in this or that. He wanted to have an exact picture, and after the picture was composed, he wanted something else done to it so as to make it more informative. In other words, what he wanted was a big illustration.

1.31. TAPE NUMBER: XVI, Side One (April 18, 1966)

NUTTING

I didn't get very much satisfaction out of my work at the museum. When I first started the project, I thought it would be very interesting because it would give me a chance to do these big canvases that I had always dreamt about. They wanted to have some rather large illustrations, and I didn't mind putting in the research to make them illustrative. I thought it would be an interesting problem

to do something that had some decorative value and that would be beyond simply enlargements of pictures. But I found that the director had no idea of a picture except that it was something that was completely documentary. And the fact is, most of their stuff had very much the same feeling. An artifact is something that must be analyzed from the point of view of time, certain kinds of culture, things of that sort, and was never looked upon from the point of view of the artist. So, sometimes, some very beautiful things would be mixed up with a lot of junk just because it fitted in solely according to their classification, which I thought was rather a depressing attitude towards much of the beautiful material that they had. The people that called themselves anthropologists there often had, what seemed to me, an extremely narrow attitude towards that sort of thing. When I finally got a large canvas going that I really liked, I'd show my sketches and work out the composition, and the director would think it was very good, but when I got halfway through, all of a sudden he had new ideas about it. When you take a big canvas that you've worked on, have it all laid in, then have to change it and throw in stuff that you hadn't counted on, it just wrecks your pictures. I thought it wasn't quite fair. If I'd had warning in the first place, I wouldn't have minded so much, but this thing had been going on, as a matter of fact, on two or three things that I did there. So I got rather peevisish, and I packed up all my things and simply walked out. Miss Partridge, who was directing the project for that region, seemed to sympathize. She said, "Well, that's all right. We want you to keep up the work for the project. Won't you make a contribution?" And the result was that I did a few portraits. Of course, they were rather difficult things to do, official sort of things, more or less the same sort of a problem. People would criticize them because they weren't finished enough, or they weren't quite the exact likeness of what they thought was the man. An especially difficult one was of a man that I never saw. He was a founder of one of the small colleges or a normal school--I've forgotten what it was--and all I had was a lot of old photographs and what they could tell me about the man's coloring. So it was a discouraging kind of a job. But it was all right. I didn't mind. It was good discipline in a way. So that was part of my work until I left the project. I've forgotten how much I was paid. It was a weekly sum, and the fact is that it's rather discouraging [to recall things] when I don't have any memoranda to refer to. I've forgotten so much. After all, it's also rather shocking to realize how long ago it was! [laughter] So maybe it isn't altogether too surprising that things that I haven't thought about for a good many years are not clear in my mind in detail. However, I think they did some quite excellent work on the project. Some of the boys did some very good mural painting, and it's too bad that more of that spirit of mural painting hasn't been carried on. I suppose, of course, in a way it has. It gave us stimulus and brought forth some excellent talent that has developed since. The other

project that I mentioned, the American Index of Design, I think was really a magnificent thing. It put the whole spirit of American design [before us] and made us feel there was such a thing as American design. Although it was derivative, it was interesting to see how a certain spirit of design in New England might be picked up and carried to the South in a different spirit and seemed to take on a certain coloring in various things. The objects that were used varied from farm tools to needlework to all sorts of things which illustrated the crafts and the artistic feeling and general expression of form and color in American life. The portrait painting, of course, was not such an interesting project. I would have liked to have worked on the Index of Design, but it required an extremely meticulous technique, and it was surprising that they found so many people who could do it really very well, or if they couldn't, many seemed to learn very rapidly, especially boys who had been working in commercial art and were used to rather meticulous derivative sort of work and were familiar with a variety of techniques and were very clever at using their skills in similar ways. [tape off] Well, during all this time, of course, I was very busy with my teaching. I had a very interesting group of young people. I pretty well described our activities there which, from the point of view of a school where you'd have a large number of students, wouldn't be too practical. In a way, it was a cooperative thing to the extent that they had the responsibility of preparing their own projects and making their own decisions as to courses of study. Of course, I would gather up all sorts of material from my own experience and the experience of other people that I would cite: that if you want to do this, then this sort of discipline you'd find necessary; or for this, you should improve your skill as a draftsman; or for this, there are certain techniques that would be required. That worked out usually quite well, because when they found a sudden impulse, like they had for the mural painting, instead of waiting for more preparation they pitched right in and did it. I was influenced in advising them to do that sort of thing by Robert Henri. Robert Henri is pretty well recognized as one of the really great teachers that we had in this country because he seemed to have a genius for bringing out the personal feelings and talents of his student, in contrast to most teachers who left the imprint of their own work on their students. A Chase student would paint like Chase. A Duveneck student would paint like Duveneck and so on. I didn't feel that was essentially bad because we find in the history of art, that the young painter has usually been obviously a product of a certain master, just as Raphael's work as a boy looked exactly like Perugino, and the young Van Dyck painted as much like Rubens as he possibly could and even tried to completely imitate Rubens' compositions and did them very well. Afterwards, he exploited his own talent and his own feeling. A man like Turner, whose exhibition is being held at present in New York, seems to be such a huge success. (I see

they're reproducing him in color in several magazines; he's made quite a splash.) As a young fellow he spent years playing what Robert Louis Stevenson would call "the sedulous ape" to other painters. Stevenson said that's what he did as a writer, and to many painters the same applies. But Henri had this ability to encourage a student to be himself, so that there were very few students of his whose work shows any obvious Henri influence. And a number really have gone places. I had a Saturday class. A good many had to work at night because of their work, and my life classes were also at night. But Saturday we could get together and work in the morning and then have a little lunch on the model stand, and then we'd discuss all our problems. Each one would bring up some idea or some difficulty or some question, and we'd throw it around, and give it the works. I also had the good fortune to get a hold of a press, because some of them wanted to do prints. The old-fashioned lithographic press was falling into complete disuse about that time. Many of the printing houses still had them for pulling proofs. (Milwaukee, incidentally, from early days, was a center of lithographic printing.) But they weren't using the old processes and had these old proof presses which they sold cheaply. So, I got one, and a number of the students went to work on lithography. Also we found that by using thin metal, we could even print from copperplates. We couldn't use the standard sheet that is used for engraving, but with thin sheets, they could get some fine experience and it often printed quite beautifully. The principle of the lithographic press is not the same as that used in other forms of printing but the use of thin metal solved the difficulty and quite a lot of quite interesting work was done. I don't know how many of them kept it up, but they got a good start. As I did with other things, such as when they wanted to do fresco painting, I had this friend, who had been working with the Mexican painters in the Diego Rivera entourage and who had learned fresco painting quite well, come around to give them a demonstration of the technique of fresco; when it came to lithographic printing, I found a fellow from one of the companies there who came around and spent an evening demonstrating lithographic printing and processes--preparing the stone and so forth. He gave them professional advice and demonstration, which worked out quite well because after you know the essentials of it, there's not too much to learn. It's just a matter of practice and study. So we were doing sculpture and painting and mural painting and all sorts of things, including this little course of anatomy that I mentioned for which the girls got the chicken and dissected it. That worked out quite well in a small school, but I could see it wasn't a way to really build up the school, to go any further in having a real art school. It was more of a club than it was an organized school. [tape off] I think I would have developed the school if I had stayed in Milwaukee, because I felt it was definitely the nucleus of something interesting, especially for older students. At

places like the Layton School, of course, they were mostly all young people out of high school who could spend their entire time there, but I found that there were also many young people who were entering professional life who also wanted to learn more. A good many people in my night class were professional and commercial artists, who came to study for that reason and also because the setup there gave them a place to experiment in new techniques and materials which they might not have at home. I had a little art library there, and I took down quite a number of books, so that if any questions came up, we could have illustrations and some inspiration from collections of prints and documents. We held exhibitions of the students' work. We went that far towards having a conventional school atmosphere. And, of course, one thing they enjoyed very much were things like Christmas parties. Those were always a great success. [laughter] Of course, they're bound to be, especially if you have a congenial crowd as this one was. But as events turned out, we left Milwaukee somewhat unexpectedly, I mean so far as anticipation was concerned. The reasons for it, we'll get around to later. [tape off] Coming back to my homeland was in its way as thrilling an experience as leaving it in the first place for my life in Europe. So much had happened while I was away. Not only had life itself changed, but also I myself had changed. I didn't know exactly how I would feel. We never felt that we were expatriates or foreigners in a foreign country, partly because we both had a deep sympathy for life in the countries we lived in, that is to say, Italy and France. We made them really a part of ourselves. But, at the same time, [we kept contact with our homeland], a great many of our compatriots, but also because we kept up our contact in other ways. My wife, I remember, always was a very faithful reader of the Saturday Evening Post because she felt that was one of the truly American magazines. Of course, in a way, it is. [laughter] And so she used to read it, not so much because of its literary interest but because it made her feel in touch with her own country. There were certain things I didn't know exactly how I would react to. One thing that I didn't take much interest in, for example (never have, unfortunately), was sports. I always tried to be interested in what was happening with the ball games, with the tennis champions and that sort of thing, because I had friends who would get very excited and could hardly wait to get the news of this or that or the other thing that was happening in the world of sports. I wondered if I would get excited if I got back into contact with the people who really took such things seriously. I was disappointed to find that I didn't, and I rather wondered why. Baseball, for example--I remember in high school, I used to be quite enthusiastic about our efforts in that field. This leads me to another thing that I have been thinking about in going back over these times: that is, your attitude towards the world around you is formed early and it will influence you throughout life, sometimes to your advantage and sometimes making it difficult

and something to be overcome. The playing of games, the competitive ideas were something that I did not have too much contact with at an age when it would be quite important. But what I started to say was that it had the advantage that whatever was done I did because that was what I enjoyed doing, not because I felt that I was getting the better of somebody else, that I was ahead of him in this or behind in that, measuring myself with somebody else, as you would in a competitive work. That is one reason why I never have been too happy with the idea of prizes in art, for example, or that a person should get a certain award just because a certain group of people thinks it's important, for maybe if it were a few years later, with a different spirit abroad, why, the person would not get any recognition at all. It seems to me that is measuring the value of a work. If the judges have understanding and appreciation, that's all right, but how are you going to measure it? Giving a medal always has puzzled me. It also made me very unhappy when I was teaching that I had to give grades, because I felt I really didn't know how to grade. Just because something fell below a certain standard and a certain preconceived idea of what a person ought to do, didn't seem to me to be exactly valid. But, of course, that was necessary in a well-organized school. I suppose a kid wants to know where he stands, and in certain fields, like a commercial art school, for example, in which I taught for a while here in Los Angeles, there is an understanding of what the demands are and what the market is for your work. Your ability to meet that can be measured to some extent. In that case, I think there is something rational, something valid about it. In the last week, in thinking about that period and what happened to me on my return to my own country, [I was struck with] the difference between that and this life that I had as a boy and an early teenager. So much of that time I was thrown upon my own resources and did not have too many people to evaluate my situation. It's a little bit hard to explain. But one of the most delightful aspects of my life in Milwaukee at the Layton School, as I look back on it, was when I started giving some talks on what you would call art appreciation. I gave these to a group that the director, Miss Partridge, got together. They would meet in the afternoons, and they were nearly all women who wanted to know something about art. There would be an art dealer there who dealt in very nice things. He had a large collection of big color reproductions of masterpieces. They are much more common now than they were then. But I found it worked out very well. I'd go down to this art dealer, and he seemed to be glad to lend me anything I wanted. I would pick out a group of pictures and put them upon the wall in one of the schoolrooms, have a sort of an exhibition of them, and give a gallery tour. That was one of the things I did for the school. One of the members of that group turned out later to be a very dear friend. Her husband was Dr. [Uno] Nyman, a dentist in Milwaukee, and Mrs. [Gyda] Nyman was trying to paint. Afterwards, she

joined my school. She used to come down and paint and do lithographs, and she worked there until I left Milwaukee. Dr. Nyman was one of the very interesting people of Milwaukee. He had talent as a musician. He was Swedish born and Gyda, his wife, was from a Danish family. But Uno Nyman had not been able to fulfill his ambition to be a musician, and he had to take up a profession to earn a living. He would have liked to have studied medicine, but he didn't have the means to get a medical education, so he took up dentistry instead and was one of the best-liked dentists in Milwaukee. But he could play the violin with considerable ability, and he was quite successful in his profession. He had a beautiful home and a big music room, and he used to have a string quartet every Saturday evening. He had a group of musical friends, and four of them played quartet music. A quartet evening at the Nymans was one of the charms. They'd play quartet, and then they'd have a supper that also was pleasant. He also entertained the musicians who came to Milwaukee, the London Strings and other well-known musical people. Usually, if they were in Milwaukee for any time at all, they were guests of the Nymans. The Nymans had up in northern Wisconsin, in Door County, a little farm, or what was really a large cherry orchard. I suppose in the old days it had been a farm, but when he bought it, the only thing it was used for was for cherries. Door County being a great cherry country. The last time that I really worked on my violin was when we stayed up there for the whole summer. We didn't always do that. Usually it was only a month or so, but one summer we spent the whole summer there and well into autumn. Every morning I would get up early and go out into the orchard and work on the double concerto of Bach. Gyda Nyman had been a music teacher and taught piano, and she read music very well. So that whole summer I worked quite hard at my high note. [laughter] My musical accomplishment was finally learning to play it, not too well, of course, but at least I could go through it with some understanding--and do both parts. Sometimes I would take first and Uno would take second, and then we'd change and he'd take one part and I'd take the other. Gyda would play the piano. We did that and a nice selection of trios that he had. It was maybe the most delightful time I think I ever had with my music. Of course, during these periods, I was doing quite a lot of painting out-of-doors, sketching, drawing, as if I were communing with nature in that way. A lot of thought of your attitude towards these things is much more of a matter of tradition and culture than we realize. People have no feeling for nature except its practical value, what it means to them in terms of making a living or the degree to which the ground is cultivated. If it's a farm, that is a measure of its beauty for them. I have a whole collection of anecdotes that illustrate that point. There's one about an old fellow who saw Yosemite for the first time. (It's about one of the things that I have noticed, and it could have been true, but it's typical of people who look at

nature with a tradition of the attitude that it should serve only certain definite purposes.) The story goes that a woman visited Yosemite and met an old fellow who was one of a party that first got into that valley. She was congratulating him and said, "What a wonderful thing to have done. Think of it. You were the first white man ever to come to all this marvelous, beautiful, wonderful country. What an experience it must have been for you! What a thrilling thing to have happened!" And the old fellow said, "Yes. Yes. If I had known it was going to be so famous, I'd have taken another look at it." [laughter] I think to most people it sounds like an apocryphal story, but I'm sure it wasn't. If it wasn't true it could have been. [I say that] because when I was a youngster, we were in a little town in Washington and my mother and I were staying at a hotel while Father had work out in the wilds. He would come in weekends, and we stayed at this little hotel during that period. It was in a beautiful, lush valley, green, with beautiful little farms and two streams on each side of the valley that came together at the foot of it and hills rising on each side of the valley. It was quite delightful. The mother of the proprietor of the hotel came out to visit her son, to spend the summer with him, and I can remember her standing on the porch of this little hotel and looking at this country that we thought was so delightful. She was born, raised, and had lived her life on the Kansas plains. She looked at this, and said, "They tell me this is a purty country. I don't see nawthin purty about it. I just feel like I was down cellar all the time." [laughter] One of the first things that we did a year after we got into Milwaukee was the very natural thing to do, [and that was to visit] my father. He was retired and was living out here in California. I had acquired a secondhand Pontiac. It turned out to be a very serviceable, excellent car, and we drove out to California. Father was then living in San Gabriel. He and his sister, my Aunt Anna, had, until he retired, lived in their hometown in Ohio, in Kent. Upon my grandmother's death, Anna joined my father out here, and he got a little property. He had a rather absurd idea, that he had had since I was a child, that he thought it would be a wonderful idea to have a chicken ranch. I don't know why, but chickens seemed to appeal to him. And even in Butte, he built a little chicken house on the hill where we lived. When he'd come home from work in the evening, he would work on this chicken house, and then he got a crate of chickens. They were running around and it turned out that apparently all of them were roosters except one. Mother was quite pleased with that little brood of chickens, because she thought they would lay eggs and they would contribute something. Well, they didn't lay eggs. This first collection of fowl, except the little brown hen, turned out to be roosters, until the little brown hen hopped up on a woodpile one day and started crowing lustily. [laughter] So that required more investment in chickens until they got hens. But, I don't know, Father seemed to find it quite fascinating, and when he retired, he started

raising chickens out in San Gabriel. That kept him very busy, and he was a man who always wanted to have something to do. He was a man of tremendous energy. It didn't turn out to be very profitable, and I think he lost his taste for it after his house burned. He moved into Alhambra then and got another piece of property, but he didn't say anything more about raising chickens, or even mention it. [laughter] He was tired of them.

1.32. TAPE NUMBER: XVI, Side Two (April 25, 1966)

NUTTING

I think that I said something about my work at the Wisconsin Players and mentioned Boris Glagolin. Glagolin probably was the most striking character that I met in Milwaukee. He was Russian, and I think he had been the assistant director of the Imperial Theater of what was then St. Petersburg. He also had been a popular actor in Russia and a movie director and had written a great deal on the theater and the art of the theater. His English was very poor, and as long as I knew him it didn't improve. He used very few words and very awkwardly. But the first thing that impressed me was that he had almost a Svengali sort of ability to bring something out of a young actor or actress. So even when the material sometimes seemed impossible, when the play was finally produced, you'd think that the work was being done by somebody who really had talent. In other words, they seemed to be able to follow an idea without really understanding it and could give quite convincing expression to it. And he'd do it in a way that I could not analyze. He'd sit back quietly, half wrapped up in his cloak in the darkness of the theater, and then all of a sudden, he'd go up on the stage and say, "Darling, not so. Not so." And then he'd walk across the stage and maybe, with one or two gestures of his hand or a turn of his head, indicate a mood or a piece of business or something. Then he'd go back and disappear in the darkness and sit there and just watch what was going on while they rehearsed without bothering them too much. It was quite amazing to me. He also got me on the stage and had me do some acting. But his life must have been extremely interesting as a director, writer and actor in Russia. Not being translated, I don't know how good his writing is in the original. He also had the experience of going through the Revolution, and he was a refugee in this country. He came here with nothing. I never did quite make out what became of his family. He talked very little, but once in a while, he would give just a little description of a scene or some experience while he was in Russia and you'd put two and two together and get the picture of quite a difficult life. He was director of that little theater in Milwaukee until not long before I left Milwaukee. Then he came out to Los Angeles. I rather imagine his feeling for

the theater (I don't know exactly how to express it) came from an aristocratic attitude towards the art and the things that he liked. He wrote on Shakespeare in Russian, I knew that. He wrote a little book on Othello. There were other things that were not of the eighteenth century, but in many ways I think his real feeling was eighteenth century. He liked to do things with eighteenth century things or with Italian Renaissance things. The play that I did the most ambitious set for was Lope de Vega's *The Gardener's Dog*. So he was very much, I think, a fish out of water. He didn't have any sense of the American scene really. The idea of directing plays by any of our American playwrights, with a very few exceptions, I think, would be quite out of his field. He had quite a hard time, but he was amazingly energetic and very courageous and was always very active. And nothing would stop him once he had an idea. But he was a charming person, and people liked him. He had a few young people who were his pupils, and they used to come to his little room and rehearse. In his way, I think he gave them some very good education in spite of his lack of any facility in English. He could get his ideas across, and I think they profited very much by him. The fact that he didn't have a theater to work in wouldn't stop him from producing something. He would get me interested, and he got everybody else interested and had everybody helping him. He was a wonder that way. If anyone dropped in, he'd find something for them to do, to help him out in some of his work. He had the idea of having a small troupe and portable scenery, and they would put on little one-act performances at a club or a hotel or anyplace where there was a room for it. It seemed like a very impractical idea and, of course, in a way it was, but he persisted and carried through with it. I made a big folding screen as a background, and we managed to construct two or three little objects, like a bench and one thing and another to make a little set. This screen that I made was somewhat eighteenth century in design. I remember the one that I did because it was simply a large folding affair, painted with scene-painter's colors and, of course, varying the background according to the subject. The kids made costumes, and I painted the scenery; and we had stuff we could put into a couple of cars and transport and set up in a few minutes and go through a sketch. He had some sketches he'd written himself, based on the stories of Boccaccio. He began by trying them out in private houses of people who were interested. Then he went out to some other places. I've forgotten now just where. I didn't go very often. For one over in Pasadena, I remember they had quite a crowd. They rented a little room there, and it went off quite well. It was short and amusing and kept some of our summer visitors amused for an hour or so after dinner. [laughter] And I think that sort of helped out his income a bit. But things got so hard for him that it was pathetic. He took a job as gardener for an actor who was quite well known in those days. I can't think of his name now, but he was a very good one. He worked for him in his garden.

However, not long after that, somebody managed to get some kind of support for him from an actors' guild of some sort, some source of help, though he wasn't a naturalized American. He lived in a very simple way, but he had that same idea--that no matter what idea he had in mind, if he wanted to do it, he could do something about it. The mere fact that he didn't have a theater didn't keep him from producing, even though it was in a microscopic sort of way. He'd put on plays and direct; and he was constantly at work on something from early morning to late at night. Even the fact that he didn't know English wouldn't keep him from writing things in English. He did this by putting down his ideas on paper in his very crude way. If he wanted to write a letter to the paper or write a little article for a magazine in San Francisco (I remember he wanted to write something for them on the theater), he would put down to the best of his ability what he had to say. Then, when anybody that came in to see him or call on him, he'd get out his manuscript and have them criticize it and correct it and put it in right [form]. So you'd sit there and work and find out exactly what his idea was and write and rewrite this sentence. And the next person would come in and they'd go over it too, and eventually he'd get this thing into readable English and get it published. One of the girls he knew had been an office worker. She knew about a mimeograph machine. That would solve the problem. He would get a mimeograph machine and mimeograph them. Then he would put the books together and become his own publisher. In some way, I think he persuaded some of his friends, and they found him a mimeograph machine, which he set up in his little room and away we went. After correcting his manuscript and reworking it and arguing about it and disagreeing with others on what he was trying to say, he finally got the thing ready, and then he would sit and, with one finger, patiently, all night long, practically, he'd type this out. He couldn't type, but that wouldn't stop him. By going very slowly and very carefully he got it done. Then it had to be bound. One of the girls knew a little something about bookbinding, and so his room was in a terrible mess for weeks. After he got this stuff mimeographed and folded, it had to be sewn [and covered]. He went around and discovered that at wallpaper places they had very handsome wallpapers. He decided that certain ones would make a beautiful cover for a book, and so he'd come home with these samples of various kinds of wallpaper. Then we had to paste these on the covers and letter the title on it. I've forgotten how many there were. I have two of them; one I gave away. But he wanted illustration, too, in one of his books. This was a book in Russian. I guess two of his books were in Russian, and the one that I gave to [Zenna] Serrurier is in Russian. I thought it would be a little addition to her Russian library, a curiosity at least. She was telling me something of its contents afterwards. Apparently this little book was about his

Russian experiences on a railroad train when he met the mad monk. What was his name?

SCHIPPERS

Rasputin.

NUTTING

Rasputin. He wanted some drawings for it. Well, I said, "Mr. Glagolin, I've never been in Russia. All I know about Russia is what I've seen in the movies and what you've told me and what I've read and seen from illustrations in books. I don't know how I could do anything that would be of any use to you." He said, "Oh, of course you can." He gave me some of this mimeographed material, and I sat there and asked what happened. "Well, we were in a train and there were berths, and there was a man in the berth above, and the berth goes crossways. The window is here, and I was sitting here." While he was talking, I visualized this and I would sketch with the stylus on the paper, you know. It was just a pure improvisation of what he was talking about. "Oh, that's fine, that's fine." I finally got through, and he put this through the mimeograph machine. The lines came out pretty well. It wasn't at all bad. So he tried them all out and said, "Oh, that will be fine." So I supposed, of course, that I would take these jottings and try to make something for him, but before I knew it, that's what he used for illustration. I guess he was wise, too, because they were probably better than anything that I could have tried to dope up, you know. They had a spontaneity and, apparently, they were close to the mood that he had in mind. So he got all of his books printed. He got them bound. He got them illustrated, [laughter] and he got them out. He had quite a serious review in a Russian paper published in San Francisco, and he got them in the Library of Congress. Though it may not have been what anybody else would have thought of, it was simply an example: that if he couldn't do what he wanted to do, he, did what he could, and he got something accomplished! The Wisconsin Players, I believe, was quite an old group in Milwaukee. At that time, it was supported by Laura Sherry who had been a well-known actress in her day and was then married to a well-to-do Milwaukee industrialist. Although it wasn't run in any very elaborate way, they had a good place to work and managed to do good work and produced quite a few talents. I believe that Angna Enters was there before my time and began her career in the theater with the Wisconsin Players. While I was there, there was a young fellow, Leroy Kuperstein, who was then working in Gimbel's basement in Milwaukee, and all his spare time and evenings he worked with the dance. He was one of the best members of our troupe because he also was an excellent actor. He could learn his part very rapidly and act it very well, and he also contributed his talents as a dancer and choreographer to the work that was being done. He went on from Milwaukee to New York and became successful in the ballet and was in Agnes

De Mille's company. He not only distinguished himself as a dancer but also as a choreographer. He is now here in Los Angeles and head of the American School of Dance. When he left Milwaukee and became a professional dancer, he took the name of Eugene Loring, and he is known by that name in Los Angeles. I saw the work of some of his students on TV the other evening. They took part in a picture. There were not many cases in Milwaukee where my contacts from my earlier life were picked up or touched upon. The visit of Ludwig Lewisohn, of course was one, his coming there to lecture and afterwards spending the evening at our house. Another Paris friend, Willy Seabrook, also came to Milwaukee to give a lecture, but I didn't even know he was coming. I ran into him by accident in the Milwaukee museum. He was on his way to see the director of the museum about something, and we stopped and chatted. And then I saw something of him in the two days that he was in Milwaukee, but that's the last I saw of him. [tape off] Of course, it's very much of a bromide to say what a small world it is, but we all have experiences which makes one realize in some ways that it is amazingly small, that there seems to be some sort of a mysterious attraction among the many millions of people who have once known each other and who somehow drift together in unexpected places. I first realized that--or experienced it--early in life when I met a young Cuban on shipboard and then many years afterwards, leaving France, I found that he was my cabinmate on shipboard. After being thousands of miles away, all of a sudden here we are in the same room again, out of the millions of people who might have been roommates. When I was a boy in St. Paul, one of my artist friends was a man by the name of Carl Bohnen. He was doing commercial work there and also was very much interested in doing portrait drawings. He did rather tight portrait drawings, but he had quite a lot of facility in getting a good likeness quickly. The actual quality of the drawing wasn't very interesting, but he had some success with them. The newspapers used to publish his drawings quite often. They seemed to think of him as sort of a local artist of repute, and he would make portrait drawings of famous people who came to St. Paul and they were used by the St. Paul Pioneer Press a great deal. When I left St. Paul and I went to Boston, I didn't hear anything more of him. Then years passed, and when I was in Germany trying desperately to find some way of getting out of Germany and back to Florence where I was then staying, I ran into Carl Bohnen at the consulate. We were very glad to see each other, and for the few days that I had left in Munich, I saw something of him. He'd come to Munich to study. He saved up money and had come to Munich with his wife and family, a couple of boys and a girl. He, too, was caught by the war, and I supposed that he wouldn't stay in Germany, being an American. But he did, as I found out later. Some years later in Paris, all of a sudden, I ran into Carl in a gallery. To my surprise I found that he had really done rather well in Munich.

He had [worked out] a very good commercial idea. He started it in St. Paul. He would make a portrait drawing and then have photographic copies made. He took care to have handsome copies of the original drawing, somewhat reduced and on handsome paper; so his client would have not only the original paper but would have these good and attractive photographic copies which would make very nice presents to the family. They really got their money's worth. So when he found himself in Munich at a time when artists couldn't expect any sort of a living (people were not thinking very much about having pictures or portraits painted or anything of that sort in those days), he got along quite well by his good business acumen. He found a bookstore that had a big window and he managed to have a display of his drawings in this window. He talked the people into the idea, and he said it worked very well. He had this exhibition of these drawings and the photographic copies for possible clients and information. He said he did a great many of these drawings in Munich, and later did some portrait paintings. His portraits were very tight and not very well painted, which he realized, and one reason he went to Munich was to improve his ability as a painter. He took a studio in Paris, but he wasn't at all happy because I think the movement in modern art distressed him very much. He couldn't seem to find any niche like the one he had in Germany, so he came back to this country. Well, again here's Paris and then I find myself in Milwaukee--I've forgotten where it was there--but I accidentally ran into him. He was in Milwaukee for a while doing some portrait drawings. By that time he was working for the calendar people in St. Paul, (Brown and Bigelow), doing quite a lot of work for them. He wasn't doing calendar pictures. It was some other project that they had in which he did portraits of famous people or something in these crayon drawings. He was in Milwaukee doing somebody for Brown and Bigelow. Well, again years passed and once when I was walking down Hollywood Boulevard, I heard my name called. I turned around and there was Carl again. [laughter] By that time, I think he'd been in a motor accident, and he had become quite frail. He was, of course, quite a bit older than I, and he died not too long after that. [tape off] Maybe because I had moved so often in my life, I never really felt that I was a permanent resident of Milwaukee, though I liked the city very much and enjoyed my work. But things happened that really necessitated our leaving. During the first period of our life there, my wife's health was quite good, but she gradually developed a mysterious difficulty and, on going to the doctor for a thorough examination, found that it was extremely serious. She had cancer of the thyroid. Of course, that was operated on, and it was quite a severe operation for her. Her convalescence was long, and she was in the hospital rather longer than I think was common for that sort of an operation. I used to go to see her. Any time that I had to spare, I would dash out [to the hospital] without any regard for the hours. I must say the

hospital was very generous about my unconventional appearances at all hours of the day and sometimes at midnight. I'd rush in to see her at all sorts of strange times. She gradually recovered and apparently was doing quite well. When she got strong enough to really enjoy life a little, I got tickets for the theater. It was a musical--I've forgotten what it was--it was one of the successful ones of the thirties. I remember Fanny Brice was in the performance. When I went to get the seats, the house was about sold out and the only places I could get were in a box. So I got two seats in a box. We were going to have a celebration of her getting well and getting out and having a little fun. It was in the old Pabst Theater, that hadn't been very much improved or modified for years, and the passage going down to the box was very badly lit. There was a step just before entering the box which wasn't easily seen in the dim light, and she stepped off and fell and struck her shoulder against the opposite wall. Well, it was hard to believe it was anything at all serious, but I found that she was not only very badly shaken up but was in quite severe pain. It seemed to be rather more than simply a bruised shoulder, so I made her as comfortable as I could and dashed out to get some help. The curtain had just gone up, and I remember Fanny Brice was on the stage in some kind of an act. Of course, they didn't want to have any commotion, but I wanted an ambulance called right away and something done about it. They tried to quiet me down and wanted to know what was the matter. I said she fell, and they said just let her rest, and she'd be all right. So I had to threaten to make a real scene in the audience before I could get any help. When they saw I was going to get rampageous and make myself difficult, they did go so far as to get a taxi and some people to help. We half-carried her out to the taxi and went to the hospital. Well, that fall proved to be more serious than we thought because the shoulder was badly broken. So here she was, just getting over a convalescence, and all of a sudden with a very bad shoulder fracture. Again that was a long siege--plaster cast, nursing, hospital expenses and so forth. The expense, of course, was the most serious thing. We sued the theater. It seemed to be gross negligence that a dangerous step like that shouldn't have some kind of illumination. It would have been so easy to put a small electric light under the edge of the step as they do so much in theaters. But that had never been done, and the wall light was inadequate. We felt that the theater was very much to blame for the accident. Apparently we weren't the only ones, because we got a couple of thousand dollars in damages. But I felt that now our life in Milwaukee really had come to an end, and we must find a better part of the country to live in because there was no prospect of her being really herself again and really strong. She was a person of tremendous courage and always active in some way. She was always interested in things and enjoyed life very much in her reading and in her activity. But the climate of Wisconsin [was very restricting]. There are extremely cold winters and the

winds off the lake are so biting that they make anything out-of-doors not very enjoyable except for people who are husky and used to that sort of thing. Then the springs are rather raw and muddy and disagreeable. They have a relatively short period in the summertime when the weather is really delightful and can be enjoyed. Well, she was California born, and she was homesick for California. The question was whether to try to come out to California or go to Florida or someplace where there was a mild climate so she could get more out of life than she could in Wisconsin. The first thing we did though was to take a trip to New York to see her niece, the one who stayed with us for a year in Paris, Helen Kieffer. She had married but her husband had died. She had quite a brood of youngsters. Also, Helen Kieffer's sister was a librarian at a place near New York, and there were other members of the family she could visit before coming out to the coast. So we flew to New York and met some of our friends and her family, and then we came back to Milwaukee and sold off superfluous furniture and one thing and another. We packed [what remained] and put it in storage. Then we came out to explore California. We first went to San Francisco. We both were very fond of San Francisco, but again I felt a little bit of the same thing [concerning the climate], that there are so many days in San Francisco that are foggy and more or less inclement. We were rather hesitant about Los Angeles, but we decided to explore it before we finally settled down. We stopped and visited at San Luis Obispo on the way down from San Francisco, where Helen's sister was living and also her niece. The niece at San Luis Obispo was a cousin of Helen Kieffer in the East. She was also Helen, Helen Ballerd. She was named after my wife and had been a teacher and librarian in the public schools of San Luis Obispo. We came on down to Los Angeles, and drove into Los Angeles, found a hotel and put up for the night. The next morning we were going out to drive around and see what we thought of this part of the world as a place to settle. As I was paying my bill, the clerk said, "Mr. Nutting, do you mind telling us how you heard of our hotel? How did you happen to come here?" Well, I said, "To tell the truth, I came in here because I got lost." [laughter] And a woman (I think that she was one of the owners of the hotel) who was in the back part of the office burst out with a peal of laughter. I wouldn't have noticed it, except that she was so amused. [laughter] But the truth was, neither of us had the slightest idea where we were. We couldn't make heads or tails of the map of Los Angeles, and so when it was time to stop, we saw a hotel and decided to go in and see what it was like. It turned out to be a very nice hotel. Afterwards we took a room in Hollywood and decided that was the region that we would look around for a place to live in. We spent about a week hunting, and finally on Winona Boulevard in Hollywood, we found a duplex apartment that seemed very satisfactory, and it was. That's where we lived until my wife died some years later. But that was

the reason and the way we left Milwaukee. [tape off] I left my school in Milwaukee going; the fact is that they wanted to go on with their work. They didn't have any special plans. They seemed to want to pay rent on the place and have some kind of a cooperative workshop, which seemed to me a fine idea. So I left them the lithographic press and also a collection of about a dozen reference books of one sort and another on art history and techniques and criticism which we had used in our talks and discussions and also in practical work. Apparently the group held together for quite a long time. I don't know what they did about the life classes, which were quite important while I was there. Whether they did anything in the way of getting instruction, or whether it was simply a matter of having a place to work, I don't know. But I remember I used to get a letter from Milwaukee, and they'd say, "Well, I see the name 'Atelier' is still on the door." (It used to be on the street door.) Apparently it kept going for some time. Then I lost track of their activities. If it hadn't been for the need of the move--for my wife's health and the necessity for an especially good climate, and also for the fact that she was very fond of her native state, California, and that coming back would mean quite a lot to her happiness and peace of mind, I would probably have gone to New York or to the East because, much more so then than now, we felt that everything really exciting happened especially in New York. We still had the old idea about Southern California, and I think that was one reason why we looked at San Francisco first, because those were the days when Los Angeles was still known as a rather crazy movie colony, for eccentric cults and all sorts of absurd aspects of living. My wife's fondness was for northern California. Her native town was San Luis Obispo; and Santa Barbara was the town furthest south that she was fond of, and she looked on anything south of that as rather ordinary and not for nice people. But, of course, we found Los Angeles changing very rapidly, and as I look back, it's really astonishing what changes have taken place since I've lived here. Most of the people that I knew that were really doing things in the world had gone to New York. It was not that Chicago wasn't active in many ways, but even the Chicago talent had moved East. Writers who had made the Middle West famous, and also had made Chicago famous, were not living in Chicago any more. Dreiser was not there, for example. Of course, there was Harriet Monroe and her magazine Poetry, and there was a very active spirit in the arts and music; but you still felt that New York was the hub of real excitement. I always had rather a yen to go back to New York. I had never spent very much time there, but what little time I had spent in New York had always been very happy and also very profitable. But what with the Depression which made the career of the artist a rather desperate one for a while and the other reasons that I mentioned, I didn't even think of settling in that part of the country, with its cold winters and hot summers and so forth. New York, in that

way, would be no improvement over Milwaukee. Further south didn't seem to be a very good idea. The most natural thing was to come to California.

1.33. TAPE NUMBER: XVII, Side One (May 2, 1966)

SCHIPPERS

We were going to insert here your experiences with the Milwaukee Art Commission.

NUTTING

The last years that I was in Milwaukee, I served on the Art Commission. There was a vacancy, and I was chosen, as an artist, to be on the commission. It had the job of passing on designs of monuments, of buildings, and things of that sort. There was nothing very important that came before us while I was there except a monument to Abraham Lincoln. The Civil War veterans in some way had raised a substantial sum of money for a monument to Lincoln. There was no monument to him of any importance in Milwaukee, and they seemed to think that that would be a contribution that they ought to make. There was a competition for a design for the monument. That was rather difficult because we had really no authority to pick the design in the first place. It was first of all to be picked and then approved before the matter came to us. Quite a large number of small models were presented to the commission, not to pass on, but to criticize, and a very interesting thing was done by Carl Milles, the Swedish sculptor. The others were rather conventional sort of things. Unfortunately, the Carl Milles, which was much the best and most original was a little too unconventional for the old boys, the veterans of the wars, and they wouldn't consider it at all. They had one that they chose, and we finally agreed on it. It was a fairly good thing of its sort. There was nothing very distinctive about it. But for this kind of thing, it wasn't bad. We accepted it. Then came the question of a site for it in Milwaukee. They were determined that it should be down on the lake front, and the commission was unanimous in opposing that idea. It wasn't a good place for it. It was too much out in the open for this sort of thing. It would have no monumental character. There was a certain bend in the highway that went down along the lake front, and it would have no background except water and sky. What little value it might have for any decorative purpose or for any monumental feeling, we felt would be destroyed in such a situation. We discussed all sorts of places and the architect, Mr. Judell, worked very hard. He went all about town in the various parks and various public places and made some sketches for the possible placement of it in various locations--giving an idea of what the surroundings would be, what sort of a background and what scale it would have to its surrounding material to get the most out of it. Well, we couldn't persuade the donors of the monument that any

of these places were really better than the one that they wanted. So finally we felt we had to yield if they were determined to have it down on the lake front, and if that would make them happy, why, that was it. I never saw it in place. I never heard anybody say how it turned out. But we took that job very seriously and had a great many meetings, and, as I say, Mr. Judell made these drawings, sketches, and plans, and we would discuss them and go about town and try to visualize a place for it and then go back to some other idea. So the commission couldn't be blamed too much for not doing the best they could to get the most out of the problem. That was a rather important thing in a way, not as much so as some of the work the commission would have to do but did not have any chance of doing at the time that I was on the commission--that is to say, larger buildings and styles [involved in the] architectural buildup of Milwaukee. But it was interesting. It was also educational to work on a practical job of that sort and give it serious study. We couldn't be blamed for doing the best we could with the problem. We had a lot of discussion; we had long conversations, pro and con, with all sorts of people who became quite interested in our difficulties. Well, when I left Milwaukee I resigned from the Art Commission. I was quite pleased and quite touched that when I announced the fact that we were leaving, the people were concerned about it and seemed genuinely sorry for us to leave. The Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors gave me a delightful dinner, kind of a banquet, and presented me with a two-volume edition of *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, profusely illustrated, which I not only treasure as a memento but also because it's a very handsome and valuable edition to my library. Very nice speeches were made by the members of the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors and also the director of the Art Institute, the schools and other people in student art in Milwaukee, and that together with quite a number of parties and farewell gatherings sent us off on our way. [tape off] Not the least touching, of course, was my students at the Atelier. They threw quite a party for us; we had quite a gathering of not only my students but our friends. They decorated the place very nicely and we had a delightful party. There was a group of the students who thought they would like to keep the Atelier as a cooperative workshop at least, and do more or less what I had done while I was connected with it--that is, to get in people for lectures or for special instruction. In the meantime they'd have the place in which to work and carry on their projects. Apparently it kept up for some time. I'd have letters and people would say, "Well, I see the Atelier is still going. I see those gold letters on the door downstairs are still there and the place seems active." [laughter] Also I left a few of my books with the idea that when they finally closed up they would box the books and send them to me. It's quite understandable, but they never got around to doing that; so I don't know what became of some dozen or fifteen nice reference books that I had for them because I suppose at the time they

finally closed it they had forgotten what the situation was. Our last days of packing up were ones of great confusion, and it was almost the last day before leaving Milwaukee that, what with the packing and general disorder, we decided to go down to the Hotel Pfister for breakfast. We had scarcely ordered our breakfast when I looked across the room and saw one of our Paris friends, Marvin Lowenthal, who I hadn't seen or really heard of since our Paris days. It was quite a surprise and quite a pleasant meeting, and he joined us for breakfast. It turned out that he was in Milwaukee for a lecture, and we told him what we were doing. He said, "By all means I want to give you a letter to a friend of mine in San Francisco." (I'm sorry I can't think of his name at the moment. We'll call him "Mr. X." [His friend] was a well-known figure in art and music in San Francisco, a man in the insurance business, I believe, and he had made some very genuine contributions, partly as a collector and partly by his interest in art and young artists and by promoting art and music for San Francisco. It seems that he was a very warm friend of Marvin Lowenthal.) Lowenthal immediately got some paper from the desk at the hotel and wrote a little letter of introduction to him for us. So our first acquaintance on coming out to the coast was "Mr. Z." who turned out to be all that Marvin Lowenthal had described him as--a very charming, very hospitable person. He invited us to dinner. He had two or three other guests, artists whose names I did not know but apparently ones that he thought I would be interested in meeting in San Francisco. He showed us his apartment, his collection, and his guest room. He was very proud of all the famous artists and musicians and dancers and various people he had had as guests and who had occupied this room. He named off some quite important names. It gave him great pleasure to have these people in his home. Also the art objects of his apartment were very interesting. That was really our introduction to the art life in California. He died not long afterwards. I never saw him again, but I remember him with great pleasure and also with considerable gratitude. My wife's girlhood being spent in California, she was very fond of San Francisco, and her family had a great many friends and associations with the city. But we both felt that in her very frail condition the climate there wasn't the best for her, and we would not decide on a place to settle until we had explored a little, at least Santa Barbara and maybe Los Angeles, to see what sort of a future we might make for ourselves in other parts of the state. Well, one very fortunate thing for us happened. Helen's niece had been teaching for years in the schools of San Luis Obispo, and at that time I think she was not only teaching but she also was the chief librarian for the schools, or had some such position. She was going to be in San Jose for the summer, taking some courses, and she had a very nice cottage at Cambria in the pine woods and urged us to come and stay there as long as we wanted. We drove down to Cambria, and I made the acquaintance of my wife's niece Helen

Ballard, who then left us with the cabin and went to San Jose. We stayed at least three months, if not longer, and it was ideal. Helen got her strength back to a surprising degree. It was very quiet there, and with the days on the seashore and walking in the woods, living a simple, very quiet life, it was ideal for her recuperation. I think it was in October of 1939 that we then came on down to Los Angeles. We stayed at a hotel and drove about and finally decided that, everything considered, Los Angeles would be the best bet. Santa Barbara, of course, is a very charming city and life could be delightful there, but there would be much more possibility of my finding myself in a larger place like Los Angeles than in Santa Barbara, which to some extent was true. After quite a lot of searching, we found an apartment in Hollywood that was within our means. It was in a duplex and had the advantage of being so divided that we could have a sitting room-bedroom and a room that was larger than average. (It was an old house and had bigger rooms that you get in most houses nowadays.) This would serve as a studio, and it had grounds and a garden. The minute we saw it we thought that was about the best that we could do; we took it and sent for our furniture and started our life in Hollywood. My wife had regained a great deal of her strength, but she was still frail. She had to economize, to rest a great deal, but fortunately she was a person of tremendous inner resources. Her interest in all sorts of things could keep her hours interesting as long as she had any strength at all. She was an omnivorous reader, from mystery and detective stories to archeology and classical reading. I remember one thing that she did was to read Dante's *Inferno* in the original. Everyday she'd do a bit, till she got through all of Dante's *Inferno*. Then she found a fascinating book on Easter Island, which interested her. She had quite a feeling for detective stories and was a good critic of such writing. It kept me busy getting up armloads of paperbacks that she would run through in a hurry. I'm sorry that she didn't do more writing. She had her typewriter and many notes and did quite a bit, but I'm mystified because I don't know how it could have happened, but I feel it probably did happen. When I was corresponding with Professor Ellmann when he was writing his life of James Joyce, I discovered that things that I thought she had rather extensively written as material were only fragments and little bits of notes and pages torn out of small notebooks. During her last illness, I rather imagine that she may have inadvertently, in destroying papers, destroyed things of value. I don't really know. I know that I used to hear the typewriter going quite a lot, and she ought to have left much more than I have of her writing. She had a definite talent for writing; she wrote well. She wrote a novel which didn't get accepted, but she wrote a very delightful book on gardening (this was before we were married) which had some success and even got good reviews in England, and English people are very critical of anybody who writes about gardens. They have a special love for their gardens and a feeling for

gardening. She wrote a book based on the bridges of the Antietam. She met somebody in Italy who accidentally picked up that book and said, "Now that's the way that history ought to be written." He didn't know that my wife had written it. [laughter] I don't know where he found it, but it interested him. He came from Maryland. The book was inspired by a man--a druggist, I believe, in Hagerstown, Maryland--who took good photographs of all the old bridges crossing the Antietam, the old arch bridges over the river. Using those bridges as a starting point she wrote her book. She also wrote quite good verse. I mentioned the fact that she translated the Corsican voceri, the improvisations that are recited at funerals in Corsica, which was published in The Bookman with some woodcuts by someone who did some decorations for it. Some bits were published here and there, but she never published very much. Well, she was also very musical, and when she felt strong enough for us to go to concerts or musical affairs she enjoyed these. So that in spite of her frailty, her very active mind and her enthusiasm and appreciation prolonged her life, and she found that Los Angeles was not nearly as unpleasant as she might have anticipated. Again, because she was a person of imagination, we would drive around our neighborhood in Hollywood, and she would note, for example, in the smaller streets the great variety of industries. The character of the shops was not as monotonous as they are in some parts of the city. There'd be strange and unusual things, maybe a craftsman or a bookbinder or somebody who was doing something not too common. She would spot things of that sort and was always appreciative of character, the spirit of her surroundings. I think that's characteristic of a certain type of mind. For example, like my mother, she was a lover of Dickens. She knew the stories and characters of Dickens more or less by heart, and maybe persons like my mother and [my wife] and other people I've known who are very fond of Dickens have that sort of feeling about a city. Dickens' London is kind of a world of his own, and she could make Hollywood also something other than the conventional conception of the place. If she wrote a novel it would have a kind of a Dickens' feeling; it wouldn't be the feeling that most of us have for Hollywood as being altogether a movie sort of a place. We didn't come to California with any introductions except that one in San Francisco, but in Los Angeles I had been preceded by two Milwaukee friends. One was Dolly Dunn, who had been my secretary and manager at my little school and had taken care of it and had done a beautiful job, and she had come out at the same time as Boris Glagolin. Dolly was very enthusiastic about my idea of starting some teaching here along the lines that I had done in Milwaukee. She had a number of friends and the first thing I knew I had a fair-sized group. I didn't have room for many, but we had a weekly group. We used to meet in this room in our apartment, and it went very nicely. At the time we came out, Dolly married a young Russian and with a rather curious result. It

made me feel how you can live in a city and how the city takes on completely the feeling of the people you associate with, because of Kolya's--I've forgotten his very difficult last name--being a Russian and having a great many Russian friends. He was rather a bright fellow and in some ways rather talented. He could draw, and he was a very good talker. He was doing some writing, but it was in Russian so I don't know what it was like. He spoke English rather fluently but with very much of an accent. Then Glagolin, of course, had a great many Russian friends, and for some months I had a feeling that Los Angeles was really a Russian town. Every time I went out I seemed to be meeting Russians. Glagolin took part in a play, and, of course, I was interested to see him in the play and used to go down to rehearsals. Here were all these Russian people around me. Some of the people Dolly got as my pupils were Russians. And an interesting variety--some of them were quite brilliant. Others were of aristocratic families who were refugees in Los Angeles. One was the chief personage of the Russian colony. I don't know what you would call her, sort of the queen of the Russian entourage. She had a very well-known Russian name, Golitsyn, Princess Golitsyn, and then there were some others I wouldn't know, but I could gather from the way that Glagolin would speak of them or talk to them that they were people of high rank. One that he was especially deferential to was living in a very simple little cottage and taking in sewing. To meet her she seemed very nice but she was just another sewing woman that you might get to modify some of your clothes. One reason that our circle of acquaintances was rather limited to people in more or less the immediate vicinity was that Helen's lack of strength necessitated that she should live a quiet life. The operation plus her accident had left her with a heart condition that had to be considered, and that required quiet and as much rest as possible. I didn't make any special effort. We had enough to live on very simply and decently, and if I had done anything that would have taken me away from home too much, I felt that I would have to have somebody to be with her because I could never tell at what moment she might need some help or attention. We couldn't afford to hire help, so I resigned myself to being simply active in my studio. I wasn't confined really, but I didn't make any effort to do much besides that. I sent to exhibitions, and I interviewed galleries. I met a painter, a landscape painter, Paul Lauritz, who lived not too far from where I lived in Hollywood. He suggested that I join the Southern California Art Society, which I did. In those days it was rather a large society and held rather large exhibitions. Also there used to be held at the museum in Exposition Park the Annual Exhibition of Los Angeles and Vicinity. It was contributed to by Los Angeles and San Diego and as far north as Santa Barbara. (Santa Barbara artists also were eligible to show.) One year I got a prize--I think it was third prize--at the Los Angeles and Vicinity show. But as usual, for some strange reason, no sooner do I get some

kind of recognition for some work than I wonder why it was given and decide that I don't like it anyway, that I made a mistake. The same thing happened with that thing I got a prize for in Paris. I got bored having it around and painted it out. Another activity I had for some years--I've forgotten just what years they were--was writing for Rob Wagner's Script. I met--I've forgotten how--Lorser Feitelson, who was with S. MacDonald Wright, head of the Federal Art Project for Southern California, and through him I met S. MacDonald Wright, and for some time he had been writing the art column for Rob Wagner's Script. For some reason he wanted to give it up and wanted to pass it on to me. So I went with him and called on Mrs. Wagner. The Script was then published in a little building over on San Vicente. I think it was published twice a month, a very delightful little magazine. It had local character and very often some very good writing and some quite nice drawing in little spots and line drawings that were used in it, along with other illustrations that were good. Well, that was interesting work, and it took me out a great deal. Through that occupation I got in touch with all of the galleries, and then if I made a trip to Santa Barbara or San Francisco, I would have material from both places to write my column. Eventually the Script was sold by Mrs. Wagner, and they changed its character completely. I felt they made a mistake because it was just another slick magazine. To pick it up you wouldn't know whether it was California or New York. It was nondescript in contrast to what it was when Rob Wagner had edited it, and Mrs. Wagner had carried on successfully, very ably, until she finally sold it. Mrs. Wagner turned out to be a very charming person. She used to call me up and wanted to know if I would care to go out for evenings at various places. One time I went to dinner at Edward G. Robinsons, which turned out to be a very pleasant evening. There were quite a number of interesting people there, not especially of the movie colony. I can't think of his name now, but there was a very well-known architect and his wife, and people in other walks of life who were distinguished in their way. Mrs. Robinson, as I guess we all know, is a rather ambitious painter, besides Edward G. Robinson having a superb collection. That collection has been dispersed. It was really a wonderful one and beautifully shown in his house, and seeing those in itself was well worth the evening. He also was trying to draw and was very much concerned about perspective. I tried to tell him that it wasn't too difficult a problem for all practical purposes, that you don't have to know too much of the theory of it for what use one ordinarily had for it. It wound up with our going upstairs to his study and trying to get the perspective of his table and furniture from all points of view, which was one time standing on a chair looking down on it and another time it was sitting down low on the floor and looking up at it, holding up pencils and measuring this way and that way. His study was quite an interesting place. He'd collected interesting photographs, among others some

photographs which up to that time I hadn't seen of Toulouse-Lautrec. Some sort of trick photographs. Some of them have since been published in writings about Lautrec. But it was the first time I saw them and they were quite fascinating, as were other things of that sort on his walls, which had more to do with art maybe than with his own profession. Another time I went with her to a showing at Charlie Chaplin's studio. They were showing a private view of a film, and the strange thing is I can't remember what that film was now. But he was there, and I met him. I remember being quite surprised to see what a small man he is. In the pictures you don't always feel that he's such a little guy. He is a small fellow, but that evening I had the feeling that he was much smaller than I had pictured him. And on several occasions I went out with Mrs. Wagner for things of that sort, which were interesting. As a matter of fact, I'm way ahead of my story because that was really after my wife's death that I took on this job of writing. She died in 1947. In the meantime there was the war--Pearl Harbor. Let's see, that was about a year after I got here in 1940 I felt--I guess as most people did--that I ought to be doing something. I knew I was too old to enlist, but what did rather give me a little bit of a jolt was when I would call various agencies to inquire about things. The first thing they would ask me was my age, and I found that I was a "forty-plus." [laughter] I wasn't really a forty-plus. I was thirty-nine then. I wondered where the years had gone. They would say, "I'm sorry, but you're too old." I found that my usefulness was more limited than I imagined. In some naive way I thought, having been through World War I and knowing something of the ropes in the various departments of war activity, that I might be of value. But that didn't mean a thing. In some way I read or heard that the Art Center was going to have an intensive course in industrial illustration. Well, I thought that was interesting. It would give me a chance to do some drawing, of sorts anyway. I decided to go down and find out about it. I went down to the Art Center, which was then down on Seventh Street, and they had a class of maybe about fifteen people of all ages, most of them middle-aged, and some rather elderly, who were being trained for certain forms of industrial illustration. It seems that Adams, the director of the school, had got this idea and went to Washington; they thought that it was a very impractical idea, that you could not train people for that sort of work so quickly. They seemed to have a sudden need for that sort of thing, partly because of the tremendous increase in the airplane industry and in manufacturing for the government, also because so many commercial artists and people who could do that work professionally were in the army, and draftsmen were scarce. But in some way Adams convinced them that he could do something practical about the situation. He had this course, which I think was six weeks. It was intensive. I've forgotten how many hours a day we used to work. I'd go down quite early, with considerable qualm because it meant that

I left my wife alone really all day. However, we then had people downstairs, a French family, who were very pleasant and understood the situation, so it was not too bad. Well, the work wasn't too successful so far as I was concerned. What Adams did was that one of the companies had given him a set of blueprints of an obsolete plane and that was on file in the place. The group were to draw a complete plane, the inner structure of it, in perspective from these blueprints, which sounds like a terrifying idea to a lot of those people who didn't really know any perspective. But, curiously enough, they had the perspective lesson everyday and little by little they got onto it quite well. It seemed to me they did. It shows that you can take a subject of that kind and give it concentrated attention, and it doesn't take too long to get the elements of it. Along with that work was a drawing of the mechanical parts. The really difficult thing was that nobody there could do really professional work, but there was a lot of illustration that could be done by people who were not professional commercial artists, that didn't take too much skill but more so than you'd expect an ordinary person to get in such a short time without previous experience. For example, they would have to draw some simple piece of mechanism in such a way that a person assembling it could tell from this illustration how to put it together, because again the airplane industry had to rely upon people with no experience whatsoever and had to start from scratch. They had to be trained to have things very simply expressed. So this group learned to draw simple objects in perspective, freehand, and to ink them in with a ruling pen and compasses and so forth and make a good, clear illustration of the object--sometimes, as they would say, "exploded." That is to say, the various parts would be illustrated as near one another, showing that this entered that and this touched that and this joined this and this screwed on that, so they could follow it along by this sequence of parts that were drawn. To draw them neatly in good perspective and to ink them in is not easy, as anybody well knows who tackles it for the first time. But they did very well. And it's surprising what some of them did with this very complicated thing of the structure of the plane. The drawings were not really professional, but very clear and surprisingly good. I didn't do too well. In the first place I found that the blueprint drawing was terrifically tiring, because it's like some kind of very finicky bookkeeping. You had to look up a certain number of a certain blueprint and that turned out to be a certain part--the inside of a plane, a plate--and it had exactly so many bolts on certain places on the plate which fitted in a certain way, and you counted one, two, three, four, five bolts; and so you carefully drew one bolt head with its six sides and another bolt head with its six sides and another bolt head with its six sides and another bolt head with its six sides, until you get rather woozy. [laughter] And then you found out that you got one of the bolts in the wrong place, or maybe the bolt had five sides and not

six sides [laughter] and you had to do it again. To make matters worse, I had some tooth trouble; I got an ulcerated tooth. Well, you seem to be trying to meet a deadline, and I felt if I left a day or so to look after this tooth I never would catch up on this infernal job; so I hung on, which wasn't too good for my nerves or my health or anything else. The fact is I got terribly nervous. I could have dynamited that place before I left--with great joy! [laughter] I finally got through with it, and I got what looks like a skeleton of an airplane with all its little bolts and extrusions and various little parts in the right place and lettered and titled. They gave me some kind of a certificate of accomplishment, and I was supposed to go out and get a job doing that thing. I decided nothing doing. I had had enough of that. But I thought, "Well, I'll take on some kind of a job. This thing of being a useless person in a period as intensive as this isn't too easy. I would like to do my little part, no matter how modest it might be." I went down to an employment agency, and the first thing I knew I was out at Lockheed to be a riveter. I think that was a much more valuable experience than working in a drafting room would have been, because it got me acquainted with a side of life that I had not known before in my life. The only thing at all comparable to being an organization man that I had ever known before was my service with the Red Cross in Italy, which I didn't especially like so far as being in an organization was concerned. And I think it's rather in a way unfortunate that my life had been so introverted as it had been in lots of ways; my work had been done by myself and for myself and according to my own ideas. To be a cog in a machine for a while, I think, might be rather a wholesome experience for anybody. I had had too little of that sort of thing. Well, anyway here I found myself getting up early in the morning, driving out to Burbank and standing in the great crowd of people in front of the gate, which at a certain hour was shoved up and then we all streamed in, punched the clock and went to a bench in this huge place. Of course, the first thing that I found difficult to get used to was the noise. I didn't dream that such a horrible amount of noise could be lived through, so I got earplugs and that helped a little bit. There was a noon rest when they played soft music, not soft music but sweet and pleasant music, and everything was quiet for a little while before this awful hullabaloo started again. [laughter] The feeling of being in a crowd of workers and the punching of the time clock and being one little person in this huge thing was a strange sensation, which in a way I found interesting. I was very glad to know more about it. When the induction was over, which consisted of about three or four hours of examination--physical and mental and psychological and educational--gosh, what they didn't know about me in four hours! Of course, it wasn't too long a one, but they crammed an awful lot of my private life and condition, it seemed to me, into that quiz and examination. Then the training in the use of the machinery for riveting, and then given a place to work and someone to

work with. One thing I remember is a Negro girl who had gotten as far as the induction and had passed everything; she was standing around and nobody would pay any attention to her. I couldn't understand it. She seemed to know what was the matter, and she tossed her head about it and sneered. It was then that I realized what it was, that nobody was going to pay any attention to her. She finally left, even though she was already trained, but nobody would take her on. So she didn't get her job. In a way I was up against the same thing that I was with this airplane drawing--that is, my dislike of anything very monotonous and repetitious. I could stand it for an hour, two hours, or three hours, but by and by, in a long day, it got rather difficult for me. I couldn't help noticing that women seemed to do much better than men. There were middle-aged, gray-haired women who never complained, who never seemed to be bothered by the brrrr! brrrr! brrrr!--hour after hour. And it was a long day's work, and when it was all over they went home quite happily, whereas I'd go home in more or less of a stew sometimes. I found little ways to break the monotony. Once when I got there in the morning and there was nobody to work the other side of the plate with me, I found by my bench a piece that had been damaged by someone on the night shift, because if this rivet gun slips it almost goes through the aluminum plate; it makes a dent that has to be repaired by somebody who knows his job. I looked at this thing and decided that I could do that. I got a piece of scrap and worked out a solution, and I went to the foreman and said, "I think I could fix this." I showed him what I had in mind, and he said, "Well, I think your idea is perfectly good. I'd put one more rivet in here." (He took out his pencil and marked the place.) "Otherwise I think it will be all right. See if you can do it." And so I did, and it worked out. It passed inspection right away--a very good job. So at least that was something a little different. Then there was a fellow who came around once in a while to gather up the drills and took them off to be sharpened, and I looked at those drills and decided it would be rather interesting to see if I couldn't sharpen those myself because the wheel was just a few feet from my bench. I walked over and put my drill on the wheel; then I examined it closely and it looked pretty good to me. I had four or five drills, and I sharpened them all up. Then I took them to the foreman and asked him if thought those were correctly sharpened drills, and he looked at them and said he felt that was really a very good job indeed. He said, "Now, if you only had a drill that turned anti-clockwise instead of clockwise those would work perfectly." [laughter] By mistake, I'd given the bevel the wrong way on the drill; so it was kind of a left-handed drill. I went back and the next time I did all right. I learned to sharpen my drills, and I learned to make simple repairs when I made a boo-boo on things. I got a little bit of variety into my work instead of the eternal riveting. However, one thing that rather concerned me was that I had to leave early in the morning, and I left

Helen alone so much. It made me rather anxious, so I looked around for another place to work that would be near home. I found one in Hollywood where they were making separate parts, and that was the sort of work where several had to work together inside a part of a plane. I was always cracking my head on some sharp point or other. Well, I finally decided that there were plenty of these fellows doing the war work and doing it quite satisfactorily, and I stopped worrying about it too much, and went back to my own life--to paint, to look after my own interests. I am probably getting ahead of my story a little, but just to finish up one phase of it, my concern about being away was justified. I used to dash home from work, partly to get my lunch and partly to see that everything was all right. One day I did that and I found that in the comparatively short time I had been away from home my wife had fallen and had broken her hip. She was ill for a long time and didn't recover.

1.34. TAPE NUMBER: XVII, Side Two (May 9, 1966)

NUTTING

Besides my efforts at working in the plants there were other things that I did for the war effort. For one thing I was an air warden, which was very amusing, and I think: it was that work that more than anything else made me feel that I was no longer a young fellow. [laughter] Up until that time I thought that I might be of some value to the war effort as I had been before as a younger man. But when you get to forty-plus, I discovered that you're not so important, and as an air warden, of course, most of the other men were also older people. The way they took their work was to me quite amusing, and it was only the younger people who had a certain sense of reality about it. The men I worked with had all sorts of funny ideas, and they wanted to change the cut of their armbands (they thought they were too wide), and so they trimmed them down. [laughter] In some ways they took it very seriously, but in other ways they had a rather childish sort of an attitude towards the whole affair. They didn't seem to have as good sense as I'd expect mature men to have. The work itself was interesting. They had it all worked out. You would get calls in the middle of the night, and maybe at two o'clock in the night they'd wake you up on the phone, that you had to report at a certain place, that a bomb had fallen, and a certain disaster had taken place and you must act accordingly. So you'd jump out of bed and rush off with these guys and mill around this spot where nothing had happened and point to the devastation and one thing and another and make plans for rescues and this sort of thing. These drills were rather frequent, and it wasn't too easy when you were working hard and had a lot of other matters on your mind. But I didn't feel badly about it. As I say, I found it rather an interesting experience as well as an amusing one. I had one rather narrow

escape from being sent to the hospital myself one night, because most of the time was spent dashing around having people put out their lights. You'd see a lighted window and you'd race down the street or across vacant lots to get people to put out their lights or cover their shades. And all, of course, in pitch darkness. Over near Hollywood Boulevard at a place where a large apartment house now stands, there was a vacant lot with an excavation and a retaining wall. Apparently, it was the beginning of a building that had been halted by the war. They had gotten as far as excavating to a certain extent, a retaining wall of around six feet or so, and a cement floor had been laid, and that was that. I saw a light in the distance and I went tearing across this lot and to my amazement and shock--it was dark--I stepped off into thin air, down six feet onto this cement floor. [laughter] And how I escaped injury I don't know, but I wasn't even lame. I landed on my feet and was pretty well shaken, but I went on and tended to business, and I didn't suffer any ill effects. That was the nearest I came to being a casualty in the war. But this going to certain addresses and congregating and spending a good part of the night on a hypothetical disaster was quite interesting. The other thing I took was a course in first aid, and I learned bandaging and took the lectures on the treatment of shock and so forth that they give to people taking elementary first aid. As a matter of fact, quite a bit of it I knew already. I don't know why, but all my life I have often had responsibilities to people who were ill, either my family or my friends, and I seemed to get a reputation of being able to do the right thing. I've often thought what profession I would have taken if what I had been doing hadn't gripped me so. Engineering (my father's profession) was to me interesting, but I think that temperamentally it would be either law or medicine. Both of them interested me. My maternal grandfather was a very talented lawyer, and some aspects of law appealed to me. Medicine too is a field that I would like to have worked in, especially if one could go on with a broad education required for a person in the field of neurology and psychiatry, because it seemed to me that that was a marvelous field, and in spite of the fantastic developments in medicine itself, the fields of psychology and neurology attracted me. I noticed how much among the professions the various fields of art appeal to many doctors. A number of writers, for example, from Rabelais to Oliver Wendell Holmes to Somerset Maugham, have begun their life with the study of medicine or have been practicing doctors, which is also true of art. Whether Da Vinci had an interest I don't know (I never saw anything in his notebooks apropos of pathology), but his tremendous interest in anatomy suggests that he might have been a very fine surgeon--he did such remarkable dissection--if he'd followed that field. Also that among the professional groups, the businessmen sketch clubs and things of that sort, by far the best amateur work in these clubs is from the doctors' clubs. And sometimes they're above the amateur. We have one

doctor here now. Bob Kennicott, a heart specialist of considerable renown, who is also an excellent painter and exhibits his work in the professional shows; it passes quite stiff juries sometimes. So it has rather interested me that there seems to be a relationship in the thought and temperament in these various fields. However, I concentrated on the idea of being a painter, always with some idea of doing writing; probably it's a matter of laziness more than anything else that I haven't made some effort in writing. A good many painters have been very articulate. The lectures of Sir Joshua Reynolds were not classics exactly but were examples of a man who not only was very thoughtful but also very articulate. Among the European painters, one of my teachers, Maurice Denis, was also a serious art critic and made some contributions to criticism. He is best known for one statement that is very often quoted by writers on art--that a painting before it is anything else, whether a representation of the crucifixion or a still life or what it might be (I'm paraphrasing what he said), is simply an organization of color on a plane surface, and that must always be borne in mind. It is in those terms that it becomes a painting, not because of what it represents. And André Lhote, another one of my teachers, was quite an industrious writer. I always wondered when he found time to write because he was so busy. Not only was he a very busy teacher but he was a very industrious painter. I found that he did some of his writings on the subway on his way to work, that he carried his book with him, and in his spare moments he would write, and little by little he would get together serious studies which he would publish. Another activity that I enjoyed, and which also took time and energy, was going to the USO and doing quick sketches of the boys in the service. It was one of the projects of the USO that they invited artists to do that sort of thing, and they would mail these drawings to the families of the boys who had had sketches made. They had mailing tubes and facilities for wrapping, and they would take over the sketch, and so all the boy had to do was to sit for half an hour and be drawn. Then they'd give the drawing to someone in charge who would tend to the packing and mailing of it. It was very nice. The boys seemed to enjoy it very much; everyone was eager to sit. Of course, there weren't too many of us doing that sort of thing, but quite a number though. We used to go in pairs. It was rather more interesting that way. Sometimes we'd go alone. But Ed Biberman and I used to go--I've forgotten how often it was--quite often, sometimes in the daytime, mostly at night though. It's rather tiring work; it's quite a strain. You can't keep it up very long, because after a certain period the boys all commence to look alike, which isn't very good when it comes to a likeness. You get a kind of a blur from one face and then another face and you remember the last face you saw and all of a sudden you find you're drawing that face instead of the one you should be drawing. So you have to take a rest. But the principal thing is that you can't keep it up just one after another too

long without it being more than you can do well. That would have led to one or two other interesting things if it weren't that I couldn't leave home. Once I got a telephone call, and they were flying a small group of artists to do that sort of thing up north, someplace where they had landed a bunch of the fellows in a hospital station, and they wanted to send some people up to interest and amuse the boys in that way. But I couldn't go, and I was rather sorry about that. It would have been a rather interesting variation in my life. So what with being an air warden and doing some work in the aircraft plant, that was my activity during the war. [tape off] After I left the work in the aircraft plants, I commenced to think seriously of trying to get a job in teaching. It was not too easy to decide. When I worked in the aircraft plant, I made it a point to only take the graveyard shift, because by working at night I could leave my wife, who was doing quite well, but was in too delicate condition to leave alone too long at a time, and by working at night of course she was in bed and asleep and I wouldn't have too much to worry about. The idea of going back to teaching would require my being away probably all day long, but I decided to do it. Two artists that I had become very well acquainted with in that period were S. MacDonald-Wright and Lorser Feitelson. MacDonald-Wright and Lorser Feitelson had been head of the Federal Art Project, and coming from Milwaukee and having been in the Federal Art Project, I was interested in what they were doing out here. I called at their office and met Feitelson and later met MacDonald-Wright. Then a certain amount of time intervened, and I was doing this other work that I've spoken of. In the meantime, I saw something of Feitelson; I met him quite frequently. And when the Federal Art Project was closed down, he took the position of instructor at the Art Center. The Art Center was then down on Seventh Street, and it was there that I did this work for industrial illustration, in a big room across the street from the school. When I spoke to him about going back to teaching, there were some positions offered me. UCLA called me up once, and there was another small art school, not too good but I guess a fairly successful one, who wanted a teacher and wanted to consider my taking the position. But before I decided on these places, I was talking to Lorser and he said, "Why don't you come to Art Center?" And he arranged an appointment with [Charles] Adams, the director, and he and I went down. I took a folio of my work, and Adams liked my drawings. He thought I had something to contribute to their work there. So I took that position. It paid much better than the other two offers, and really for that reason alone I took it, because I was glad to have the money. The Art Center was getting along very well. It seemed to be very well managed in a business way, and it was going to be a successful school, which it has in fact become. At that time it hadn't been going very long, and they were rather cramped in their quarters. But it was already getting a reputation, especially its school of commercial art. They had a

certain amount of training, which was considered fine art, under an excellent teacher by the name of Stanley Reckless. Stanley Reckless was one of the founders of the school, along with Adams and two or three other people, and had an interest in the business. So I started teaching life drawing in the same room where I had been doing my industrial illustration, which had been changed over into a life class. At first it wasn't too easy. The school was run in much the same way as the Layton School had been managed, the instructor being there the entire time of the session, but also they had rather special ideas of what they wanted the drawing course to be. At least Adams did, though he didn't interfere at all, but one could feel that he always looked through the drawing of the student in its immediate application to the other parts of the course, especially in advertising layout and that sort of thing. For example, I had one class at one time in head drawing. Ordinarily, in the drawing of the head in most art schools that I had been familiar with, you would do a drawing of the head nearly life-size, not over life-size but fairly large, the idea being that in doing it on a larger scale, as you would have in conventional portrait painting, you get more intimate knowledge of the structure. For example, you can really get into the drawing of an eye and find out how the eye is made. In a very small drawing, you can't do it so well unless you are very proficient. Sometimes, with that idea in mind, remarkable work has been done, especially by a Russian school in Paris. Students would do a drawing of a head much greater than life-size, sometimes quite a colossal drawing of a head. In that way they couldn't cheat on anything, using little clever touches, you know. You had to actually make the nostril as it is built, and the corner of the mouth, and how the eyelid fits over the eyeball, and how the lids join at the corners--the exact structure, almost the architecture of it--which I thought was an excellent idea. In contrast to that, one of the few things that Adams suggested about my teaching was not to have them do the head so big. He said, "They never do that in practical work and we want our work to be always very practical, to have its immediate application to what the student is doing, and they've got to learn to do small heads." So most of our head drawing was a sheet of paper with a large number of rather highly finished little heads drawn on it, which was all right. I didn't feel it was too bad of an idea, although I didn't feel I got as much out of my students as I would if I had had a chance to. As a matter of fact, I didn't pay too much attention to the idea. I had them also do large heads as well as small ones. Well, there are a lot of little variations like that in teaching, the demands of a school which emphasized commercial art, which I had to get accustomed to. It was extremely hard work because my classes were very large, and it was quite a problem how to do justice to such a big class in one session. If you really wanted to do the most you could for them, go around to each one individually and give adequate explanation and criticism, it would have taken

days to get through forty or fifty drawings. So that was something I had to learn, and I never felt that I really did. You could do quite a lot by talking, by demonstration, by putting drawings on the wall and going down the line, comparing one drawing to another, explaining the reason for this and that, and something of the theory. I didn't mind, as a student, if a teacher would actually work on my drawing, and the same way with my painting. If I could see him actually take that problem and lick it right there on the spot, it would mean much more to me than any amount of theorizing. At the same time, I had the other responsibilities, my wife and my father. My father was then out in Alhambra; after his house burned, he got a place in Alhambra, and he and my aunt were living there. There were certain difficulties, as when both my father and my aunt got pneumonia at the same time, that kept me quite busy and quite worried. But, I was lucky in finding a nurse, a woman who was quite practical and good. She had a little boy, and she was very glad to live with my father. She had a room in his house and took care of the place and looked after him. Father pulled through, but my aunt died in 1944. There were things like that that complicated life. [tape off] The director and founder of the Art Center, Adams, was a man of great ability but in some ways very much of a martinet. He thought of things that I thought were a little excessive. For one thing, it seemed to me that he would systematically throw out so many students every semester, because he didn't think that they were promising material--or that was the idea, that they weren't doing well enough to justify their taking the full course. That kept the others very much on the *oui vive*, of course, and made them work very hard. One of the excellent things about the school is that the kids do learn to work. After my wife died, the house in which I was living was sold. Somebody bought it and was going to remodel it into a number of small apartments. So I put all my stuff in storage and by that time the Art Center had moved out to Third Street in what used to be the Cumnocks Girls School in the old days. It had beautiful big grounds, and a big building that had an auditorium, and on the second floor, there were many rooms. They did much remodeling, which was going on when we moved the school. I began teaching down on Seventh Street, and then he moved the school before they were really ready for it. We had classes in all sorts of odd places, and it wasn't too easy at first. Then after my wife died and I put my stuff in storage, Adams said that they had plenty of room there, and if I wanted to, I could take one of the rooms upstairs, which was very nice and worked out very well indeed. The building superintendent and his wife also had an apartment on the same floor, and she used to give me my breakfast. That made it convenient. I could go down in the morning and go to my classes; they had a cafeteria in the school, where I could have lunch and go back to work. For dinner, I went out to a restaurant. But one thing that I enjoyed very much after coming home, if I didn't go out--and I went

out very little--would be to go down and wander around the night school. They had night school with life classes, and if I saw an interesting model in one of the classes, why, I'd go in and sit with the students. And in that way I got quite a lot of drawing from life, which is something that I had rather missed. Unless you make a special effort to get out and go to a life class, you don't get it. And, of course, it's too expensive to have one's own model and do much such work at home, especially when you're doing it for study, very much as a musician would practice everyday. I always felt that I ought to have a certain amount of my scale work, like any other student, and also because it's the kind of study that I enjoy very much. It would amuse me that there were certain times that they would think that I was just another student in the class, trying to learn to draw like the rest of them. I remember one girl who used to work not far from where I would sit. She came to the night class, and I got into a conversation with her and she was tremendously interested in her work and said that she was going to enter the school full time at the beginning of the following semester. The reason that I noticed her was that her work was unusually good, very sensitive, and I thought showed very definite promise. Also, she seemed to be so intensely interested in her drawing that I was sure that she would make good. Well, she was one of the ones that thought that I was just another student at the night class, coming to learn; so when she finally joined the school and came into the life class and found that I was her teacher, she was quite flabbergasted. [laughter] And I had her in my life class for some time. As a comment on the school--and I don't say that I blame the school at all for it, but it's one of the unfortunate things that happened in this case, and it doesn't always happen--the very severe demands of being a good commercial artist took completely out of what she did most of those qualities that attracted me to her drawing in the first place, and she became just another commercial artist. She learned the techniques and all the tricks of the trade. I say tricks of the trade, because a boy going out to make his living at commercial art, if he is going to be at all successful, is supposed to be pretty proficient at doing most anything that we ask of him, especially lettering. The well-trained commercial artist, of course, is at least skillful in lettering, and he ought to be very good at layout, because the layout is the most important part. But even so, he must be able to render a block of lettering proficiently. If he can do that, he has a very strong entering wedge in a commercial field. After that, it depends on what other things he has talents for, which include things like fashion drawing and also being able to illustrate advertising, which is one reason that their course in perspective was quite complete. This was very hard on some of the students who weren't mathematically minded because they had to know the principles quite thoroughly, very much as an architect would learn perspective. A good many of the girls, especially, used to get nervous prostration over their

perspective course. I had more students come weep on my shoulder, because they were afraid of being kicked out of the school at the end of the semester. They didn't think their work was good enough. They were so afraid they wouldn't be able to stay, because this course in perspective was simply driving them crazy. They couldn't make head nor tail of it, which of course was a gross exaggeration. Like a lot of things, at the beginning, it's a complete mystery. You can't see any sense to it, but, little by little, things fall into place. I don't think many of them failed their perspective course, even though it was rather stiff. They had an excellent teacher. He was a very nice fellow, and he worked out models and mechanical devices to illustrate his teaching. I thought he was doing a very good job, and I would have liked to have taken the course myself, because although I understand it up to a certain point, it's not something that the painter makes too much use of. In commercial art they have to know it pretty thoroughly, because a good illustrator for advertising will sometimes have to make a very realistic picture of something that hasn't even been manufactured. He must do it from blueprints and knowledge of materials and make a rendering which will be convincing, just as an architect will make an illustration of a house that hasn't been built and give you a good idea of it. Especially in the old days they used to do it very realistically; sometimes you'd swear that the house had been drawn from nature. Nowadays they do it rather more schematically. Adams demanded a great deal of the students because I think his idea was that when they got out into the world and had to meet deadlines, they must know what it's like. I imagine when they finally got out and got their jobs that they would very often find that the work was really easier than it was at Art Center. There were quite a number of students that were given rooms and lived there at Art Center, and I never came home late at night without seeing some of the windows with the lights burning as they were working on their projects. The only thing that we called the fine arts was the classes of Stan Reckless, though there were some other courses at the Art Center that were good, especially one by a man name of Kaminski. Kaminski had a course that I thought was excellent; it was called the Logic of Drawing. It was one that I would like to teach myself; I would like to use some of his ideas. I never have had an opportunity to really do it. You could only do it with someone who was taking a regular course and doing daily work. But Kaminski's course and Reckless' course were excellent for artists, and as I say, the discipline that was given at the school wasn't one that necessarily killed talent. I felt that it did in this girl that I mentioned, but one of my students in life in those days is now [acting] head of the Art Institute here in Los Angeles. Bentley Schaad not only mastered all the Art Center had to give, but he got an excellent start in painting and afterwards went to study with Henry McFee, and then became a teacher at the Art Institute, now Otis. He not only was very

accomplished as a painter and in his art background but has published a beautiful book on the art of still life painting, which isn't just one of these how-to-do-it books. It's really quite a serious and excellent book on the subject of still life in art and the painting of it. [tape off] The work that I saw of Kaminski's at the school interested me; one was his course on the logic of drawing, which instead of what we used to do in the old days of simply setting up a still life and making a drawing of it, he would begin right away with a student inventing compositions. The first problem they would have was a rather good-sized drawing in black crayon. I don't think it was charcoal. I think they used a Conté crayon on a rather smooth paper. One of his favorite problems (I think it was the first he gave in course) used to be to take a cigarette and to lay it over a match box. You had there a combination of a cylinder and a cubical form, and studied the theory of light--the transition of light, the reflected light and so forth. At the same time the student would do an imaginary composition, using the principles, and being as fantastic as they liked. It resulted in some of the wildest surrealism you can imagine. Some of the kids really did some good illustrations for horror stories. But they were good in the way they turned them loose into really using their material freely rather than copying the actual appearance, as we used to do when I first went to art school and made charcoal drawings from still life, but always with the reasonable use of those various elements--line, light, shade, and characterization of edges, reflected lights and all that sort of thing. In the old days, realistic rendering was one of the things that architectural students would have to study. I don't think they do any more. One was the theory of shadows, of cast shadows. Usually it would be drawn mathematically onto the rendering, in perspective. It wasn't simply an impression of light and shade; they had to be able to actually make it. If the light of a shadow fell on a curved surface, the degree of curvature and the angle of the light, all that sort of thing, was mathematically worked out and laid out on your drawing and then rendered. Well, Kaminski didn't demand this exactly, but he demanded understanding. Later, with the knowledge that he gave them, plus the mathematics of perspective, they were well on their way. After that, it's then only a matter of tonal values and of color relationships to make a complete pictorial representation of anything. Kaminski was excellent, and also an instructor (whose name I can't think of for the moment) had a course in color. Usually I found that color courses are rather boring. First, I had an idea that the theory of color would be extremely interesting, but from my own efforts, I felt, more and more, that color is a very personal matter. Its relation to your work is more a matter of feeling; beyond certain elements of it, I never found too much use for theory. But this course that he gave, with its exercises, he made interesting, and the students did some rather beautiful things in abstract designs in color. They used all of the qualities that we have in color--hue and

value and so forth, how they could play against one another and be modified by texture. Incidentally, another part of Kaminski's work contributed a great deal to the success of the department of commercial photography which was, and I believe is, very good. Kaminski himself was not a photographer, but he had classes for the photographic student, in the study shapes and of textures in a way that's familiar to us, mostly of montages and collages, in which you would take various textures--like a smooth piece of paper and a rough piece of canvas and this, that, and the other thing--cut them up into shapes and arrange them. Sensitivity to texture and the rendering of it is, of course, very important to the photographer and one thing that you very, very seldom see in the work of an amateur photographer. They have no sense of texture whatsoever or the possibilities it has in making an attractive picture of even an ordinary subject. This course would cultivate such feeling and would have quick repercussions on the work of the photographic student. They took their photography very seriously there and had excellent instructors and lecturers; some of the most famous photographers taught and lectured at the school. Sometimes it seemed to me that they weren't too economical in some of their projects. I remember one day the whole auditorium was in an uproar. You'd have thought that a movie was about to be produced there, because of the cameras and effects and models working on the auditorium stage and the making of a fog effect with dry ice. You felt that something really big would come out of all that, because there was enough in the way of costumes and build-up and color effects and lights and all the boys with their cameras to produce a spectacular movie. Finally the picture was made, and it seemed to me that almost anybody could have tricked it up in an ordinary photographer's studio fairly easily without all that fuss. But I suppose I do them an injustice. Maybe the not impressive results were the measure of the value of all this expense and hoopla. [laughter] I can't say that I was very happy at Art Center. I spoke of Adams being a martinet. He believed that you should demand a great deal of the student, and you should not treat them with kid gloves, that they were there to learn to do a job and they had to learn it. There was a certain military attitude towards doing your job. Well, the boys were just back out of service, and one thing that contributed to the success of the school in getting started (the same thing that aided the Layton School) was the fact that they had a lot of fellows right out of service, going on with their education and getting it in art. So they were used to men like Adams, but I never have been. I never liked to make much show of authority. Adams used to try to get me to be more demanding and severe in my criticism. Also I felt there was an excessive emphasis on the purely commercial side of art. I felt, and do feel, that in the field of commercial art the important contributions are really made by the creative artist. What happens is that they may not, as commercial artists, contribute too much, but the source of everything that is

used in commercial art has begun outside of the field of commercial art. In Europe, you have the magnificent posters of Toulouse-Lautrec and [Théophile] Steinlen and [Jules] Chéret. The artist, and sometimes the great artist, has made the real contribution. It's only on rare occasions (not too rare fortunately) that you find superior talent. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

I asked you to mention some of these other personalities you worked with there.

NUTTING

Feitelson was teaching life drawing at the same time that I was at Art Center, and I saw a great deal of him. We often went out to lunch together. He is an excellent teacher. He's not the conventional teacher of life drawing that I was used to, but he was good in the sense that he had not only been a serious student of his art in a practical way, but one who understood it historically and theoretically as well. He's very articulate, and he has a very good way with his students. He interests them; he brings illustrative material and he discusses it. He gets excellent results from his students. They learned a great deal about the art of drawing as well as acquiring skill. Reckless' teaching in painting was more academic. He was trained in France in the Beaux-Arts' tradition of painting. He used to put up still lifes around the room with artificial illumination. I hardly ever saw work being done with natural light. They always had some system of electric lights over the subject and would work a long time on their paintings, which was fine discipline in drawing and in textures and tone and color values. Bentley Schaad, incidentally, now teaches at the Otis Art Institute and was in my life class. He was also a student of Reckless' and did some excellent things. He afterwards worked with Henry McFee. I met S. MacDonald-Wright at the same time that I met Lorser Feitelson. He is, of course, a very talented painter, not only a beautiful draftsman with a fine sense of decoration--the murals in the Santa Monica library testify to that--but also, he was one of the very first of the painters in the modern movement to do so-called "pure abstraction." He and another painter [Morgan Russell] founded a movement--I say "founded" a movement--they started what they called Synchronism, which wasn't too important in the history of art, but it was interesting in the fact that it was one of the earliest, and may possibly have been the earliest, efforts to do purely nonobjective painting. Well, besides being a distinguished painter and very articulate person, he is witty and highly cultivated. He is an excellent teacher. [tape off] He's a great collector of, and an authority on, Oriental art and is spending most of his time--or half his time, it seems to me--in Japan these days. A lot of his painting has definitely the influence of the Orient, especially his drawings and watercolors.

1.35. TAPE NUMBER: XVIII, Side One (May 16, 1966)

NUTTING

Of course, there were other art schools in Los Angeles; there seemed to be rather a burgeoning of art instruction, especially in the period immediately following the war. Some of the most important ones, besides Chouinard and Otis, were the Art Center and the Kahn Institute of Art, which I thought was quite a good school. Kahn himself was a modest sort of a person and an excellent teacher. He kept his school going for some years, but like many other projects of the same sort, it went on the rocks because of poor business management. After all, if your school gets beyond a certain size, it becomes really a business proposition and has to be run by somebody from that angle with a thorough knowledge of that sort of thing. Kahn had a very pleasant school and some very good instructors who have since become well-known painters. I thought that Jepson's school was excellent. He had a very fine staff of teachers with varied points of view. The most influential member was Rico Lebrun. And Jepson himself is a fine draftsman and teacher of drawing. I used to visit the school quite often to see the fine work that was being done there. Chouinard, of course, kept up high standards, and Otis was more or less in a state of transformation. When I first came to Los Angeles, the teaching there was still more or less the teaching that I was used to when I first went to art school. They made highly finished charcoal drawings from still life and the same sort of periods of painting and sketch classes, with a course in commercial art, as nearly all art schools have. [tape off] The principal change that I saw in the spirit of the art student was their impatience, their terrific desire to get something done very quickly, to learn something very fast. They wanted to form a style right away. They liked somebody's style or somebody else's style; the idea of one's patient climbing of the ladder, which was more characteristic of the art student as I remember it as a young person, seemed to have been dissipated to a certain extent. I remember one associate professor at UCLA who spoke of one girl who joined the painting class (she was going to major in art), and after all the formalities of registering and getting her materials to start in her work in the art class, the very next thing she did was to go downtown and engage a gallery for the following year to have an exhibition. [laughter] Well, in my day I think the girl would have been laughed out of school. I thought that was rather startling, because as a young fellow that was unheard of. You didn't even know whether you were going to begin to make the grade, largely because much of one's preliminary work in a serious art school seemed an endless grind. It was in a way. They set you down before a plaster cast, and you labored day after day, and the paper got worn out and dirtier and dirtier from all the rubbing. It was often disheartening, and it looked as if the

chance of ever getting any place was desperate. And when you could graduate into a life class and then to the painting class, you took it for granted but always looked forward to a long period in which you would not be acceptable for any really serious exhibition. But in some ways, although we've lost some of that spirit which I don't think was too bad--it is a problem; you have to take it patiently--it did have the disadvantage that the student whose talent, which might be genuine, is still rather a tender plant and easily damaged. I remember that at the school exhibitions, when they had a great number of life drawings on the wall, the first impression was of a one-man show. They all used their charcoal in the same way; the drawings were the same size; the treatment was the same. I have illustrated what I meant, when I spoke of how, when I began to teach at Layton School, I threw overboard that idea and commenced to look for the individual talents and, in some cases, was able to really nurse them along. When I noticed a boy could do a thing with spirit and significance, using that as a starting point, we could also get the other thing. Another student might have quite a different point of view, but again by enlarging his experience, you finally got the whole thing pulled together into real development which is much more rapid and which I found was also much more pleasant for the student and he was much happier in his work, because his work then had some meaning. I suffered from the fact of doing quite a lot of work which really had no special meaning; it was just drudgery, just practicing scales. I think sometimes that that spirit became a bit grotesque, the fact that we were required to do charcoal drawings. No serious drawing was done in the life class except in charcoal, and the Boston school was always hard charcoal, whereas maybe another school favored a soft charcoal [producing] a broader, tonal sort of drawing, while a hard charcoal drawing emphasized line and high finish. I remember in Boston I got quite enthusiastic when I was at the library one day looking at some of the red chalk drawings of the late Renaissance, the drawings of Del Sarto and Michelangelo and people who were very fond of sanguine as a drawing material in contrast to the silver-point drawing of the early Renaissance. I thought it was such beautiful material that I turned up in the life class with my sticks of Conté red chalk, but I didn't work very long, not because anybody objected, but they all razzed me so: "Oh, look at Nutting! He thinks he's a real artist. He's using red chalk now. [laughter] He is not a serious student. He is trying to show off." And so I went back to my hard charcoal and tried to catch up with the other students in that class who had been working longer than I and were more advanced, which is a pretty tough situation for a student to be in. It gives him a feeling of inferiority which isn't too easy to bear. Well, of course, there's nothing wrong with the fact of making a very accurate drawing of hard charcoal from the model--I'm not arguing against it--but I do feel that the student should have some sense of its meaning, not a theoretical one but should

feel from his heart that this will be part of his idiom, part of his language, and have some meaning to him. If that is lacking, then it becomes such sheer drudgery that he gets discouraged, and sometimes a quite genuine talent is nipped in the bud. On the other hand, the rather extreme feeling that they have in so many classes now is simply to express themselves. They often do very interesting things, and quite important things, in constructions and in using transparent papers and in making collage and putting together strange objects in the study of texture and form. It has the advantage, when it is successful, that a student in expressing himself, even very crudely and in a variety of media and materials, will get a sense of being an artist, even if only in a very small way, how expressive a thing can be when used in a certain way or in a certain context, that it's quite an adventure. That in turn, if it is successful, will then open up the beauty of fine craft, that you must have a skill in using these things, that you must understand them and also be able to manipulate them in order to get the highest expression. It's not that you can just put your fist down on a piano and say, "Well, that has a beautiful tone. It's Steinway, don't you know." You must have your fingers cultivated with a skill that you can pull out of this Steinway something that's terrific. When Michelangelo found a block of marble and visualized some interior spirit that he could draw out of it, it was through years and years of marvelous use of his hands to make this thing something great. Whereas, the young artist very often, I think, gets the idea that if you simply have talent, then it's bound to be really worthwhile, no matter what happens. If you have talent, all you've got to do is to throw things around and it's bound to be very expressive and important, which of course is extremely fallacious. I notice that same thing with young actors. When I was with the Wisconsin Players, there were young people who seemed to have quite a lot [of talent]. They had tremendous enthusiasm and they worked hard, but to me, they did not seem to realize that to be a good actor is much, more than just having talent or being good-looking, that it's a craft to be patiently studied like any other. When Glagolin insisted on my taking part in some of his productions for the Wisconsin Players, I was very glad to do it because it was a very interesting experience, but I didn't kid myself in the least that I'd ever be even a good actor, because without dedication, without a great love of what really is a craft, I don't see how anybody can be especially important, even though they may get great popularity. There is, among the people who know, who have real feelings for the theater, an instant knowledge of the person who is an actor, both by talent and by dedication and by training, and the one who simply has a few facets to his personality which are marketable on the stage. That is very true with the painter. The result, of course, is that we have our galleries full of things now. I don't want to sound cynical or pessimistic, because I do admire enormously the talent that is burgeoning in this country; but if you go up and

down the galleries on La Cienega, the people really don't know painting. They don't know drawing, and they, therefore, resort to certain dodges and tricks. Maybe they're not insincere; they may really think they are producing great art. But I feel that it's a very small proportion that actually do. Of course, that's always been true. So again I suppose there's no harm done especially. I am amazed at the number of people, who should know better and who have sensitivity in these things, that can be taken in. Forgeries, for example: the other day I was walking down Beverly Boulevard and went into a gallery. Very beautifully framed was a drawing, with a little plaque under it, "Modigliani," supposed to be a pencil drawing. It was really shocking, because it was no more Modigliani than anybody would do by putting a piece of tracing paper over Modigliani and running a line around it. It had the shapes, head, funny eyes and long neck and all that sort of thing, but the essence of Modigliani was so completely absent. Sometime ago there were a lot of drawings of Rodin around Los Angeles, and I had a friend, who really had quite a good feeling for art, who bought one of these because it seemed extraordinarily cheap for a Rodin pen drawing. Well, again, to anybody with a sense of drawing, it was a shocking thing to see. A large number of those apparently sold very well. In fact, there was an article not too long ago in Time magazine about this guy. I was quite interested in seeing it, because I had seen his things when they were first circulated around Los Angeles, and he made quite a good living at faking Rodins. They reproduced a true Rodin and this man's fake, which when you saw them side by side, with a little bit of feeling, I think you could sense that they were different. Well, the person who really acquires the quality of a Modigliani or a Rodin so that what would look in the hands of anybody else to be simply a careless scribble to a person who has a eye for that sort of thing--as a sensitive lover of music has for the performance of a Rubinstein or a Horowitz compared to that of a lesser person, or a fine violinist compared to simply an accomplished violinist--the meaning is significant of the activity. I'm speaking now of the make of the thing, not his ideas or what we might call his message or what is he trying to do, but the mere touch of his hand has a magic which can be sensed and has a thrill for the person who really loves that, to whom that sort of thing has meaning, to a degree which I think sometimes would be quite unbelievable. I don't want to stress that point, but sometimes I'm rather surprised myself. It is like hearing a distant note of music and recognizing it, even very faintly, as being something of a certain importance. Going through a bookstore, I turned over a page of a big art book, and here was this pencil drawing, which was an extremely simple sort of a drawing. I think that ninety-nine percent of art lovers would even think, "Well, that's a very beautiful drawing," but they could name, oh, maybe ten or fifteen or twenty people who might have done that drawing. My first reaction to it was, "Why, I

never saw that drawing of Corot's before." Then I was rather puzzled and said, "Why did I say Corot? Is it really Corot?" And I looked down at the name, and it was a drawing by Corot. I still don't know why it is, except that that sensation, that strange feeling in the make of a thing, that strange magic will be in many of the arts. It will be in that little something that makes a great actor above a good actor; a musician may do something wonderful, but then somebody else just does something that's superb. And you don't know why it is. The love of the make of the thing, that quality. I think in most of the things that rather discouraged me among the young artists, the lack is what I feel. They do it well, of course, but in just plain words, I suppose you'd say it's a lack of sensitivity--at least what I consider a lack of sensitivity. And why so much art should be accepted as significant puzzled me, why people should think, "Well, that looks modern. There must be something very good about that because it looks so queer." [laughter] A gallery shows things of that sort and apparently with some success. But as I say, that doesn't mean that I don't feel there's a remarkable vitality in our art, and the gallery-goer has to--at least I have to--wade through this vast amount of stuff, always on the lookout for something that seems to him good, that seems to be a little bit greater labor than we ought to be subjected to. A dealer--again this may be a bias on my part--should have really higher standards because he should know, a man who has been in the business all his life. And if he's successful, it's because he loves his work. Like anybody else, you're not successful unless you love your work. You acquire sensibility, you acquire insight. There may be things you don't understand, but along certain forms of art, you do have insight and understanding. If the dealer gives in his galleries what he feels to be the best, you can feel it right away. And, of course, a great many of our reputable dealers do. There are numbers of them who do exactly that sort of thing. Of course, the public has to suffer, because if they're out to see modern art in the galleries and exhibitions, I regret that they have to try to differentiate when there's really too much that is confusing for them. It ought not to be. Of course, that is then the responsibility of our museums, like our beautiful new museum down here, at exhibitions that they will have, and other such places that we have growing everywhere in this country, where the best art of its type can always be seen. My own activity as a painter was somewhat restricted to a certain extent, partly on account of lack of the time and energy, what with other things to think about, especially during the war, during the forties. I used to send things to the local shows, such as the Los Angeles and Vicinity exhibitions. I stopped sending things to the Eastern exhibitions, partly because it's rather an expensive thing to do and it's not profitable unless you keep it up. I limited myself to the exhibitions in San Diego and Los Angeles and Santa Barbara and San Francisco. Even so, I didn't make any too great effort to promote my work, so to speak, in the way of

having exhibitions or getting into small shows. I felt that if you're going to be a professional painter, the thing to do is to at least show as much as you can in the major exhibitions. One year I got the third prize at the Los Angeles and Vicinity show. They used to have quite large shows, held at the museum down at Exposition Park, quite representative shows of Southern California art, and one year I was a prize winner. But prizes, I think, are very often things that are worked for, and that is something that I would never do. I've known painters--and very sincere, very dedicated and very honest painters--with the reputation of being successful, who at the same time keep their ear to the ground and try to sense what's coming, what the juries are most interested in, what is most likely to win the prizes. If it's back in the days of social significance, why those were the days when Benton and Curry and the social significance art was born, and the Mexicans, Orozco and Rivera, would have an influence. So with a certain amount of that, at least a touch of it, you had more chance of being recognized by a jury, because they felt, I suppose, it was the most up-to-date element in painting. Whereas, I have very often been accused by my colleagues of being out of step, maybe not because I wanted to be. But any overemphasis in the spirit seemed to stimulate in me something of a reaction in another direction. In that way, my things that I sent to a show were never quite what would be in the spirit of the times. However, they also gave me a one-man show down at the museum. That is to say, they didn't give the whole gallery to me, but they gave the whole wall of a big gallery one year, and I showed my work down there. It didn't stir up any tremendous enthusiasm, but on the other hand I was quite well treated by the critics. They didn't find it bad, but they didn't go wild over it. Nor did I make any big sales to the museums or get any very great commissions out of it, which again didn't disturb me too much--maybe not as much as it ought to. I have had people who have been very much interested in my work. I got a telephone call one day, and a man introduced himself as James Tyrrell. He said he'd seen a picture of mine, which was really a still life, the sort of thing that I don't very often exhibit, a flower thing, things that I do for study but which I very seldom show. But I had this at a small show in town, and he saw it and liked it very much and said he wanted to buy it, which he did. He also came out to see me, and we became quite good friends. I was pleased that he liked my picture and bought my picture before he even saw me or knew me really from Adam, because I hadn't been out here very long at the time. Sometimes people will buy your things, and you feel a little bit biased. They kind of like you and other feelings are involved, but in this case there was none whatsoever. So our friendship started from his interest in my painting. Through the next few years, he acquired quite a number of things. They were a family of North Ireland, I gather rather well-to-do, and a family of some lineage. He mentioned once in a while some of his ancestors which gave

me a clue to the fact that his family tree apparently was a rather long one. His brother was knighted; his brother was a surgeon and head of the medical affairs for the Royal Air Force and was knighted after the war for his services along those lines. My friend came to this country as a young man and went into the lumber business and learned it from the ground up, and when I knew him, not long before his retirement, he was with a big lumber company. He used to come to see me very often, and I visited him a great deal. He and his wife Vivian were very warm hosts and had some quite interesting friends, and he had a very large collection. He bought things because he liked them; he wasn't a collector in the sense of making investments. The walls of his house were covered with work, and what pleased me was that he concentrated on the local painters. If he found somebody in California or some part of the West whose work interested him, he would try to get an example of his work. He told me how his interest in art started. He began first by trying to make pictures with a camera, and then he found that his pictures weren't too satisfactory. He liked pictures very much, and he started collecting colored prints, good reproductions, and he had large portfolios of examples of masterpieces in large color reproductions. That was his hobby for a while. Then from that, he went to autographic prints and had a large collection of etchings and lithographs and woodcuts, and he sold his collection of reproductions and concentrated on buying examples of good etchers and good lithographers and good wood engravers and things of value of that sort. From that, he gradually commenced to buy small paintings, and then he forgot all about print collecting and bought paintings, oils and watercolors, especially of the California painters. He wound up with quite a large number of my things. Once in a while, people seem to have a special sympathy for an artist's work; they collect it and that has happened with me, he being the outstanding example. His house, which was not a large house, had not only the walls completely covered but also had a room set apart with storage. I don't know how many canvases and things under glass he had in racks--also a very nice art library. Although I have never been a person to need many people, I'm very fond of people and like to be out in pleasant company, but I never made it a point to be at gatherings and to see everybody and to meet everybody. I never outgrew a certain introversion formed in my boyhood and to get sufficient extroversion to enjoy that thing too much. But there were a few people in Los Angeles, among the great many that I've met and was very happy to have met, who have meant quite a lot to me in my life here. I think that probably Walter Arensberg was one who, in his quiet way, meant quite a lot to me. My meeting him came in a way through my work but not through my painting, through some writing that I was doing. S. MacDonald-Wright for some time wrote very witty and excellent art criticism in Rob Wagner's Script. For some reason he got tired of it; I imagine because,

in order to do that sort of thing, you have to do quite a lot of running around and that meant that twice a month you had to go out and see shows. It is a chore. It's almost more work than the actual writing of your column. So when he decided that he'd give it up, he wanted to pass it on to me and took me out and introduced me to Mrs. Wagner, with the result that I took on the department. Sometime afterwards, as a matter of fact, Mrs. Wagner sold the Script. It was not easy work. Twice a month you had to be sure that you had rounded up the exhibitions and sometimes they're pretty far apart. There were things even out in the Valley I felt I ought to see. It's difficult because of the great many things you have to pick and choose from, and very often you don't feel that you've done really the right thing, if you take your work seriously. Some important exhibition you found you've missed, for some reason, you thought it might not amount to anything, and then afterwards when you saw it, you regret very much that when you had a chance to give the man some publicity for something that seems superior, you missed the boat. You feel a little compunction, especially if you spent your time on some lesser figure. But it was work that I enjoyed very much because I'm an insatiable looker at pictures--good, bad and indifferent--I always look with interest to see what things are. Of course, it forced me to get out and to really get acquainted with what was going on among the artists in this part of the world. Some of the contacts that I made through this work were interesting. Elizabeth Taylor's father had a gallery in the Beverly Hills Hotel at that time. He used to have exhibitions of the more conservative sort that I liked, people like Augustus John and some of the English painters, for example. I was rather surprised to find that if a thing's once in print, though very few people read it, sometimes it's read by someone who may be very far away. I had no idea, for example, that a paper as local in spirit as Script would be read by anybody outside California, especially Southern California. But one day I got a letter from a man in London, through Taylor at the Taylor Gallery, and he had read an article that I had written in Script, and he decided to come to California on the basis of this. [laughter] I have no idea why, but because of something I had said about art life in California, he decided he'd come. And sure enough, he turned up. He seemed to be quite a successful painter. I've forgotten his name now. He wasn't a famous one, but one of the sort that exhibits at the Royal Academy, you know. He painted somewhat along the spirit of [Sir Alfred] Munnings, who was president of the Royal Academy and did horses with a tremendous skill. This man too painted horses very well and with very tremendous knowledge of horses. I haven't seen him since. I don't know whether he stayed out here or not; I haven't even seen his name. It probably was more of just a temporary visit on his part. He was very much impressed with California the first time he'd seen it because he said, that in painting out-of-doors in England, you had great

difficulty in finding anything but green to look at in your composition, and here you could go out, with our golden hills and the color of the California landscape, and very often you have to look around to find something green to put in your picture. [laughter] Just the reverse of it. I think that his first impression of California was our landscape. We had very interesting and very important characters in the art life of Los Angeles. A man who I think thoroughly deserves taping, whose life would be intensely interesting, is Earl Stendahl. It was Stendahl's Gallery over on Wilshire when I first came here, and I used to see quite a bit of him, and later his family. Another man who was very important and a very strong character and figure in the galleries of the city was a man like Frank Perls. Again it would make a wonderful tape. Hatfield also. Each man was interesting in a different way; each represented a different attitude toward art. Stendahl--I'm inclined to use the French pronunciation on account of the writer of that name--began with anything but the sort of life that you would think would lead him into being an art dealer, and a very successful one. One of the rather quaint things was the fact that at the time that he had a gallery on Wilshire, every year at Christmastime he had beautiful boxes of candy for sale at the gallery, which he made himself, because at one time he had become not only a candymaker but a man with a thorough knowledge of it, and apparently he'd had a number of careers in which he has been very knowledgeable and very successful. What should have developed his intuition really for matters of art is one of these mysteries. From contemporary painting, he went into pre-Columbian art and formed some of the most important collections of pre-Columbian art that we have in our museums. [tape off] What I have to say now will have to be put into its proper place. It's simply the ending of one period of my life, and that is my wife's illness and death. I told about certain difficulties that she was feeling in strength, but that in spite of it, it was perfectly amazing how much inner resources she had in the way of interest in her reading, her drawing, her translation from the Italian, her extraordinary catholic taste in literature, so that she was a woman who was never bored. She could always find something interesting to do. When she had to spend a good deal of the time being inactive, of course, it meant a great deal. But it made it very complicated very often for me, especially when I was teaching, because I never felt safe in leaving her alone too long. Due to her thyroid operation, largely her heart condition was not good and she had to be careful about that. Being concerned that everything was all right, I would rush home from my teaching for lunch and very often would go without lunch, because of the time it took to do that. Eventually, what I had feared to a certain extent happened, though what actually happened, of course, I didn't anticipate. I left her at noon feeling quite all right and went back to my work, and when I came home in the afternoon, I found her lying on the kitchen floor with a

broken hip. She didn't know how long she had been there, but it had apparently been for some hours because she hadn't been able to move. When I called an ambulance, which took her to the hospital, where she was operated on. But the chances of her recovery were manifestly going to be difficult and at best very slow, and she was in the hospital for some time. In those days the hospitals were crowded, and it wasn't long before they were complaining that they had to have the room, and she must be moved to a rest home or something of that sort. So that was my introduction to what I think is one of the horrors of our life just now, and that is these rest homes and places for people, especially the old and ill. I found that they seemed to me surprisingly expensive for what they gave you. I kept her in the hospital for much longer than I would have in spite of the continual complaining that they had to have the space--there was no more that could be done in the hospital. The operation had been performed and everything and now it was simply a matter of having some care, and they couldn't do that in the hospital. Eventually, I found a place. I was very fortunate in having a good doctor. That again had been a great trouble. I had been getting doctors that were highly recommended, but whom I found extremely unsatisfactory. It was very nerve wearing, but eventually I found a very delightful New England doctor. A friend had recommended him. He was of New England ancestry. He was a surgeon really, but was fine for her bolstered spirit, and his actual treatments seemed to be efficacious. He himself became quite ill, which again threw me into very much of a dilemma, but he recommended a doctor who was a doctor of internal medicine. He also turned out to be a very delightful personality, a man who could handle nicely a person of a very nervous, high-strung condition. He also had ability. I have always been very grateful to him, because he took very serious care. I did succeed in getting a place, which was far from being ideal but which I could afford, and according to Dr. Messer, the care was good. I asked him to keep his eye out for anything that he felt was the slightest bit remiss about this rest home, and which I think he did. He said that so far as he could see, the care was excellent; they seemed to be very efficient, and I had nothing really to worry about. I did feel so many of these places were really a sort of institution that would make good material for a Keimholz--the sense of depression they would give you in their treatment and of attitude towards people in a bad condition. So I relaxed, but she did not recover and gradually grew weaker. And her mind wandered; that was one thing that concerned both me and the doctor. There was quite a long period that she would imagine herself back in Europe, for she'd say, "I think we ought to go out to California." And I'd say "Why, you are in California." And she'd say, "Why, no, we're not." I said, "Why don't you look out the window? Don't you see the palm trees out there? They don't grow in Europe." And she'd look at them rather puzzled. But she grew gradually weaker

and weaker, and she died in the spring of 1947. So that ended one period of my life. [tape off] I did have another responsibility in a way to my father who was living in Alhambra. In 1944, he and my aunt, with whom he was living, both had pneumonia and were extremely ill. My aunt, Aunt Anna, died, but my father recovered and recovered very well and lived until March of 1948. He was a man of amazing vigor. He was in his nineties. But he'd walk to the market and do his marketing, come home and mow his lawn. He was well in his eighties when he decided that a tree in his yard had to be cut. It had grown so big that it was pressing on the house, and all by himself, he got up on the roof and topped the tree, sawed off all the main branches and cut off the top. Then he got down and cut the tree close to the ground.

1.36. TAPE NUMBER: XVIII, Side Two (May 23, 1966)

NUTTING

My father, after his house burned in San Gabriel, bought a house in Alhambra, where he eventually died, and I'm very sorry that I couldn't get out as much as I would have liked to have seen him in his last days. In 1944, my aunt died. They both had pneumonia and were very ill. Father survived, my aunt did not, and that left him alone, which of course was of serious concern to me. But on the whole, I think I was fairly fortunate because the expense of a housekeeper to take care of him and the house would have been more than I could have managed, but I found a woman who was experienced in nursing and who had a little boy was very happy to take on the work in order to have a place to live. Inasmuch as there was also extra room [in the house], she had one other man who had been a very successful doctor in Pasadena, but owing to a brain operation, he couldn't carry on with his career, so he also had a room in the house. It worked out that the care was not ideal of course--it never can be--but I think it was very good, and she took good care of the place and was experienced in taking care of people who were ill. So that was quite a relief. Even as a man of ninety, he was a man of amazing energy, and his mind was as clear and sharp as could be. About this time I met Muriel Tyler at Lorser Feitelson's. She was studying painting with him, and Lorser one day showed me some of her work. He was quite excited about it, and we both agreed it showed beautiful qualities. Afterwards I met her, and we became friends. She was one of a little group of people that met quite often. One day she went out with me to Alhambra but what I didn't realize at first was that once before when I had taken one of my friends out, my father was very much disturbed (this was some months after my wife's death), and I couldn't make out what it was. But it eventually came out that he thought that I was serious about this friend of mine, and he didn't approve of her. [laughter] I couldn't imagine why, because he saw

her for such a very short time, and she was very pleasant and didn't seem to me to have any characteristics that he could take exception to. Another occasion, I went out with Muriel Tyler, and my father fell for her immediately. He liked her very much and told her something about my mother, what a wonderful woman she was and described one of the events in our life out on the coast when we were out in camp. I don't think that I mentioned any of that in what we've talked about before, but this was a rather striking, vivid thing. My mother was a person who, as a girl, until the time of her first marriage, was brought up in a very sheltered life, not one of any great affluence but a very comfortable one, with a beautiful home. Her father was one of the rising young lawyers in her part of the country, and she had servants and horses and rode very well. But to switch from that into the life that she lived when I was a youngster is an amazing change. In the wintertime along the Washington coast, the rivers swell and sometimes the floods, as we know from recent news, are quite serious. I can still remember that one of the rivers that we camped on got very high, and there was a very big tree which very slowly was driven down the middle of the river by the current. It took two or three days for it to pass the camp. Well, across the river was a little store; a man had a claim there, and he kept the store and traded with the Indian reservation which was at the mouth of the river. Mother got word (the river was more or less impossible, but somebody got across) that the young newly married woman, the daughter of the proprietor, was going to have a baby, and there was nobody to care for her. I don't know how Mother learned of it, but it was at nighttime, and she promptly went down to Father's camp and told the men that she wanted to cross the river. They all protested that it was impossible, that it was too dangerous and nobody would dare cross the river in that condition. Our boats were dugout canoes. They were the only small watercraft that we had around there at that time. They were beautifully made canoes, but they certainly were not the sort of thing that you would want to go out into a dangerous stream with, especially when, on the other side, with the overflowing of the banks, you'd have maybe a hard time finding a landing place in the underbrush. But Mother berated the fellows and said that if she had the courage to do it, she thought somebody else ought to have the courage to go and do what they could for somebody in a serious condition. One man said he would do it--if she was game he was too--so they set out in the dark across the river. They went upstream quite a ways and then got across, and by hugging the other shore, he finally found a place where he could get in for a landing, which was somewhat below this property. He and Mother got out and they fought their way through the underbrush and up to the store, and she spent a couple of days with the woman and cared for her. Everything came out all right, and it was just one example of the courage and drive that both my father and mother had. They were really people of the old

school, with a tradition of discipline and courage which is amazing. Father told this story to Muriel, and I could see that he wouldn't do that unless he felt immediately something deeply sympathetic in her nature, in her character. Well, in the meantime, Lorser Feitelson, who is a very energetic and ambitious man, had the idea of a gallery. He'd had some experience before in running a picture gallery and wanted to do it again. When I first knew Muriel, that project was very much in her mind. She was also interested and thought it would be very interesting work. She and Lorser were looking around for property and some sort of a setup for that idea, which eventually culminated in the building of a place on Clark Street (now San Vicente Boulevard), with a large room for a gallery and exhibitions. I'm quite sure it could have been a very successful project, but unlike most dealers who start in a small way, Lorser had a very exaggerated idea of bursting into the field of art dealing. I felt--and it was brought home to me in my conversation with other people in Los Angeles, like Stendhal and Hatfield and people who really were tops in their business--that that wasn't the way to build up a successful business, unless you had an infinite amount of money, which of course he didn't have. Lorser didn't have it, and Muriel didn't have too much, compared to what would be required for what Lorser had in mind. But in spite of that, he spent money in a way that some of these people that I have mentioned found rather absurd when I asked them about it. For example: to buy a full-page ad in New York art magazines, which is not a cheap thing to do and is of no special value unless you can keep it up, as they explained to me. But, of course, I didn't say anything. I wasn't in the business and I wasn't consulted. But I did feel it quite definitely. However, the story of the Twentieth Century Gallery was I think one of a definite contribution to art in Los Angeles, with some very excellent exhibitions by men like di Chirico and a very fine exhibition of Eugene Berman. The list which I can eventually give will show what interesting work was done. I got to know Muriel better when we formed a little party and went to San Francisco on a vacation. There was Lorser Feitelson, and Helen Lundeberg, whom he afterwards married, and Arthur Millier, before he married his present wife, and myself. We spent a few days in San Francisco. I was writing for Script then, and I wrote my column on some of the things that I saw in San Francisco, including the murals in the post office which had recently been completed. In 1948, Muriel and I were married and announced our engagement to Lorser and Helen, who took it very nicely and seemed to be quite pleased and wished us all happiness and that sort of thing. We went away for our honeymoon to Ensenada, and coming back, I can remember distinctly that we rather anticipated our return. We felt sure that Helen Lundeberg would have a dinner ready for us and we'd have a reunion and start our life together on Clark Street. [tape off] Yes, I forgot to say that when we got to Ensenada, I got a telephone

call. Lorser had been having considerable trouble in getting me, and I found that my father had died rather suddenly. Well, there had already been a delay of a day or so, but Father's funeral in a way had been anticipated and the arrangements to a certain extent had been made. Father was brought up in a Congregationalist atmosphere in New England; my grandmother and my aunt were both quite devoted to their church. When I was a youngster. Father became somewhat of an agnostic, and in the latter part of his years became very much interested in theosophy, and he was a member of a theosophical group here. One thing that was rather curious was that although he was very fond of music and both he and my aunt had good voices, he objected very much to having any music. That is one thing he stipulated in his funeral. All this was arranged with the members of the theosophical society, because Father felt that he didn't have too long to live, and so with the help of this woman who was keeping house for him, everything was arranged according to his wishes, and he was very rigorous about that. He was going to be cremated, and he didn't want any flowers. He didn't want any monies, and his ashes were to be disposed of in the simplest possible way. He'd have been furious, I think, if any fuss had been made. He mentioned several times to me that he looked upon his passing as simply the discarding of old clothes, and he thought it was disgusting to make a fuss over cast-off garments. He wanted to be treated as you would anything else you'd gotten rid of because it was no longer useful and could be thrown away. So I think that it worked out all right. We were driving, and so the funeral was over when I got back. We stopped at Clark Street and rather expected a warm greeting from Lorser and Helen who had one of the apartments of the triplex that Muriel had built where the gallery was, and to our surprise, they treated us rather coolly and said they were sorry but they had an engagement to dine out that night. So, we went out for dinner wondering what it was all about because there wasn't the slightest hint when we left. Our marriage had been there at Clark Street with a small group of people, and everybody was in fine humor and good wishes all around and so forth, so that nothing could possibly have happened in the few days that we were away that would bring up this coolness between us. But this coolness was very, very definite, and was really a coldness. But the strange thing was that we could not find out exactly what was bothering him. I felt very badly about it because I had seen a great deal of Feitelson, as we both had been teaching at Art Center. I had left Art Center before our marriage. I set about very seriously trying to [discover the cause], first of all, simply by asking him. But he was always very evasive, and for three months, I did everything that I could to find out exactly why--what really amounted to animosity. His rudeness and coldness was inexcusable without some very definite reason. But I wasn't at all successful. I wasn't ingenious enough to devise any method of penetrating the mystery, so I

finally gave up and called it off. Once in a while, I see him in the distance, but if he sees me, he fades out of the picture as fast as he can. It's a very, very strange situation. Well, the very first thing we did on getting back was to go over to Alhambra the next day, and Muriel and I stayed there to put things in order and settle up Father's affairs. Thanks to Muriel's knowledge and experience with houses and the purchase and sale of property, she knew exactly what to do with the place. Father had had some carpentry work done in the house to make the house more convenient for him, but Muriel saw right away that that didn't contribute to its salability. So we got the carpenter to come and put the house back in the shape it previously had been. It was painted and prepared for sale, and we sold the property and then came back to live on Clark Street and to carry on with the Twentieth Century Gallery. [tape off] To go back, when we decided on our marriage, the first person I think that we talked to was Father McLain. I've forgotten his first name, but Father McLain was a very delightful person and, incidentally, owned some very fine Chagall s and was apparently a warm friend of Chagall. But he said he would be very glad indeed to marry us, but it was in Lent and he'd have to get what you would call a sort of a dispensation from the bishop for marrying us in Lent. But the bishop refused, to our great disappointment. Father McLain had promised that we'd be married "under one of his best Chagalls, and when he had to tell us that he couldn't marry us until after Easter (this was some time before Easter), he said, "Well, that's all right. You go away and have your honeymoon, and then when you come back, I'll marry you." [laughter] He was a High Episcopalian. I believe he that. I always felt that when Father McLain died we lost a very delightful, very intelligent and very interesting man. Apropos of Chagall, he gave a very interesting talk once on Chagall, and I'll never forget the ending of his talk. He said that he was talking to Chagall one day and Chagall said to him, "You know, after all. Father McLain, it's only people like you and me who are flying through the air who have their feet on the ground." [laughter] And you know that Chagall has these figures floating around up in the sky, but we're the only ones that have our feet on the ground. [tape off] The Twentieth Century Gallery was opened on October 18, 1947, with a showing of Lundeberg, Feitelson, Moore, Tanguy, Tyler, Grosz, Merida, Picasso, Teasdale, Wright, Hélión, Miró, Roesch, and Zadkine. Quite a mixed show, and very excellent representatives of modern artists. Of these, a number were lent by Mrs. Maitland (Mrs. Maitland was the widow of a distinguished doctor who had a very fine collection of art) and Vincent Price and Adolphe Menjou and Veree Teasdale. Then we had a exhibition of photographic art. It was photography used in a more creative way; it wasn't just examples of good photography. It was some of the modern efforts in experimental photography. As I said, there were one-man shows, such as the beautiful one of Eugene Berman. Many of his

pictures are quite large, and though the gallery is good-sized, I felt it would be difficult to show them except in a very large gallery. However, it was a very good presentation of his work. Then we had a show of di Chirico, which was interesting because it showed the development of the man's change. As we know, di Chirico is a rather strange figure in modern art. As a young painter, he produced things of great interest and had a great deal of influence. I think that Berman, for example, was quite influenced by the early di Chirico and some of Dali's idiom is definitely swiped from the early di Chirico. But fairly early in his career, he turned his back completely on his early work. He wouldn't have anything to do with the ideas or admit that there was any validity in anything he had done, and the later work, which we see so very little of, although it's not artistically as important or as interesting as his early work, historically it made an extremely important show. There were, of course, other showings. Muriel Tyler herself had one there. [tape off] We don't hear so much about Leonor Fini now, but at the time she was quite important in the Surrealist movement and was living in Rome--a very accomplished painter of very fanciful sort of things. I believe she's now living in Argentina; I think that's where she came from originally. That in turn was followed by a group show of Knud Merrild and Emil Bisttram and Boris Deutsch and Ralph Peplow. Knud Merrild was a very interesting man. He wrote a book of his acquaintanceship with D. H. Lawrence, because he and D. H. Lawrence were in Taos at the same time, and in 1948 he had been for some years in Los Angeles and was doing some quite interesting experimental sort of things in what he called "flux," which was use of color, by floating it onto a canvas or a panel. In a way he would be sort of a precursor of Jackson Pollock in the sense of letting the medium do what it wanted to do without too much interference, the actual manual manipulation of it. Jackson Pollock poured or dropped or splattered his work onto the surface. Knud Merrild in these little paintings of his did some quite fascinating things in simply dropping his pigment or his paint into a thin medium. I don't know exactly what his technique was, but he could partially control the flow of the material over the surface, could do some things that were accidental but at the same time were very definitely Knud Merrild. And Bisttram, of course, was a modern painter who also had a very excellent art school, because in spite of the abstract nature of his work, his knowledge of art and of painting was such that he gave his students an excellent foundation for any sort of career that they wanted to embark on. He now has, I believe, and has had for years, an art school in Taos, New Mexico. I think it was later than 1948 that Boris Deutsch won a big prize; Pepsi Cola had an art competition and Boris Deutsch got the first prize for a very Expressionistic work. Boris Deutsch is one of our elder painters of Los Angeles, and in many ways one of our best. He also was interested in being an art dealer. I think what he had in mind, maybe not so

much as making it a successful business, as giving a chance for the showing of what he felt was the most significant of the young artists of Los Angeles. I have an idea that he used his prize money--which was a rather considerable sum--in starting a gallery here over on La Cienega. He had it for some time and did some quite interesting work in the way of promoting some good talent. Ralph Peplow was a member of the Serigraph Society. Not only a very good sculptor, his wood carvings are excellent. We sold from that show a very nice thing of his to Huntington Hartford. Huntington Hartford came around and picked out this piece of Ralph Peplow's and purchased that. The next show was somewhat my fault. When I was living in Rome, one of my best friends was a young Italian painter by the name of Tommaso Cascella. And his father was a painter and also published a very interesting magazine called *Illustrazione* which was rather of a large format and was an art magazine. He had two sons, Tommaso Cascella and Michele Cascella, both of whom were painters. I thought Tommaso was by far the most talented and the most able, and didn't see very much of the younger brother's work. A man came around to see us one day about a show for Michele Cascella. Well, I was very much interested, and sure enough it was the Michele Cascella that I knew in Rome. He said that he had a large collection of his work and he'd like to have an exhibition of it, so we gave him an exhibition. Well, Michele Cascella has had several exhibitions out here since. Apparently, he does quite well and has shows in various parts of the world. As a matter of fact, he shows in Argentina and has exhibitions in this country and I believe lives now in Portofino. But, although his work is accomplished and colorful, it didn't represent anything that the Twentieth Century Gallery was supposed to stand for. So I got some civil criticism for showing his work, and I had quite a hard time really explaining why I did it, rationalizing it. But I don't think it was quite fair, because although his work is not representative of any of the modern movements, it's very proficient. I think we recouped our prestige in the next show, which was a very good one of Channing Peake and Howard Warshaw and Milton Zolotow. At that time Howard Warshaw and Fanny Brice's son, Bill Brice, were together a great deal and both were very promising young painters. Channing Peake's work was extremely interesting, especially from the graphic point of view--very vigorous drawing. He had a ranch not far from Solvang and raised quarter horses, and he was back and forth from Los Angeles and Texas with that business and also a very industrious and dedicated painter. Zolotow was a friend of Howard Warshaw's. It was on his recommendation that we showed his drawings along with the work of Warshaw. Warshaw is now a professor of art at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and has since done excellent work. The next show that was interesting was the Mexican painter Federico Cantú. I had only know Federico Cantú's work in reproduction from a very fine book by MacKinley

Helm on Mexican painting which gives an account of him and reproduces some of his work. We met him and found him to be a very charming person. He had quite a large collection of his work up here; we showed both his painting and his very excellent engraving. He uses the burin on metal quite beautifully, and some of his plates are quite large. They're not etched; they're really engraved plates and I think he is among the best of printmakers of Mexico. We spent a vacation in Monterey, Mexico one time, and he did some decorations in engraved silver around the altar for a very modern church, which was very nicely done. Not only did he use his abilities as an engraver and as a printmaker but also he did work in silver in a decorative way. Then Muriel Tyler had an exhibition of her work. I didn't show at the gallery. Sometime before, my friend Jim Tyrrell had been very anxious for me to have a show at Esther Robles Gallery. Well, it didn't come off, and I finally decided that I would have a one-man show; I hadn't had one for a long time. So I arranged for Esther Robles to have a show at her gallery, which I did in 1949. Then we gave the first show out here of a very interesting artist, Ted De Grazia, who for many years had been living in Tucson. He was versatile--a graduate of the university at Tucson and a musician and a self-taught painter. I doubt if he took any art courses. But he was a very original character. He built himself an adobe house, which at that time I suppose was practically out in the desert. Now Tucson has grown up around it. He lived a very free kind of life. He refuses to be tied down. He made pottery, ceramics, and those sold quite well, and [also sold] watercolors and paintings. When he was really short of cash he apparently had enough experience in mining so that he could go out in the mountains and pan enough gold to pay his necessary expenses and go on with his work. Part of his life as a boy I think was spent in a mining district of Arizona, so it was something that he understands quite thoroughly. He carries out very original ideas up in the hills above his house in Tucson. He built a church. Well, he is not at all--at least in his conversation--a religious person, and it seemed rather strange that he should want to build a church; but he and an old Indian built this adobe church. I don't think he really had any plans for it. He just made the bricks and piled up this strange structure, just because all of a sudden he got a brainstorm that he'd like to build a church, and so he went ahead and did it. [laughter] He was a little bit like Glagolin that way: if he wanted to do something, why, go ahead--if you want to build a church, go ahead and build a church. What's stopping you? Sure enough, he did, much to the bewilderment of some of his friends. There was an old lady who said, "You are building a church?" And he said, "Yes." "Why do you want to build a church?" He said, "Oh, just for the hell of it." [laughter] The water had to be carried up in drums to the place where he was building his church. He was very much puzzled, because he'd get a drum of water and take it up there for the old Indian who was working with

the adobe and found that the water disappeared very rapidly. And he asked the old boy, "What in the world happened to the water? What are you using all this water for?" He couldn't drink it, and he knew he wasn't taking too many baths with it, and so he couldn't understand it. The old boy said, "Well, the bees drank it." Ted had to be satisfied with that explanation, but he found out what it was. He was making some kind of a fermented drink from cactus or some plant up there, and that used up more water than he used for anything else. Well, he got his church built, and he also painted murals inside of it. It's a strange sort of a structure. The roof has sort of a narrow opening that runs the length of the building to let the light down into it. You can buy color postcards of it in Tucson now. It's one of the curiosities for the tourists to see. Ted is very fond of the Indians and the Mexicans and the native people; he speaks Spanish and dialects. I don't think his church has ever been consecrated, but the Indians (I believe they're the Papagos and another famous tribe) gather and have celebrations and carry candles and things. At least I've seen pictures of them doing that. As I say, his first show of painting out on the coast was at our Twentieth Century Gallery. We had a beautiful exhibition of the drawings of the painter Jack Starr who was then living in Santa Barbara. He had not shown his drawing very much heretofore, at least in shows, but it made a very fine exhibition. He has a fine sense of color and was essentially a painter. He was in the habit of doing drawings which were more or less of a uniform size, studies for the compositions of his paintings, and they were extremely interesting. That exhibition was followed by one of Gerda With, the wife of a professor of art who was then at UCLA, a very remarkable man, I think. We became very fond of Karl With, and his wife, Gerda. Karl With had been director of the museum at Cologne, which in the field of museum direction I gathered had really made history. It's obvious when people like Sir Herbert Read, for example, mentions his work at Cologne as being very important and what he had done for the art museum. With the Hitler troubles he came to this country, not because of his being Jewish--because he is not, nor is Gerda--but because of his violent antipathy to Hitlerism, which he apparently didn't handle too diplomatically, because he left without being able to bring away anything but what he could bring with him. As he described himself, "I came to this country with two suitcases and 150 words of mispronounced English, and that was all I had." His reputation [rests in] his work that he had done in Germany, as well as a great deal of writing he'd done. Curiously enough, I had in my library a book in which he had written the introduction, a book of photographs someone had made on the island of Bali some years ago, and the text was by Karl With. We gave Gerda With her first show in the United States. Gerda was from Hamburg, Germany, and she studied art at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Berlin. Well, the German Kunstgewerbeschule (I believe you would translate the name roughly

as arts and crafts) is not like our commercial art school, and it's not like the courses in the academy. I know the one in Munich was quite impressive. The students learned drawing and painting under the very best instruction, but they learned much more in the way of technique. Gerda With was a fine craftsman. She could do anything, from a book illustration, paint a portrait, various ways of drawing for this purpose or that--and very proficiently--and she did a number of beautiful watercolor studies done from nature in the woods, of flowers and ground plants. That was her first showing here, and was in our gallery. She gave us a finely made lampshade made of sheets of acetate with leaves and flowers pressed between them. She has since become quite a distinguished painter. Very methodically and very industriously she has developed her talent to produce a quantity of excellent and quite beautiful work of its sort. She has had many shows, both here and in other parts of the country.

1.37. TAPE NUMBER: XIX, Side One (June 6, 1966)

NUTTING

After my marriage, I gave up my position at Art Center, not entirely with the idea of not going on teaching but in the first place I felt I had been rather overworked previous to leaving Art Center. I wanted to completely enjoy the new life I was now entering. Muriel was familiar with various aspects of building and dealing in real estate, because her first husband was an architect and a builder. She'd spent many years in close contact with all of the problems of that sort of thing. It was something that also appealed to me, because in my ancestry, my father was an engineer. My grandfather was in a way a builder, and my great-grandfather was what was called in New England in those days, a "master builder." That is, he was an architect, builder, carpenter, contractor, and everything all combined. As a matter of fact, the New England church at South Amherst is a very nice example of one that he built, so it was a little bit in my blood, and it appealed to me very much. Muriel suggested that instead of going back to teaching, to getting a salaried job, we take what resources I had, and we would work together on other projects, which at that time was especially good because there was a shortage of houses, of places for people to live. That in itself was an attractive thing--you were providing something that people wanted. The first project of that sort was on Kelton [Avenue] in Westwood, and we built a triplex. We always tried in planning a house not to do the conventional thing but to find some little angle to make the house somewhat different; in this case it was a small patio in front of each of the units. On the plan they looked too small, but as a matter of fact, it worked out very nicely. Since then, I've noticed that that same idea has been used again and again, but at the time it seemed to be rather a new idea. A certain little planting area, even

though very small, I see is used in front of a place when you're remodeling a house. They'll do it so often. And in this case that's really what we did, and with careful planting, the smallness of the little patio wasn't noticed. It was big enough to be useful for outdoor living to a certain extent, from the sliding doors of the units. The house was quite attractive and was quite successful. The units rented at very good rents and very quickly, so I felt quite interested and encouraged. It was not only the fact that it was a profitable investment, but I also found it to be very interesting. It was creative work to think about houses and living, and to know something of the building was nothing that seemed to me foreign from my general feeling in creative art. The next place we tried was in Brentwood on Saltair. Then I did something that seemed to most people quite a crazy idea. I suggested that we have a large studio with the house, because the artist has quite a difficult time in this town--if he doesn't build a studio--to find a decent one. Well, artists aren't supposed to be especially affluent, and from the real estate man's point of view, it didn't seem very practical. But, we did that. We designed a very nice house that fitted a lot with a rather interesting formation. It had a certain dip at the back with a stream; it was a semi-hillside, semi-flat sort of a lot which lent itself to using your imagination to fit the place. We built a place with a large studio, and at first it seemed that it wasn't too much of a good idea, because people would come (we built it for sale and not for rent in this case), and they wanted to know what in the world this big room was for. The real estate people would try to explain to them what a wonderful rumpus room this would make. They had various explanations for it. They didn't think an artist's studio was very saleable. Well, nobody wanted a house quite that odd, but there's always somebody for anything--if you have a real idea somebody in the world wants it, and they can't get along without it. And sure enough, a man turned up who was a commercial artist and had been for many years. He was a very successful designer of calendars for Brown & Bigelow, the calendar company. He did girls in pastel, and they [the calendars] were very popular. So he had plenty of money, and that was exactly what he wanted. [laughter] He had a very nice home, with a big fireplace and comfort and adjoining this large and very practical studio, so he nabbed it up. The fact is, I think, that we could have asked a higher price and he wouldn't have blinked an eye. Then from that we went to Pacific Palisades and bought eight lots there. On one lot we built a home for ourselves and moved from Clark Street to Pacific Palisades. [tape off] In 1950 we moved to Pacific Palisades. Muriel's daughter, Ruth, was married to Robert Brittingham, and they were living in Dallas at that time. We went to Dallas to visit her in 1950, a trip that we enjoyed very much. It was my first experience with Texas. Up to that time, I never had any desire to go to Texas. It's one of these unfortunate things in a way, especially if you're living in a part of the world

where you see your compatriots mostly as tourists, but I got a rather dim view of Texans which is not altogether fair because the reputation that the American has as a tourist is not really true to life. A very small group of people will make themselves felt in a strange country, and to the native they become the type, whereas the quiet and well behaved and civilized people are not noticed. I experienced the same sort of thing with the Texans, and when I got to Texas and spent a little time there, I was delighted to find wonderful people. And in many ways, the life was superior to what I had had in many other places. Ruth's husband was starting a business there, the manufacture of tile. He had a process which, as I understood it, was a single firing of tile instead of two firings. I don't know what the technique of tilemaking is exactly, the glazing of it and that sort of thing, but it enabled him to manufacture tile quite profitably. He was then starting a business and afterwards became very successful. We not only enjoyed staying with Ruth in her very beautiful new home, that she had to a large extent planned herself and with the help of an architectural designer had completed, but we also took a trip to Mexico with her. That was in a way eventful to me, more so than it would have been otherwise. My half-brother, Merritt Carpenter, was then living in Pharr, Texas, down near the Rio Grande, and I hadn't seen him for a great many years. He stayed in Mexico when I left as a child. Later he was still in Mexico when we were in Tampico, and after that I went to New York and Boston and eventually to Europe and then my years spent in Milwaukee, I didn't see him--he didn't come north, nor did I go south--so that many years had elapsed since my seeing him. So we had a reunion; it was a very short one. Maria, whom I remembered as a young and vivacious Spanish girl, was now an old lady; Merritt wasn't too well and was in retirement in Pharr. He was about sixteen years older than myself. He was my mother's son by her first marriage; she was married when she was very young. We had a visit with him and then drove on to Monterey where Bob Brittingham's brother, Jack Brittingham, was in the same sort of business. The visit there was interesting in a way that it wouldn't have been otherwise, because they knew a great many people. We had a chance to see more of the home life of Monterey and meet other people at gatherings, instead of just being a stranger visiting the town. We also had an opportunity to have a very pleasant excursion to Saltillo and see some of the country and the landscape of that part of Mexico. [tape off] Ever since my childhood, I've had sort of an ambition to know Spanish. I never have learned it; I can read simple Spanish without any trouble at all. But after living in Italy, I had difficulty because there's so many words that are more or less the same in Spanish and Italian. It's very easy to mix the two languages and make a curious kind of salad when you're speaking, and the first thing you know, people burst out laughing because you say something in Spanish and all of a sudden it turns into Italian.

Especially if you're not using the language, you have a sort of a reference in the back of your mind of the two languages, and things get all mixed up together. I wanted very much to get a little practice in using Spanish when I was in Mexico, to get a little familiarity with it. But I found it was quite difficult. You'd go into a store and they always had a clerk who would spot you as an American and would start speaking English, and the same way in the hotels. They'd pride themselves that they could speak English, which is all very fine, but I didn't want to speak English, so I devised a trick. I'd go into a store to buy something and would walk up to the girl and say, "Bonjour, Mademoiselle, parlez-vous francais?" And she'd look at me blankly, and I'd say, "How do you do? Do you speak French?" And when she couldn't speak French, then we have to struggle along in Spanish, even though she might know English perfectly well. [laughter] In that way I got a little exercise in Spanish, but I was rather surprised that I found it so difficult, at least in places like Monterey and, I suppose, in places near the border. The people with education learn English more than we learn Spanish and were provided for by people who were meeting the tourists very much. [tape off] After our return from that trip to Texas, and after a short time living on Muskingum Street, Alan, Muriel's oldest son, had a heart attack, which was quite a serious affair because it interrupted his work completely, and during his convalescence the problem was what he could do with his life from then on, because the doctor was very insistent that he should do no manual labor, anything of physical effort, which for him was very difficult. He was a man who was very ambitious about his work and, as a builder, was on the job personally more than most builders are. He didn't like office work, but he liked to be right there and superintend the making of a house. If the work was going to suit him, he'd like to set the example, to pitch in and set the pace, so to speak, both for quality and the efficiency of the work. Well, that of course was something that was ruled out completely, and we felt that, for the time being at least, he should find some line of work or activity in which there'd be no temptation of anything of that sort. We thought of all sorts of things. We used to have family discussions--what he would like to do, what he was interested in, and what we could do to help him to get into an activity. Well, for some reason--which I've forgotten now--we got in touch with an Englishman who had spent all his life in the confectionery business. It'd been something in the family. He had been a manufacturer of candies in Australia or New Zealand and then came to this country where he opened a school for the training of people for that sort of thing. He seemed to know all about it, from the business point of view and everything else. Mae (Alan's wife) was anxious to contribute to the family fortune as much as possible, but she wasn't trained in something that would pay well in salary, so we felt that that might be a rather interesting thing to do. She could learn the making of fine candies (they also

taught such things as cake decoration and other things that go with that kind of a business), and they could start one someplace. There's one other reason why we decided on that, and that is that Mae's brother had for some years manufactured candies in Texas. He was by no means a person who made things at all deluxe or especially fine. He manufactured the ordinary grade of grocery store variety, apparently. But at least he knew the business, or certain aspects of the business, that would be useful and also had contacts that would be helpful for Alan in starting that sort of thing. Altogether it seemed like that might be something they could try, at least until Alan could find himself in some other line of work. That resulted in our going to Kilgore, where this brother of Mae's lived, and which seemed to be a very promising town because it had Kilgore Junior College, which was quite well-known in Texas. Although it was a small town, it was one of the towns where they first struck oil in Texas and there was lots of money--or had been. But, as we found out afterwards, the oil wells were somewhat giving out, but it left quite a large number of people of considerable affluence in the town, and they built a very nice school, Kilgore Junior College, with a fine big auditorium. It's interesting that it was the first time that I had ever heard Van Cliburn play, because Van Cliburn's mother was a music teacher in Kilgore. It was the very small town of Kilgore which not too long before had been just no place at all, a little stopping place on the road, but after the discovering of oil, it had become extremely prosperous. We heard Van Cliburn play in the new auditorium of the Kilgore Junior College, and he had a fair audience. The auditorium was about half full; the town came out to hear him. I don't know how many of them really enjoyed his music, but he had had some success before that. He'd played with the Houston Symphony, or something of that sort, that gave him a little start as being somebody important in the town. We enjoyed his playing very much. Well, we sold our house in Pacific Palisades, and we had for quite a long time toyed with the idea of getting a trailer. We thought it was an easy and pleasant way--it seemed from watching other people--to see the country, of getting out and exploring during our vacations. But we weren't at all sure whether we would like it or not. So we put our things in storage and bought a little secondhand trailer, just to try it out and see what the possibility was of our liking that sort of thing. It was quite small but had quite adequate sleeping quarters and a little stove and all the other necessities of life so we could live and sleep comfortably. We got into this trailer with our two cats and started for Texas. The experience with the cats was an Odyssey all in itself. It was quite an experience! We stopped at Dallas and visited Ruth and then went on to Kilgore to see what could be done in the way of finding a place. We were going to go in business with Alan, and that was especially desirable because Muriel's business ability was quite necessary. Not that Alan didn't have it--he had quite a lot--but she had very much of an

understanding of things of that sort. We found Kilgore rather an interesting little town, and it seemed as if the idea might work out very well, especially with this junior college, which in season had a great crowd of young people, and available right near the college was a place which was much bigger than we needed. It wasn't too big, though it had been at one time a Piggly Wiggly store, a rather small store of that sort but, as I say, bigger than we required. So we took it and partitioned off the front and decorated it and made a very attractive room, not only for the confectionery but also for the serving of malts and other things for the school kids. In the back we had ample space for the equipment for the making of all the other stuff that goes with that sort of a business. [tape off] We got them started and then came back to California, stopping at Dallas on the way to again visit Ruth. We decided we liked the trailer idea very much; all we needed was a bigger trailer. We had sold some property here at that time and decided to put some of the money into a bigger trailer. We went down to trailer lots with Ruth and looked at all kinds of trailers and finally settled on an aluminum, thirty-five-foot trailer, which we were assured we could handle very easily with the Mercury that we had, which wasn't quite true. But still it worked out all right. Among these huge trailers on the lot, our trailer didn't look so awfully big, but it did look very attractive. It had a stateroom, with berths, a shower, a kitchen, a sort of dining alcove and the area in the rear was a small living room, so to speak, which was very comfortable and all in what seemed to be a very small area. The fact that it didn't seem too big at the time was a little bit of an illusion, because it was really, by comparison with a lot of these quite enormous house trailers that they have, and this thing looked a bit modest. But when they got us hitched up and I pulled it out onto the highway and got out to look at it, I nearly had a heart attack myself. [laughter] It looked monstrous! But, very gingerly, I started on our way home. Well, it had one great advantage over the little trailer. It had brakes that you operated from the car. As I had occasion to learn later in pulling a small trailer, that is a great advantage. To have a heavy weight behind you that you can't control from the dashboard is very dangerous. But this worked beautifully, and you could put on the brake and slow down. It wasn't long before I got over my squeamishness, and we got along very well. We came back to California, and went up to visit San Francisco and Cambria, and then stayed at Paradise Cove. We parked our trailer there and stayed there by the ocean for some time. [tape off] But again we had a serious misfortune. Muriel became ill, and her doctor diagnosed it as a gall bladder that had to be attended to quickly, so she went to St. John's Hospital, where she was operated on and where she convalesced for a while. Ruth was then on a vacation at Newport, where she had taken a cottage. So she wasn't far away and came to do all that she could in the situation. She stayed with me for a while in the trailer. But for

some time, I was driving back and forth everyday from Paradise Cove to Santa Monica. The operation was successful and gradually Muriel got her health and strength back. [tape off] We went back to Kilgore and took a house. Our furniture was all shipped to Kilgore, so we could furnish it quite nicely, and we stayed there for some months and helped Alan in the management of his business. Another event in the family was that Ruth was getting a divorce from Bob Brittingham, and we left Kilgore for a while and stayed with Ruth in Dallas during that time. One question that was worrying us quite a bit was: where do we want to live? Because once we got Alan on his feet with the business and helping him to get started, we felt decidedly that we didn't want to live in Kilgore. The next town of importance was Dallas, which is a very attractive city. We decided to explore a bit and see what appealed to us, so we spent some time traveling around. We went to Austin and to Houston and to San Antonio and decided that we must make up our minds and choose one of the four places: Dallas, Austin, San Antonio or Houston. Houston is very attractive in lots of ways. Of course, the principal difficulty--especially with southern Texas, but with all of Texas so far as we're concerned--were the very hot summers. We'd have to count on leaving in the hot weather if we were going to really enjoy life. Otherwise, we found lots of things about life in that part of the world that were very attractive. We finally settled on San Antonio. Upon our first return to California in the big trailer, I had a letter from the head of a society connected with the McNay Museum in San Antonio, offering me a position there in the art school. I've forgotten exactly how they got in touch with me, but a pupil of mine in Milwaukee married a young man who was a sculptor and also a teacher in Houston, and apparently they knew recommendation, apparently, because they just offered me the position outright to teach at the art school there. Well, I turned it down the first year and wrote back that I wouldn't be able to. We finally settled on San Antonio; we decided that that was maybe as interesting a town to live in as we saw in Texas, and not too far from Kilgore, so we could be in touch with Alan and Mae and visit them quite often and even still be some help in their business. It seemed as though it would be quite a satisfactory situation. We bought quite a nice little house in San Antonio and got our furniture and settled down there. And then again, there was a delegation that called on me one afternoon and asked if I would teach at the art school. I accepted it for that year and taught for the years of 1954 and 1956. We were quite justified in many ways. Speaking about it recently, maybe if we had gone to Houston, it would have been more profitable in some ways. But they were very delightful people in San Antonio, and also there was a lot of energy there, a certain civic pride, the beautiful use they've made of the river that goes through the town. The art school was quite small, but they had no money worries. The [Marion Koogler] McNay Art Institute is a beautiful place.

Mrs. McNay was a wealthy woman who was also an artist and had very good taste in buying pictures; so the nucleus of an excellent museum was there. With the beautiful place and with the fine nucleus of that sort, it had every chance in the world of becoming more and more worthwhile. There's quite a difference we found in Kilgore and in San Antonio. I think that especially Southern California suffers from its roots not being quite old enough; the old families are too few. But in Texas--though it's by no means what you'd expect on the Eastern seaboard, in New England or Virginia--you have the feeling that people know each other and all about each other. There's a community of feeling somehow, also a hospitality and generosity. We are much more suspicious out here, and with good reason, whereas there, they're not. We were quite impressed with that in money matters, for example. At the bank in Kilgore we'd go in as perfect strangers, and immediately we were treated as old customers and have all the privileges and courtesies of people who'd been banking there for years. There's an atmosphere which I don't think you'd find so easily in a newer part of the country. San Antonio, of course, had old families and had a good deal of the atmosphere of the people who had established a certain tradition, and a gratifying proportion of them were not at all of the type which I mentioned, having established a certain feeling that I had towards the Texan, especially when I lived in Europe and used to size up the crowds of tourists that you would run into always. For some reason, I got an idea that Texas was not a part of my country that I wanted to spend any time in. But I got over that, but not completely. There are certain reasons why I prefer not to live in Texas, but there are many things that make it very, very attractive, and I'm very grateful for having had a chance to know my country better and to modify some false impressions. [tape off] One thing that we enjoyed very much about San Antonio was that there was a very genuine feeling for cultural things. They have a symphony orchestra which maybe at the time wasn't tops, but it was good and very delightful. I never have heard such a series of fine chamber music as I heard at San Antonio. They had a series of string quartets the winter that we were there, the very best obtainable. Not only was the music fine but the whole atmosphere of the audience was rather unusual. It was given in a hall that was not too large, but it was sort of an occasion, and you found very soon that you knew so many people and you looked forward to the next quartet evening, not only for the music but also because you would mill around and meet people. There was a community of feeling and interest in the audience which to me was rather unusual. I can go to affairs here and maybe not see a soul that I know, even though we have interests in common. That's not always true, because sometimes I meet a good many people that I know at a concert or an opening or something of that sort. But it can easily happen that I see no one. Whereas, in San Antonio, not being a very large city or very small, you had

quality and also had a certain feeling of intimacy and a mutual enjoyment of that sort of thing, which is not at all common--at least in my experience. The two art institutions there, McNay and the Witte museums, were doing excellent work, and they spared no pains to get the very best, partly I think because the money problem was not as serious as it very often is with institutions of that sort. They could afford it. But also, they were very definitely people who were understanding and with a surprising amount of very genuine talent. The exhibitions in Texas of the Texas artists are as good as any place that I have seen--the ones in Dallas and the ones in San Antonio. The Houston museum has some excellent things; the activities are quite important. For one thing, I never saw as fine an exhibition of the work of Gauguin as I saw in Houston, and they had sculptors like Carl Milles there. A very real and vital institution. We were both struck in driving around Houston to see a certain civic pride, more so than you see in most towns. You see it to a large extent--that is to say that a buildings that look nice and [will be] landscaped to make it as attractive as possible. It seems to us that they were unusually successful from that point of view in Houston. You could even drive through industrial districts, which in some cities would be quite gloomy, but there it would be very attractive. So the spirit of living and of nice things was very much in evidence. I only taught that one winter because then we came back to California, but in some ways, I would have liked to have stayed in San Antonio and worked with the young people there. I think it would have done me a great deal of good, because the understanding of modern art, having a very genuine feeling for its significance without trying to be modern, was gratifyingly true of the people that I worked with. [tape off] The people were very hospitable in San Antonio, and it wasn't long before we had quite a group of friends. The curator of art at the Witte Museum was a very charming lady. Her father had been a painter, and Miss Eleanor Onderdonk (she had the Dutch name, and I think that the family originally came from Yonkers) was quite a witty and charming person. We enjoyed her very much. Amy Freeman Lee was one of the strong forces in art in San Antonio at that time. She herself worked very industriously. She did rather abstract watercolors, which had a certain amount of success. Hatfield here in Los Angeles handled her work. She was very articulate and quite energetic. She was not an especially strong person, but with a great vitality and spoke very fluently, so that in the organization of societies and on all occasions where somebody was required who was articulate and could express themselves and understand art from, I'll say, the less conventional point of view--she didn't subscribe wholeheartedly to anything very advanced artistically, but she did have a definite and very fine feeling for the modern movement and for modern tendencies--[she provided] a talent that was really needed there. Because, as one can understand, the general feeling is more

sharply divided between the old and the new. Either you were all for or all against anything that was modern. It seemed to be more so than you would feel in a larger city. You have the violence of feeling in Los Angeles, for example, but you have in between a sort of a buffer. But in San Antonio I felt that that wasn't quite true. [There were] people who went all out to support what they thought, which was against all these modern, unhealthy tendencies, and to keep up good old-fashioned culture and ideals; and [there were] the other groups, who felt that we had new life and vitality in other points of view. We had not only the school and the exhibitions, which were excellent, and the interest in music, which was very genuine and very enjoyable, but also the speakers for these various groups would be brought in. We had at one time Sir William Rothenstein, director of the Tate Gallery in London; they flew him down for a lecture, which was quite interesting. One delightful evening was when [Alfred] Frankenstein, who was the art and drama critic of the San Francisco Chronicle, was there. [John D.] Leeper, director of the McNay Institute, worked out a rather amusing program for him at his lecture. He brought out quite a number of slides to be shown which Frankenstein hadn't seen and then he would comment immediately on these slides--say who they were by and make some sort of a comment about them. Leeper tried to be rather tricky, which isn't too hard to do, because you can find very easily things by quite famous people that are perfectly genuine but which don't look at all like the man's work. But he didn't trip him up very often; a few times he did. The audience started joining in to identify slides. I played the game too, and I came out all right. I could identify the slides about as well as anybody else, [laughter] including Mr. Frankenstein. It was quite a lot of fun; it was quite interesting--to see a thing by Odilon Redon which wouldn't look at all like Odilon Redon, but I just happened to know it was, maybe accidentally, but I was sure it was. "Well, how could it be? It doesn't look like his work." "Well, it is just the same!" The schools there in San Antonio impressed me. It seemed to me that all of the schools and colleges were very busy enlarging and remodeling and improving their facilities. I don't think my own ideas of teaching were altogether what people expected of me, because there was an idea that a person should be a modern artist, should represent definitely modern tendencies, which I don't in my work. But for some reason they seemed to think that I would in my teaching. The idea that a student should simply express himself and nothing else always seemed to me to be a very shallow basis for any artistic development. It's perfectly true that he should be led as quickly as possible, I think, in any of the arts--whether it's in languages or in music or in the visual arts--to find meaning and to find himself in his work. But you can only do that by a certain understanding of what this thing is in itself. What is this craft that I'm going to learn? What is this language? What are its characteristics that I'm

going to use? What are its instruments? What can it yield in which I will make part of myself? So some of my teaching may have seemed to some of them rather conventional. In painting a still life, not to be immediately, extremely inventive about the way you transpose your forms and values and colors, but look at it and see what's going on, what texture and form and color are. You can really make that. First of all, I don't mean that it should be a boresome job of slavishly copying the thing; however, it should not be what my emotions are before this subject, but rather what this subject is; what is the unique quality of this form, this figure, this aspect? What does it mean to me when this happens against that, in contrast to this happening against that, or this to this? And then to say clearly on your paper or with your paint that that is that. It isn't that we don't want to do things, that we don't want to put out the effort, but we don't know how to find some organization in the activity that would build up, even in a very modest way. All too many simply depend upon the fact: "Well, I have talent or I haven't talent." As I mentioned once before, I think there's something quite fallacious about that, and although I don't want to be accused of being old hat or academic in my attitude towards art instruction, there was just a little something that was valid in the old idea that the beginner wasn't supposed to have talent. He was supposed to learn his job; he was supposed to be able to draw correctly or to conjugate his verbs without error or to play the scale without missing a note, and those were the things that were primary before anything else. You could talk about his talent afterwards, whether he had talent or not. If he could learn to do these things, there might be some hope, but we'll see about that later, which very often--and all too often--was kind of a discouraging entrance to the field of art. But, as I say, I think there was just a little bit of truth in it. A certain humility about entering a field has to be present before very much will be revealed to the student.

1.38. TAPE NUMBER: XIX, Side Two (June 13, 1966)

NUTTING

I'm rather sorry we didn't see more of Susan Kirksey while we were in San Antonio. She wasn't a person who mingled very much. She had what I thought was a very successful class of young people at the Witte Museum. She seemed to have ideas which combined an encouragement in a creative way with a cultivation of technical ability. It so happened that in our discussions about art I mentioned Herbert Read's *Education Through Art*, a book that I thought especially [appropriate] if she was working with young people, and another book that I had which I loaned her was by Mrs. Lily Cohen, entitled *The Artist Within Us*. She wasn't familiar with either one and was very enthusiastic about them; the result was that we were invited to her house. Apparently, even people

who knew her quite well had not been invited to her house. One reason, I gathered, was that she had an extremely interesting and really valuable collection of Oriental art, and she seemed to be rather concerned that this should not be known. She was living alone in this big house and I rather gathered that she feared the possibility of burglarizing if the word got out that she had things of value. Otherwise one would not ordinarily think that the place would be worth robbing. For that reason, people didn't even know very much about her collection. Very few people, not even her friends, seemed to know very much about it. But thanks to a community of ideas and feeling--and I suppose to a certain extent her appreciation for lending these books and any other material that I might have had that would be interesting to her--she entertained us and showed us what she had, much of which wasn't on display, mostly in cases. Objects of very fine quality. One of the first things that happened after getting to San Antonio was their having a show of my work at the Witte Museum. Of course, that was quite a natural thing to do, as I was a new instructor there for that year, and I suppose they wanted to give me some sort of publicity, as well as the school. I was pleased that it was quite nicely received. I sold quite a few things and one watercolor was purchased for the permanent collection of the museum. Not long afterwards, a club called the Bright Shawl, that was interested in promoting art, gave both myself and Muriel a showing of our work. So we got pretty well displayed in San Antonio. Among the people that we met there were two painters I already knew--one was a friend, Michael Frary, one of the talented young painters of Los Angeles, one of whose pictures we bought during the time that we had the Mid-Twentieth Gallery, and the painter Etienne Ret. Etienne Ret I didn't know too well, but I had met him several times. His work was being handled by Hatfield here in Los Angeles. I didn't know that he had gone to San Antonio, but I found that he was there and was very active. They were the two painters. When I was teaching at Art Center, Michael was looking for a teaching position and went to see Adams, the director of Art Center, with the idea of getting a job there. But Adams turned him down very flatly. He told him that he had students in his second-year class who could do better work than he did [laughter], which was not too unlike Adams's way of treating one sometimes. But what made it curious was that very soon after Frary's work got recognition, more and more so. He was living in San Antonio and had married and was very active there. The recognition had led to a position, which I think he still holds, at the university in Austin. I suppose it was an assistant professorship, I'm not sure just what. But, apparently, he's very much liked and a very successful teacher. It rather surprised me in a way, because Adams at Art Center seemed to be on the lookout for people with what he would simply call, "modern trends," which from his point of view was very shrewd, that the commercial artist should be

introduced to some training in some of the modern movements because it's more or less like Füssli said of William Blake, "They're damn good to steal from." [laughter] While I was at Art Center, John Ferron, who has since become a very well-known figure in abstract art, was teaching, and also there were one or two others that were there only for a short time. The thing is that I don't feel that Adams recognized the talent that would be useful in his organization, and he slipped up on Michael Frary, who apparently is a very attractive personality and a very sympathetic teacher from what I've heard of his work. There were other professional artists in San Antonio. There was quite a brilliant portrait painter by the name of De Jori who was there. I don't know whether he felt he was there permanently or not. I say he was very successful; his work is extremely accomplished and apparently he's doing very well. He got himself a nice home in San Antonio, and he was a very interesting person to know, especially with his European background (he was from Vienna)--and very musical. Both he and his wife were people that we enjoyed very much. Among the people that worked with me in my class were especially the older people. General Waitt had a background of science--I think his specialty was chemical warfare, but he was retired--but was very much alive to all sorts of thought and ideas. He not only listened to a symphony with pleasure, but he carefully made notes of the programs in a very neat notebook in which he had things that he'd heard and comments. Apparently, he not only wanted to enjoy music but to understand it, and he entered upon his painting with the same concentration and intelligence that he applied to other fields. He began with me, painting still life. I find it very difficult to get over the idea--I suppose to a large extent it's because of the period in which I grew up--that fundamentally the artist's work is a craft. He has to learn something, how to make things--whether you make it with words, whether you make it with sounds, whether you make it with gestures. You simply can't do a ballet by simply emoting movements. There is something that you have to learn in body control to even be an ordinarily good dancer, how to do it, how to use your body. A certain science seems to be in everything. I think that a certain amount of what most people would think of as academic training is rather indispensable. Otherwise you're left up in the air and get quite unhappy with the work that has that sort of a foundation. I explained to General Waitt what I had in mind, that the painting of a still life and making it look like a still life was for that purpose, and how he applied the knowledge afterwards, of course, was something that one must think about from the very beginning. He seemed to understand very easily what I was driving at, and after I left, he worked with a young painter who was much more abstract in his work than along the lines that I had laid out for my students, but the general seemed to be in a position to do it quite successfully, and since then, I have heard that he is being accepted in pretty good shows and

has gotten quite a lot of satisfaction from his work. Mrs. Wray was another of my very serious students. She was the kind of a student which is delightful to have. They listen to what you say and consider it carefully, which puts the teacher on his mettle, because you know that they're not going to throw it away. You have to be careful to be very clear in what you have to explain, or give-- what's your theory and so forth--because they're going to make as much use of it as they can, and you must look forward to the results accordingly. Mrs. Wray made excellent progress. She took every hint that I gave her very seriously, even how to organize the use of her material--the cleaning of her brushes and things of that sort--and I suggested that I had a certain method (by a combination of a sieve and a coffee container) for keeping my brushes rinsed while I was working. She not only got one but she would bring it to class with her [laughter], which rather surprised me because I didn't expect that she'd go to all the trouble of bringing her studio equipment to class. Of course, there's one thing [true] about any craft, that if you have it organized so that you save time and energy, you have that time and energy to put into your work. That was understood thoroughly by all good craftsmen, and maybe to the nth degree by the Oriental painter. For example, you read that a Japanese painter not only prepares his work but he has a certain spot for each tool, for each brush, for his ink slab, and then the posture of body and some breathing exercises and a certain routine. There's not a detail of preparation to his activity that isn't very, very carefully considered. It may seem to the Occidental sometimes rather an extreme idea, but the essence of it, I think, is very important. No matter how disorderly a painter may be, I think you'll always find that the success of any artist or workman is due largely to a certain amount of organization, though sometimes it's diametrically opposed. The case of a painter, for example. There's a very fine painter here. Max Band, who at one time I saw quite a lot of. And a friend of his, Moise Kisling (who was quite an important figure in French painting and modern movements in the twenties and thirties and has remained one of the important painters without being what the French would call a chef d'école, like a Derain or a Matisse) was out here, and I went painting with them. Band at that time didn't have a car and, of course, Kisling didn't have one; so I provided the car and the three of us would go out painting out-of-doors. Both were very fond of working out-of-doors from nature. It's a habit that has decreased to a very large extent in popularity among painters, it seems to me. But they were of the period in which one naturally spent a certain amount of time painting out-of-doors, and it was fascinating to watch the two men at work. Max Band's color is superb in his good things and his paint quality is excellent, but to look at his palette you'd wonder how in the world a man could work under those conditions. He never cleaned his palette. He would squeeze out his colors, and when they dried, instead of scraping off the palette,

he simply squeezed some fresh color on the pile until his old palettes must have weighed...oh, I'd be afraid to say how much. They were heavy objects. It not only seemed to be an awfully cumbersome thing to use in the studio, but such a bulky object to carry out-of-doors to go sketching or painting. At the same time, here was Kisling, with his big, very nicely organized canvas case, in which he had his canvas, his palette and his paint; and Kisling, on the other hand, brought out this palette that looked as fresh as though he'd just brought it from the art store, and he would set his palette very carefully and at the end of his work would carefully take off all of the color on the palette and wash his palette with turpentine, clean it off and polish it, and put it back in his case. What I'm implying is that it was not necessary for the one to work the way the other did. It was more or less what I said about Otto Bank. When you say, "Ought I to do this? Ought to do that? Ought I to work this way?" Then the question comes up, and you can ask yourself very seriously, "Why the hell should you?" Those are problems that are dictated by the objective of the worker--a point which, in my efforts to teach, I can't help stressing without getting tiresome. But I keep hinting that you must find out for yourself what your work demands, what it is trying to be. Don't force things. Watch what happens. Find what you can subscribe to, and then use your intelligence to see what is hindering it or what is necessary to carry it still further. And it may not be anything that anyone else would think was even sensible, but you must not worry about that. If you come to a certain point in your work where it's necessary to go down and stand on your head in the middle of the intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and Cahuenga, why, that's the thing to do. You don't say, "Well, I'll be arrested," or this sort of thing. You go ahead and do it, if that is what is needed before you can move this thing over into something, or at least has the possibility of being moved into some field, in which it will be more significant to you. I present that sort of an argument when people say, "Should I study anatomy? Ought one to know perspective? Should one do this? Should one do that?" Theoretically, in a course in which you can prepare and in which the student will agree to follow, you can say that you should because we have agreed to do it, and this is the course. It won't do you any harm. But, not to think that there's any great intrinsic value in it, just because it happens to be in the course. To me, the discipline that artists have submitted themselves to has always been a very fascinating thing to watch in the history of art, and also in the living artists that one can see at work and talk to. Very early in the game--and usually I think it's a sign of real talent--they are obsessed by certain things which, from the school routine, is more or less jumping the track and they sometimes become rather difficult students. But you have to be sympathetic with them. It's all right for a Michelangelo or a Da Vinci to dissect a cadaver with such intensity--in the case of Da Vinci because of his interest in the

subject itself; in the case of a Pollaiuolo or a Michelangelo or a man of his generation, it was because it provided them with the vocabulary that they needed for artistic expression. Rembrandt, although he paints a very famous picture, *The Anatomy Lesson*, which has a cadaver and is very marvelously done, obviously wasn't at all sensitive to that sort of thing. Etienne Ret was teaching at Chouinard when I was there, and his class was very good. He had the French upbringing, and I think that one of the great strengths of French painting is that they have not only a thorough knowledge but a very fine feeling for tradition. It's not simply that a picture of fifty or a hundred years ago is old hat, unless it happens to be by some great master, and even then I find that a young student is apt to look upon it rather suspiciously. Etienne Ret, for example, when he was teaching at Chouinard, had the students doing different things in the room, according to their talents and their ability; I remember he had one student making a very careful copy of Vermeer, and he spent a long time on it, which is one way of mastering it. The Vermeer, of course, was a good color reproduction, not having the original of Vermeer accessible, but it gave a clear enough idea of the quality of painting for the student to learn quite a lot. That, of course, is one thing that is extremely old hat in any of the schools that I have seen. I haven't seen for a great many years a student making a careful copy of another man's painting; whereas, up until 1900, a certain amount of copying was a matter of course with a student. In the earlier periods, it was much more a part of his training than later. All of the important painters have not only examined things and studied them but in one way or another have done a certain amount of copying, simply because it's a very pleasant thing to do. It's very profitable. One of the last things that Ingres did, when he was a man over eighty years old, somebody found him working away, making some pencil drawings, copying the paintings of, of all people, Giotto; and Ingres, his work being associated with the classic art, one would think that he would think Giotto maybe had something rather primitive, but he derived an appreciation of Giotto. And they asked him why he was doing that? He said, "To learn." [laughter] He was still learning. The careful copy of things for the trade wasn't in that category at all. The great copies of Rubens are always variations on Titian and Veronese and Parmigianino and the other people he copied, and Delacroix made one copy which is fairly faithful. But Ingres did a great many studies and copies from the masters' drawings, paintings, as he would say, "To learn." However, it was something that I always urged students to do and even showed them examples of how Degas, for example, was a very assiduous copyist, and it didn't kill his talent. They are so afraid of a student being influenced, and they want him influenced by something they feel is more modern, more alive. When Degas made very careful copies, and drawings and paintings, from both the old and the new, he was nourishing his creative ability

as much as anything else he could have done. [tape off] We settled on San Antonio as our place to live. It was not near, but not too far away from Kilgore, and we kept a room in the house that Alan and his family were living in. We furnished it so that we could go up there at a moment's notice and have a place to stay, which we did at certain times when the business should be looked after. We made quite frequent trips, which were always very pleasant, because it was through very nice country in east Texas. We used to enjoy the ride, if nothing else. We got this house in San Antonio, and we decided to get rid of the big trailer, which had given us a great deal of pleasure and in many ways a very, very profitable experience. Mrs. Nutting thought that it would be a very good idea to trade, that we could buy a house in San Antonio and use the trailer as the down payment on a house. She spoke to some real estate people, but it was a brand-new idea to them, and they took a very dim view of such a deal. But she was quite right. She got on the phone one day and called up some people (she saw some houses advertised for sale) and suggested this. The result was that from one phone call we had three very interesting propositions, very nice houses on which the trailer would be taken. We settled on a house that was recently finished, very modern and very nicely designed, and we made the deal. We promptly rented the house for a very good rent, which disposed of that problem. The business in Kilgore was obviously not going to be one that was sufficiently profitable to carry on, and we saw that that interest was not going to last and decided to come back to Los Angeles. The fact is that the business in Kilgore was faced with bankruptcy. We dissolved the partnership with Alan, and he sold the business for enough [to cover] the debt. Otherwise it was quite a loss to all concerned. We decided to come back to Los Angeles, and sold our place in San Antonio. We packed up and shipped our household goods by Bekins. We decided to bring our library and paintings in the station wagon. We had a station wagon then which we had used for pulling the trailer, and to save the job of packing the paintings and pictures we got one of these small trailers a U-Haul and had that packed with the pictures. The U-Haul was packed by professionals who were supposed to have done a very good job, and I guess it was, though I don't think it was as completely balanced as it ought to have been. Anyway, we started off, and, of course, we were very heavily laden. The trailer was very heavy, and books of course are extremely heavy. We had quite a lot of them. I sold quite a few in San Antonio, but this still left us with quite a heavy load in the station wagon. Everything went fine until we got into western Texas a day or so after. We came to a stretch of road which was being repaired; it was being resurfaced. There was traffic over the road, but the final surfacing hadn't been done, and it was fairly like a dirt road. I could see it ahead. I saw the change in the road, and I became a little apprehensive. Luckily I slowed up to a very slow speed, because, although the road wasn't rutted, it was grooved

sufficiently by traffic so that when the U-Haul with its heavy load struck the unpaved road, it commenced to weave and swing from side to side. Being so heavy, the station wagon wasn't heavy enough to hold it down, so it threw the back of my car from side to side, making it impossible to really hold the road. I couldn't do it. I did for some time; and of course, I was afraid to put on the brakes, the U-Haul not having the electric brakes that the big trailer had. There was nothing to do but slow down as easily as you could. I didn't use the brake at all; I simply tried to let the car roll to a stationary condition. But it didn't do that. It whisked the back of our car off to the left, which headed me straight out into open country, and luckily there was no big drop and no fences or anything to get tangled up in. But it got us out into the flat and threw the car completely over on its side--on my side, incidentally--so that I was at the bottom of a great pile of books. The sudden, almost violent stopping of the car threw all of the contents from the back of the station wagon on top of me. I had my face buried in gravel and, I suppose, broken glass, though fortunately I didn't get cut. I was in complete darkness because of this great weight of books on my head, and I had no idea how Muriel was. I called out, and she answered me. She seemed to be all right. But it was a kind of a pickle. Fortunately, there were a couple of young fellows right behind us, and they came and opened the door and lifted Muriel out and then excavated me. I crawled out, and we found that we weren't hurt; but what I never could understand was that there was an ambulance there in no time at all. I never found out exactly how they got word. There were people ready to care for us, and when they found we weren't hurt, they took us to town, which was about seven miles away. We got a wrecking company to come out and pick up the remains of our car and trailer. The side of the car looked pretty terrible, but the inside was not damaged. I think we were two or three days in this town. They got us in perfectly good running order. But the rest of the way back to Los Angeles we were rather a scandalous sight. The side of the car was pretty well raked and dented and peeled. We had no body work done; we simply got the car into running condition as quickly as possible and came on. The insurance company handled it very quickly and nicely. It was Allstate. We had no trouble at all. So here we were back in Los Angeles in 1955. [tape off] When we were living in Pacific Palisades we became interested in the Great Books group; we found that there was one there and joined it and enjoyed it very much. It's been really a part of our life ever since. In San Antonio, we found there was one meeting in the library there, a very pleasant group of people doing the great books of the Great Books Foundation. We used to meet regularly with them. When we came back to Los Angeles, one of the first things we did was to join a group here. I never have been very much of a joiner, not because I have any objection to people joining things--I think it's an excellent idea--but it's just that temperamentally I don't seem to last very long

as a very active member of a group. I seem to get a little bit of claustrophobia somehow when we all meet the same people and the same prejudices and the same ideas and that sort of thing, which so often happens if you belong to a club. One club that has meant quite a lot to us is the Severance Club here in Los Angeles. Emil Kosa was the one who introduced us to the Severance Club. He doesn't attend any more, but at that time he was a member and used to be there at the meetings quite, often. [tape off] Well, just the facts of history are that we got back to Los Angeles, and our daughter Ruth and her new husband lived at 1009 North Clark Street, where we formerly lived and were married, and when she knew that we were coming back, she found us a place not far away, sort of a motel for temporary living. We stayed there and looked around to find some way of resettling ourselves in Los Angeles. Usually that sort of thing takes driving around and looking at all sorts of possibilities. We were even considering living some other place; for example, we always found Santa Barbara a very attractive town. Across the street was a little white house with a steep roof, which really had quite a little character and in its way was rather attractive. And one day Ruth said, "You know, that house across the street, I hear it's for sale." At first we didn't think too much about the idea, because it seemed so small. But then we went over and looked at it and found that it was for sale, that a German-born owner and his wife were living there, and in many ways it was quite attractive. It had a little unit in the back of the lot, which was in good condition and was easily rented and had a garden and some possibilities. We finally decided that might be the answer, with the result that we bought the place and really enjoyed it very much. I'm a kind of a magpie, and the result is that we were more or less bursting at the seams. The house, in spite of the outward appearance, was really two stories because the attic had been lived in and fixed up into three rooms; so we made our library upstairs and also kind of a workroom. The next problem was a studio and someplace to work with room enough at least to get out materials and do something, which was quite a serious problem. We decided that the most economical thing was to make use of the little house in back. It was simply a matter of taking down a partition. Somebody found a large window that was very cheap. The carpenter or painter who was working there said that a fellow had one in the back of a garage someplace near where he lived. It turned out to be a perfectly good plate-glass window, about six-feet square I should say, and that was set into one side of the house, and I was in business, with quite a nice little studio, which I used for some time. With the idea of making the property more profitable, especially in that region, we decided to build on the back of the lot. We built three units, very nice ones, and that involved taking down this little house. There was plenty of room at the back of the lot across the street, at 1007, 1009 and 1011, for the building of a studio, and Leslie Tyler built me a very

nice studio there. That was my studio until we sold the property, at which time I used one of the units at the back of 1012 Clark Street for a studio. We designed the ones at 1012 with the idea of their being used by artists, sort of a real studio apartment, in the sense of having a workroom, a kitchen and bath, with the emphasis placed on light and space, which wasn't a bad idea at all because places of that sort are more in demand than I think builders realize. We had one very nice tenant who was a commercial photographer and did covers for record companies and quite interesting accounts. He got married, and once the tenant gets married, why, then they have to have a bigger place and they move out. And that's what happened with him. We also had a couple of young painters who were very good tenants and very interesting ones, too, and they shared the place. That same studio was occupied for quite a little while by Murray Fromsen, who's now over in Viet Nam as correspondent for NBC. At that time, he'd spent quite a lot of time in the Orient. He seemed to be quite an authority on the Orient, I see him reporting on TV once in a while. Well, he too got married, and he was replaced by another tenant. We were very fortunate in our tenants there; with one exception, they were all pleasant people to have. Also what is so important, if that is your source of income, is that they paid their rent. [laughter] After selling the place across the street, I used one of these places for my studio in the meantime and also gave my monthly talks there, while the place on Huntley was being built. We settled on the Huntley place after seeing a great many possibilities, both in Los Angeles and in the Valley. Somewhat to my surprise, it seemed only to me such a very short time before that vacant lots were available. Even in that place that we built in Westwood, which was a very nice walking distance from the center of Westwood, lots were available. But when we commenced to build our place on Huntley, we found that a vacant lot just seemed to be nonexistent unless you went way out. The result was that we had to finally settle on buying a lot and with a house which seemed a rather of a shame to destroy, not only was it in quite good condition--it had been well cared for--but also it had not long before been repainted and was clean and nice, with the idea of being ready to rent for occupancy. But it seemed to be the only thing to do. The house was destroyed, which was the first time I'd ever watched one of these operations from beginning to end. It is certainly quite impressive, the way machinery can move in and convert a house that took a reasonable amount of time to build and in no time at all reduce it to matchsticks. This bulldozer would not only shove it down but then pile it up and then climb on top and turn around and around on it and grind it down into small bits so it could be shoveled up and taken away in trucks. Building to me was always quite an exciting thing, to watch the making of a structure of any sort. Ever since my boyhood, I have been quite an avid sidewalk superintendent; I like to look through knotholes and see exactly what's

happening. [laughter] When it's your own place, and the place you plan to live in, of course it's quite thrilling. The first thing that happened was the designing of this house. We all put our heads together and made floor plan after floor plan. We would do them on cardboard and then cut the rooms apart and readjust them, but always saying, "Well, now how big is that going to be?" And then I'd measure our rooms at 1012 and say, "Well, it will be so many feet bigger than this and so much wider than that." Then we'd try to figure out if we could afford to have it just a little bigger. And we always had that idea--just a little bit more room. We suffered for some years from a sense of being squeezed into a place that we wanted elbowroom and kept thinking of that continually. Well, when this house was finally framed in and I commenced to walk around the rooms, it kind of took my breath away, because at first it seems much bigger than it's going to be, really. And, of course, most people on the street thought it was going to be several apartments, and most of them were quite amazed to find that there are only two apartments in this whole structure. But once we found that we could do it and the house was finished, we've been very happy. We also managed to figure things out so as to give me not only a nice big studio but a studio divided so that I have a room with a workbench--which is something that I always yearned for but never had quite enough room for--to do all sorts of dirty work or carpentry or fussing around. As I've often noticed, most artists love to tinker with things. I'm not a very good craftsman; in spite of the ancestry of my father, my grandfather, I never acquired any great skill in the use of tools and the care and precision [necessary] to make a thing very, very nicely. If it will work, why, I'm quite happy. I had occasion to bring that up the last time we had this talk on American painting. In speaking about Samuel F.B. Morse, I found to my surprise that nobody in the group had very much to say about him, except that he had invented the telegraph and the Morse Code, which isn't quite true, because the principle of the telegraph was already well known and the Morse Code, in a rudimentary sort of form, was used in signaling and was only adapted for the use of the telegraph. But what I said at the time was, and I think it's true, that the artist is very much inclined to love gadgets; he likes to make things. I have a little bit of that in my blood, and so having a place in which to do it is one of the things that I've enjoyed here. Morse's dream was to be a painter. He was a very accomplished painter and did some very interesting things. He did a very important portrait of Lafayette on his second visit here, which is owned by the City of New York, a very accomplished thing, and very good. He painted quite a remarkable thing of Congress in session which, not only from an historical point of view, but also from an artistic point of view, is worthy of more notice than it is given. What really happened was that Morse was another one of these fellows who like to tinker around with things, and what he really did was to persuade Congress to

put up fifty miles of wire so he could telegraph "What hath God wrought?" over it and get everybody all excited. That's all that people remember, what he accomplished, which I think is in a way a bit of a tragedy because he had his dreams of art and of being somebody important. At first I suppose he thought it was a little toy and then thought, "Well, there is good practical value in it. Let's see if we can't persuade them to put it on the market," which in a way gave him the satisfaction of becoming famous and making money. But I always think of Morse as being a disappointed man. I may be wrong. I see there's a book about him now published. I'd like to read it and see if there's anything in what I have to say. [tape off] We got into [our house] just in time to celebrate Christmas in 1965) Ruth and her husband moved in down below a little bit before, and they were more settled. So we had our Christmas festivities in our new home. Ruth is an ardent gardener. She loves to spend her Saturdays in the garden, and we were very glad to turn the landscaping completely over to her, and everything, except on our balcony, is her idea and largely her handiwork. She and her husband put in good hours of labor in the planting, and I think: quite successfully. [tape off] One important thing about the painter, and still more the sculptor, is that he has to have a place to work. I've seen the writer sitting out with a composition book and composing by the hour, which in actually producing something in painting can't always be done. If the canvas is of any size, the light is also important, and if I felt that we could have afforded it, the only difference in my studio would have been a more or less vertical skylight above the floor, about four feet, which is more or less the idea of the French studio, and which is very economical. It provides a north light, which is a steady light, and if you're painting, it is extremely useful and eases things up a lot. In that case, it is like the French studio, what the French call a soupenete-- that is, with a balcony from one end of the studio which provides a little bedroom upstairs and down below you can have a little reception area, and then the rest of the floorspace can be used for work. At the opposite end of the room, depending on the street, there would be a north light so that your canvases don't shine and glare from reflections. Especially in working from the model, this light is steady and doesn't change in quality during the comings and goings of the sun, which sometimes for the realistic painter is quite annoying. Otherwise, I have a studio and working space in which I'm quite happy and have a nice library where I have all my books out. Before, I had to fish around in cupboards and in one thing and another to find things, which is no longer necessary. So that is our present life in Los Angeles.

1.39. TAPE NUMBER: XX, Side One (June 20, 1966)

NUTTING

We had all sorts of ambitious ideas in the use of our Spartan trailer, some of which we carried out. We didn't do as much as we planned, because we found that, although pulling a great thing of that sort is quite a job, by not hurrying and taking things leisurely and enjoying our trips, we could get a great deal out of them. I don't know how it is now, but in those days it was rather inexpensive. Usually for a dollar, you could park in a parking place. It was very simple; all you had to do was to drive in and then screw in your water hose, plug in your electric light, go in and take a shower, and then you were all set. I was very fond of getting up very early. I just loved to get started just before sunrise and see the dawn, and so our method of traveling was to drive in the morning and then stop early in the afternoon. In that way, we could cover a fair distance. Then we had the rest of the time to do what we wanted to do. We had all our books and things with us, and everything was quite liveable. We dreamed of quite extensive trips of that sort, going to the East and even up to New England, none of which we really carried out. But in spite of the fairly short time we had the trailer, I think I pulled it about sixteen thousand miles in our trips between here and Texas, and up to San Francisco. One of the largest contributions, at least to my knowledge of my native country, was our trips into Louisiana and down through the Cajun country, which of course was very different from anything I had known before. I have at least a speaking acquaintance with most of the United States--New England, the Middle West, the Northwest--due to my father's work which took him to various places, and with the experience of my childhood in Mexico, and one short trip into the Carolinas. The trip that we made into Louisiana was really quite different. We found the people in that region very delightful, very hospitable. Things would happen that you don't expect to happen out here. I remember once we were driving around and drove onto a man's property. I didn't intend to [laughter], but the owner came over and was very pleasant and wanted to know what we wanted. And I explained and he said, "Why don't you make yourselves at home? Drive down through the pasture. I've got a nice little bunch of cattle." He seemed to be very proud of them. So we drove in, and the first thing I knew all these animals seemed to think that we came to feed them. We found ourselves in the midst of a little herd of cattle, all trying to shove their noses into the car. We then drove out and thanked him, and he was very pleasant, very hospitable. There's a place not too far from Longview [Texas], Cross Lake; it's an artificial lake, but good-sized and quite a delightful place. We even toyed with the idea of getting a place there to live. It was near Shreveport and not too far away from the amenities of living, and [we would] still have all of the delights of country living. That's one of the reasons...

MURIEL NUTTING

The house is on fire! [tape ends]

1.40. TAPE NUMBER: XX, Side One (SECOND PART August 8, 1966)

NUTTING

At this point on June 20, we were very rudely interrupted, as we can hear from Muriel saying, "The house is on fire," and it certainly was. She opened the door of the studio and found the place full of smoke and with flames at the back of the place coming up over the dividers. Both she and Don Schippers were marvelous. They kept very quiet and did exactly the right thing. Muriel went to the phone and very quickly got in touch with the fire department and then commenced to look after other things. I rushed for the hose, and Don very efficiently took down a lot of my paintings, including a couple from the studio which he could reach, and neatly stacked them in the backyard, as I discovered later, and after the danger was over, brought them back. I took the hose around to the side of the house where there's an entrance to the studio from another stairway, and my first concern was for our little cat. We have a black cat, which of course we are quite fond of, and at first I was quite sure that he was in the studio. So I played the hose rather low over the floor and around the furniture to see if I could find the little animal. Then all of a sudden, I remembered that hardly less than half an hour before, he had wanted to get out. I let him out from that very door, and I felt very much relieved. Then I was conscious that the firemen had arrived. After I realized that the cat was safe, I started playing the water over the top of the divider where the flames seemed to be the strongest. Of course, it wasn't at all efficient. I found that one of the boys from the fire department was by my side. He didn't have a hose, and he found me up there with my little hose and a pitiful little stream of water, which was extremely ineffective, and he kept admonishing me, which was quite right, of course, to keep my head down. My tendency was to raise my head, and he kept shoving my head down to the floor. I played the hose back and forth, but very soon the other boys came up with a real hose and said, "Well, I think you'd better get out of here." And I said, "I'm awfully glad to do that." I went down and left that part of the work in their charge and went to the front of the house. What I wanted to do at first was to get to the back of the house and up where Don and Muriel were carrying things out of the place. It's rather curious, but at the time, I felt that I had considerable presence of mind. I realized afterwards that I didn't really, because I was rather hypnotized by two things. One was the fact that the firemen seemed to present the effect of a slow-motion movie; their motions all seemed so very slow and very deliberate. From the sidewalk, I could see into the studio through the big front window. In the meantime, as a matter of fact, the boys that had come into the door where I had been before had gotten in and broken the glass, so it was wide open and you could see the flames. Even the floor was burning, and the sight was somewhat petrifying,

especially, as I said, because they seemed to be so slow in getting any water up there. They weren't. They were very efficient; they came very quickly. They said that they were on the scene three minutes after they got the telephone call. I had the feeling that I couldn't get to the back because of the water and falling glass (they were breaking the windows on each side of the studio, and glass kept falling and the water came out of the windows), which was quite wrong, because all I had to do was to go into the neighbor's yard and go back and climb over the wall. But the fascination of the scene through the window was so strong that it kept that idea out of my mind, so I was quite a useless part of the scene for some time after the fire started. They called three companies, not because of the need for the equipment but for the men, they said. Well, it was my first experience in that sort of thing. I thought afterwards that it seems to be rather in the history of the family, that each generation seems to have had one serious fire. My father did, and his house was completely destroyed; and my maternal grandfather lost a great deal in a fire in his hometown in Illinois; and my paternal grandfather lost his business in a serious fire. [tape off] Something that I didn't realize, from a very decided lack of experience, is how freakish a fire could be. The firemen threw out quite a mountain of rubbish, and one of them who inspected it, partially in trying to determine the cause of the fire and where it started and that sort of thing, saw that there was very strong evidence that it started under the sink, which puzzled me very much because I had nothing that I thought was at all inflammable under the sink, only things like Ajax and cleaning stuff and things that you use around a place. But he pointed out that the fire was especially hot there, that it completely burnt the drainboard, and it left the sink isolated. In other places, the heat was also quite puzzling. For example, it more or less melted the metalwork on the frame of the big sliding doors onto the balcony, when there was nothing that seemed to be especially inflammable around that part of the room, and with all that heat, not more than six feet away, was an open can of paint thinner that I use for washing my brushes, standing on my paint stand, and that was untouched. And other things that you thought would be explosive, like cans of paint thinner and turpentine and alcohol (I buy them in gallon cans and I had them in a cupboard), but thanks to the fact that they were under the cupboard and the doors were shut, I suppose, kept it from doing any damage. In other words, the really inflammable stuff that you would think would cause a lot of damage wasn't hurt. All the little bottles of things that I had out burnt, but they were small and couldn't account for very much. Apparently, oil paintings can generate a lot of heat, and my racks of painting, I imagine, caused most of it. Some of my larger things that were on the wall burnt so completely that I couldn't even find pieces of the frames or stretchers. There were simply the patterns of the pictures on the wall, which in a way was rather useful to me

afterwards, because in making out the things for the insurance, I could get the exact size. I didn't have any records of the sizes of my pictures, but I could measure these ghostly forms on the wall and get some information that way.

SCHIPPERS

What was the cause of the fire as they determined it?

NUTTING

They didn't come to any conclusion. Of course, my wife says--and I think quite understand ably--that it was cigarettes, because I do smoke cigarettes a great deal. But once before, over in my other studio, there was a small fire that didn't cause any serious damage. It took place in a metal wastepaper basket, and it was due to the fact that I emptied an ashtray into it too soon. But since then, I have been very leery of cigarettes in wastebaskets, and usually I soak them before I put them in, or at least crumble them all up with my fingers, because that was rather a startling experience. So it's hard to think that I did that, and also I wasn't back there that morning. I did a little work in the front of the studio, but I didn't do anything back there. I don't remember even going back. I may have. The building, being rather new, it's hard to believe that it was anything to do with the wiring, because I think that fires from faulty wiring are due partly to the age of the building and partly to the fact that a lot of installation of that sort has been done years ago when they were not so strict in installations. But, of course, the installation here was up to the standards of the building requirements nowadays, so it's hard to believe it was that. The other possibility, and what does start fires, was oily rags. If you use an oil that is a drying oil, it oxidizes rapidly if it is shut up in a closed place, but my paint rags were not. And I didn't have too many around. The ones that I had were dry; they weren't oily. The fact is that they don't get too oily. It's not like where you use rags and okum and that sort of thing to swab oil on machinery, or something of that sort, where they really get saturated with oil. But it's a possibility, and so far as the cause of it, that's where we stand for the time being.

SCHIPPERS

You told me also that just a few weeks previously you had sent out several of your paintings to your agent, and they were also destroyed.

NUTTING

Yes. There was a young man who wanted to give me an exhibition last October of some of my work, and at first I was inclined to refuse because I hadn't felt that I could put together an exhibition that would be really representative of what I would like my work to mean to the public. But I consented; so he took out about some thirty canvases, and he arranged a showing at the Royce Galleries on Sunset Boulevard. I had nothing to do with it really; he framed it and attended to everything. He also had a number of my things down at his

store. He wanted to have them in stock, and my interest was not so much whether he would sell them or not, because I feel that the selling of work of that sort--unless you're doing purely commercial work and manufacturing stuff like you see in hundreds of galleries all over town--is a rather slow process. You build on what reputation you have and keep yourself before a public which is more a collector of a painter than simply a buyer of something to put on the wall. But, I was interested to have some of my things out where people would see them and see what sort of a reaction I would get, because it's not only the quality of your work but also the general taste and feeling of the public that's continually changing, and maybe I would be quite surprised that some of the things that I thought might have no appeal at all would have appeal. It would be an interesting experience. It so happened that Dirks, who had the gallery on Melrose and who had these things in his gallery, had a fire which gutted his place--I imagine very much as my studio was--so that I lost what was there except for two things--one that I sold to him and another which by some fluke escaped destruction. [The latter was] a small painting of a head. Nothing of any special importance [was lost in the gallery fire]. Really my important things were in my studio. The most serious thing about that loss, so far as I was concerned, was that I had things which represented something of every year of my lifetime, and especially things that had gotten some recognition. When I first came back from Europe, I showed a canvas that I had shown at the Autumn Salon in Paris. It had got noticed, and in another gallery in Paris it again got quite a favorable notice. I sent it to the Pennsylvania Academy, which is rather an important and rather difficult annual to get into. But I had this canvas [in the studio], and I rather valued it.

SCHIPPERS

Which one was that?

NUTTING

That was the three figures that was up over the door, an earlier thing of mine. The three standing figures with the black dog was painted in the early twenties and was the beginning of my real ambitious canvases. I showed that at the Autumn Salon and also showed it here at the Los Angeles County Museum, in a group of things that I had there, and I showed it at the Witte Museum in San Antonio and at the museum in Milwaukee. [tape off] Of these pictures that I mentioned, the most important one I would say went back to the early twenties. The last large thing was a thing which I gave the Proustian title of Remembrance of Things Past, a rather romantic composition, but it was an effort to be rather painterly and also well organized in design, which represented my work of about ten years ago. So probably all of these things [represented] periods that were definitely past but which would be very important if I should have a retrospective show--supposing that I should do

more exhibiting than I've been doing lately and should get to a place where curiosity would be stirred as to the background and the past of this painter in reference to the work that he's doing now. So that was the principal loss. It wasn't so much what I felt would be the money value of it, but the fact that they had Remembrance of Things Past at various places. I showed it here in Los Angeles, and it was shown at the Pasadena Museum, and at the Witte Museum in San Antonio. There were also my files in folios and also cases that I had made. I had about a dozen or fifteen boxes that I made myself, for holding drawings and prints, and that contained my collection of prints to a large extent. Some of the things were not too valuable but a very fine dry point of Pascin, an excellent etching of Charles du Fresne, and quite a charming etching of Marie Laurencin, and some etchings and prints of contemporaries. Also things like a rather nice collection that I made of the Images d'Épinal which is more or less to the French public what Currier and Ives are to us. They're popular prints. The principal industry of the little town of Épinal has been that sort of thing for a very long time. I've forgotten how far back it goes, but well back into the sixteenth century, if not earlier. They made popular prints, woodcuts, and then later metal, and still later lithographic pictures. I was sorry to lose that collection because I think they're increasingly difficult to get. At that time in Épinal, they had quite a lot of authentic old prints that were still for sale and at quite reasonable prices. [I lost] a lot of my sketchbooks, folios of drawings, some portrait sketches of people from my Paris and also Roman days and of some of the characters and people I met up on the Italian front. In the evening I used to make little portraits of them, and some of the drawings are quite elaborate and people of some importance, so the loss was, I felt, quite severe. So far as how the loss affected me, personally: at first I sort of flattered myself in a silly sort of way that I was being philosophical about it, that after all I had on occasion in war-torn Europe (France and Italy) seen destruction that was so much more serious and seen people suffer personally so much more in which the actual loss was far more important than mine that it was foolish to take it too seriously. At the same time, I couldn't help noticing that no matter what you may think about an experience of that sort, you find that it has a very definite effect. I tried to find some way of exactly describing it, but I don't think there is. It is a part of yourself that is gone, and that sounds as though it was some kind of an amputation, which does vaguely suggest it, but it's something more from the inside of you that has vanished, and in some way you feel left with not quite so much to function with. That sort of thing, of course, is idle thinking, but I think a psychologist, maybe a Freud or a Jung, might like to find your reactions and complexes and see just what a person undergoes in terms of losing that which has been the projection of himself into his work. It may be a very wholesome, a very educational thing to have that sort of experience. That,

though, of course, is more or less beside the point. It is perfectly true, though, that so far as my own evaluation of things of that sort (as I think I mentioned once before), it may be a very slight thing or it may be something that is more traumatic, like an experience of this sort, that really, if approached in the right way, can be very valuable to a person in finding himself and in realizing himself, and being deprived of what was probably a little bit--maybe, more than a little bit--of overvaluing something simply because it's part of your experience, or part of your thought and your feeling, may be in a way some kind of a fetishism which is good to have nipped in the bud or amputated or extirpated. I don't know. It puts you in a state of greater psychological freedom of some sort. [tape off] Quite a few things of my own work were saved because they were hung around the apartment, including one or two of my possibly more important things, which unfortunately wasn't true of Muriel's paintings. She has very little around the apartment. She has a very good attitude towards her work, which I have never been able to really develop. When she starts a work, she sticks to it and brings it to some sort of completion; whereas, a lot of my work I destroy or give up halfway through and start again. So all her pictures were brought to the state in which she felt they were to be preserved, and if not, she did not destroy them. She didn't have as [great a] number of things that were simply in the process of being made as I had. She had practically all of her work in the studio. She has done a great variety of things; she does things on a small scale very delightfully and very often can carry them onto quite large canvases successfully. So it is very hard to say exactly what her loss was. Neither of us catalogued our work, which I think was a great mistake that we made. Our important things, of course, should have been. Several times I've started to do it but never have kept it up--dimensions, material, dates and all that sort of thing. Very little of our work survived the holocaust. One thing that was extremely interesting, just at present it's very annoying, but if you look at it objectively, I find rather amusing. We have an excellent man who for many years has handled our insurance, but our agent slipped up in a strange way, because when we insured the contents of our place we made no distinction between things of our home and things that had to do with our profession. It seems that when you read the fine print, it turns out that we're not insured for things that you are making as part of your livelihood, unless you have a special insurance for that sort of thing, which is understandable for the person who is manufacturing something or who is licensed to a certain activity. I can see where that's quite clear-cut. As one insurance [representative] pointed out, if a lawyer has part of his law library at home and his home burns up, that won't be covered by insurance except by an insurance applying to his things in his law business and his law practice and offices. But in my case, you can run into some rather amusing things as to what

constitutes a professional artist--when it is his profession and when it is more of an activity in which what he produces is for sale, because practically anything one owns is for sale. When I was a boy I played the violin a little bit, took lessons, and supposing, for example, if I would take my fiddle and go out on the street corner with a tin cup and play some tunes and collect some pennies, would that make me a professional musician? And does my fiddle and my tin cup have to be covered by separate insurance? [laughter] Or supposing I have the standing on the violin of a graduate of some famous conservatory like Juilliard and can get a job any time I want in an orchestra--I have professional ability--but, instead of that, I make my living in the insurance business or something. What happens then? Does the fact that I would accept a job, filling in sometime with a professional organization, make me a professional musician? Of course, in that case you have something, that is to say, that the professional musician is a member of the union. But I'm not a member of a union. And the fact is that, legally, I'm not licensed to manufacture objects of art for sale. I found out I can get a license. What you get is a peddler's license. You make an application and you are then licensed to make pictures and to go out and put them up for sale in various places as a peddler. [laughter] But I hadn't a peddler's license. I'm not licensed to do that sort of thing. In other words, your activity is primarily a way of life--that's one way of expressing it--as contrasted to the person who is a [professional] writer, for example. You speak of the hack writer as a man who makes something for publication according to the demands of his buyer and according to specifications and thirds that are wanted. He's a professional writer. The man who is a creative artist, such as a novelist, is professional if he sells his work, but he's not primarily professional. A great deal of the things he writes, maybe his finest stuff, he has no idea of even presenting for sale. So it seems to me that it leaves a person in my situation in a very foggy situation when it comes to what is professional and what is not. If it so happened that a substantial part of my living was dependent upon my producing and selling, I think that might have standing. But it's not. So that's why I would say that this argument seems rather foolish and has very little legal status. There's no way of defining sufficiently the border line between what I do for my own possession and that which may or may not be bought.

SCHIPPERS

And what have been the reactions of others to that particular?

NUTTING

First, in this argument with the insurance people, I listed the things which had been offered for sale. The principal ones were the ones in this showing last October, that I just mentioned, the only one of the sort that I've had for years. I haven't been exhibiting my work very much, especially for one-man shows.

The only one-man shows that I've had have not been primarily for the sale of pictures. They were like the one at the Witte Museum at San Antonio. It was an invitation affair by the museum to show my work, because I had taken a position at the McNay Art Institute as instructor for that year and, of course, it was of interest to the art people of San Antonio to see what sort of work this man had been doing. The fact that I did make some sales from that show was secondary (one thing was bought for the museum and other things were sold), but that was quite secondary to the primary purpose of exhibition. That was also true of my exhibition years ago at the [Los Angeles] County Museum. I was invited to show quite a large group of my work. I have no memory of it, but for insurance purposes or that sort of thing, some evaluation was put upon the canvases. But I didn't put the prices on the canvases, or show my pictures with the idea of selling them. It was a presentation of my work to those people who were interested in local California artists and that my place might be found by such an exhibition of my work. Another show, that was quite a long time and that was the same sort of an exhibition, was a rather large one at the Layton Gallery in Milwaukee. Then we were both invited, Muriel and myself, to a showing at another place in San Antonio, where we showed quite a large number of our things. So problems of this sort are exasperating, and at the same time I find them rather amusing. [tape off] On the advice of our lawyer, we got a number of letters--which in itself was rather an interesting experience--from people who knew that my more important and larger works, that went back over a great many years, obviously had not been presented for sale or put into the marketplace and were really a part of my private collection, people like Esther Robles of the Robles Gallery on La Cienega. We've known her for a long time, and she's known my work for a long time; years ago I had a showing of quite a number of my things at her gallery. She felt that the whole [insurance] thing was ridiculous. Maybe her insurance agent was more aware of what the problems were, and, of course, it was much simpler in her case. We were fortunate in knowing a number of important people in the art world who have known our work for many years and who were able to write a letter testifying that these things were definitely not in the category of the things that had been produced for the market, so to speak, that they had been hanging on our walls for many years and were part of our private collection, along with works by other artists and other objets d'art that we possessed, antiques and things that belonged to our art collection. Some of the best letters--and the most understanding, I think--were by people like Don Schippers and Arthur Millier. I've known Arthur Millier since I first came to Los Angeles, and he's known my work since then, and being the principal art critic on the West Coast for many years, I feel that what he has to say will bear weight. Then there were other excellent letters by people who seemed to understand the situation and

expressed themselves very well. Muriel and I both feel rather adamant about the situation, but we hope we won't have to carry it to court because that's an expensive idea. I think that we would, as much as a matter of principle as the monetary interest involved. If it were carried to court and cleared up, it would be a precedent for other people in the same situation. [tape off] One of the things necessary, as everybody knows in a thing of this sort, is to have someone who is supposed to be an authority to appraise the work. One was the stuff lost in the studio in the way of furniture. The principal loss, the one that I regretted most, was a library set that belonged to my mother. It was solid oak and very elaborately carved. I had no idea of its value. There were some other things, aside from the paintings, that had to be appraised. Apropos of those, I called up Jake Zeitlin, the bookdealer of the Red Barn. It happened that he was out of town, but Roy Squires, who is with him in the store there, explained that he was away and wouldn't be back. I told him what my problem was, and he gave me the name of a man across the street who he said would be excellent. I called up this fellow, and he was very apologetic and said he was just about to leave town himself. He wouldn't have any time to come around, but he gave me the name of another man. Well, if I had known, I certainly wouldn't have engaged him. I phoned him, really apropos of the furniture, but he said that really his specialty was paintings and art objects, so we felt that was wonderful. Well, he turned out to be a very fast talker. He had a little recorder, and once in a while, he would hold this up and dictate something to his stenographer: "Pearl..." [laughter] Pearl was supposed to take it down. Well, he charged us fifty dollars for about an hour. We telephoned our lawyer about something, and he came right over to talk to him. I think he was very professional; probably his job is all right. [tape off] We found that he was working for quite a large number of insurance companies and was cutting things down as much as he possibly could, apparently. So then we thought of a neighbor of ours across the street, Mrs. [Dorothy] Paul, who is a member of a society of interior decorators [AID]. I think she was at one time an official in the organization. She remodeled the place where she now lives. We gave her a ring, and she was very nice. She came over and very quickly put quite fair prices on the various things that could be identified. At first, I had some kind of hopes that maybe this set that belonged to my mother, if it were sandblasted and treated, might still be rather interesting furniture, but it was too badly burned to do anything but to dispose of it completely. But there was enough left for her to recognize what it was and give us an appraisal.

1.41. TAPE NUMBER: XXI, Side One (August 15, 1966)

NUTTING

There are a few things in driving through Texas that we were struck with. One was the very nice stopping places along the road, rest parks, where you could stop and get out your lunch and sit at benches and tables. They seemed to make such nice provisions for that sort of thing. I made the acquaintance of a man who had been sort of an agricultural editor--at least that was his specialty--for a Dallas paper. He was with one of the big Dallas papers for a good many years. I told him one thing that impressed me while driving through the country were these ponds that every farm seemed to have. He said he was very glad that I'd noticed that because he thought that was a very important thing that Texas had done in the conservation of water. If I remember rightly, they called them "tanks." A farmer or rancher could get a subsidy from the state for digging these things, and sometimes they made quite substantial lakes. They could be stocked with fish, and people in that part of the world seem to be crazy about fishing. I noticed that in my first trip South. At every ditch by the roadside, people were sitting quietly with their pole, hoping to catch some fish, and I'm told there would be fish in some rather surprising places. It's one of their favorite pastimes. Well, one of our trips which we enjoyed very much and which was quite illuminating in lots of ways was going into Louisiana, north and then south--through the Cajun country and then back the southern way. One lake that stands out in our memory is Cross Lake. It was a charming lake in many ways. There were the cypress with their big knees, and there was all the picturesque qualities of a Southern landscape and swampland, along with this fairly large body of water. We even played with the idea of settling there for a while, getting a house. Of course, I had the business there to help look after. So we drove around the country quite a bit in that region. The same sort of thing happened to me there that has happened, I think, quite often before. As I've mentioned, in a region which has been settled for a long time and there is a certain homogeneity of feeling and people know each other and families know each other, there's a certain hospitality, that in newer country, such as in Southern California, you are not aware of, even though it may exist more than we realize. On the trip which we made south through Louisiana, we stopped at Shreveport which in many ways we found to be a very charming town. We met some quite interesting people there. One little thing rather surprised me, an unexpected sort of a thing. When I lived in Rome many years before as a student, one of the young fellows who was a Prix de Rome came for his period of work at the Villa Medici. I didn't meet him, but on one of my rather frequent visits to the villa, I left my card with this boy, and the next day I found his card at my studio. We never made any contact there, but I did when I found he was in Shreveport. He'd been there for quite a long time and he was quite a well-known portrait painter in that part of the world. That was very unexpected--to find, so far from Rome and in such an entirely different atmosphere, a little

fragment of my Rome experience. Then we drove south through Louisiana and eventually into the Cajun country. [tape off] The weather, the climatic conditions, are quite a contrast to those on the Pacific Coast. The contrast is much more dramatic in the Middle West or Mississippi Valley, where you see the tremendous thunderstorms and, of course, the tornadoes which, fortunately, we had no experience with. And they have much more dramatic skies there. I think the clearest memory I have of New Iberia was on the first day we got there (we spent two days there). After we found a very nice place for parking, we went into the town and Mrs. Nutting went into a drugstore to do some shopping, while I stood outside. And there was this tremendous black sky. If we had seen that out here, we'd think that something very serious was going to happen. I rather looked around apprehensively to see if anybody else was noticing it, but they weren't paying any attention to it whatsoever. It was a very common sight apparently. But it got very black and very dark, and then the clouds parted. Apparently there was a heavy storm that bypassed New Iberia that time, so we didn't even get wet. But it gives a certain drama and color. I have always loved thunderstorms, ever since I was a child in Montana. We used to go up in the mountains there and we used to have marvelous thunderstorms and see the lightning in the mountains coming from all directions and hear the thunder. I always found it extremely exhilarating. So in east Texas and through that part of the country, the change in weather and the dramatic sky gave a certain color and drama which I enjoyed very much, probably more so than many people do, of course, who are afraid of thunderstorms. New Iberia also interested me because, after living in France, I was interested in what had happened to the French language in other parts of the world. I found that it was still spoken very much down there and was quite understandable French. It wasn't patois. Usually, if you don't know the language too well and you run against some sort of a patois or dialect, you're completely lost. I found that especially true in Italy, though at one time I spoke Italian, rather fluently. It is rather like when we asked a friend of ours if he spoke French, he said, "Oh, yes. I speak bad French very well!" [laughter] I imagine that was what I did in Italy. I spoke bad Italian quite fluently. But, I could at least understand and enjoy the theater, movies, and could read Italian. But to get to a region which has had any shift in dialects, sometimes it's quite hopeless. Of course, sometimes, it is an entirely different language, like Neapolitan. The Venetian dialect is impossible to a foreigner. [tape off] I'm sorry that I haven't studied language more seriously. I was very lazy in my European life about learning good speech, good grammar, so as to be able to write it well and that sort of thing, although I did write my little paper at the Sorbonne in French, and it got by pretty well. But I couldn't do it now. I was interested in the French that was spoken in Louisiana, and from what I could

overhear in the little eating places we went into, I found, where it was the language of the people, that it was quite understandable and very close to the French that I was used to. At least it was close enough so that I could have gotten along quite well in conversation. We didn't stay long enough for me to get a chance to experiment in French conversation with anybody. Of course, my French is something that I'm very shy about now. It is so terribly rusty that I feel embarrassed in ordinary conversation, though my pleasure in reading it and hearing it has persisted. The country also was interesting from a sentimental point of view, it being the country of Evangeline. We visited a house which was dedicated to her. I also learned, what I didn't realize before, that the word "Cajun" is a corruption of "Acadia." From "Acadia," it finally became "Cajun," which, if it happens with many of the words, would completely disguise the French language, but I don't think it does. I don't know whether the people who are using French would call themselves Acadian, or whether that is not an English approximation of what they hear them saying. We got a beautiful souvenir of a cypress root, which, I'm sorry to say, got burned up recently. I had enjoyed it ever since and had made quite a number of rather careful drawings of it. Those cypress roots which are sold to tourists are very attractive. That is nature's wood sculpture--the beautiful form, the texture of it. It's very delightful. I appreciated another experience we had there. Ever since I commenced to grow up and saw the changes in our country, and especially so recently, I have been sensitive to the destruction of our country. The hills around Hollywood used to be quite beautiful hills when I first came here. But being a material that they can very easily bulldoze, they're carving it up like a big piece of cheese to put developments on them. I find it extremely depressing, partially because of the way the natural beauty of the country is being cut up, and also because so often the stuff that is put on it is so depressing. So you have all these problems: such as the incredible thing of a great lake being so polluted that the fish can't live; the problem of the Hudson River and the Mississippi River; the pollution of our waters; the destruction of our wild life; the terrific effort to preserve our forests and the natural beauty of our country; and recently I saw on TV where the animal life in Florida is being flooded out and you find fawns struggling through the water and starving to death. But there are a few bright spots that are encouraging like the work in Brazil where I saw a man who had saved, I forget, how many thousands of animals from the flooding of a country. But, on the whole, there's so much of the destruction and extinction and pollution of our very beautiful country that it depresses me. There are certain improvements, of course. When I first came out here years ago, the one thing that struck me enormously in driving along the highway was the number of beer cans and whisky bottles--billions of them, it seemed to me--by the roadside and the wastepaper and all sorts of stuff. Now

this [anti-litter] campaign seems to have had quite a definite effect and these things are very much improved, but there's so much to be done. At one time, the egret feathers were such an important part of a woman's decoration, along with the ostrich feather. When I was a child, the ostrich plume was a big business, but I believe now it doesn't amount to anything. We visited a place which was called Avery Island, which is a sort of an upthrust of land in the swampy country. I've forgotten the exact dimensions of it, but it was four or five miles, I believe, at its greatest diameter, a plateau region surrounded more or less by water and approached by water. The owner of that property was a man by the name of Edward Avery McIlhenny, famous for Tabasco sauce, oil, and I've forgotten what else was his source of revenue on this property. The first owner, Avery, started a little aviary of egrets, but after they had propagated, he found that they flourished and laid eggs and he raised others. He turned them loose, and to his delight, they came back. He raised more egrets on the same property, and now there are thousands of them. It is a beautiful refuge, which is appreciated by the birds, and they really have prospered. So you look across this little lake that he has there, and there's just clouds of them flying around. This resurrection of a bird that was on the road to extinction was a very happy sight. I hope we can do the same with the whooping crane. From there we went on to Houston, and I was surprised to find Houston in many ways a much more attractive city than I expected. I enjoyed very much their very excellent art museum. They were building a substantial addition, with all the modern perfection of air conditioning and all that sort of thing for the valuable works, and had one of the sculptures of Carl Milles. I think it was one of the last things that this quite important Swedish sculptor did in this country; he did a great deal of work. One of my disappointments in Milwaukee was that when they were erecting a statue to Lincoln (it was being financed by some society of the Civil War, with the very few surviving veterans in those days who were especially interested in it), Carl Milles submitted a sketch, but they couldn't see it. It was too fantastic, too modern for them. Otherwise, Milwaukee would have had a very nice example of Carl Milles' sculpture. Houston at that time had a very impressive show of the work of Gauguin, quite a large and very representative collection of his work, which to me was one of those things that made the visit memorable. From there, we drove on back to Kilgore. [tape off] Our night in Houston wasn't too successful. We found a trailer park, which seemed quite attractive, and after we got settled there was a carnival nearby that started up with its night festivities and kept going until the small hours of the morning. It kept us awake practically all night. So what we did was to get up quite early and get on the road in order to find a more attractive place for our next night's stop. Well, the trailer park happened to be somewhat below the highway, which was perfectly all right because I had no difficulty in driving

down to it. But going up, I made a mistake, which to a person with not too much experience is understandable, and I went up the grade at too much of a right angle to the road. Of course, I was afraid to go at too much of an angle to the road because there was always a feeling that the trailer might tip over. [laughter] It wouldn't, of course. You can go at quite an acute angle to the road, and it's quite stable. So I don't think there was any danger, unless you were driving a very high truck or something of that sort. Then it would be quite a different matter. Well, going at too much of a right angle to the road when I got up to the highway, it caused the middle of the trailer to come too close to the ground and it dragged and stuck, and I couldn't back up and I couldn't pull it forward. For a while, we seemed to be in a rather desperate condition. But as usual, very friendly people and experienced truck drivers do seem to turn up at the right moment. I've forgotten who it was, but somebody who seemed to understand the situation came and got us out onto the road after a delay of possibly an hour. I was quite seriously worried, because it didn't seem that anything less than a crane could lift up the trailer onto a place where the trailer was back to level ground. We finally got on our way and drove quite happily a good part of the morning, when a car came by of the state police and stopped us. I pulled the trailer off to the side of the road and got out and wanted to know what was the matter. He examined the trailer very carefully and decided that we had a trailer that was too long; it was against the law to pull a trailer of that length on the Texas highway. Well, we'd already crossed the state, I don't know how many times, and nobody had ever said anything; so I was quite surprised. But he assured me that [pulling] more than a certain length of car and trailer was illegal and that you had to have some special permit for driving such a trailer, that I'd have to go back to the little town that we had passed some miles back, called Sugar Land, and see the justice of the peace there. He was quite polite and nice about it. He took us to his car and drove us back there. We drove up to a very plain little house, and the justice of the peace wasn't in. It seems he ran a filling station across the road. They went and got him away from his work at the filling station to come in and do his duty to these violators of the law. While we were waiting for him, there was a whole crowd of little kids that crowded around and looked at us with great curiosity. The justice of the peace turned up and got out his book and his papers and was very serious about it, and the family stood around to take it all in. It turned out that we had to pay a fine--I think it was ten dollars or something like that--and that at the next town we would stop at a certain office and make arrangements to do this thing legally. Though I don't know, we sort of felt as though the justice of the peace got a little something extra beyond his income from the little filling station, and maybe the police got something, too. I wouldn't put it past them. Anyway, it was a very quaint, a very amusing kind of an experience, [laughter]

especially under these rather primitive conditions and the solemnity in which the procedure was conducted. It was really a very serious matter. That was finally settled, and we got on our way. That was our second adventure of the day. We made Austin, and we had the address of a place that sounded very good and had been highly recommended. Pecan Grove, and with the map of Austin, I thought we would have no difficulty whatsoever in finding the place. But in driving down one of the streets, we came to quite a steep incline, and I looked at the map and decided that there was no necessity in going down such a steep incline, because apparently the street next to it at the top of the grade that turned to the left would take us straight to the place where we wanted to go. It was a smaller street and rather winding. We took the street and had driven maybe three or four blocks when we found it was a dead-end street. Well, that's the time when you regret very much that you haven't learned some of the finesse of driving a trailer, and I'd always intended to do it. It wouldn't have been too much of a job. I could take off maybe a day, or at most two days, and find some part along the road which is not populated, especially if you can leave the road and get out on a flat, and practice backing a trailer. Although it is very tricky, it's amazing what the boys can do who learn it. We have noticed that truck drivers will back a huge truck right up to a loading platform with absolute precision, with just a very small crack between the truck and the platform and will never graze it. Sometimes the parking people at these trailer parks would park my trailer for me, and they had the same skill. They could move it right up next to a cement sort of a platform which divided the stalls for the trailer. Well, I could back a trailer, but not with precision, and when it comes to rather a small and winding street and you have to back this trailer out into traffic, I found it rather trying, to say the least. But by doing it very slowly and with Mrs. Nutting standing to guide me--because of the curves there were some things that I couldn't see too well--and by moving inch by inch, inch by inch, we worked it out eventually to the highway. When I finally was able to drive ahead instead of backwards, the relief of course was terrific, and although it was not a hot day, my clothes were completely soaked. I had perspired from the strain of managing this huge contraption and, as I say, into a street which had fairly heavy traffic. Although I dreaded the traffic part of the episode, it didn't turn out to be too difficult, because as soon as I got out there, I found that I had no difficulty in swinging the trailer around. I didn't obstruct traffic at all. I got into position and drove down the hill and to the Pecan Grove where we spent that night. [tape off] At this time, we were looking around for someplace to settle, at least temporarily, because we didn't want to live in Kilgore, but someplace where life would be more interesting and where it wouldn't be too much of a trip to visit Kilgore, maybe once a month or so. We considered Austin, and in many ways we found it extremely attractive. We drove out

around the country and made some inquiries as to properties, and in the meantime we enjoyed the town itself very much. There was the house of O. Henry, which I imagine is very much, if not exactly, in the appearance and state that it was when he lived there. It's now kind of a museum, with mementos and so forth of his life and work. A rather surprising and also very interesting thing in the sights of Austin was the museum, which was originally the home of a woman who came to that country in the early days--I say in the early days, in the middle of the last century--and settled and built herself a stone house, which was quite substantial, and also made a pond on her property, on which she had a boat, and she and a woman companion were very fond of going out and spending hours on the water of her little lake. She was a sculptress, Elizabeth Ney, and a very able one. There is a life written of her. She was quite a friend of "Mad" Ludwig of Bavaria and lived an extremely interesting life as a young woman, with friends such as Schopenhauer and people in the intellectual world and artistic world of Germany in those days, and why she should pick up and come to that part of Texas, which must have been rather a desolate sort of a place and life for a person with her experiences, has always seemed to me very much of a mystery. She seemed to have given up her sculpture for a number of years and devoted herself to ranching of some sort. But her place now is a museum of her work and has quite a few mementos--her books, her library and equipment, photographs, and one thing and another. If it hadn't been for the woman who was some sort of a companion to her, her life and experiences would have been [found to be] extremely interesting. After she died in this house, her companion, in putting her things in order, was to a large extent extremely destructive. Apparently, she would go out everyday with her apron full of letters and papers and all that sort of thing and throw them on a bonfire. With her contacts with Europe, which I imagine she must have kept up, and with her experiences out there and correspondence, the material would have been fantastically interesting, I think, especially because it was that of a unique personality and of a character who made this part of Texas her home and in a way made her contribution to life and culture of that part of the world. If I remember rightly, at the time of the World's Fair in Chicago in 1895, she did some portrait sculpture which got some recognition, and from that, she got some commission and got back into doing her work, which is nothing showing any genius, but when you consider the amount of very bad portrait sculpture we have around, hers was really quite able and quite acceptable. Anyway, she had quite a genuine talent and must have been a very interesting personality. She was looked upon as a very eccentric one in her time, which is understandable. We also met a few people in Austin. There was one man of German birth, Heiligenhal his name was, who died a few years ago, and with whom I enjoyed very much corresponding. He had quite a beautiful home and some very

interesting heirlooms and furnishings that belonged to his family in Germany, I met him because he was very much interested in painting and was trying quite hard to paint. He built himself a little studio on his grounds and submitted things to local exhibitions and took part in the activities of the art life of Austin. However, we did not settle in Austin. We finally decided upon San Antonio, and for a few years we had our home there, except for the summers, when we made use of our trailer for some explorations that I've been describing. [tape off] Well, I think I must have met Mrs. Nutting first in 1946. I first met her during my first wife's illness. I had a problem of the place where we were living, of the house being sold, and for awhile I thought that I would buy the place myself, which meant selling all of the sources of income that I had. In those days it was extremely hard to find a place to live, especially to take care of a person who was ill, and I didn't want to move her. Through Lorser Feitelson I met Muriel Tyler, and she was extremely helpful, with her years of experience with escrow. She looked through some papers and gave me some good advice about them, and so we became acquainted. About that time she and Lorser Feitelson were interested in starting a gallery. Lorser had had some experience of gallery management and seemed to be very ambitious to start something that would promote contemporary art in Los Angeles. Muriel had been doing some work with him in painting and was also interested in that idea as well. The upshot of it was that she built on Clark Street a very nice place, more or less a studio apartment. They were studio apartments in the sense of apartments which could be used by artists, with very large north windows, with very pleasant, comfortable living quarters, with a very nice garden. In the front of the building, adjoining the first apartment, was a larger room designed especially for exhibition purposes, using artificial light. It was a good-sized room, the full width of the building, and with ample depth; it made a very attractive art gallery. They opened, curiously enough, on my birthday in 1947, with a showing of Lundeberg and Feitelson, Moore, Tanguy, Tyler, Grosz, Merida, Picasso, Teasdale, Wright, Hélicon, Miró, Roesch, Tunnard and Zadkine. It was a quite a mixed showing of a variety of artists and a variety of nationalities--Tunnard being English, Zadkine French, and also American painters. A number of things were lent by Mrs. Maitland and Vincent Price and Adolphe Menjou and Veree Teasdale. That show was followed in December by an exhibition of photographic art and then the one-man show of Helen Lundeberg and then a one-man show of Muriel Tyler in January of 1948. Then, from New York, representatives of the French painters, Jacques Herold and Henri Goetz. They had a very interesting show, and we both acquired works of Jacques Herold (the ones that I had were lost in the fire). Then in March an excellent show of Eugene Berman. He is a prolific and many of his canvases are quite large, but in spite of that, the general aspect of the show was excellent.

The gallery was quite suited for the showing of his work. In April, Leonor Fini; in May of that year there was an exhibition of people like Knud Merrild, Emil Bistram, Boris Deutsch, and Ralph Peploe. Then in the autumn of 1948 they had a show of Michele Cascella. I wouldn't have wanted to show Cascella's work except I was rather moved, I'm afraid, by sentimental reasons. He is quite an able painter. He's had several shows in Los Angeles since and seems to do quite well. But he certainly was not a painter who in any way represented modern art or any modern movement in art. But we were persuaded by a friend of his who had a large number of his paintings and who was trying to represent him in Los Angeles. I think it was probably the first show he had in Los Angeles. Since then he's had others. When I lived in Rome, his brother was quite a warm friend of mine. He was a very delightful boy, who died not long after, and he really was a more talented painter than Michele Cascella. The boys' father was a painter and also an editor. He published a very good art magazine in Italy, with some success. It had very good color reproduction, which in those days was more rare than it is now. He had given the boys excellent training in drawing and in painting. My friend was rather a more original, more talented painter than his brother. Moved by my memory of the Cascella family, I voted to give Michele Cascella a showing, for which I was criticized by some of our artist friends, I think somewhat unfairly, because his work was creditable, was good. That year [1948] ended with a showing of Channing Peake and Milton Zolotow and Howard Warshaw. Howard Warshaw is now quite a well-known artist of California, connected with the University of [California], Santa Barbara. One showing that I enjoyed very much, was very glad to give, was to the Mexican painter, Federico Cantú. He personally was quite a charming man and in his way, I think, has a very genuine talent, both as a painter and as an engraver. He has not exhibited any etchings, but he works directly on large pieces of copper, with the burin, a regular engraver's tool, and with great ability. In Monterey, Mexico--the last time I saw his work--he had engraved silver plaques that had to do with the decoration around the altar of a very modern church there. In that case the engraving was itself the object, not the print from the engraving, though the technique is the same. It was a decoration of a silver plaque through engraving. It's rather rare among the Mexican painters to use religious subjects, but apparently he was a good Catholic, and many of his paintings in the showing that we had at the gallery were somewhat of a religious nature. I think that the gallery had an excellent record in its showing. Besides the people that I have mentioned, there was Bill Brice, who is now connected to UCLA and one of the well-known artists of this region. We had some very delightful drawings by an excellent painter--I'm sorry we didn't have a chance to show his painting--and that is Jack Starr of Santa Barbara. I think we gave Gerda With, Professor With's wife, her first

showing in Los Angeles. She is a talented painter, with excellent training, the sort of training that I rather envy. In Germany, [that type of training] was rather more successful than it has been in other countries. We have schools of commercial art which are very definitely devoted to what we understand as commercial art, which is art in business and advertising; but the German Kunstgewerbeschulen are schools which have excellent courses and excellent teachers--at least they used to have when I was there--and differed from the academy, where you entered the atelier of some well-known painter of the period, in that you were trained in a variety of work. In other words, not only would you learn to draw and to paint but also you would get an all-around experience which would give you more of a chance to make your living at art than simply developing your genius under the tutelage of one painter with his special style. If I remember rightly, Gerda With went from Hamburg to Berlin to the Kunstgewerbeschule and left, after graduation there, with the ability to do almost any sort of work that might be asked of her--the illustration of a book, the painting of a portrait, the doing of a decoration or of a craft. She gave us a lampshade which she had made, a very beautiful design of autumn leaves between acetate, which was in its way a very creative piece of work. The ability to use her tools and her materials would be appreciated more by Renaissance artists than it would be by a great many of the people who exhibit and feel that they are our artists nowadays. [tape off] One thing that the gallery was well adapted to was meetings. We had quite a number of them. The Council of Allied Artists, of which I was one of the charter members and at the time also an officer, would hold meetings there. Artists Equity had quite a meeting there one evening when the Eastern president of it, a Japanese painter--I can't think of his name for the moment--was visiting the West Coast and visiting the chapters of Equity. In those days Artists Equity was rather stronger than it has been since. (That was not long before he died.) Albert Hoxie at that time was giving lectures. He gave a lecture, quite an interesting one on engravings, to the Council of Allied Artists. After we had these meetings in the gallery, he gave a course of art history lectures, very good and very interesting ones. Also we used to have interesting parties. The most memorable one was quite a large Christmas party that we gave in the gallery, and Karl With volunteered to make glühwein (mulled wine) for the party. It was really quite a huge success, except that Karl With let himself in for a little more of a job than I think he counted on, because the glühwein was extremely popular. The result was that he spent practically the whole evening out in the kitchen preparing new batches of mulled wine. So the rest of us would mill around out there; the only chance he had to join the festivities was by people visiting him in the kitchen. This is somewhat of an exaggeration, of course, but we felt some compunction in having him do so much for the party and it taking up so much of his time. I'm

not sure whether that was the party where I had a rather curious experience--one of these things that kind of mystifies you for a moment and you wonder what's happening. The crowd was rather thick and I would go in the front door and gradually work my way through the apartment and into the gallery, then go out the door of the gallery and come around front and start all over again. I made the rounds of the crowd in that way. I was talking to a girl at the exit of the gallery and then I left her and went straight across the garden to the front door of the apartment, and there she was--standing in the doorway. I thought, "My this mulled wine must be having some peculiar effect on me that I have never experienced before." Just a second before, here she was standing [at the rear door of the gallery, and] I knew she had no chance of getting through this mob to the front door as quickly as all that. Well, what I discovered was they were twins! [laughter] And one had happened to be at the door of the studio and the other one happened to be at the door of the apartment. But for a moment it gives you one of these strange sensations. You're completely lost for an explanation.

SCHIPPERS

What brought the gallery to a close?

NUTTING

Well, it was, of course, an immense amount of work, because we couldn't afford it. It wasn't making money. It might have. With patience and perseverance and investment and a lot of hard work, and I think especially with what's happened in the art world since, we could have done something very interesting. But it would still have been a full-time job. For example, the mailing--sitting up all night addressing envelopes every so often--is nothing to be sneezed at, as a drain on your time and energy. And both of us wanted to do things--I wanted to paint, we wanted to get out of town once in awhile, we wanted to live a bit--and to have a concern of that sort which was not well enough financed to make it easier, because we had to do so much of our own work--hanging pictures, correspondence, mailing lists, contacts, and all that sort of thing--it just didn't add up to the kind of life that we looked forward to. The perfect thing is [a concern] like the Perls, for example, where it's been in the family, and it is in their blood to be art dealers. The people have the experience of art dealing all their lives. It is not a thing that you can go into, it seems to me--as we were trying to do--without having experience on that side of the game. The only experience I ever had was as an artist who exhibited in a gallery, who had somebody handling my work. But that, of course, is a very small part of the responsibility and work of the man who is running the gallery and trying to promote your work. So it put us in that position, as well as trying to be creative artists. My advice right away, especially after Lorser Feitelson

had failed so dismally in his part of the job, was to forget it. It was a rich and interesting experience, but we had had it.

SCHIPPERS

How were the exhibits received?

NUTTING

Very well.

SCHIPPERS

You also indicated that in view of what's happened in the art world since, does this indicate that you were a little avant-garde in your effort?

NUTTING

No. What I had in mind was the enormous increase in art galleries, and how they pay their rent I often wonder! But you go up and down La Cienega, you see a tremendous amount of commercial art, commercial art in the sense of art which is simply manufactured by people who turn something out like flapjacks to sell, and people apparently buy them. But that's just on the periphery of a more real art world in which the collectors are much more innumerable and prices are bigger and people take more pride in owning paintings. I think that is one of the striking things about what's happened in the last few years. In those days there was more of a feeling that if you have a good reproduction of a Cézanne on the wall, why isn't that as good as a Cézanne? But now, even quite simple people will spend good money for a perfectly worthless painting because it is an original painting.

SCHIPPERS

Were there many art galleries in the city at the time?

NUTTING

Not anywhere near like there are now.

1.42. TAPE NUMBER: XXI, Side Two (September 21, 1966)

NUTTING

In speaking about one's development as an artist, while I think it could hold true and work in any field, in retrospect it's like looking back from a point of view which makes so many things clear which at the time were a complete mystery. It makes me think of being in a labyrinth while traveling in England, and my wife and I wandered around quite a long time, trying to find our way out, but the man up above finally came to our rescue. (He was there for that purpose) and said to go so far, turn to your right, then your left, then your right, and all of a sudden we were out. And looking back on one's career, I think it's as if one were wandering in a labyrinth--you pull this way, then that way, you take this turn, you take that turn, you doubt yourself here, you have the courage to do something at another point--and one regrets that one can't go back and

straighten things out and make the road much shorter and leave you that much more time and energy for some sort of an accomplishment. I think it's also true of, what shall we call them, creative workers. Our culture has not a sufficient knowledge of the intuitive life or the instinctive life for the development of the youngster. I can't look forward too much, but I am expecting tremendous developments along those lines. There are certain things that I've mentioned to people, and they don't seem to take them quite seriously enough really to think about them, or maybe they do, but I never have gotten into any very interesting conversations on the very impressive fact, in the case of the artists, that a child is so free in expressing himself graphically and very often, before the age of ten, will produce some things that would put an adult to shame. It's really embarrassing sometimes to see what quite beautiful things they can do. Now it's an exaggeration to say that they are specially significant as works of art. That is not exactly the point. The point is that they have a certain freedom of impulse that is lost. I don't think that we can assume that it is simply a matter of the natural development of the child. Something happens. And what happens is--I have noticed it so often and have been so impressed by it--is that a youngster, doing these beautiful and creative things in a childish way in the childish world, will all of a sudden lose that. It happens towards the approach of adolescence, usually at about the age of ten or eleven at the latest. All of a sudden, it is as though a blight fell on him. It's very much like you have a garden that's flourishing beautifully, and all of a sudden the plants are attacked by some kind of a disease and wilt and disappoint you. The same things happens, I've noticed, in childish speech. The youngster will invent quite an amazing way of expressing himself sometimes, very vivid, and he uses metaphor in an astonishing way. And again, as he grows older, he falls into the speech that is common among his associates, and he has an especial adjective: it's "cool" or it's "neat" [laughter], and no matter what it is, he hasn't any other way of making a real expression of his experience. It's a value judgment, but that ability to give a vivid picture of a situation by some kind of a turn of phrase or use of a metaphor is lost. It's very much the same thing that happens with a child who is drawing or painting. Not only is the use of energy astonishingly weakened and his apparent interest in expressing graphically the world around him, but also it seems to have an effect on his nervous system. His line becomes timid and cramped, where before he could spread all over the place with great joy. It's pitiful to see an adult, who has complete control in all sorts of manual dexterities, start to draw and is afraid to touch the paper with a pencil. It's one of the first things that you have to get over. There's so many of them. Why that should survive is to me very much of a puzzle, because they may sign their name with great vigor, which is of course a form of drawing, but you ask them to draw a box, for example, and they commence to put little timid

touches on the paper and tease a line along and try to do it very delicate. A stage fright seems to take possession of them. Though they would deny it vigorously, it does have that effect in what they're doing. Well, I think that when we speak of a really talented youngster he is one whose instinctive life is so strong it overrides a lot of the difficulties in our culture as he gets older. The fact that this is so, opens up a tremendously wide field. What is our civilization? What is our culture? One book that really has had quite a lot of influence on what I am saying just now (of course, there are quite a number that I think have contributed, but one that I reread not too long ago) was Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*. I think I mentioned before that I had the pleasure of meeting Ruth Benedict at Walter Arensberg's one afternoon. There were only a couple of other people present, so I had a chance to really hear her talk and even have some interesting conversation with her. She was a very charming, delightful person to meet. In her *Patterns of Culture*, I think she's done a very significant work, and that is that in a certain civilization or culture a person has a place of value, where in another, which may be equally advanced and significant, he has a much lesser place and may even be looked upon as somewhat of an outsider. I think that that is one of our great problems now in our relations with the East and the West. We don't know our cultures and the demands that the instinctive life makes upon us. Whether Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* is a very great contribution is not too much the question. But I think it's a very significant one. Another writer who I admire very much is Herbert Read and his book on art as education. That's not the title [*Education through Art*] exactly, but I think it's really quite a significant thing, not only from the point of view of the education of the artist but of education of all sorts. As I look back in this labyrinth of my experience, and my memory does go back rather vividly to my early childhood, though there's just an enormous amount in between that has been lost and that I don't recall, what I think happened to me was that I would have developed much faster in every way except for the concern of my parents. There is where a youngster very often gets into trouble, because although they're not exactly demanding of him, they make him feel that they expect so much of him and along certain lines, not only of attainment but in the sense of values of life. If a youngster is taking up the arts, such as painting or sculpture or music or acting or playwriting or being a creative writer, he has to unconsciously struggle against his impulses, in the sense of those life values that are imposed upon him by his family, which in turn represent their highest ideals of the culture of their country and their period, and [this struggle] works almost complete havoc on a vast number of youngsters. That may be all to the good, because although these others will conform to the values of their country and their period, there are the few that are strong enough to ride over it and become really significant; and so

we will have a few geniuses instead of simply a lot of talented people who are well-developed, which would be very nice but which after all may not be too important. Maybe the difficulties have their value after all. In my case, there were two things that mitigated against a full development of my emotional life; one thing was that, as a youngster, we moved about a great deal. My father's work as an engineer would take him one place, and when that job was finished, why, then he would be transferred to some other place. That happened so frequently that it kept me from getting a formal education until I went to high school. The loss, as I said before, was not too great, because I found that I was very well prepared and got along very well in high school. But it did keep me from associations that I ought to have had with other youngsters of my own age and learning to live with people and understand people in a broader way than I would with youngsters who are settled in one place and have a lot of friends and meet youngsters of all sorts and get to know them and understand them. Partly, it was because of not being able to take the time to make friends in the places we went and usually there was a period in the summer when there was no school. My mother, who was a perfect lady of Southern traditions, also had certain ideals of behavior and was very much concerned that I should not associate with people who might have a bad effect upon me, and she was overly solicitous along those lines. I can remember that when I was a youngster in Butte, she overheard the language and the conversation of the youngsters next door and was so horrified that the next thing Father did was to build a board fence between our properties. So all I could know of these youngsters was from looking through a knothole. One time, climbing up on an oil can to look over to see what was going on down there, I fell and cut my lip, the scar of which I have to this day. I don't think, of course, that it would have been completely ruinous if I had known these youngsters. They were maybe not the nicest kind of youngsters, but I don't think it would have done me any harm, and in some ways my development would have been better. There is another thing in the development of a talent. Again it goes back to these strong impulses; a boy or a girl will get very much excited about a certain thing, and I think it is sometimes rather difficult for an adult to realize how intensely interesting a subject may be or some sort of an activity. I once knew a youngster of about twelve or thirteen who had an extremely high I.Q. and had an interest in many things. He got quite fascinated by butterflies. Well, from a practical point of view, a boy going out by himself chasing butterflies doesn't seem what a family would be especially proud of. He would be much better off on the ballfield or something of that sort and living the life of the community than going off all by himself and spending the whole day chasing butterflies. But, in an amazingly short time, this youngster became quite an authority on butterflies. He got library books. His father fortunately had the right idea--at

least in my point of view--for he not only encouraged it but also made him presents of equipment for that sort of work, such as a nice set of cases where he could mount his specimens and so forth. Well, how long an enthusiasm of that sort will last isn't very important because I think that it integrates with the personality and development of the child in any walk of life and gives life meaning, though it may come up later in some entirely different form. My mother was very critical of my work, and although she had a fine sense of literature--she was a great reader--she didn't have too much of an understanding of the visual arts. Either it was a beautiful picture or it wasn't a beautiful picture. Anybody could see that with no trouble at all. If it was a beautiful picture, why, that was a good picture, that was fine, and that's the sort of thing you ought to do. But if she thought it was an ugly picture, why, you mustn't look at that. In some ways she was a little bit discouraging. If I got a sense of humor and wanted to do things grotesque or something of that sort, why, she thought that was ugly. You must always search for beauty. That's what is really important. Or caricature. She hated caricature. She thought that people shouldn't make caricatures of people. That wasn't beautiful. Well, in spite of being a very broad-minded person in every way, that was perhaps a little narrowness on her part and a little bit unfortunate so far as I was concerned because then I tried very hard to do pretty pictures. So as I grew up, I would assume that [the work of] the adult, with his years of experience and knowledge, was superior to anything that I might want to do, and if I wanted to accomplish anything and learn something, I must subscribe to their ideas and follow their teaching, and then I'd be all right. Again a pretty dangerous thing, as I've learned in my own teaching, and something that I have strenuously tried to avoid ever since the first year that I taught in the Milwaukee school, when I suddenly realized that I was all wet and that the kids had a lot more to teach me really than I had to teach them, which I was very glad to learn. Well, one of my first efforts at being a painter--and one that I remember most vividly, because it probably had a certain emotional result, so far as my pride was concerned--was in Jalapa, Mexico. I think: it was the first box of watercolors that I had been given. My little brother was still living, and we had this box of watercolors. Before that, I had had crayons and colored pencils. So we were extremely happy with the watercolors, and we went out to the kitchen and got all of the sheets of wrapping paper we could find and spread them out on the floor. We had a grand time. I say that I remember that as one of my first experiences in painting because once we were in a room doing these pictures, which we did quite large, we'd spread the paper down and splash paint around and have a grand time with it. Mother was entertaining some friends in the salon of our house there, and among others [present] was the French consul from Tampico. I can still remember his name. He had a German name of Schoenfeld. He had his

family in Jalapa because it was a much more wholesome place than Tampico, and I think he commuted back and forth. It gave me the idea that he didn't spend too much time on his job in Tampico, but maybe he didn't have too much to do. His wife was an Englishwoman. They were very charming people, and there were some other friends of Mother's there. I wandered in and Mother introduced me and I did my manners to the company and they asked, "What are you doing?" And I said, "I'm painting." Mr. Schoenfeld said, "What are you painting?" I said, "My mother and father gave me some watercolors and we are using them" "Well, show it to us. Show what you've done." I said, "I haven't done anything. I don't know how to paint." I was very diffident about it, and I wanted to go back to my amusement. And Mr. Schoenfeld insisted, "Oh, we must see what you're doing. Now be sure and go and get that." He was so insistent that I went and got my big sheet of wrapping paper and held it up for him to see. He burst out with a roar of laughter, and they had more fun with this thing. I think there were some other people there that were not altogether sensitive to a child's feelings, you know, and made comments on what it looked like, and this ought to be this sort of thing, and is that supposed to be this, or is that supposed to be something else. Of course, I was terribly embarrassed [laughter], and I think Mother was quite put out with the behavior of her company. She didn't think that was quite the way to treat a youngster. However, it didn't discourage me, and I really enjoyed my materials, even long before that. Here we come again to something in this mysterious thing, like this boy all of a sudden seeing a butterfly and wanting to follow up the idea, or another youngster sees something he likes to work with and from that he maybe goes on to being a builder, a mechanic or an engineer or something. The making of the structure of things fascinates him. I can feel very definitely that in the case of the writer, it's not that the child wants so much to get out ideas that he turns to writing, but rather it's because of a certain magic in the actual use of a word. To a youngster who has talent as a writer, words are like very wonderful playthings. They're like what jewels might be to an adult woman, something that she can feel and spread out and look at and pick out this one or this one. I think one gets a very definite feeling of what I am driving at if one thinks of Dylan Thomas, for example, who as a youngster had a passion simply for writing. Not that he had any noble ideas or wonderful things he wanted to express, but he loved to write. He loved to use words. One day, he wanted to write a poem, and he asked his sister, "What shall I write about?" She said, "Oh, write about the kitchen sink." So the kid goes ahead and writes a poem about the kitchen sink. [laughter] Why? Because he's a writer. Not because he was especially interested in modern plumbing or anything of that sort or information on the system of plumbing in the house, but because of words! Using those words in relation to his experiences was to him a very thrilling and

very deep thing. To a large extent, I think that one of the strongest influences I had as a youngster was the charm and the wonder of materials in which you could make images. There was clay. You could shape it this way and that. And paper was simply marvelous. I thought paper was the most wonderful thing. When we left Butte, going to Jalapa (I was six or seven years old then), my father threw out a lot of stuff from his office which included some long rolls of profiles in a survey. When profiles were made from a survey, the result was in a roll. Usually, it's about twelve or fourteen inches wide and as long as a survey might be. I suppose it might be close to twenty or thirty feet of paper in a roll; in working on these on the drafting table, they would roll them out and make their calculations and cuts and developments. The back of these was good heavy paper. He had some of these things that he threw out and also some field notebooks, which were leatherbound things that the engineers carried in their pockets in the fields, with lots of blank pages, and also some other things. I was simply entranced when he gave me these things and this gift of paper. It nearly broke my heart when we got down to Jalapa, and I found they hadn't brought all that stuff with them. [laughter] Nothing could quite compensate for those marvelous masses of paper and the pencils and crayons. I was very, very sad about that, and no toys or mechanical gadgets or anything would equal the delight that that stuff would give me. To tell the truth, I still have a lot of that. I never see a piece of paper or a piece of something with which you can make something, that I don't want to look at it and see what it does. In Seattle in 1907, they had an exhibition in a big case of all kinds of paper from Japan, just white paper, and I wandered around and around and around this case of paper. I couldn't touch it, but I could see this kind of paper and this rice paper and this sort of stuff and this one, and they all looked so exciting. I think it's now understood in art education--it wasn't then--that that element is very largely felt in a child's art education. I still have certain old-fashioned ideas about the art education of youngsters, that there is something in the simple skill of drawing--to be able to express an idea on paper, if it is a map of a country, you can say that Viet Nam or Australia or Texas is shaped like this and this and this, and you can take a pencil and show it in a way that you cannot do with words. I think it's unfortunate that people don't have more facility in graphic expression. Of course, most people can. You'll say, "How do you get to your place?" They'll draw a line [to show that] this is this street and then you turn two blocks to your right and this is this street and this and this street. They will do that on the back of an envelope and you have that with you and you'll find where they live. Whereas, if it's just words, you probably might forget it unless you wrote it down very carefully, and even then it wouldn't be as vivid. There's so many ways in which an adult can use graphic expression; therefore, I think it's unfortunate that it's not more cultivated. I only say that because I'm still trying

to do that with people. I have some friends who come in to study drawing and painting, and I help them out with it. But they have too much the idea that they must be artistic, that they must do something creative. I don't think that the talented boy thinks of that at all when he is drawing. He simply wants to put down on paper what he thinks about, how it is and maybe what he feels. But I don't think he says, "I am an artist." He may think, "I want to be one." When he sees work that he admires very much and he is told, "Well, that's by a great artist." And he says, "I too would like to be a great artist." But the primary thing is that he simply wants to make images in the same way that he wants to tell you about something in words, and if he can do it clearly and in good language, he has a great accomplishment, and if he can do it clearly and with good graphic means, he has another fine accomplishment, which, if he wishes to pursue it, may develop into what you may call his entering a field of the fine arts. But that's not necessarily the principal value of his work. I can cite all sorts of instances of that sort that I have watched with youngsters, how they won't even show their work because they don't think it's interesting to other people. Even after putting a lot of energy and work on a drawing, they will roll it up and put it up on a shelf in the closet, and the family wants to frame it, but they don't want that, because that's not what they're doing it for. And there you have a really good instinct. Whenever you have the show-off idea in a youngster in doing his work, this indicates it's rather shallow. You find the deeper one is, he finds it really a means of self-realization. He wouldn't use those words, but what it really amounts to is externalizing his thought, his life and becoming, therefore, stronger and more at home in this very mysterious, confusing world around him. It gives him a certain stability. Just why, is hard to say. But any activity primarily does that, whether you're chasing butterflies or repairing your automobile or building something or writing something or taking part in some activity that you believe in, because fundamentally that is the purpose of it. The youngsters now have a surfeit of inspiration that when I was a child didn't exist, and if I could have looked forward to it, I just wouldn't believe my eyes. Just go down to the drugstore and see some of the children's books, beautiful color reproductions, and the whole range of thought and feeling that's accessible to them. In my days as a youngster, I was limited to children's books that were too childish. When I began to read, there was hardly any of it that interested me very much. I wanted much more adult stuff than was provided for me, and from the point of view of art, of course, the life that I led then was not in large cities where anything was accessible. It was usually either in small towns or out in the wilds. The years of my early adolescence were out West and often quite far from any center of civilization, without libraries or exhibitions, so what little I did have was inspiring and was very precious to me. To get back to this thing of the natural feeling and instincts of a youngster trying to do something and

how it varies--he doesn't know why he wants to do it, but it gives him a strange excitement and satisfaction in doing it. I think that one value that one has in looking back to the very beginnings and trying to trace this labyrinth up to where you are now, and how you see things and what you're trying to do, is to see where you have had a path which could have been very fruitful, but you lost it because you didn't trust your intuitions and your instincts. You mistrusted them because they were not given value by the people in your environment. If you had the material, I don't think it would be at all hard to demonstrate exactly what I mean. There's a man in New York, Carl Holty, who is one of the most distinguished among the abstract painters. He has great ability in a conventional way of drawing and painting, but he developed through the influence of Cubism and Picasso onto other forms of art, which have given him quite a place in New York among the abstract painters. At one time I knew him, and the last time I saw him was in New York. He is from a Milwaukee family. That's how I happened to know him. When I visited him in New York, he showed me his work, and among other things, he brought out some things that he did when he was a child. I was very much struck because when he was a youngster he made drawings of Indians and Indian tepees and things of that sort. He was interested in the wild and woolly West apparently, and he liked to make pictures of that sort of thing. Now, the tepees were geometrical, these triangles, and in a series of tepees you had the germ of the same feeling that he had in his mature work as a more Cubistic sort of an artist. He loved straight lines and formal relationships, and that apparently persisted, no matter what other fields he explored, until he developed a very fine style and became a significant painter. By the same token, I look back on my own things, which were somewhat silly. I haven't any of my really early things, but I can remember them. I would try to do what my parents would admire, what Mother would think was pretty. That's a pretty picture, and if it were more than pretty, it would be a beautiful picture. Of course, I couldn't do it. And the subject matter had to be very innocent, like flowers and birds and things that were nice, but nothing disturbing should enter my thoughts or be given expression in my drawing. [laughter] But those were the things that influenced me, and there's an element to this day in the very first things I can remember. I'm very often asked, "What sort of a painter are you? What kind of work do you do?" And I say, "Well, I'm an incorrigible Romantic." The reason I say that is that I think it's largely true. Again, it's an aspect of my work that raises problems I've never been able to solve. When I was in Paris and in the midst of the modern movement, when Picasso and Braque and people of that sort were so much in the ascendancy, I felt quite strongly that I couldn't really say, "Well, they represent what is significant and, therefore, I must go ahead and follow what they're doing." Because even if I tried to make myself more modern in that

sense, it resulted in what the French call: Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose! (the more it changes, the more it's the same thing), and I found that I was simply doing the same thing over again, except in an idiom that wasn't really appropriate. That problem of finding an idiom that really is appropriate to the forces forming the thing on canvas, of course, is a terrific struggle. The first picture that I can remember as a child was when I was four years old. I can remember I was four years old because I remember the house in which I had this book. It was a book of a collection of odds and ends put together for children, and among other things, it had a woodcut or wood engraving of the Deluge from Gustave Doré, one of his Bible pictures. Well, I suppose a psychologist would say that it was the content of the picture that was important. It was the sea and there was a tiger up on a rock holding her little cub, and there was a woman down below reaching her baby up to somebody who was trying to rescue the baby from the rising flood. It's one of the early pictures of Doré's Bible illustrations. Well, all of those things I found rather fascinating, because I had never seen the ocean, and here was the ocean, and I was glad that the little baby was being saved. But it wasn't that. It was the same interest that Carl Holty had seen in the shapes of tepees, their geometric forms. It had something of an analogous meaning in this case of the Doré picture. There was a certain movement, a certain rhythm of drama, of form and of space in this thing, that I'm sure preceded any interest in the content of the picture. Of course, as all youngsters are, I was interested in pictures and I can remember lots of things that I looked at that I found very interesting, but for some strange reason, I still recall the vivid experience of coming in contact with this picture, which is not very important or especially good. Doré was an amazing illustrator and had a quite a fascinating talent, but, of course, not great. So it wasn't a matter of being great art. It was simply a type of vision, of imagination, of intuition, that I felt at one with and felt in some way expanded by looking at it, independent of what the thing was about at all. I'm sure of that. Well, why [should Romanticism appeal to] a youngster who was living a very realistic kind of a life, in the sense that the whole atmosphere of my childhood was very definitely one of very serious work and preoccupation? It was a period of hard times, for my father was often having a very hard time to keep things going, to get work and really support his little family. My half-brother was also living with us, and he was deprived of the schooling that he yearned for because he had to work--and work very hard. In those days, labor was not in the ascendancy and the life of a working man was not an easy one. So, I suppose some people would say, "Well, you sensed the atmosphere of concern and anxiety around you, and this sort of art was escapism" But I don't think that's true. But that was an age in which I really decided in some way to make art my career. I had a very slight idea just what that meant, and my parents had still

less. My father was very dubious about it. But little by little, we'd point out the fact, for example, that Charles Dana Gibson was making \$75,000 a year, which in those days was quite a sum for anybody to make that was very popular. His popularity was of course enormous. I think the first thing I ever read by Jack London was a story in St. Nicholas. I think that Mary Mapes Dodge, being rather well known as a writer herself, had influence with her writer friends so that they would write for St. Nicholas. Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain's biographer, added a little department called the St. Nicholas League. I used to send drawings, but I never succeeded with my drawings, although I did with my writing. I got a gold badge for writing. There were some very clever youngsters who did drawings for the League in those days, some very nice things. My work was not too clever. In efforts to follow out this career of an artist, I used to take down the Encyclopaedia Britannica and turn the pages until I saw a name that said "painter." I'd usually read only the first part of the article, because I wasn't too much interested in what happened in his mature life. I wanted to know how he got that way. What did he do to become a great artist? Well, almost invariably it would begin by saying he was born in so-and-so and at a very early age showed remarkable talent. Well, that was very discouraging, because by my wildest stretch of the imagination, I could not see that I was showing any remarkable talent. [laughter] So it didn't help me very much, but that was one of the discouragements I had to overcome. Very often, however, it did give you some clue as to what sort of a life he led and what led to doing certain things that afterwards became important. I found that it was done in very, very different ways. That leads me up to my adolescence, and my yearning to become an artist, at least to follow that road, was becoming stronger and stronger. It's rather curious that when I saw a real painting at the Metropolitan, much of it I admired enormously, but the color rather disturbed me. It was something rather new. In a way I was right, because very often in that sort of painting, especially illustrative painting and academic painting, the color definitely is not part of the painting. It's sort of a superimposed sauce to make it look nicer and make it more palatable than the black and white would be. While I didn't know why, in a way I was right, because afterwards I found that for the real painters, the great painters--a Cézanne or a Rembrandt or a Titian or a Rubens--painting and color are the same thing. It's not colored pictures. It's a creation in color. Then you have real painting. But it led to my efforts being rather monochromatic, and again I later found considerable consolation in that fact, because early Van Goghs were quite monochromatic. The early Rubens were quite monochromatic. The early Cézannes had not much color, and yet they all became the greatest of colorists. Odilon Redon, whose things you always think of as most delightful because of his wonderful use of color, for years did things in black and white and charcoal and in black-

and-white lithography. It was only later that he entered the field of color, and when he did, it became extremely significant. So I don't think that this being disturbed by color in the beginning was too important. The painting, of course, made a terrific impression upon me in the Metropolitan Museum, but at that time they had a large collection of master drawings on one of the balconies above a court, in screens at right angles to the wall. Those fascinated me beyond measure. The stay in New York must have been rather trying to Father in a way, because he wanted me to enjoy it and wanted my mother to have a good time. That's what we were there for. He would say, "Well, Son, what do you want to do this morning?" And I would say, "I want to go to the Metropolitan Museum." The poor man must have been bored stiff. He was interested the first time, but once was enough. He saw a picture called Forging the Shaft, which was here recently at the County Museum, and he thought that was wonderful because you could see that white-hot metal, just about to go into the furnace. "It would be marvelous if you were able to do that. Now if you can only learn to paint like that you'll be a real painter!" But I never did paint any white-hot metal going into a furnace, and I don't think my pictures ever really satisfied him very much. They were unfinished. He couldn't understand them. I would have liked to have given him more pleasure as an artist. He tried to be sympathetic, but I don't think that he got too much satisfaction from my work.

1.43. TAPE NUMBER: XXII, Side One (October 7, 1966)

NUTTING

Aside from my efforts to learn something about drawing and my reading of Ruskin and my evenings spent in libraries looking up art books, I don't remember that what anyone would call a really creative effort began before I had spent some time in art school. That again brings up the fact that, as I look back, one of my mistakes was that I was always looking for an authority or a guide, for somebody who knew, and I didn't really turn loose and trust my own instincts--in other words, to look upon my work not too seriously, at least not self-consciously, which I think is almost the hallmark of a talented boy. He's not too concerned whether people like his work or don't like his work. He likes to do it. That is all. I had lots of other activities which I enjoyed for the same reason: they were an exploration of a life experience. In other words, I think that a youngster--I won't say with an artistic mind, but one who may follow some of the visual arts--is simply a maker of something. He likes to make things; he likes to use his hands; he likes to feel things; he likes to put things together, and he explores the world in a certain tactile way, which, in the case of the artist who is a writer, it may be completely lacking. As I think I've mentioned, one of the most impressive things I found about Joyce was his

extraordinarily helpless hands. To shake hands with him, you felt there was a hand that wouldn't do anything so far as constructing or making or putting things together, which always seemed to me rather amusing, because he called himself Dedalus, and of course Daedalus was the artisan par excellence, a man who makes things. Now I think that the most valuable approach to any of the arts is: What is he making? How is he reaching out and impinging his personality on his environment? That is not what he has to say and what his message is. He simply wants to increase his sense of the wonder of the world by putting his hands into it and feeling it and putting it together and constructing it according to his heart's desire; and along those lines, he may become a man of a possibly narrow life. As a matter of fact, I don't know, for example, what Rembrandt did besides paint and etch. His life doesn't tell us, but we do know that a genius like Da Vinci was not unique at all, especially in the Renaissance. All of the great artists were great makers of things; Michelangelo was an engineer. He was an architect, and I suppose most anything you wanted made, he would make it for you. He knew how to put things together, the principles of things. From that, it would grow into the use of certain materials and certain techniques which can be handled and which is a work of art. But the work of art is fundamentally an object, and should be taken as such. "What is this thing?" And not to stand back and ask: "What is this supposed to represent? What is he driving at? What does he have in mind?" You should have a definite feeling for the mere fact that he has projected himself on material--his personality, his feeling, his psyche--whether it's a mechanism or whether it's a portrait or whether it's a decorative design or a great painting by Velásquez or Rembrandt. In essence it's the same thing. He has made something, and what is it he has made? More and more I felt this drive to express myself graphically. The drive was strong, but there were certain things that influenced me, a moral responsibility, don't you know, of "what's the use of this?"--a sort of Puritanical idea of what you ought to do. "You're wasting your time!" "Well, no, I'm going to be a great artist." I didn't say that to myself, except that I felt that I ought to. For that fact, I was always searching for the best guidance, and when I went to art school, I'd suppress my feeling about things and listen to my teacher and try to do what he would tell me to do, which is all right. There's nothing wrong with that. I wish I had had more superior discipline and schooling of all sorts. If I had to live my life over again, I would subscribe to lines of work, study, and education which would be conventional, but which would be the discipline which would give me the strength and facility in lines that I could make use of in my life. But when it came to my own painting, I think I felt it most keenly in Boston. In those days, the Boston Museum's School of Fine Arts was a very excellent school of tremendously accomplished painters--Tarbell and Benson and Paxton were the

principal ones, men who are somewhat forgotten now, but excellent artists in their way--and they had a certain approach which really stemmed from their academic training in Paris, which I tried to follow and not very successfully, not because I didn't try very hard, but because there was this conflict. I would leave the art school, and before I went home (I was living in a suburb of Boston at that time) I would go to the art library, and would spend an hour or so there. Modern art in those days was not very much publicized. That was even before the days of the famous Armory show. The English and the American art publications and books gave hardly any attention to anything to the important movements or the important people. Van Gogh and Cézanne, of course, had already produced, and Van Gogh had even done his life's work and was dead, but I didn't know anything about Van Gogh. I did find some foreign publications in the art library, one magazine especially, called *Der Sturm*, a German magazine, which was devoted to the most advanced art and art ideas of the time. I regretted I couldn't read the articles, but the pictures interested me. It was, curiously enough, in spite of the atmosphere in which I was working, one which was dominantly French in its influence. It was the academic painting, to a certain extent, of the *École des Beaux-Arts* and the Julian Academy, plus a certain amount of the influence of the Impressionist painters. Impressionism was the modern art when I was a boy. That was the most modern, that was really the most adventurous thing that I had experienced, which reminds me of one of the old masters of American painting, Alexander Harrison. When I was a boy, he had a picture in the Corcoran Gallery in Washington called *The Wave*, which was supposed to be quite a masterpiece of marine painting. When I sat next to him at a dinner one evening at the Artists' Club in Paris, I was quite thrilled to meet this man who as a boy I thought was one of our really great painters. Of course, by that time the modern movement was in full swing, and so I asked Mr. Harrison, "What do you think of the condition of painting nowadays and of the things that people are doing?" And he spoke up very cheerfully, "Oh, I think much of it is very interesting." That rather surprised me because his work was so meticulous and so realistic, and to have him speak so cheerfully about a period in which Cubism and Picasso and Matisse and those people were already, to a certain extent, old masters, rather startled me. But then he went on to say, "Of course, I myself don't use broken color very much, but I've seen things in broken color I found very interesting." [laughter] I was completely flabbergasted, and it really stopped the conversation completely. But he was an extraordinary old gentleman. I used to see him walk past the building in which I had my studio, everyday at a certain hour. He took his walk out to Lion de Belfort and back, and once in a while I'd meet him and would ask him if he's doing some painting. "Oh," he'd say, "I'm just touching up some old things." But the spirit of painting in Boston in those days was not quite so

antiquated as Harrison. Of course, the strong painters of the Boston school in those days were much younger men; there was nothing of modern art about them but an appreciation of people of the period of the Impressionists. I think that Degas had quite a lot of influence on Tarbell. So I felt that my instruction there ought to be really the best in the world. Nothing could be finer. These men were so very accomplished and were winning big prizes, Carnegie prizes and that sort of thing, so what more do you want? So I was very much concerned to find myself rather unhappy. It didn't seem to be leading to anything that my natural feelings seemed to be driving me toward. This finding of the European publications on art had quite a lot of influence on me, and I became very much interested in painters that were really very German and quite foreign to the feeling of any of my fellow students or teachers. Most of them were looked upon as not too important in the history of art. I don't think there's anything wrong in that. I was very much impressed in reading the letters of "Van Gogh, for example. He was a great collector of prints and reproductions. If somebody would send him a clipping from a magazine of some painter that he was interested in, he seemed to treasure that very much. It's quite amazing the people that he admired. You can't see that there's anything in their work that may have any meaning to him at all. If I found the work of people like Arnold Böcklin, for example, or Max Klinger, something that had meaning to me, well maybe they aren't too great in the history of art, but we must not forget that di Chirico's early work was very much influenced by Arnold Böcklin, and really the Scuola Metafisica in Italy, of which di Chirico was a most important exponent, seems to have really started more from the off-hand, let us call it the metaphysical painting of the north in contrast to the classic outlook of southern painting. One summer (I've forgotten what year it was, but it was after my father had gone to Mexico on this job, and I'd been down there and came back) a woman wanted me to be a companion to her son and teach him drawing and also to go on trips with him. She wanted him to get out and spend a good summer, but she seemed to have an idea to let the boy do what he wanted, so long as he had somebody to go along with him. He was a nice fellow, about eighteen or nineteen, and he wasn't at all feeble-minded but apparently he had difficulty in school and the family felt concerned about him. So they paid me very well, and that summer I earned more money than I had ever earned before. I had done a little work in engineering parties as back-flag, but these were wealthy people and they paid me well. I saw him almost everyday, and then we went off together and took a long walking trip in the Berkshires. He had had some experience in hiking, so it was no problem. We put together packs and we walked and unrolled our blankets at night and slept in the open. We climbed Mount Whiteface and really had a very interesting vacation. But I also had some time to myself, and I set to work and painted a

picture. It was a very non-Bostonian sort of a picture, what the students used to call the St. Botolph-Vermeer School. These men--Tarbell and Paxton and Hale, the son of Edward Everett Hale, who taught anatomy at the school--belonged to St. Botolph Club, and I think they looked upon Vermeer probably as the most important painter, at least I had that feeling. They all painted interiors, and they painted them very meticulously and with an effort at a very subtle effect of tone and light, and so they got the nickname of the St. Botolph-Vermeer School. I wasn't doing the St. Botolph-Vermeer School. I did a couple of figures on a lonely beach, with some flying drapery and some waves rolling in and I think that was my first real effort at doing a painting. I had always put off trying to do something. I'd say, "I must know more. I must learn more before I really try to make a painting." This idea of just plunging in and making a painting I thought was arrogance that wouldn't be forgiven unless you know more, that it would be silly. I must first learn to draw and do good work in school, and you did composition sketches. They got criticized from the point of view of arrangement and all sorts of theories of composition. But you never took those sketches and went ahead and tried to do something with them. You simply went ahead and did another composition sketch, but you made no effort to produce a picture. But I took the bit in my teeth and I painted a picture, about a twenty-by-twenty-four thing. It was very interesting, as I remember now, the strange release that the doing of that thing gave me. I finally got it done. I got people around the house to pose, and I made sketches from the movements of figure. I did my seascape and rocks from memory, without any reference to nature very much. In fact, there wasn't too much reference directly to nature in the whole thing. But it was a curiously strong experience and seemed to really blow the lid off some of my inhibitions and gave me an amazing sense of exhilaration. I ran up and down the stairs and danced around and tore around like a puppy dog [laughter] because of the strange happiness from having done this thing, you know. I don't know what became of that canvas. I think that my father's cousin with whom I was staying kept it, and whether it exists now or not I don't know. After I went to Europe, I got a clipping from one of the magazines, and there was a picture in it by quite a well-known painter, a member of the National Academy. The amazing thing was that this man's painting, which I had never seen before, was exactly the same composition as my painting. It was published after I had done my painting. My cousin sent it to me and wanted to know, "Is this plagiarism? Has he seen your picture?" Of course, he hadn't, and it wouldn't have had any influence on him if he had, as a matter of fact. It was, though, a strange coincidence. If anybody had seen mine, they'd thought that this young fellow had simply taken a clipping out of the magazine and had tried to copy it, more or less. Well, it wasn't a copy; it wasn't as close as that. If it were a copy, it would have been a better picture in a way, but what I did was

my imagination, my feeling. Then I went back to Mexico, and after Mother's death, I stayed down with Father for some months, because he said, "You can go back now if you want to, but if you want to wait, I'll be going back to New York, and we can go back together." I thought that was a nice idea and I'd like to go back with him. In the meantime, it was very interesting down there. I got natives to pose for me, and I painted heads. There was one young fellow, a young contractor, in southern Tamaulipas, down in the oil fields, and he had his wife down there, and he wanted a portrait for her. I made fifty dollars painting a portrait of his wife, and I made a lot of drawings and sketches and painted natives. They didn't know what I wanted at first, but when they found out that all they had to do was to sit still for a while while I painted and were paid pretty well--I mean, so far as they were concerned, because I suppose they weren't used to money at all--I had all the models I wanted. I didn't mind staying, and I got some profit from doing some landscape and people and painting from nature. Then my father and I went back to New York, and he helped me find a place to live, and I had another winter in New York. The next spring [there arose] the problem of how to go on with my education, for by that time I had lost really quite a lot of time because of certain setbacks in my health, which was perfectly all right except that I was inclined to overwork which meant that my work was forced. I didn't have the energy to really accomplish what I ought to. I put in the hours and effort, but it was very discouraging because I didn't make the progress I wanted, partly that and partly because of this psychological situation which I just described, which got its first release when I actually got busy on my own and made a painting. Well, the fact is that the more romantic spirit--that's the only term I can think of to use at the moment--of the north began really [to influence me] from the very beginning; as I said, the most vivid memory I have of the first picture I saw was that of Gustave Doré's *The Deluge*. I got acquainted with English painting somewhat through Ruskin, Turner, and even the realism of Constable. Although the very imaginative compositions of Blake always seemed to me to have meaning--a girl sitting in a room sewing, with a certain kind of light and a beautiful tone. That's wonderful; that's fine, but they didn't seem to have any real significance to me, whereas, the people I mentioned were exciting. They seemed to be opening up some kind of a strange and very wonderful world that I wanted to get into. The painters like the two that I mentioned, Arnold Böcklin and Max Klinger, if people that I knew among the artists knew anything about them, they sniffed at them: "It is not great art. You mustn't look at that sort of stuff too much. It's not good for you!" But it's interesting. At least to me it was interesting. One of the large canvases that got burned here was of these three figures that I painted in Paris while in the atmosphere of Derain, of Matisse, of Picasso, of Braque (people that I admired tremendously), but still that's what came out when I did

my own stuff. Being somewhat offbeat, so far as the painting was concerned that we were looking at in the exhibitions, I felt rather depressed about it. In other words, I wasn't a loner; I did have a strong desire to be involved, to be one with the workers in a significant field of painting. It was on the wall in my studio on Clark Street when Professor With was in one evening, and he looked at it and he seemed quite pleased with it. He said he liked that. He said, "You have quite a bit of Hans von Marées in it," which I had never thought of. The first of the influences in modern painting that I saw over there was a series of rather large canvases of Hans von Marées that had been installed in the Museum of Modern Art in Munich. I did like him enormously, but I never thought of his being especially an influence. The subconscious seemed to have taken something from him, and I suppose, as I look back, that maybe he was somewhat of an influence. Munich was an art center and had great influence on some of our very best painters (Chase and Duveneck and other people had been trained in Munich), and would therefore be really ideal [for me]. All you had to do was to go down and buy a ticket--and go to Germany. So I went on the Hamburg-American Line to Cuxhaven, and then to Hamburg and saw galleries there, and in Berlin and Dresden, and then wound up in Munich where I spent the winter. My idea was to get into the Academy in Munich. All of the influential painters were professors in the Academy, so far as I knew, and I discovered that, whereas, at most places in this country, if you can pay the tuition, why, you can go to school, but in an academy of that sort, that's not at all true. You had to pass an examination, the concours, as the French call it, to be accepted in the atelier of some professors. There were a number of American boys who were in the Academy, but in the first place, I was rather late to enter, and in the second place, I didn't have the material to show. So in spite of an interview with Carl Marr, an American painter who studied in Germany and afterwards went back and lived in Munich and became a professor at the Academy, I couldn't enter. Carl Marr was very nice. He said that the thing to do was to spend at least a few months in one of the art schools in Munich. Of course, there were a great many of them, and he gave me the name of one or two. He said, "You work there and then next time" (I think in the next semester one had another chance to enter the Academy), "and you can try again. You'll have done something then and have something to show." I found one of the schools that he had recommended and entered that. It was very cheap; I was really quite amazed, because I didn't have very much to spend but it was ample. I could not only pay at my little pension where I was staying, but I found that it wouldn't be too hard, to make my money stretch so that I could have a studio of my own. I got a little studio. As a matter of fact, I shared it with a French boy who was also studying sculpture in Munich, and I would work in the morning in the school and in the afternoon in my studio. During all

my spare time, I went running around to the Glyptotek and the Pinakothek and to exhibitions. One thing that did happen was that I saw for the first time really modern art in the sense of the movement generated by Cézanne and Van Gogh, by Expressionism and Cubism. I remember a very fine exhibition of Odilon Redon, a painter that I had never heard of before and whose work delighted me. The Expressionist movement was really well under way in those days. I found that extremely intriguing and strange. When I left Boston, Matisse had at least gotten some sort of a news value, and exhibitions of his had caused people a lot of amusement. They even had an exhibition in the Boston Museum, that I described. One student saw it, and she said, "It's awfully easy to do. When I was in Paris, we used to do Matisse drawings. Anybody can do Matisse drawings. That's no trouble at all." Well, here was much more than Matisse, because German Expressionism had a certain violence and robustness that made even Matisse look quite refined and delicate. I didn't know German, and I couldn't discuss these things with any of the Germans that I met at the time, which was very unfortunate. If I could have associated with German students and had gone to cafes and got into arguments, why it would have been a tremendous education for me. All I could do was to see things. There was quite a group of American painters working either at the Academy or in the schools there, and they formed a little coterie or club. They even chipped in together and got a room where they used to meet and put up their work. But they were all studying very conservative painting; so even though I was in the atmosphere of modern art, so far as my fellow workers were concerned, I was still in the atmosphere of conservative painting. I still had this conflict--of leaving a philosophy and theories I had been brought up with and of trying to understand what was happening in the world around me at that time. Well, in Munich I simply studied. I got models; I painted. I worked in the art school in the morning. That was in October that I got to Munich (I don't know why it was as late as that; I don't remember), and I remember the Oktober Fest was on, which in those days was quite delightful. They had carnivals and balls and seemed to have a wonderful time. I may have described that before. Then the question of what use to make of my summer came up. I met this German boy who was working in one of the art galleries as one of the salesmen, and I told him that I would like very much to go to Italy. I thought that if I spent the summer seeing things in Italy, it probably would be the most profitable thing I could do. He said, "I'll go with you." And it wound up that we did go down together. In a way, it helped quite a lot, because he had very little to spend and was very clever at getting along on very little. That was one thing that had worried me, because I wanted to keep my expenses down as much as possible. I always felt great qualms about the money that I spent. I was always looking for the most inexpensive way of living, the most inexpensive way of eating, and everything

else to save as much as I possibly could. But this boy had saved up some money and he wanted to go to Italy for a vacation, and not having money to spend, the result was we did travel very cheaply. We traveled third-class, and he knew how to get breakfast at workmen's places and knew all sorts of things. Instead of going to hotels, he'd run around wherever we happened to be and find somebody who had a room for rent and maybe give us coffee for very little. We wound up in Venice. We went to Bologna, Florence and Venice; we didn't get very far. I wanted to stay a while in Venice because Venetian painting really bowled me over completely. There's another case of where it's hard to tell what influences a young artist--and I think that's probably true of the young writer, too--because it's not necessarily the masterpieces, or the works that are felt to be the most important in art history, that are going to have meaning to him. I had more than average familiarity with Venetian painting due to my collection of prints and magazines and to a certain extent books. I think that most of my first knowledge of Titian and Tintoretto and Giorgione and Bellini came through my reading of Ruskin. Every time Ruskin enthused about somebody, then I couldn't rest until I found some book or reproduction of something that would give me some idea of what his work was like. So I had that much familiarity, but he never mentioned Tiepolo, except very disparagingly, and in those days Tiepolo was a person that people really sniffed at. He was rococo; he was superficial; he was very clever. People didn't want to look at his work; they wanted to look at Piero Francesca, which was very good advice, as Piero Francesca is still a powerful influence even among our most modern painters. They look at him with awe and respect, though their own work may seem to be miles removed from his work. I did see Tiepolo, and I became enthusiastic and wanted to see everything that Tiepolo did. I was fortunate enough to see probably the finest ceiling that he did in Venice, a huge fresco, and was quite marvelously done. To anybody who had even thought about the problems of painting, it was fantastic that this man could do what seemed almost an acre of ceiling with a lightness and a freedom of doing a small canvas. Usually you see these big works, and you say, "My what a lot of work he put in them" But you look at that Tiepolo, and it looks as though he somehow reeled it out, tossed an angel up here, you know, and threw clouds over there, and by some kind of magic, he'd juggle his forms around, with a freedom and relation of tonality and color, and played one against another, that was unbelievable when you think he had to get up there and, being close to it, do it piece by piece, then get down and see this thing. That it held together in such a rhythmical, beautiful way was to me unbelievable and very inspiring. His small works, too, and especially his drawings were very beautiful. He was a very, very prolific draftsman. They too have had quite a lot of influence [on me]. Tiepolo still is a man that I enjoy very much, very much indeed, but I

don't think that anybody would ever see any of his influence directly in my work or sense it. I don't think there is. I don't know exactly what meaning he had to me. I got married in Venice. I met my wife in Munich. We corresponded, and the upshot of it was she came down to Venice and we got married. We went to Florence and to Rome. In the meantime, the war had started, World War I, and we expected to come back home. But we didn't. She was enjoying her life in Europe very much. Her trip to Europe had come after some years of rather severe difficulties. She'd had some family cares and the making of her living and the taking care of aunts. Those responsibilities ended with the death of the aunt that she was responsible for and supporting. She had an inheritance, and she was enjoying her life over there. She wasn't at all anxious to come home. She was a person with a very wide curiosity. She enjoyed a great many things: she enjoyed music; she enjoyed history; she enjoyed reading; she enjoyed painting. She had the type of mind that could get much more out of life over there than most people do. With the beginning of the war, we went to Rome. I started doing not so much student work in the sense of art school work--in some ways it would have been good if I had budgeted my time to enter an academy or someplace where I would have had competent technical instruction of certain things and good discipline that I could make use of--but instead of that, I decided that I understood what the problems were and that I would work entirely on my own. I was influenced in that decision, as I think I have described before, by Albert Besnard. He said, "Paint a big picture. Paint a big one; it doesn't make any difference." For some reason, he seemed to think that that was the kind of experience that I needed. He himself painted big pictures on every opportunity. He painted a ceiling, a huge thing in the opera house in Paris, and some big things for the School of Pharmacy, which, incidentally, are quite nice. A number of his easel pictures also were very large; he rather enjoyed that. For some reason, he thought that that was the next step, that I should plunge in and do a picture, so I went to a shop and ordered a canvas six feet by nine feet, I think it was. I thought he might call that a pretty big picture, so far as I was concerned, because I had not gone beyond a twenty-by-twenty-four-inch, canvas up until then. I looked at this thing, and I was quite appalled. But I got busy and did charcoal sketches of a drawing, and dreamed up this and dreamed up that, and finally settled on a motif which for a long time was almost obsessional, so far as my thinking was concerned, pictorially--and there's still a little bit of it left, not too much--that the sea and the ocean and rocks and figures was the first thing I would think about. This was the same old thing. It was a little bit like this picture that I described in Boston--some standing figures who looked down on a bay, with waves rolling in and some big rocks. I had a lot of trouble with the rocks because there was no place near Rome where I could find the kind of structure

that I wanted, and I couldn't seem to find any illustration; so I just had to fake up my rocks and my figures and then did my six-by-nine canvas, which was a very fine experience. It involved a lot of things and I learned a lot. Models were very cheap in Rome then. The Via Margutta, which now, I take it from what people have described to me, is a street of rather expensive shops and art studios, was in those days just a plain little street of artists' studios and downstairs were people who did work for the artists, men who cast things in plaster. There were quite a number of sculptors working in the Via Margutta, and after the clay was finished, these men would move it downstairs and would convert them into plaster--and other little shops of that sort. Having so many artists [living there], all you had to do was to poke your head out the window and you'd see all these people wandering up and down, waiting for a job. In those days a model was quite important--all sorts of types and figures that people use, because exhibition pictures were always of subject matter of some sort. If they weren't simply like Tarbell's picture, maybe a girl sitting by the window, and of a Vermeer sort of a composition, why, then they were historical or religious. For example, there was one man who was very successful as a model for St. John [laughter] and whenever anybody did a picture for a church and they wanted St. John, why, he seemed to be the first one they thought of, and so he got quite a lot of work being St. John. Men and women of all types and in all sorts of costumes. Of course, in those days you saw quite a lot of the peasant costumes on the street, of people who came in from out of town. I imagine that's disappeared completely now. Instead of shoes [they wore] a leather sandal, really tied on with thongs, the simplest kind of a sandal imaginable, with the kerchief over the head and this sort of corset effect on the outside of their dress. They were very popular for pictures of Italian life; they got lots of work. If you wanted a model you'd look out and say (after a while you knew them all by name), "Dominica, come here." I'd get Dominica, and I'd make drawings and studies and paintings for this big canvas. I worked quite a long time on it, and that was my first really ambitious effort.

SCHIPPERS

What happened to the canvas?

NUTTING

I was trying to remember that as I talked. I think I destroyed it when I left Rome. I had a great way of destroying everything. I never seemed to have any faith in my work, for some reason.

SCHIPPERS

Did you do other big ones?

NUTTING

Nothing as large as that, but quite good-sized canvases, and I even exhibited some of them. Some of the technical things were quite interesting, especially as

I always had this idea that I'd like to do mural painting, which is a desire that has more or less waned with the years, but in those days I dreamt of doing things on a very large scale. I had just a little bit of the feeling of Rubens, who said he didn't enjoy doing "little curiosities." They were called cabinet pictures, the picture in a frame that you walked around with trying to find a place to put it. He wanted to have area, and I thought that was of course the ideal--to incorporate a painting with architecture, and to have its place, was to me the grandest field of painting. To find, for example, that you'd do your sketch very carefully and your color arrangement, then climb up on the ladder and paint in this area, and to come down and find it was much too dark was a kind of startling experience. It took me quite a long time to get over that, that as your values seemed to increase in area, the contrast seems to become stronger, so that a thing that seemed to be very close in values on a sixteen-by-twenty canvas, when you get it on an eight-by-twelve canvas, the relationships are much less. The contrast seems to be greater. To get the equal effect of contrast on a large canvas that you have on a small canvas, you have to make your tonal values on the large canvas much closer, and it was a hard thing to learn. But I finally mastered it, and it was very valuable.

SCHIPPERS

Did that become a crucial experience in determining the size of the canvases you worked on thereafter?

NUTTING

No. I did enjoy having plenty of room. I had four fairly good-sized canvases that got burned up; they were larger than people usually show--now, of course, they do. The abstract expressionists, like Pollock, and even the graphic artists work on a very large scale, but that is fairly recent, within the last few years. They're right to do it. For what they're after, you really need a very large scale to have its meaning on the canvas carry over. With a thing which is more representative, more figurative, I think it's very seldom that you gain too much. There's some very powerful compositions that are really quite small. Vermeer's Lace Maker is only about eight-by-ten inches. It's quite amazing to see it. And the Pollaiuolo that was found and was on exhibition here at the museum some years ago. I knew those Pollaiuollos from reproduction as a kid, and I had supposed, because they had this powerful Renaissance feeling in them, that they would be frescoes like Michelangelo's or Raphael's, that someplace you would see these big figures on the wall. I finally found them in the museum; I found these two little pictures in one frame, and the frame was smaller than a sixteen-by-twenty-inch frame. And these two pictures were in the same frame! It was quite flabbergasting, and it drove home to me that the bigness of feeling is not necessarily the area of the canvas. But that has to be qualified too, because I think everything has its scale, as Steichen demonstrated

in that wonderful exhibition of photographs. He had enlarged some photographs until they were mural-size, and others were little things, you know, but you felt that each one was the size that it should be. I don't know whether I really have a monumental feeling in painting or not. I doubt if a very large canvas would add any value to what I do.

1.44. TAPE NUMBER: XXIII, Side One (October 10, 1966)

NUTTING

The doing of this large canvas that Besnard advised me to tackle in Rome didn't have too much as far as a background of experience in painting during the time that I had been in Europe. Of course, I arrived in Europe with the experience of Boston and New York. New York had been the most vitalizing experience that I had had. I was also still in a state of considerable confusion, because I was really in contact [in Europe] with the modern movements in art, which even in New York I didn't see very much of. I began to get a little appreciation of men like Gauguin and Matisse. Some of my fellow students in New York were very enthusiastic about these artists, but I still felt that to plunge out and do creative work without proper training, skill and knowledge was somehow immoral. The influence of modern art, of course, struck this country terrifically with the famous Armory show, in which the representatives of what we felt at the time to be the best of modern American art were supposed to get a showing and get a wider appreciation. It consisted largely of the influence of people like Robert Henri and his group, the "Eight." The Ash Can School was looked upon as quite revolutionary, and they were painters that excited me quite a lot, especially some of the things of Bellows. I remember a painting of his called Men of the Docks that made a strong impression on me. But, of course, as we know, the Armory show somewhat backfired on its organizers, because they showed an excellent collection of the most advanced art of Europe, and it rather overpowered our representatives of what we felt to be the modern movement. It made it look really somewhat dated and really had much more influence in an appreciation of the movements in Europe, especially those in Paris. If I remember rightly, the only people that weren't well represented were the Futurists. But the people in Paris were very well represented, and they had a tremendous impact on it. Back of that was my experience in Munich as a student there, in which I still attended rather academic schools, at the same time frequenting galleries and exhibitions and becoming more acquainted with what was going on in modern art. But the influence of the more romantic spirit of the north seemed to be something that I could not completely shake off. I say "shake off," because there was a conflict between my impulses and my reason. I felt that the work being done by people not only like Matisse and Derain but

also the more strictly formal research of the Cubists was very important, but it never seemed to really move me to do it myself or to find some application of it. Maybe I was somewhat influenced by a man who was one of the organizers of the Armory show, Arthur B. Davies, who for a while was influenced by the Cubists. All he did was to superimpose geometric forms on his very romantic figure compositions and landscapes, but they didn't look at all successful or at all convincing. When I tried to get more in touch with what I felt to be significant in the painting in Paris, I went for a while to André Lhote, which was a very good experience. I meet people nowadays who rather sniff at André Lhote. But I think his contribution was excellent and was very valuable to a lot of young painters. It resulted again in the same dilemma that Davies found himself in when he was influenced by Cubism. I had a large canvas on show at a gallery in Paris, and it got some notices. But I think the really understanding one was that "Myron Nutting paints Davidian nudes seen through a Lhote prism," which I thought was not bad and was quite right. So I made efforts to paint in Rome. It was in wartime and I didn't attend any of the academies or schools. The fact is that there wasn't too much opportunity for that sort of thing, nor did I find anything that I thought was very valuable to me that I couldn't do by myself. I was lucky in getting a nice big studio in Rome very cheaply. A Russian woman had a beautiful place in the Via Margutta, and she had had to go back to Russia quickly. She partitioned off a portion of the studio for the storage of her furniture and belongings and then subrented the place. I got that, and it was such a big place that the loss of the space where she stored her stuff didn't harm the studio in the least. It was in the Via Margutta and the window looked up the Pincian Hill to the Villa Medici and was really quite a delightful place and an excellent place to work and right in the center of the artistic life of Rome. In those days, most of the painters and sculptors had their studios in the Via Margutta near the Piazza di Spagna. I set to work and I worked rather hard. I don't say with any extraordinary diligence, because I was still too much interested and excited by the life of Europe and in seeing things. I spent all my spare time in the galleries and museums and visited the sights of the city and took trips outside of Rome. Models were very cheap; so I was very well set to study by myself. This advice of Besnard's was really very good because it gave me more self-confidence and made me move out of the feeling of being simply in the student stage and to take my place as a creative artist. I commenced to send to the exhibitions. In wartime they still kept up a number of exhibitions, and the Art Society of Rome had a big annual show. The first year I was turned down; the second year I was accepted and was accepted after that as long as I stayed in Italy. I sent a variety of things, from rather conventional portraits to imaginative compositions, usually of figures combined with rocks and the seashore, which seemed to be a motif that in those days especially haunted me,

I think largely due to the tremendous impression of my boyhood year up in the wilds of the coast of Washington, where the landscape is extremely dramatic and the ocean is very impressive. Well, it was again--it is rather hard to express exactly--the feeling of trying to solve the problem between the subjective experience and objective experience, to really look at the world as a source of all of your material and thought and feeling, but I was quite unhappy if it were merely a matter of transcribing it with great ability and realistically. I envied people who could do that very well, but when I tried to do it myself, it was always a chore. It was a matter of slave labor. I remember one summer on Capri, for example, when I tried to paint out-of-doors. There was a Pole who spent his summers on Capri painting and was quite well known in Poland and in Germany for his rather academic work, but which was still in some ways very fine painting. He had a canvas he was working on that summer and every morning he spent the whole morning on this canvas. For six weeks, day after day, he went down and did some more on this one canvas (he did something else in the afternoon). But after I had worked for four or five days on a canvas, I was sick and tired of it. I wouldn't have any interest in it anymore. Of course, I could have been more influenced by the philosophy of the Impressionist painters, which would be a matter of just as serious study but would be in terms of many canvases instead of tiring yourself out with one canvas and one motif, each time being able to carry it further, with more refinement, with more ability, with more knowledge. I loved the Impressionists' painting. I was introduced to them as a boy in St. Paul. Durand-Ruel had an exhibition that circulated, and it went to Minneapolis and St. Paul and some of the Western museums. It made an impression upon me and in some ways influenced my painting, more in concepts of light and a freedom in composition. In Rome artists could have meant, and did mean a lot to me. One was at the Scuola Metafisica of which di Chirico was the most important figure. The strange tragedy--it seems to me--of di Chirico's painting life is that his career practically ended when he was young and that in some strange way he completely lost faith in what he had to contribute and which still is really significant. I don't know that that would have disturbed me too much. It wasn't happening so much at that time; by that time I think he had done all his important work. Well, what I did in my research was to alternate between the direct painting from nature and from life and the doing of an immense number of sketches and drawings which I would then carry out on canvas, not many of which I preserved. The fact is that I was quite destructive with my work. I'm afraid I always have been to a certain extent. I've saved things as a matter of reference because they had hints of something that I could make use of, but I find that I have lost a good many things that were really more significant than I thought at the time. In regard to what I am talking about now, I've been looking

over photographs of my work over the years and again I'm rather distressed that the photographing of my painting has been more or less a hit-or-miss matter. I'm sorry that I don't have at least some Kodak records of some of my early things that would have shown the tendencies and helped me to understand my problem, because I think it's only when you see things in context that you can make use of them so far as your own growth and development is concerned. An isolated thing may not seem of any importance, but then you see the same thing carried on in something else and trying to get it to come into being, and maybe in a later canvas, you realize that there's something there that's trying to be something. This indescribable sensation, which I have always felt to be essential in the work of an artist, that he himself doesn't really know what he's doing or where things come from but which has that feeling of something that is trying to be, trying to exist, gives him somewhat a feeling of a split personality. Well, those were the days before I knew anything about Freud or Jung, but nowadays we'd say that because of unconscious motivation you find certain things happening. And if you have faith in them and bring them into being, you have some chance of evaluation, and it gives you another point of departure. I was still continually haunted by the fact that I had embarked upon a career as a professional painter, and therefore I must justify myself as one. What I did in those days was to send quite regularly to exhibitions, and I was very pleased if I would get some kind of recognition. It began to a certain extent in Rome. I used to have my things noticed in the quite large exhibition they had in Rome, and as a foreigner, I felt rather flattered that my name should also appear with some sort of a remark about it. I still had the idea (that had been instilled in me from my earliest art schooling) that the painter had two real outlets if he was going to make a living as a painter: one as a portrait painter and the other as a landscape painter. I had a friend in St. Paul who was both a portrait and landscape painter, and he sold a great many landscapes, a very prolific painter. He raised a large family. He was my idea at first of a man who really justified his career as a painter. My admiration as a boy for Howard Pyle had made me think of magazine illustration, which in those days was a relatively more important field of art than it has been since, not that we haven't had remarkable talent in the field of magazine illustration, but in the days of the old Century and Harper's magazine, the illustrators were very serious artists. They didn't feel the separation between the commercial field and the field of the fine arts that afterwards grew up when the magazines wanted more jazzy material and the accomplishments became rather separated from that of significant painting. I have always had the idea also [of doing] mural painting. That's one reason that I embarked upon this big canvas with considerable enthusiasm, because it suggested a large thing for a mural painting. My idea of mural painting was again one that I never completely solved as a painter,

because wall painters or the painters of large canvases that to me were very significant were real painters. They were the Veroneses, the Titians, the Tintoretos, with their wonderful color. Even in the Renaissance, the Florentine painters, with their emphasis more on form and on drawing than on color organization, were essentially painters. But, as I saw more and more of the work of the boys at the American Academy in Rome who were doing mural compositions, I felt that mural painting had become more the doing of a pattern with certain color harmonies but without any sense of painting. Powerful compositions were done by people who could have done things on a large scale, like the seventeenth-century Dutch examples of painting on a small scale that could have great monumental importance. The Piero France seas and the Signorellis, and above all the Venetian paintings, didn't seem to me to have the interpretation or the influence that they ought to have on anything that I would call mural painting. To just be a designer of some kind of nice wallpaper with some kind of symbolical intent discouraged me quite a bit from that field. So that left me with the idea of portrait painting being not an essential part but an important part of my activity, in which field I had plenty of examples of important painters in the nineteenth century who had led just such a life. Not that I imagined Cézanne ever got many commissions for his portraits, but there were many excellent and rather significant painters who were also painters of quite distinguished portraits. So I worked in Rome quite hard at painting from life, the study of the head, more from a sense of duty than from any real impulse to do a fine portrait. It may be some sort of subconscious resistance on my part, but I look through my things and I find hardly anything of the portraiture that I've done in my lifetime. I've done quite a number, but I don't seem to have any photographs. The only ones I have are things that I've done for my own pleasure and not the sort of thing that would get me any commissions. Here's a Corsican boy which has a certain amount of vitality and here's where I'm working on a Russian woman in Paris. The wife of a man had been an admiral under the Tsar. I liked to do things very quickly. This one is of Herbert Weinstock who's now writing musical criticism for the Saturday Review, and is well known in the field of music. He was a Milwaukee boy. He was one of my friends while I was in Milwaukee. And, of course, this thing of Nora Joyce, again done just for my own pleasure. I was doing a portrait of Victor Llona. Llona was a writer in Paris. He and his wife were living there. He was South American by birth, but I think he was doing his writing in French at the time. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

For the sake of the record, I have asked you to describe the photographs you are working with right now in a little bit more detail. [tape off]

NUTTING

Looking over the few photos I have of my early days as a portrait painter, it seems quite evident that the influences were varied. I think that the most successful ones are the ones which have a sense of design to them and not so much the realistic, definite copying of nature which I was struggling for, largely because that, of course, was what as a professional portrait painter I felt would have to be necessary. People wanted people to look right, a good likeness and a speaking likeness, so that was somewhat against the grain. The things that I did for my own pleasure have qualities which, as I look back now, if I had really yielded to them, even in the field of portraiture, I might have had some success and a certain public for my work. Of the things that I showed in Rome, I remember that I had one head. I think it was this little canvas that was shown at Amatori e Cultori di Belle Arti in the annual exhibition of Rome. Besnard saw it, and I thought that he would dislike it because, as I've said, he had this terrific background of academic ability and training and this was a sketch, sort of brushed in at one sitting, and [I thought] he would look upon it as something rather superficial and pretentious on my part to show that. However, he spoke very well of it and the only thing he suggested was that the color of the lips was a little bit cold. He thought that it should have more of the warmth and redness of the lips, which brings up another one of the problems I had in my development as a painter, and that is the function of color, whether doing the thing realistically or from imagination. I still am inclined to look upon a thing first of all in terms of its organization of light and dark on the canvas, and then from that, in cold and warm color, which if that's successful, then to carry it into a stronger hue of color if I feel I can orchestrate it still further. I had a certain amount of comfort in finding that even great colorists have not plunged in by simply using a lot of color, that a man like Rubens even to the end of his life, kept developing in a marvelous way. He anticipated some of the aspects of painting that were centuries ahead of his time. Yet his early things are very dry and sometimes rather cold in color, the ones I've seen of his earliest work. Van Gogh's early things are brown, more or less monochromatic sort of things, but he searched in those terms the character and the things that really made him Van Gogh, and eventually through the influence again of the Impressionist painters, he began to use color really significantly from his point of view. And Cézanne, whose use of color influenced modern painting so enormously, his early things that I've seen are very much like Van Gogh's. The color is kind of incidental and not too significant; they're sort of monochromatic. So I've always had hopes that if I continually worked and thought of it in that sequence, I would find what really was important to me. Starting first with the organization of the canvas in its simple terms of space divisions, then of values, then of warm and cold color and then of hue, I would

get a full and well-integrated orchestra and get fullest expression in my painting.

SCHIPPERS

Could you describe the subject in the little portrait that you showed in Rome?

NUTTING

Well, this is one of a great number of head studies that I made, and it shows definitely the influence of my teacher Chase, to whom I really felt that I owed quite a great deal, because his enthusiasm for sheer, direct painting was so contagious that you felt your blood commencing to really circulate if you would use your paint, your brush, and your materials with the joy that he seemed to get out of working, in contrast to the laborious manufacturing of an academic study for which one was not at all prepared.

SCHIPPERS

I believe it's a Italian boy of about what age?

NUTTING

I wish I could remember more distinctly. This was done in Rome, and I'm wondering if it holds true today. There used to be a town near Rome up in the mountains, Anticoli Corrada, in which the industry of the town was posing for artists. Like in other towns, you drive through Italy and you might find one little village and everybody is doing something else. Every village would have a special industry. Well, Anticoli was a charming town. The people were especially good-looking, and they made posing for the artist more or less the village industry. In the summertime they'd work in the fields or vineyards, and in the wintertime they would come down to Rome and work. A whole family, the father and mother and sons and daughters and babies, would get jobs posing, and I imagine this boy was probably from one of those families of artists who I got to pose for me. Sometimes the girls would make very good marriages. The people were a little different looking from the people of the surrounding country, and if I remember rightly, they had the idea that they were people from the other side of the Adriatic. There were some very wonderful sort of Greek types among them. Some of the men--with their black beards, tall, splendid-looking fellows--looked like they might come out of Homer. They really had a classic appearance. The women had real classic figures, not of the later Greek sculpture but of the earlier in which you say, "Well, she's too heavy or she's too big!" The Venus de Milo was not a fashionable type of figure. But these girls really had that. It was a genuine thing. For certain types of pictorial work that was done in those days, they were magnificent models. This boy is not especially handsome, but he's a very typical Italian youngster. This other one is a similar one. He's a boy on Corsica. During most of the summer we spent in Corsica, the weather was very good for outdoor painting, rather warm, and painting outdoors was rather tiresome because on Corsica it was a matter of

either climbing a high hill or going down one; you were either going up or down. You were very seldom walking on a level road. But there were interruptions, and the interruption was the mistral. The wind would blow steadily and very hard for about three days and would make painting out-of-doors practically impossible. It would blow your equipment right off the map. I tried to do it one day and was getting along very well when all of a sudden the easel and stool and the whole works disappeared down the mountainside. I had to climb painfully down quite a distance and gather up my equipment piece by piece. When the mistral was blowing, what we did was to get somebody around town to come to pose for us, and we'd paint indoors from life; and this is one study that I did of this Corsican boy that we got to pose for us.

SCHIPPERS

I notice that is reproduced over there in a newspaper.

NUTTING

Some of these studies I sent to exhibitions and they got notices in the Paris papers. Oh, this is one that was shown in the Carmine Gallery. [The notice] says, "He is a highly proficient portraitist with clean technique." (That's speaking of my painting.) "There is an ease which excites admiration in the manner in which he executed the above painting of a boy." This is from the Paris Times. I did some portraits of my wife, which I have lost. That was an earlier one. Well, when I got to Milwaukee I found myself much busier as a teacher than I had expected to be, not that I was spending so much time teaching--I've forgotten how many hours a week I gave to the job at the Layton School of Art--but somewhat to my surprise I found that I was running into another difficulty so far as painting was concerned. That is that in my experience with teaching I found--I don't know whether many teachers find it true or not--that you give so much to the student that when you go back to your studio to work, you find yourself rather drained of your creative impulse. You've tried to pass it on to somebody else and you find that you're left sort of high and dry. At least that was my feeling. However, I did do a great deal of painting. I was not in step with anything that was being done in this country, especially in the Middle West in those days, and although I didn't have any great success with my work, it was liked. A great many of my students felt that I had something to give and seemed to be very appreciative, and on the whole my life in Milwaukee was extremely pleasant. I taught at the Layton School until the Depression almost wrecked the school; I resigned and started my own class, an atelier. My place was seriously enough considered so that toward the end of my stay in Milwaukee, I was made a member of the art commission of the city and was president of the State Society of Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors for one year, as well as serving as an officer in other capacities. But I didn't press this idea of being a portrait painter. I painted a few things of my

friends. There was one commission I could have had. A family wanted portraits of their youngsters. Well, the painting of portraits of lively small boys is difficult, to say the least, [laughter] and I started the canvas, but then I decided I couldn't do anything that I felt would please me or please them either. Then came a certain amount of portrait painting because the Federal Art Project came along and for one period I did some portraits. But then there was another project to do some murals for the Museum of Natural History in Milwaukee, which at first seemed to be rather an interesting one, one I would have liked to have done in any case; especially as part of the project, I was very pleased with the idea. [tape off] Looking back over the portraits that I've done, I was never happy with them. I think probably because I was too much afraid to be myself in doing a portrait, that you have a certain obligation to the sitter, that they must like it, and if they don't like it, why, you're cheating them to ask to be paid for something you've done simply because it's your personal feeling of what the portrait ought to be. One exception, I think, is the portrait of Nora Joyce, which has quite strongly the qualities that I was searching for in figure painting and in portraiture, and at the same time it was very much liked because everybody seemed to think it was an excellent likeness. People who only looked for likeness complimented me for that, but others would because of a certain painterly approach to the problem, which to a certain degree was successful. If one were to look for influences, I was never conscious of any special influences, but it might be little bit of Cézanne and you can also see that I have tremendous love for El Greco. There are certain dynamic qualities in some of the divisions of form that are taking place through the canvas and something of the movement which you may find in a Greco. At that time I was very enthusiastic [about Greco's work]. There was a crucifixion in the Louvre, with a couple of portrait heads in the lower corners, which I used to look at again and again. Not with the idea of trying to do something like it, but in the case of the thing which Karl With likened to Hans von Marées. I suppose that, although it never entered my head to think of von Marées, he in a certain way was there and influenced the painting. This thing of Nora Joyce is now at Northwestern University, along with some other material that I had of Joyce and his family, and it's owned by Northwestern University. One of my friends described me as being out of step because of two things. The artists in ascendancy then were exponents of the "American scene"--Benton, Curry and Grant Wood--and also the Mexicans. So there were two things: the American scene and social significance, which they were always talking about. Well, I certainly didn't object to the American scene in the least. I was very glad to get back and to savor the country in which I was born and hear its language about me all the time. I still had this feeling, which I suppose was more or less a movement that generated the American scene (the Ash Can School of New

York, Henri and those people whose work influenced me a great deal), that painting was not just illustrating the life around you. It was rooted in the life around you, but it was not an illustration of it, and clearly using the material didn't make it a fine painting. When it came to social significance, of course, then I was still further removed from anything that I have thought about. They would argue that a Goya or a Daumier's work was terribly important because of its social significance, and I would argue that it was not, that if they lived very intensely at their place and time and assimilated it, what made it great was not the fact of Goya's excoriation of the cruelties of the war in Spain or that Daumier was trying to appeal to your emotions in depicting the people who were poor and underprivileged, but that in both cases, these were the works of men who were seers. They were not preachers and they were not illustrators. But, of course, that argument in those days didn't go over very big at all. I was not at all successful. I was always looked upon I think as somewhat of an outsider so far as being in any significant movement was concerned, though, as I say, with a great deal of sympathy and respect in many quarters.

1.45. TAPE NUMBER: XXIII, Side Two (October 31, 1966)

SCHIPPERS

The last time we were recording you were commenting about working on a large canvas on the prompting of Besnard, and since then we've gone through a lot of your photographs of paintings, and we've decided to use them as a memory prompter for the sort of things you were doing. Before us, we have one folder of a period that we call "Rome" in general, and I was asking for your comments on some of the material.

NUTTING

Well, I began my work in Italy there, and I was still, I feel now, rather too concerned with what you might call an academic approach to painting. I hadn't gotten over the idea, which had been sort of drilled into me by my association with the school in Boston and to a large extent also in New York, that a student should first of all be a student, and concentrate on the elements of his job. For the student nowadays, it seems strange, because even in a commercial art school they begin right away doing rather creative or imaginative or inventive things, along with learning their techniques, whereas in the old-fashioned art school, it was working from the model day after day, with a weekly criticism of some kind of a composition sketch, which was usually rather of a short period of looking over stuff that you would put on the wall and somebody would give maybe an hour's talk and comments. That's about all that I had ever had, and that was not looked upon as the serious work of an art school. One summer in Florence I found a little art school that was run by a couple of young fellows

who were graduates of the academy and were quite accomplished, and I worked there. Then we went down to Amalfi. (I don't know how many of my photographs I've lost, but the unfortunate thing is that I was never systematic in keeping records of my work or photographing even some rather ambitious canvases. The things that have been photographed were [done so] almost by accident. If I would send something to a show, sometimes I would get a photographer to take a picture of it, and I think that, in all probability, a lot of my best work never got photographed. Also in my travels, I lost baggage two or three times; so I have no idea how much material that had to do with that period of my life I lost in that way.) Going down to Amalfi I wanted to still paint from life, and I think one of the earliest things that I did of my Italian period was of a young priest who was connected with the cathedral in the Amalfi. I got in conversation with him and got him to sit. I painted a portrait of him, and he was very well pleased. And another thing happened there. I was out walking one day and passed a villa overlooking the sea, about a half a mile or a mile from Amalfi, and saw somebody was outside painting. I got into conversation and it turned out they were Americans. We afterwards became very great friends. Earl Henry Brewster and his wife were both quite ambitious painters, and Earl also had been a pupil of Chase. They had rented a villa near Amalfi, and with them was a friend, Frederick Shaler. Shaler had been a commercial artist in New York, and apparently quite a capable one, and had saved his money for a period of European study. He was living with the Brewsters at that time, and he was the first man that I had real association with who was definitely devoted to the modern movement which was then becoming very powerful in Paris. He had spent some months in Paris, and he was doing quite abstract sort of canvases and very colorful things. One thing in which he was a very good example to me and which I wish I had followed was that he was very methodical in his work. I think that came from having to earn his living by his work, and he made the best use of any time or any activity that he was engaged in. I was quite impressed. He would be sitting on the beach, reading the newspaper, then all of a sudden he'd make a little pencil drawing on the margin of the newspaper and carefully tear it off and put it in his pocket and then go on reading. Next I would see that in his room this little note had been developed into a larger drawing, and on a table in his room were little stacks of drawings, about six or a dozen stacks of drawings, and he would carefully sort them, putting this sketch here and this one there, this connection with this connection, and maybe a day or so later I would drop in, and among the other things he'd been doing, this little sketch by that time had become a color study. Maybe later there would be a large canvas developed from it. You could see a very logical development of an idea which occurred to him at a moment when he was not even thinking of it, but all of a sudden he would make a note of something that

would pass through his mind. He didn't lose it; it didn't fall to the wayside. And I think Frederick Shaler would have been one of our really important American modernists if he had lived. He stayed with the Brewsters in Italy for the rest of his life, which was, I think, only two or three years. He worked there and exhibited. The Brewsters had a very pleasant way of living. For a certain period of their life they would find a region or a country they liked, and they'd look around and find a place for rent and would lease it for some time and settle down and work hard. From Amalfi, they went to Taormina, Sicily, and did the same thing. They found a little villa and settled down and worked. Out walking one day up in the hills, Frederick Shaler did something that one must be rather wary of, especially in southern Europe and out-of-the-way Mediterranean places. He drank some well water, with the result that he got typhoid and died not long after. In the meantime, he had had an exhibition in Rome which promised considerable success for him. Giacomo Balla, who was one of the most important of the Futurist painters, visited his show and left a note in the guest book [expressing] great enthusiasm for his work. He congratulated him in very flowery Italian language on his fine talent. The talent that Shaler had was one that Achsa and Earl Brewster didn't really share. They had a considerable degree of it, and Earl was doing quite imaginative sort of compositions, influenced maybe somewhat by people like Puvis de Chavannes, with a little touch of Gauguin maybe. Very nice but nothing of importance. Achsa, his wife, was very ambitious; she was doing very large canvases. But she didn't have the training as a painter that justified her efforts on a large scale. She couldn't draw very well, and she made no bones about getting somebody to help her out in her drawing [laughter] or some difficulty she'd get in. "Now, you try that. See if you can draw that head. See if you can draw that hand." So Earl or Shaler or myself would correct a little of her faults here or there. She turned out a lot of work, but I'm afraid that she didn't have much chance of any great success. They both had a show some years later in Paris, but it didn't get them anywhere. They were very charming people; we were very fond of them. They met D. H. Lawrence in his travels in Italy, and then he and Earl took a walking trip up in the region around Orvieto where the Etruscan tombs and archeology is found. In one of D. H. Lawrence's books, an account of his travels in Italy, he made some remark about Achsa which was very funny and very descriptive. They had a certain amount of influence because they encouraged me to get away from being just a student. "After all, you're getting along in years." They didn't say so, but they made me feel that I should get busy and do something. But that winter in Amalfi, I didn't do much more than painting from models. People would pose for me, which wasn't very difficult [to arrange] and it's a very nice thing about Europe. They seem to take the artist in his stride, and they don't find it anything strange about being asked to pose. The peasants and

people were very glad to make a few extra soldos by posing for you. I'd work from models in the courtyard of the Hotel Luna and also did quite a lot of painting out-of-doors. Nothing very large or very ambitious, but a great many small paintings. Both Earl and Shaler spent quite a little time in painting directly from nature, though they both spent the major part of their work and efforts on what I suppose you'd call imaginative or creative painting. Well, then we went to Rome and I commenced sending my things to the annual exhibition in Rome. I was refused the first year, but after that, though, I think that as long as I was in Italy I showed something every year at the annual show in Rome, not with any success in the way of getting any special attention or mention, but a reasonable amount for a beginner. We also had a studio in Rome which we were lucky in getting very cheaply. Living in Italy in those days was extremely reasonable. It was during the wartime and places were for rent of all sorts. My studio was a large one and a delightful place to work, and also it was an ideal place for doing large canvases. As I think I have described before how I went up to the Villa Medici and called on the director, Albert Besnard; and, encouraged by him, I did a nine-foot canvas of three figures which got me into doing things which were really what I was dreaming about, but I never got around to doing. It's another case in which I didn't take some very good advice that Robert Henri used to give his students. He would tell them, "Don't put off painting that picture that you want to paint. That thing that you want to paint and are dreaming of doing when you get more ability and more knowledge is something that you ought to do now, because when the time comes, there's something else that you will want to do then. Now is the time to do it." And I was impressed by that advice, but I never really followed it, unfortunately. But I began in Rome doing a great many canvases, both from nature and from imagination. There was of course the influence in that period of the Futurist painters, who were most active at that time. It was before World War I, I think about 1910 or 1911, that Marinetti started the Futurist movement, which began more as a literary movement, very much as the Surrealists did, which also started among literary people and not among painters. Many of the painters who were in that movement--and the most talented ones--were in the war because then the war was in full swing and Italy had joined. I didn't have a chance to meet many of them. [Umberto] Boccioni, who I have always felt was the most interesting and the most talented of the group, was killed not long after he went to the front. There was one young fellow who was lame. He had to use a cane, but he had to walk slowly because he had a very bad limp. That was Enrico Prampolini. I've forgotten how I met him, but when we started our little magazine there in Rome, Atys, I asked Prampolini to do something for us. He was very obliging and seemed quite pleased with the idea and wanted to cooperate. He did a great many of our cover cuts for Atys, always linoleum

cuts, but in two blocks, so it was very seldom that the cover didn't have color. It'd have two colors. We lost track of Prampolini after I left Italy, but he became quite an important figure in art in Italy, at least to the extent that his death [was reported] in Time. What he did, I don't know exactly. There was another painter also that I met. I knew his brother rather better because he was not drafted. His health or something, I've forgotten what, kept him out of the army. But Ferruccio Ferrazzi was a very talented painter, and, if I remember rightly, he got a Carnegie Prize one year. Although he was a graduate of the academy there, he was given a studio for what you might call graduate work for a year. He was very adventurous in his painting and very convincing because he had all of the knowledge that the school could give him, plus a very active mind and very sensitive, very fine talent. I liked him very much. His year was up not long after we went to Rome, and he didn't have the means to get himself a studio in the Via Margutta. The next thing I knew he was out in the outskirts of Rome down in back of some kind of a soap factory, I think it was. On the lot was this shed which he could get very inexpensively, and he had taken the great mass of his work down there. He borrowed a very large kettle someplace-- maybe he got it from the soap factory--and built a fire and heated water and boiled the canvases he didn't want to keep, cleaned off the pictures and restretched the linen and prepared the linen. Even if he didn't have the money to do anything else, he painted with the finest materials. By that time, he was known to a certain extent. The government bought one of his pictures for the Museum of Modern Art in Rome, but it wasn't a time, of course, when the artist could make money selling, especially in Europe. People weren't buying pictures in the days as distressing as [those of] wartime. So I don't know exactly how he lived. It must have been with great difficulty. But a doctor in Switzerland took an interest in him and invited him up to Switzerland to stay there. Well, Ferruccio went. At first the doctor provided him with living quarters and a place to work in his house, but Ferruccio couldn't stand being so close to the family. The doctor apparently was very well-to-do and had a large property with some kind of a little building or shack someplace off in the woods up in the mountains, and so Ferruccio moved up there and slept and worked and painted for some time as the doctor's guest. I expected to hear great things of Ferruccio. He had the success of the Carnegie Prize and once in a while I have seen some mention of him, but he didn't become one of the really important Italian painters. At that time, there was also a movement of the metaphysical school of Italy; Giorgio di Chirico was the most important figure. There were some magazines of modern art, the Valori Plastici was a magazine that was quite influential in Italy and recognized these painters, wrote and published their work quite a lot. There was I think in their painting something that appealed to me very much. To a degree I suppose you might say it would be

influential, and again as I look back I'm really surprised that I didn't yield more to [this influence]. At least I might have delved, experimentally, in the forms and ideas of people like di Chirico and Carrà and other painters of that group. Afterwards, in reading about di Chirico, I was rather impressed that in a way he seemed to have gone through some of the same sort of feeling that I had as a young fellow. In spite of the fact that he was from the south (I think that, if I'm not mistaken, he's part Italian, part Greek), instead of going to Paris or some of the centers that were more recognized in those days as places for study and where things were really happening in modern art, he went to Munich as I did. He also was influenced by painters who nobody else was paying any attention to. A man like Arnold Böcklin, who is spoken of rather disparagingly in most art histories that you read nowadays, was I think a bigger talent than people realize. When you get by a certain rather tiresome romanticism in his work, like the famous thing of his called the Isle of the Dead--which he repeated in several versions and which was enormously popular at one time many years ago, and those other things that may turn you away from his art--you find that he had something that was really rather important and quite genuine in the history of modern art. Not enough to be of any great influence, but at least he and some of the people he influenced in the first part of this century always rather fascinated me. Sometimes I would get really enthusiastic about them. I got certain satisfactions from these painters. Above all, the work of Hans von Marées, who had large canvases that had just been installed in the Museum of Modern Art in Munich, was probably the strongest influence I had on my work in Rome. Well, as a matter of fact, all the way through, because I never seemed to be able to get away from it. From a purely rational point of view, I would try because I recognized that the really significant work being done at that time was in--roughly I would express it just now as the Latin spirit in contrast to the romantic, because Picasso, as a Spaniard with a Spanish heritage, is intensely so, and he has a certain realistic attitude which we find I think in Spanish art all through history. Granting Spanish mysticism, it's still people like Cervantes who stands out among the Spanish writers. When they show talent, they have very little patience with the fairy tale or the fantasy or anything of that sort. In France, too, you can feel to a large extent that that is true. Braque was a thorough Frenchman, but again he wasn't dealing with gods or fairies or spirits of the sea or anything of that sort. He was looking at the world around him and was not doing too much dreaming, if any; whereas, of course, I was a dreamer. I had been since childhood. I could be lost in dreams by the hour. Probably for that reason the northern art has had a hold that I have never been able to completely shake, even as I say, when I felt that somehow it was a hindrance to me. Even though I hadn't been in actual combat, for example, in the war, the visions that I had had of the war when I was in the Red Cross in Italy were

certainly severe enough to shake one loose from what was overly unrealistic in one's life and attitude and agreement with one's art. It didn't do so as much as one might expect. What I'm thinking of just now are the people who were terrifically influenced, not so much the French but the Germans, who also had this background of romanticism. A man like George Grosz, for example, turned into the most bitter, vitriolic satirist of his time and of the Kultur of Germany that one could imagine, probably more so than anybody who has ever used drawing as a graphic medium to really tell the world what he thought and felt about the worst side of humanity as was shown in those wartimes. I'm wondering--this is somewhat of a digression--if maybe the young artist was much more shocked at that time than he has been since, because we had World War I; then we had World War II, and war has become almost a part of life; whereas the declaration of World War I was rather unbelievable. I can remember we thought that now in modern times it simply can't last. It was all right in the old days. The Civil War went on for years in this country. But, nowadays, with what we have of technological development in warfare, civilized nations can't keep this up. When the year passed and another year and another year, it was incredible. The reaction of the German young painters--with a few exceptions like Franz Marc, for example, who kept his serenity up till the day he was killed at Verdun, and a few others--was to give a terrifically subjective evaluation of the life and times. Another movement which was a result of the same sort of thing was the Dada thing of Tristan Tzara and of the writers, sculptors and painters who did it with such a different attitude. To tell the truth, I'm digressing now and I have not thought exactly how it expressed that. It occurs to me just now as I'm talking of the tremendous difference, though the same sort of experience, and of the people who gave expression to it. The Dadaists, of course, gave it by making enormous fun of the civilization and the culture that we valued so much, which is an idea that took on in Germany too. But it wasn't a German reaction. The typical German reaction was much more serious in its way, much more violent. Well, that was very disturbing to anybody in creative work--how to find yourself in a world so disrupted; what's the use of being a painter anyway? Isn't it rather silly? All of this is going on and here you're in a studio trying to make a good composition, trying to get nice color on the canvas. What does it mean when the world is being remade? Of course, as we know, that was a personal problem. Nobody could help anybody out, and various talents reacted in various ways. For instance, e. e. cummings wrote his *Enormous Room*. Afterwards, when I knew Joyce, I was tremendously impressed with the quiet serenity with which he went ahead and did what he wanted to do, and how he looked upon politics and world conditions with a strange sort of calmness that the rest of us found difficult. He was still at work on what has to do with Dublin back in 1906. He

read and learned languages and did all sorts of things which seemed to have no connection with [contemporary life]. Of course, afterwards, what I felt was so impressive was that he is the one who really was the product of that ethos, and so many others who were trying to be part of it weren't part of it at all.

SCHIPPERS

We have two things here that are still existing from Rome, and one is the canvas here in your studio.

NUTTING

For the moment, I can only think of two things in painting that survive from my Roman period. One was of a girl that we knew as Teresina. She was Italian, but if I remember rightly, she was part Spanish and was one of the models in the Via Margutta. I have that head of her. People who don't care anything about painting think it's a very charming picture. Of course, she was a very charming girl and the painting does give some expression of her appeal. The other thing that I have is a small study of the American painter Elihu Vedder. It was done at the tea table one afternoon. I don't know whether either one of them was typical of what I was doing at that time, but at least they're examples of what I was striving for, especially in objective painting, painting from life.

SCHIPPERS

Certainly they are very different treatments. The Teresina is quite academic and the Vedder may have shown some of the influence of the Impressionists.

NUTTING

Yes, as a matter of fact, the Impressionists had been quite a strong influence since my days in St. Paul when Durand-Ruel circulated an exhibition of Impressionist painting and it went to St. Paul. I've forgotten whether it went to Minneapolis or not. We saw it in St. Paul. I was very much impressed by it. Everybody was talking about Impressionism. In those days, it was looked upon as the last word in modern art, in spite of the fact that there was the school of Henri in New York, which in some ways anticipated modern art more than the American Impressionists did. In the Chase class, when I was studying in New York, I had seen some work of the Impressionist painters and studied them very carefully and went back and made a painting from the model in his class, using broken color in small strokes. I didn't mix my tones on my palette. I juxtaposed small gobs of paint, somewhat in the spirit of a man like Pissarro. Other students in the class were quite impressed by it. Chase had so definite an idea of what is good painting and how to paint that to digress in that way was looked upon by the other students as something extremely daring, and they'd say, "You gonna let Chase see that picture?" I said, "Why, yes, of course. Why not?" "Well, I don't know." Some of the other students who were wandering up and down the hall would look in to see what the Chase class was doing, and they'd see this thing and say, "Gosh, you gonna let Chase see that?" So I wondered

what in the world they expected Chase was going to do to me--was he going to fire me out of the class or something? I was more curious than anything else. He came and made his rounds of the class. He came to mine, stopped and looked at it, pulled his moustache, and he turned, and after a few seconds of quiet, he said, "Are you in the habit of painting this way?" And I said, "No, I never tried it before. I never did anything like this before." "Well, some people seem to like this sort of painting that looks as though worms have been crawling about over the canvas. Personally, I don't." [laughter] Then he gave me a pat on the shoulder and said, "Go ahead," and went on to the next student. He wanted us to take a full brush of paint. He wanted us to think of Frans Hals and Velásquez, people like that, and little colored worms moving about over the canvas was an antithesis of good painting.

SCHIPPERS

The next group of things that we have to refer to are some things that you did on Corsica. You had moved on a bit in your efforts. One of the first ones here is apparently one of your favorites.

NUTTING

Yes. If I remember rightly, I did something like forty canvases that summer on Corsica. I wouldn't have done it, except that other painters were so very industrious that they'd put you to shame if you didn't go out and work with a little semblance of the same intensity that they were putting into their summer. The only time they worked from models was when the mistral would blow, and then it was quite impossible to work out-of-doors. The very strong wind would blow your canvas all over the place. So we'd find somebody to pose indoors. The only thing that I kept of this sort was a head of a boy that was done one day under those circumstances. It still shows my Chase influence. Although it's not especially proficient, there are several things about it. One is that, from what I was trying to do in the way of a certain feeling for characterization, it was very successful. It's very much the kid. The simplification of form shows a little bit of the influence of the modern painters, maybe to a certain extent even of Cézanne, though it's a long way from being anything done with any real understanding of Cézanne's painting.

SCHIPPERS

You mentioned that you were with five painters during that summer. There was the Belgian, Kvapil.

NUTTING

Yes, Kvapil was a very good painter. When I first knew him, it was just after the war. His wife had a job in a government office, and they were just barely getting along. But he got recognition quite rapidly and started to do quite well in the sale of his pictures. I was going to say they were mostly landscapes, but come to think of it, I think it was about half-and-half. He would spend his

summer painting out-of-doors and his winters painting from the model. He had a lot of the Flemish feeling in his painting, a certain richness of color that showed he was growing up under the influences of the Flemish painters, such as Rubens. A very fine and rich color of painting. He had gone through the war and kept up his painting all through the war. He said he used to have his paint box with him, and for canvas, he would get window shades from bombed-out buildings and tack those up on some crude stretcher and paint portraits of his officers, one thing and another. The way in which the artist would keep working was really quite impressive sometimes under those terrific conditions. Like one fellow that I knew who was a musician, a cellist, and he constructed some kind of a folding contraption and attached the head of a cello to it and the means to string it as you would a cello. Of course, there was no sound box or anything. So, anytime he had the advantage, he would unfold this thing and tune it up and go through his exercises and studies, more or less silently, just like the pianos and violins and things made for that purpose. But his devotion to his music kept him hard at work, all through the war, and Kvapil was the same way. He had been some sort of an observer during the war. His eyesight was very good, and apparently that experience affected him, so that on a walk he was always conscious of every little tiny movement away off in the distance. He'd say, "Well, there goes so-and-so." (He'd mention some other party or maybe somebody in the town.) "He's over there. Don't you see him?" We'd look and by Jove, he'd be right. [laughter] He got so he could recognize the tiniest vision of a person or thing and describe it. The practice in watching day after day made him so sensitive. What effect it had on his painting, I don't know. He taught me one thing that summer. It was on his advice that the rest of us went down to this little town in northern Corsica, because he had been there one year and had done quite a lot of work and was quite enthusiastic about it. He said that the year that he was on Corsica he had spent too much of his time wandering around the country trying to find motifs. He'd go out and hunt and hunt and hunt for a motif and would note this and note that, then go back and paint it. But he'd gotten over that to a very large extent, not that he wasn't always doing it to a certain extent. He always had his eye open for everything that happened in the whole landscape. We never went out walking in the evening that he didn't suddenly see something and come back and do it. But he never really went out of his way too much. He rather joked about himself, but he said something that was largely true. He did all his painting from nature. He didn't do them in the studio. He took his stuff right out before his motif. He said, "The way I paint a landscape, first I go out and I look around and I see a nice shady spot under a tree." He always took with him a wine bottle full of very strong coffee (Belgians love coffee). So first of all he'd make himself comfortable under the tree and get out his bottle of coffee and then he would

set up his canvas, and then he'd look around and pick out something to the right or the left or the front of him, wherever it might be, and start painting. And he said, "I find usually that if I do it that way, it's as good as if I'd spent hours trying to find a motif." [laughter] Although it's not completely true, it is surprisingly so, that it's not so much any particular spot. The person who is experienced will sometimes amaze you by making something from what apparently is very little. I think we feel that especially in Van Gogh. If anybody has seen the photographs of places that Van Gogh had made his paintings, they looked absolutely impossible. He would paint them without any variation, and he would paint them very objectively, as he saw them. He produced something that you would never guess had come from anything so empty of what you would think were the possibilities as a painting, as were shown in the photograph.

SCHIPPERS

Another painter who was with you was Lemerrier.

NUTTING

Lemerrier was from a well-to-do family. He was, I think, even of aristocratic lineage. He was a friend of all of the important younger painters of Paris in those days, the up-and-coming people like [Dunoyer de] Segonzac and a close friend of La Patellière, a very talented painter who died of war injuries. He came to Corsica after we'd been there for a while and brought with him a little automobile. I don't know whether he was a graduate of the École des Beaux-Arts or not. He'd been through the mill of art schooling and had a very fine appreciation of the modern movements in painting. Although his work was not especially modern it was certainly not old hat. A very charming man, he could have made his fortune as a mime. He was full of fun and on the spur of the moment he'd very quietly put on some little show that was absolutely delightful. I remember one evening after dinner he was wandering around, while the rest of us were sitting there talking. It was out on the terrace of this little hotel, and there was an old skillet that had been thrown out because a large hole had finally burned through it and it was lying there rusty. He picked this up and put it on an old table under a tree nearby, and proceeded to make an omelet. [laughter] There was a little girl, a child of the family of the house, who was very shy and very solemn--she never laughed--and we had tried to make friends with her. She was very nice and wasn't unfriendly, but these strange foreigners, I suppose, were rather a little too much for her. So up to that time, we hadn't made much headway in getting acquainted with her. She was about ten or eleven years old. But that performance of Lemerrier broke the ice. The rest of us were laughing, when all of a sudden I heard this most delighted squeal of laughter, and I turned around and this little kid just simply broke loose. That was the funniest thing she had ever seen. [laughter]

SCHIPPERS

One of the others was Sardin?

NUTTING

I rather felt rather sorry for Sardin. They were neighbors of ours in Paris. And he wanted very much to be a painter. He was a rather shy, quiet little man with a pointed black beard, and his wife was very lively and a great talker. He was one of the party. He worked quite hard, as the others did, but his painting was quite mediocre. Well, one other member of the party though was very talented. That was André Favory. He was a nephew of Herman Paul. Herman Paul was very well known in France for his drawings and his cartoons, his woodcuts, his graphic work in general, and André Favory was ambitious to be a painter and was on the road to becoming quite a distinguished one. He did a great deal of painting which brought him considerable success that year at the salons and in the galleries. He was a man of great vitality and rather uncouth in lots of ways. My wife thought rather too much so. But a very interesting fellow.

Unfortunately, not long after, he was in a motor accident and received a head injury which caused a long period of deterioration, and finally his death.

SCHIPPERS

What brought you together?

NUTTING

Oh, this little group? It started with Kvapil, and Kvapil was a friend of the Sardins, our neighbors. We would get together, and he talked about what a wonderful place Corsica was and that we all ought to go down there. We decided that nothing could be nicer than a beautiful place to visit, and to go with fellow painters would be something new and a delightful way to spend one's vacation. I call it a vacation, but it was certainly a hard-working one.

SCHIPPERS

Did you influence each other in any way in your painting?

NUTTING

Not at all. I suppose I was influenced more than anyone. The others were very much on their own, very different, and we'd usually discuss painting all night long--not all night long, we went to bed rather early and got up early. We always had these very vigorous arguments and discussions after dinner.

SCHIPPERS

You mentioned, though, earlier, that you were all more or less under the influence of the Impressionists, perhaps Derain and Cézanne.

NUTTING

Derain, of course, was not an Impressionist. No. The only person who was was Sardin, and he still showed quite a little influence of Impressionism. Kvapil's painting was very solid, very rich. It was by no means what the French call *pompier*, which is their expression for being old hat. At the same time, he was

not to be classed with any of the groups then representing modern art in France, though he was friends with them and great admirers of many of them. Favory had a very direct, robust way of painting, with a large, full brush, mostly of figures. In the summertime he would do out-of-door painting, and he again, curiously enough, was rather Flemish in his painting, as was Kvapil. Kvapil, of course, was Belgian. But there was something in Favory's drawing and composition and colors that seems to stem more from seventeenth-century Flemish painting than anything French.

SCHIPPERS

There are a number of what you call plein airs.

NUTTING

Yes. That's the French word for "outdoor."

SCHIPPERS

And what do you have to say of them?

NUTTING

I think that, on the whole, I made a rather definite effort to get away from the influence of the Impressionist painters in painting out-of-doors. I never have, really.

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SCHIPPERS

Last time we had left off discussing your trip with four other artists, and during that summer you did a number of outdoor or landscape things that are quite nice, and you were commenting that that was one time you did more than you had done at any other time.

NUTTING

Those were the days when outdoor painting was looked upon as one of the prime necessities of an artist's work. It's something that is not very evident these days. I don't know many people who do really serious painting out-of-doors. But I think one reason that it kept up was probably the influence of Cézanne, because Cézanne was such a fanatical outdoor painter, and most of the important men of that period, with the exception of Picasso, for example, looked upon a certain period of definite study out-of-doors as an essential part of their career. And the people who had powerful influence--such as Matisse, Derain, Segonzac, any number of them--their big idea was to get away from Paris in the summer. Of course, Paris was more or less deserted in the summertime. Everybody goes if he possibly can to get away from the city. The painters would make great sacrifices to get away and into the country and to paint. This trip to Corsica was inspired by Kvapil who had been there once before and was fascinated by it. So it resulted in the group of us going down to

this little town of Rogliano, which is in the northern part of Corsica, what is known as the Cap Corse, and I did more paintings than I ever did in one summer. I came back with about forty canvases, if I remember, rightly. I've forgotten how long we were there, probably about two or three months. I was fortunate because the men that we were with were very accomplished and very serious artists. With one exception--Sardin was not a very able painter. He was a very serious one, but the others were very good, so that I had the stimulus of their enthusiasm to work, plus the example of some very good painting, each in his own way. We used to get up fairly early and get out and carry a rather heavy kit of our easel, paint box, canvases and so forth, and would usually go more or less in the same region. We had long evenings, because Corsica is really further north than we imagined and the summer days are quite long. So in the evening we'd take quite long walks after dinner and hunt for motifs and decide on one. The next morning we'd go to this region and paint in the same place with various interpretations of more or less the same motif. Then after dinner when it really got dark, the first thing to do was to unstretch the canvases and tack them up on the wall around the dining room of this little hotel, and stretch a new canvas for the next day's work, because most of the things we did we'd do in one go. We'd spend more time than, say, an Impressionist painter would, because none of us were really painting very much influenced by the Impressionists. Men like Monet, for example, could only work from a motif for a very short time. They'd have to switch to another canvas. In a day's work he'd probably work on quite a number of canvases out-of-doors. But with us, working from the motif on one canvas in the morning and then that afternoon, there wasn't that consideration of simply light effects, the study of form, of structure, of certain plastic values in the landscape; and I think all of us in one way or another were influenced very much by the work of Cézanne. Not imitating him but certain principles that we had in mind. I seemed to be rather successful in finding motifs. I don't think any of them liked my work too much. They weren't especially complimentary about it, anyway, but I noticed they'd see a canvas of mine and would ask, "Well, where did you do that?" Then the next thing I'd note one or more of them would be out using the same motif that I had used. It would save them some trouble sometimes. Some painters will do that sort of thing. But a lot of our landscape painters of a more modern movement will simply use the material before them as a stimulus and juggle things around to make a composition and to develop an idea. But Kvapil would have an astonishing ability to take a very simple motif that nobody else could see anything in and paint it more or less directly as he saw it, and by Jove, he could give something that you would only see after seeing his canvas. That, of course, was true of Van Gogh. People who browse through any of the books on Van Gogh or in magazine articles about him very often find

photographs that have been taken from the point of view that he used in painting his picture, and often they were things that to the rest of us would seem quite impossible. He would not distort the drawing. He would paint more or less the motif before him, and yet the thing would turn out to be a very beautiful canvas. Kvapil had something of that same talent. I never acquired it. I have never done enough outdoor painting to have that much sensitivity in vision. I had to wander around quite a lot, take long looks at what I was going to do and plan my composition pretty well, though I did paint quite realistically in a way. I didn't rearrange any material before me. I took it rather literally, which at that stage of the game was the best thing for me at least to do. And after all, I had the precedent of Cézanne himself. Cézanne did modify to a certain extent the shapes and forms before him, but it was still a certain kind of a realism. He felt a certain tension of forms before him, and to translate those things on canvas might force him to merely make a house lean this way or that, or a wall not to be quite the way it was in the motif before him. But he didn't use any fantasy. It was always what he called "ma petite sensation" ("my little sensation"), that in observing and studying Mont Ste-Victoire or a house or a road, to get on his canvas what he felt in regard to certain architectural qualities. I say "architectural," because the sense of planes and volumes, the precession and recession of solid shapes, is always really evident in his work, in contrast to the Impressionists who were simply sensitive to light and color values and the poetry of nature as seen in those terms. Cézanne, in a sense, reverted to a more classic sort of a feeling of nature. In fact, he said that what he wanted to do, was to do Poussin after nature, Poussin being a very classical sort of a painter. To the nonpainter, no two people could seem further apart than Poussin and Cézanne. But, as a matter of fact, a man like Poussin had a great deal of influence on all of the French painters down into the modern painters and is appreciated by them very much. He was thoroughly a French painter in his vision and his philosophy and his sensibility. That sense of formal relationship that Poussin had, Cézanne appreciated, but without his subject matter and his classical feeling. He used that in his principles in rendering what he called his "little sensation," which I think is a rather good term, because the sincere painter doesn't start with any very clear idea. He doesn't know exactly what he sees nor what appeals to him, but he gets a little glimmer of something that is promising, and if you can nourish that into real significance, well then, he has a real painting. Of course, I feel that's true of any art. Though I'm not a novelist, I can imagine, for example, that some small incident or some striking little happening in some human relationship would appeal to a person, and by not willfully trying to create something out of it, but by trying to feel deeper into what has happened, maybe a whole book will evolve from it. I know that it's felt by some people in other lines of thought. The famous French

philosopher, Henri Bergson, said that one moment's intuition results in a whole volume of philosophy. The whole secret of it is that he grasped that moment of intuition; and in the painter, I think it's the same thing that happens, that if one moment's intuition is held onto and nourished into some sort of fulfillment, it will result in something that is really significant and that is art.

SCHIPPERS

In your summer on Corsica, there's one painting at least that still exists, the one of the church at Rogliano. Is that something you did in one day?

NUTTING

Yes, that's probably the quickest thing that I ever did. It's a ruined church on top of the hill above old Rogliano. At that time it was pretty well falling to pieces. The roof had caved in and only part of it was kept up, because there were some tombs of some old Corsican families that went back for many generations which were in the church. Therefore, they kept that part in repair, if I remember rightly. It was rather a difficult place to get to; it's rather a hard climb up to the place. It was a very hot day. We used up most of our energy because it's very hilly in that part of the country, and it's a matter of going up and down very steep hillsides--no level ground at all. In this painting, as one can see, the horizon is very low. When I got up there, I couldn't get close enough to see it properly so I had to do it from below where I could get far enough away. In some ways it was one of my most successful canvases, and I think I did it in between two and three hours.

SCHIPPERS

There's another one here; you say the original is in Wisconsin. It's a house with trees, which apparently was done in or near the village.

NUTTING

Yes. The village itself was a very interesting place. There were innumerable motifs of that sort, such as the old houses. It was a very old town and it had interesting landscapes: the olive trees, the rocks, the hills and the old houses and also these square towers. They had the square towers and the round towers (I've forgotten which are the oldest), which were built for protection from piracy.

SCHIPPERS

Is there anything more you might say about the efforts?

NUTTING

No. I don't think there is.[tape off]

SCHIPPERS

We've been going through folders of your photographs of paintings that you had done and we're now on one that's labeled "Portraits." These were done largely while you were in Paris. One of the first is one that you did of your first wife.

NUTTING

Yes. I did quite a number of portraits of her, none of them very successful. The one that we're looking at now shows an effort to get away from what would probably be looked upon as an academic sort of an approach to portraiture which I had received in the art schools. I remember that the color was very subdued. At the same time, I think it had real color in a significant way. It was very much influenced by some of the Renaissance Italians where you have a very thought-out design, not to the extent of being Cubistic, though at that time I was working with André Lhote. But the idea of trying to paint something that could be called a portrait, in as Cubistic a way as he would do it, was something that I didn't feel was real in my case; it would only be an exercise, but it never seemed to have any special significance. At the same time, the use of parallels and certain angles, the design of the picture in a geometric way that wouldn't give it solidity, but having a certain dignity without being forced, was my effort in this case, plus a certain interpretation of light and transparency of values.

SCHIPPERS

We have a very interesting one here. You call it The Jewess.

NUTTING

Yes. She was an art student in New York, and she came to Paris apparently with very little money. She wanted to get some experience in Paris, and to eke out her living. She got a few chances to pose for people and had classes in the art schools, and I engaged her. That [portrait] was done very quickly, and it's sort of a compromise. The one we were just looking at I had used geometrical shapes more obviously, and in this, which was a study done in one sitting, I still was searching for--I don't like to use the word "decorative," it wasn't that--but it was a certain simplification and organization of shapes and forms and values in the canvas instead of simply translating literally the head and its surroundings that I'd been doing in the art schools. In other words, Piero della Francesca and other Renaissance Italians were very much in my mind, as well as some of the Parisian painters of a more formal nature.

SCHIPPERS

You mentioned once that it may have been done after you took your trip to Spain and that there would be perhaps a suggestion of the El Greco influence in it.

NUTTING

Yes. My enthusiasm for El Greco really began in Boston, with the thing they had in the Boston Museum. I was about the only student that admired that very much. The others in the Tarbell class couldn't see too much in it, but I was very much struck by it and was on the lookout for El Greco ever afterwards. Then, in Spain, of course, he did have a tremendous impact on my feeling for

painting. There is not very much, except maybe for a certain emphasis of that very long neck and simplification of form, that would suggest that I had been looking very much at El Greco. I was sorry to lose it. It was a small canvas. I would guess that it was about 12 x 16.

SCHIPPERS

Yes, it was burned. You also said that it was one of your favorites.

NUTTING

Yes. Of course, one never really knows, because in one's own work, it is not only being critical of your effort, as objective as you possibly can, but you can't get away from certain subjective things and associations. I was very much impressed by this young woman because I think she was a very sincere artist. She was making a great sacrifice to study and to learn, and at the same time, I don't know whether it was because of a melancholy disposition, but she was rather sad in her general attitude, due to the fact that life was really a little difficult for her. I never made any pretense to be psychological in my portraiture. I didn't search to render the soul. I've always been a little bit like Courbet or Sargent or some painter who said that if he saw a soul he'd paint it, but he only paints what he sees. [laughter] I was only painting. I didn't try to render a mood or character or be psychological; and at the same time, there's something about it that evokes her personality very strongly. Whether it's my memory of her or whether I succeeded in rendering it, I don't know, but it gives me a certain satisfaction that it got beyond just transcription of nature.

SCHIPPERS

Well, it certainly is a very powerful piece of work. Here we have one that is a study of a model. Again, it's small, 16 x 20, and very obviously a definite reference to Cubism.

NUTTING

Yes. That is when I was working with Lhote and I think its great weakness is that it's a compromise. I don't know exactly how to express it, but it is willed. It's trying to put into practice something that I'd been taught that didn't really function, so it falls between two schools. It's not a realistic picture, and yet it's not courageously broken up into real Cubism. Maybe if I had done that in clay, and worked it out, I might have been much more successful, because the general idea is perfectly all right. There is a certain simplification and abstraction of forms and of structure and an interpenetration of planes and volumes, which in a piece of sculpture or modeling might have been quite convincing. But here it doesn't quite make it.

SCHIPPERS

We have another one here: it's Daphne Carr, 20 X 40. This is something you said was slightly Whistlerian in tone.

NUTTING

Yes, it was not strong in color, but the color was rather good in a subdued sort of way. I think most of these things of that period show some effort to get away from the purely naturalistic sort of art school stuff that I had been taught, which was very valuable in its way, but which seemed to me superficial. In this case, it's more of a decorative pattern. The head we were just looking at was a search for real solid forms and their relationships; whereas, this is more of the contours and areas and contrasts of light and dark and warm and cold color.

SCHIPPERS

There appears to be a rather easier texture on this canvas than on some of the others.

NUTTING

In a way it was quite natural, because by that time I had gotten a certain facility in the brush and enjoyed the movement of paint across the canvas with a full brush, not worrying too much about the third dimension and keeping it two-dimensional, and with a certain pleasure in its texture and pattern.

SCHIPPERS

It certainly is a very lovely thing. Is there anything you might say about the sitter?

NUTTING

Daphne Carr was a correspondent for fashion magazines in Paris and also in New York and in London, and was a friend of ours. She was supporting herself there after an unfortunate marriage. She'd been divorced and she went back to journalism.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a reproduction of a charcoal of Thelma Lewisohn.

NUTTING

Yes, it was really Conté crayon. I think it was brown Conté crayon.

SCHIPPERS

You said you did rather many of this sort.

NUTTING

Yes, in the first place I lost quite a few, apparently, and I don't know what happened to a great many drawings that I made in Paris. A few I had, and I think that a few still survive, but not many. Thelma Lewisohn was the second wife of Ludwig Lewisohn, and they were near neighbors of ours in Paris. We saw a great deal of them.

SCHIPPERS

Now this is an interesting one. This is the portrait of Mrs. Joyce.

NUTTING

Curiously enough, I think that's one of my most successful portraits of that period, in spite of the fact that there is a little bit of, what you might call, a willful use of geometric shapes, the conscious contrasting of straight and

curved lines and planes. One of the basic principles of Lhote's teaching was the relationship of straight and curved, both in opposing each other and in sequence, but it doesn't seem to have tied me down too much and has given the canvas a certain simplification in character which was rather successful, and plus that it did not weaken the feeling of character. I always felt that it looked very much like her, and everybody who saw it and knew Mrs. Joyce was impressed that it was, first of all, a very good portrait of Mrs. Joyce, as well as being a very interesting painting.

SCHIPPERS

Was this done in a series of sittings?

NUTTING

Yes. That was when I had my studio in the Falguière. It was the first period of my stay in Paris, and I not only worked in the Julian Academy with Maurice Denis and André Lhote while I was in that studio, but I also sometimes would hire models and work in my studio and also would get people to sit for me. I did quite a number of pictures of friends. I did the Joyces quite a number of times. I never got very far, except with this one I got a certain sense of completion and one of Lucia Joyce that, along with this one of her mother, is at Northwestern now.

SCHIPPERS

Did they come to your studio?

NUTTING

Yes.

SCHIPPERS

About how many times?

NUTTING

I couldn't say in this case. But sometimes--like that one of the Jewess, for example, and others--I would do them at one sitting. Then again I would have not more than half-a-dozen sittings. Especially with your friends, you can't keep them and impose on them. You can have a hired model for hours, but for some people it's very tiresome work to pose.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have another one. This is a Conté crayon of Joyce.

NUTTING

Yes. I was quite anxious to do something of Joyce, and he was very nice about coming to pose. But in the first place, of course, he was a tremendous worker and he needed to take time away from his work, and another thing was that his work was interrupted a great deal by his eye trouble, so I never did as much as I would have liked to [have done] of him. I started a large portrait, and after that he became quite ill. The beginning of the portrait is also at Northwestern. I did a number of drawings, three of which I saved; the others were not successful.

SCHIPPERS

Now, the one we were referring to is apparently one of your sketches, and this one we're looking at now is one that you feel is one of the best sketches of him. This was in conjunction with the painting at Northwestern.

NUTTING

Yes. They were all around the same time. The painting was not that pose. I think it's not bad of him. Sylvia Beach, someplace in that book of hers, Shakespeare and Company, says, "I wonder what became of the drawing that Myron Nutting did of Joyce? I liked it," or something of that sort. Well, she remembered it. She was a pretty good critic, and she knew Joyce very well.

SCHIPPERS

Now, is this the one that she was referring to?

NUTTING

Yes.

SCHIPPERS

And this is in the possession of Paul Kieffer in New York?

NUTTING

Yes. It's certainly very different from most things of Joyce. He doesn't look as worried, as quizzical as he does in most of his pictures.

SCHIPPERS

We have a charcoal here of Joseph Collins.

NUTTING

Yes, I think I've talked about Joseph Collins when I talked of my Roman days, and afterwards we used to see him quite often. I think he spent most of his vacations every year in Europe. He used to go for a cure someplace; I've forgotten where. He'd spend some time in Paris and we'd get our friends together. I did a painting of him, but I afterwards destroyed the painting. I did a number of drawings. It was through him, of course, that I met Joyce, as I think I've described.

SCHIPPERS

Another one here is of Bob Wolf.

NUTTING

Yes. Bob Wolf was the husband of Genevieve Taggard, the poetess. He was a very brilliant young man, apparently, and graduated cum laude from Harvard, and I've forgotten what. Afterwards he lost his mind. He was in a sanitarium the last I heard. The last time I saw him I was rather puzzled by him. He seemed so distracted, as though he had something on his mind. Apparently it was the beginning of his trouble.

SCHIPPERS

It certainly is a very striking use of charcoal.

NUTTING

Yes, that's a charcoal drawing.

SCHIPPERS

We have a portrait here of Usana Kohl.

NUTTING

They were a young couple whom we were very fond of. She was a great-granddaughter of Noah Webster, of dictionary fame, and her mother was English and her father Swiss, I believe. She was raised in Switzerland and had English and French education. Ernest Kohl, her husband, was a young Swiss painter and also had an English education. They both spoke perfect English as well as perfect French. Ernest Kohl was on his way to become rather successful when I left Paris, but I have never seen anything or managed to hear anything about him since. We saw a great deal of them and were very fond of them.

SCHIPPERS

You said you rather liked this because of its painterly quality.

NUTTING

Yes. Also it was a very real portrait. It's very much Usana and was nice in color, with the red dress, cool tones in flesh and background. That started off in a rather curious way. It started out as a charcoal drawing, and as the thing progressed, I regretted that I hadn't started to paint instead of making the drawings, so I started to put some oil paint on the charcoal drawing. I got rather ambitious about it and took it down to a framing place, and they mounted the drawing on a canvas and on a stretcher. So then the paper was the ground for the painting. All I had to do was to render it a little less absorbent by a light coating of mastic varnish as sort of a filler. So I had a very nice surface and the pure white paper was very effective as a surface. I got some very nice tones and transparent quality.

SCHIPPERS

Too bad it was destroyed, seeing how that would have held up over a period of time.

NUTTING

Yes. I was sorry to lose that. I think [it would have kept] perfectly well. As a matter of fact, there's some very old things on paper--even some Rembrandts on paper, if I'm not mistaken, and a few things of Delacroix. Some of them have gone to pieces, but I think that's more from lack of proper care. Constable also did some of his small oil studies and notes on paper, and they seem to be all right. There is no reason why it shouldn't be, but of course paper is fragile and it gets very brittle on account of the oil, so it has to be mounted to really be safely preserved.

SCHIPPERS

Here's one that was done. Manning?

NUTTING

Yes, I've forgotten her first name. Her father was an Englishman and was a horse trainer for racing stables in Paris. He died. She posed a great deal. She would get quite a few engagements. I don't know what else she did. She was quite a nice English girl, and I used her [as a model] quite a lot.

SCHIPPERS

Do you see anything outstanding about the effort?

NUTTING

I think the intentions were pretty good. I see where it falls down here and there rather badly, but again it's getting away from the superficial sort of portraiture. It shows some of the beneficial influences of André Lhote. Earl Henry Brewster was my oldest friend in Paris. They rented a place down at Amalfi and then in Rome and then they were at Paris. He was from a New England family and his wife, Achsa, also was from an old New England family. Earl had been also a pupil of Chase, and he was in the throes of trying to get away from his art schooling into something more personal and more his own. It's rather what I would call, maybe a little bit artificial. It looks as though he has an academic gown on. I'm afraid I was trying to make more an impression in composition than I was trying to make a real portrait of him. But so far as the portraiture is concerned, it was very like him. This is the portrait of the Belgian painter, Kvapil, done down at Rogliano. They had really marvelous weather down there except when the mistral would blow, and that was a very heavy, very steady wind that lasted about three days and made painting out-of-doors rather impossible. I tried it once or twice and wound up climbing a hundred feet down a gorge to rescue my equipment. All of a sudden, it would be whisked away and would vanish off across the country. I remember that day especially. I was at quite a deep sort of place, and all of my paints and brushes and my canvas and my easel were scattered up and down this cliff. I was climbing up and down there for hours trying to rescue things. Well, during those days of the mistral, we painted each other or we hired somebody from the village or got somebody around the place to pose for us, and we kept on painting. This has the appearance of being out-of-doors, but I doubt if it was. It was probably painted in the court or some sheltered place on a windy day. Afterwards I added the landscape of some other part of the country as a background.

SCHIPPERS

It's of interest though, that the treatment is very much like the landscapes that you were doing at the time. What is the element that's carried across?

NUTTING

I think in all of my things, in my very small way, I had something of the same idea that Cézanne had when he said he wanted to do a Poussin from nature, that his "little sensation," which resulted in his getting a greater reality, was not simply transcribing but feeling formal relationships--the certain simplification

of form, the emphasis of these angles and parallels, a certain architecture of the material of the canvas, of its stressed values. In other words, it's a movement toward a certain conscious abstraction.

SCHIPPERS

There's also something in the way you've used the brush, for example, in the head area to convey a certain flesh tone and warmth.

NUTTING

I never gave up the feeling for that. Of course, one thing I found difficult: if I was really trying to apply some theory which I felt ought to work, it became very evident and made for a very artificial, manufactured sort of a painting. I felt that what I had been doing before I went to Europe, which was simply the translation of the impression of colors and values and textures, was not enough; and I had a strong desire for more organization in my canvas. At the same time, I was troubled because, in doing that, I would lose certain tactile values that I felt were very important. And that is where Greco gave me great encouragement, because nobody could paint more beautifully than Greco, for sheer paint, for all the wonder of using your material for its intrinsic beauty and charm. Of course, a great many of his things seem to us extremely austere and sometimes rather cold and gray. But in his earlier things, he still had the feeling of the Venetians. You can see it very definitely, like that big canvas in Chicago--and there are others--in which, although it's very austere in its color and restrained in many ways, it is very beautiful and a very real painting. So that is something that Chase gave me that I didn't want to lose. At the same time, I wanted to carry it on to something more solid, more monumental--a term a little bit too grandiose for the purpose, but "monumental" in the sense of something that you felt was lasting, that had the essence of something that was not just an illustration of the object but something that was more timeless.

1.47. TAPE NUMBER: XXIV, Side Two (November 14, 1966)

SCHIPPERS

We're again working with a folder of photographs of some of the works you've done, and this one is a folder of paintings that were done in Paris. One of the first is a circus scene, a girl on a horse.

NUTTING

I suppose the first thing is the motif. During my life in Rome, I became interested in the theater and the circus or any of the performing arts. I've forgotten what gave me the most stimulus. I think it was because in those days Diaghilev's Russian ballet was tops as one of the art forms that were alive at that time. I liked theater, and I was very fond of music and painting--the fact is I was really more musical in those days than I am now. I had a better musical

memory and had more knowledge of musical literature. I was thrilled with the idea that here we had a field in which one could work very happily in collaboration with the other artists--the dance, the music and the decor, and in the case of a ballet, the theater also. It seems to me it would be something that I would very much enjoy doing. That was of course intensified a great deal by my friendship with Gordon Craig. I knew Gordon Craig's art, his drawings and his writings, before I met him. I got some copies of *The Mask* [1908] at some time or another (a magazine that he edited and published), and one or two of his books, and it was really my knowledge of his work that caused me to take advantage of meeting him and afterwards to enjoy quite a real friendship with him. While we lived in Paris, the theater was very cheap and was very much alive. Nowadays we hesitate to pay the prices of a good play and budget our money pretty carefully to get full advantage of it. But then, anytime we felt in the mood, if we saw something interesting, we didn't think anything of going to see it. And that extended from the subsidized theaters, like the Odéon and the Opera, to other little theaters. One of the most famous at that time was the one at which Jouvet was the principal actor, the Vieux-Colombier. It was very small; it was hardly big enough for a decent-sized movie. It wasn't originally a theater at all. But they did marvelous work, and we were great patrons of it. There was a little theater that was operated by a couple of Russians, Pitoeff and his wife. She was a very talented actress, and he did very well. He had apparently one fault that he was criticized for a great deal, but we weren't able to recognize that his French accent was not perfect. It seemed to annoy the French people to have the French plays with the Russian accent. Otherwise his work was excellent. He also had great talent in stage sets, because he had to work on an extremely small budget, but he could do a great deal in an abstract way, simply by a few formal relationships and color and lines, and could set the mood of a scene very fascinatingly with hardly anything at all. He had a sense of rhythmic relationships that could express violence or express sadness or some general tone of an act, without having any realistic scenery--simply abstract form. His theater interested me, and that extended to the circus because the circus was especially good then. I've forgotten the name of the circus. Cirque d'Hiver may have been the circus, in which the stars were the Fratellini brothers, clowns, and they were real artists. They were a sheer delight. They could play on all sorts of feeling in a very humorous and very inventive way. The great English clown, Grock, used to come to Paris every year, and he certainly was a great artist in the same way that Charlie Chaplin was a great artist, one with technical ability but also making his art something more than simple clowning. It became something very subtle and marvelously appealing. So it's rather natural that I did a great many drawings and sketches and paintings based on the idea of the theater, but not so much of the dance. Most

of the paintings I remember really were inspired more by the circus and the Fratellini performances than by anything else. The stage itself would have been more difficult because there you have the problem of a definite scene and not so much the purely visual, I mean a definite scene in the literary sense and not so much the sheer visual delight that you get in the performances of acrobats and actors and horses and animals and color and the general feeling of a circus. Not many of the canvases I did have survived, and I don't think that the best ones did. I don't know as any are left now after the fire, but this is one of a number of things that I did, which suffer, I think, quite a bit from being a bit too formal, not enough spontaneity of drawing. It seems as though I was trying to get good composition, when in that sort of thing it should have been more free, maybe a little bit more in the direction of possibly Raoul Dufy. The spontaneity and gaiety of the thing would have been better than a rigorously formal sort of an approach. This was a large canvas that we have here. It was reproduced in American Art News, and it has, maybe more than any that I now remember, a combination of a freedom of movement and gesture and forms, which were put together in a more or less incongruous sort of a way. But I never got, especially in those days, away from the idea of a well-composed and rather architectonic approach, with the idea of mural painting in mind.

SCHIPPERS

This canvas was 30 x 36, and it was reproduced in the Art News or Digest. We didn't know the name, did we? April 1, 1928.

NUTTING

A European editor saw it and wanted a photograph of it, and it was published as a two-column cut.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a photograph with the painting as you were working on it. There's a model in the photograph.

NUTTING

It looks in the photograph as though I used a model directly. But that wasn't true.

SCHIPPERS

You did not?

NUTTING

I never did, especially in compositions. I'd make drawings and pastel sketches, or maybe even an oil study from life, but I never painted directly on my canvas from nature. That sketch was one of the first things I did after I went to Paris.

SCHIPPERS

Yes. It was four figures on a canvas and was destroyed in the fire. You said that this began your first real emphasis on figures.

NUTTING

Yes. One sees a certain amount of influences of that period in it. It's a little bit of the Cubistic, with a certain conflict between a formal design and a search for a painting quality. The conviction was growing on me then that there's not very much that one can do, at least, immediately, in trying to shape oneself. One has to let things happen, and not be too critical. There must be a tremendous degree of self-acceptance. No matter how much you disapprove of yourself, accept what happens. It's an if, and I emphasize if approach, [for it] is about the best we can do a lot of these things, as though you are not trying to do it. It is trying to be. That idea got a hold on me at that time, because I found continually that my reason and my intuition were at odds. Things that I felt were vastly important, or were better than another, were questions that ought not to enter into what you're trying to do, at least until the thing has gotten to some sort of objective reality. Then you can tear it to pieces and go off in sackcloth and ashes and say you'll never do that again. But you have no business doing it until you pass that period. So that when I got that idea, I was a little bit happier, because as I said before, I was troubled by the fact that I would be tremendously enthusiastic about somebody's work or their great talent--"Now there is what direction one should take to accomplish something!" Then I would knock myself out for days on things, and I would always come back to the French proverb: Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose--the more it changes, the more it's the same thing. [laughter] As long as I am what I am, that's going to be what is happening and what my work must be. One fundamental thing that I had some difficulty in completely accepting was that, whatever my specific impulse to paint is, it has the tradition of painting and not of drawing; that is to say that people who really could give me something directly in terms of what I was trying to do came through the line of people like Giotto, and then not so much the Florentines, but the Venetians, Giorgione especially, from Giorgione to Titian, Titian to Tintoretto, Tintoretto to Rembrandt and Velásquez, with maybe a glance at Caravaggio in between, with the Flemish painters, beginning with those marvelous little things of the Book of Hours for the Due de Berry, pictures on vellum, that are so small and yet so big in feeling and also such a very fine feeling for nature. And from then on to the Flemish painters. You already feel it even in their very highly finished work. The Van Eycks, for example, in contrast to the early Florentines, were essentially painters, with a sense of paint, a sense of material, what the French call *matière*, and which we translate as "quality." It was very thrilling to me. Winding up with Rubens, a man who is very difficult for the general public, understandably so, unless you do have that great love of painting. In his finest things, you have a marvelous sense of the use of color and the quality of color and of pigment, to get the most out of it--a feeling that developed in his work till the very end. I think if he lived another twenty years he would have

amazed us. He amazes me because he anticipates real painting in some of his works that you don't see until you get down to men like Constable, for example. In the last part of his life, Rubens did landscape, which don't remind you too much of Constable, but you look at some of those late things and late sketches for his paintings and parts of his landscape, and it's hard to find through the Dutch, anything that quite anticipates Constable. Constable, in turn, had a great influence on another hero of mine, and that was Delacroix, who was essentially a painter. After Delacroix, it comes then to Courbet, Courbet maybe to Manet, and Manet to Cézanne. That current, that feeling in the history of art, was one that would give me great strength. But, at the same time, I had a great excitement from the Florentines--Piero della Francesca, for example--in which the organization of the canvas, as we finally find it in a man like Seurat, was so mysterious and so wonderful that I kept feeling for it. But in this period, I feel there was somewhat of a conflict, in that what you might call a more intuitive or possibly a more expressionistic sort of an approach would be tethered by some effort to rationally organize my canvas instead of getting the means and letting it take care of itself. This thing we are looking at just now, I think illustrates that quite a bit.

SCHIPPERS

You also mentioned that it was an effort to depict the timeless aspect of the subject rather than to be restricted by, oh, costumes or other references.

NUTTING

That brings up a thing which is profoundly interesting in all of the arts. In my experience, you look at the work of a man or you read some writer, if he has real talent, he dominates you and you feel, "Well, that makes everything else or any other approach artificial or false." I don't know how many people have it, but that experience is sometimes to me disconcerting because I often think of Emerson's idea: "It's better never to read the book than in by so doing be warped out of your own orbit." I remember when I went down to Madrid, I spent day after day in the Prado, and at that time I think that Velásquez and Goya were probably making the greatest impression on me. Afterwards, Greco [was an influence], especially in Toledo, but in the Prado, it was "Velásquez and Goya. I would look at these things of Velásquez with awe and admiration, one after another, and then, when I turned to go out of the building, I would look down the hall and I'd say, "Look, Velásquez! Look, Velásquez!" I wanted to go around pointing, "Look down there. There's Velásquez! Look there! There's Velásquez!" Everything was this tonality; the beautiful relationship of shape and color that he had in his canvas, you could find all over the place. I couldn't see anything else. And that is true. We went to see the big Monet show. I felt, "Good gracious! I've grown up on Monet. I've seen thousands of Monets, originals and reproductions. It seems to me Monet is old-hat, in a

way." But I went down there and I was rather flabbergasted at the old man's career up to the very end. I really got a terrific bang out of it. Not only that but, when I left the building--I remember we were with the Millier's one day--I kept saying, "Arthur, look there! Monet, Monet! Look at that over there, Monet!" I couldn't see anything else but color and scintillation and some kind of immersing yourself in atmosphere and the powerful experience of nature, which is the antithesis in a way of Velásquez, with his low tones, his broad treatment of nature. Yet it is the same nature and it gives you the feeling that nature doesn't exist until somebody shows it to you, which again I think is a theme which could be developed tremendously, that the things that we admire. Like that story of the old chap who went into Yosemite Valley (he was one of the first ones there), and he said that if he'd known it was going to be so famous he'd have taken another look at it. And he said, "I guess you're right. I guess it is rather wonderful. I guess it is beautiful. What's this?" Well, somebody comes along with vision and intuition and gives a presentation of it. Landscapes are especially true in that way. In the old idea of landscape, mountains were something rather obnoxious, you know. Petrarch, I think, was the first one to climb up to the top of a mountain or something. Little by little, the idea [grew] that even the infertile parts of a country could be very beautiful and have meaning.

SCHIPPERS

Here's another that's called Three Figures, and it was shown in the Tuileries Salon.

NUTTING

Yes. There's another case of drawing on some of the ideas of Lhote and other theories of composition. It's a small canvas. It rather amazed me that it was accepted at the Tuileries. The Tuileries Salon was very selective. The president at that time was Besnard and the vice-president of the society was Émile Bourdelle, the sculptor. As one can rather guess, even from the photograph, that was very quickly done, done at one go. Probably I made a number of drawings first, and after a certain amount of preparation I decided what the design was going to be. I may even have had some figure studies or something as part of my vocabulary of the picture, but after I began to paint, I think I did it in one morning without any special trouble. So many of my things were successful that have been done rather quickly. I never have learned to really hang on and keep a thing developing properly, which is something that I always felt rather bad about, but I discovered in the whole history of art, there are painters in more or less the same position. I don't think Goya ever spent much time tormenting himself about finishing a picture. They always look as though they were done just bang--there was a canvas all of a sudden! That doesn't mean that a Vermeer should be done in the same way, that a Vermeer should paint things

at one go, like Goya. Again it's in terms of this mysterious force that you can't do much about. If that's the way you are, that's the way you are, and if you change, it's not going to be something that's willed, it's going to be felt for very gradually, dedicated work.

SCHIPPERS

Now in your exploration of figures, this seems to be a rather important effort. This also was burned in the fire. It's two figures and it was about 24 X 36. You mentioned that you had by this time--this was probably done, oh, between 1925 and 1929, you couldn't say for sure--that you had gone beyond the Fauve influence.

NUTTING

It was still there but not so obvious. I assimilated it and could make use of it when I wanted to. I understood it much better. That again of course was one that had apparently been worked on for quite a longtime. It shows it. No. I don't say that it does, but do know that I worked quite a long time on it, largely scraping out and recasting.

SCHIPPERS

You mention too that there's an emphasis on the tactile quality of the forms in many of these studies.

NUTTING

Yes. I think the searching for those qualities was again a certain recognition of the fact that any work of art is not simply of the eye or the ear. It's the sum total of one's sense of perceptions that has influence. Just as a writer has, of course, vision. People are always saying, "This is a wonderful description of this landscape, such a wonderful description." But, it isn't something that can be narrated. You can't narrate a tree. You see a tree, [laughter] And if he says something about a tree that evokes the image of a tree, then it's part of the way a painter senses that the writer has. Of course, what happens to the painter when he tries to tell a story, it usually means the wreck of the picture. I don't say usually, because a great many things are. After all, Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel is the story of the Bible, so far as that goes, but it never gets away from the fact that he's primarily a draftsman and a sculptor. And to a large extent, a very good painter. I was surprised to find that his color was much more interesting and successful than I imagined it would be before I saw the original. The people in the modern movement who stressed that more than anyone else, and usually very unsuccessfully, were the Italian Futurists, especially the ones just before World War I and a certain amount of work done afterwards. They'd try by jagged streaks to get the sound of a machine gun, for example, and things of that sort, which of course was a fallacious idea.

SCHIPPERS

You mentioned the sculptural quality of some of these studies and previously said you wondered why you didn't do more modeling or more work with sculpture in that period.

NUTTING

Well, ever since I was a youngster, sculpture has interested me very much. One of my favorite books when I was a boy was a large catalogue of a concern that used to be in Boston and made plaster casts. You see very few of those things now, and the ones that you do see are terribly bad. They made quite good ones, and I think probably most of their clientele were art schools, in the days when they used plaster casts a great deal in the art schools. Now you don't see any at all. In fact Mrs. Chouinard boasted there wasn't a single plaster cast in her art school, which I thought was rather unfortunate because I like plaster casts. A good cast of something is a beautiful thing. It gives us a thing as to form, independent of color, and I used to pore over this thing and make little drawings from this catalogue of photographs of classical sculpture. I remember I had a print when I was a youngster of Hermes by Praxiteles, and I worked quite a long time trying to make a good pencil drawing of that. That I think probably also influenced me in what you mentioned, a while ago, and I always seemed to be trying to find in the immediate experience something that was timeless. I had three reasons for my interest on the figure: one was I think the experience as a youngster of these prints I had of classical sculpture, and from that, onto making drawings from sculpture. Another thing is that it really crystallized fairly early, in my efforts to think these problems out, that everything that we enjoy or that we are conscious of in the world around us is in some way a projection of ourselves, our likes and dislikes. Otherwise it is almost nonexistent, unless it gets in our way. Usually I notice that we describe things not in a purely factual way, but very often in a sort of dynamic way. We express something happening, not what a thing is. We'll say, "This street goes down in this direction." Well, a street doesn't go, it is. [laughter] "There's a tremendous fall from the height of this cliff to the house at the base of the cliff." Well, nothing is falling. We describe the uprightness and dignity of a tree, which is a moral value or characteristic. Of course, there's the pathetic fallacy of the raging or angry sea, all of which is a matter of empathy to a certain extent, isn't it? That's what I was saying a while ago. What we feel, what we hear, what we taste--all of it goes into the appeal that the world around us has, that makes it part of ourselves and gives it some reality. The artist is the explorer. Well, that means that it's [perceived through] his hands, his eyes, his whole nervous system. The dance enters very interestingly into this question. In painting, where you are trying for some reason or another to find something back of the topical and incidental to a greater reality, the first thing that strikes you when you take the figure, for example, is that clothing is already a work of

art. So it is an artist copying another work of art. All the things around us, houses and everything that you would paint or draw or study, are works of art. So you have the combination of the thing which is nature and the thing which is art. You originally would draw a house because it is that house for some sort of a function; or you'd paint it because that is a sort of a house like in an old Dutch city scene; or if a church, that is the church in which they go to church and the services are performed and that sort of thing. Finally the culmination of realistic painting, or of anything illustrative, was with the Impressionists, who saw things independently, whether it is a work of art or whether it is nature. Their slogan was that one should paint with an innocent eye--that is, not say, what is it, or what is it about, but what do you see?--which, of course, was a very glorious period of painting and corresponded to a certain psychological development in our culture. More or less the same thing would happen in science, which made modern science ask, beginning much further back, and the ordinary person to this day still asks, "What use is it going to be? What are you doing that for? What use is that?" It must serve some sort of a purpose. You're not in a state of mind as Julius Sumner Miller is when he gives those very delightful physics talks to the kids, and he's always quoting Kepler: "Why are things as they are and not otherwise?" The Impressionists sat down before a landscape and the world around them and really looked. They brushed aside [the attitude]: "Well, this is this kind of a tree; and therefore, one must know exactly how an oak tree is made. This house is this kind of a house and this kind of character, and you can see that this sort of thing would happen in this house that wouldn't happen in that house." Instead he simply opens his eyes in all innocence and looks and sees that there is a color, a shape, and all those things together, and that the light is falling with this result. He broke sound barriers. He crashed through a wall of experience, which I think we don't find very rarely in any painting before that time. If we do, we see it in retrospect, in a man like Velázquez. In the time of Velázquez, any intelligent, very highly cultivated man would see that is a picture of Philip IV, or this is Balthazar, or this is maids-in-waiting, or this is his dwarf and commence to read the picture in terms of all these things. But this terrific symphony of tone and shapes and subtle color relations, though he might be quite responsive to it, didn't enter into anything that he could put into words. As you can very easily see by reading contemporary criticism, up until the time of the Impressionists, the fame and importance in the minds of the public of the Mona Lisa is due much more to Walter Pater than it is to Leonardo da Vinci.

SCHIPPERS

Not all of your efforts apparently were things that you liked. Here's one that won a prize.

NUTTING

Yes, I see that was 1925. They had a large exhibition of decorative arts in Paris. Quite a beautiful one. Every country had a pavilion there. It was quite exciting because you could see what was being done in Austria and in Scandinavia and England, and we are allotted space there but apparently we couldn't get together on any way of getting up a good showing of our decorative work. The decorative work was largely of architecture, of furnishings--furniture, textiles and designs of all sorts--but painting also entered into most of them quite a bit. It was really the art of the country. I remember Austria especially was interesting in those days, because the design in all forms, from architecture to printing and typography, was very much alive. They offered a prize in the French section. The color manufacturer, Paillard, put up a pavilion and the company wanted some murals in this pavilion, and they sent out to all of the artists in Paris a little leaflet giving the terms of the competition for it. I didn't think very much about it, but my wife said, "Why don't you paint it? Why, look, they will provide the materials at cost. It won't cost you much. You may as well be painting that as something else," which was a perfectly reasonable idea. So without much idea of really taking it too seriously, I got the canvas and painted this composition. It was very fairly done; they took extra pains that the painter would be anonymous, as much as possible. You made some kind of a little mark of some sort that you put on the back of the canvas to identify it, and then you did that on a piece of paper which was sealed up in an envelope, not to be opened until after the competition was over and then they'd find out who did these pictures. I guess they really were very, very fair about it. They had an exhibition of the works (the canvases were of an uniform size) in the Patio Marsan of the Louvre, which is part of the decorative arts section of the Louvre. There was a very good jury and the painter Jean Louis Forain, who was a very famous and a very important figure in French art, was chairman of the jury. There were two first prizes given. I was having breakfast one morning, when there was a knock at the door, and a boy came in and asked me if this little mark that he had was mine, and I said yes. So then he sort of clicked his heels and bowed and said that he had the honor of announcing that I had gotten a first prize in the competition, which amazed me, but of course pleased me quite a lot. But when I left Paris (it was a very large canvas), I didn't feel like going to the expense of having it packed and shipped home. The more I looked at it the more I thought it wasn't very good anyway. It was not too pleasant in its paint quality, and its color was rather ordinary. I never felt it was any special loss. I destroyed it. Though it was afterwards used in their advertising in this country quite a lot. Every once in a while I'd pick up an art magazine and see this thing reproduced.

SCHIPPERS

What did the prize consist of? Was it a cash prize?

NUTTING

It was a cash prize. I've forgotten how much it was. The exchange fluctuated so much. I do know that there was enough so that my wife suggested, "Why don't you take a trip? You've never seen the galleries in Belgium. I don't feel very much like going." So it wound up that Paul Burlin and I went through Holland, stopping at all the towns in Holland, and spent some days in Amsterdam, then went over to Berlin and spent a day there. I got home and the prize paid for my trip. I think it was four or five thousand francs, something like that. In those days, of course, a franc was a lot more than it is now. It was devaluated quite a lot. It was enough money for quite a marvelous trip, a very profitable one. Here's another one of those things that was done very quickly. That was very successful in color and tonality. I commenced to really control the relationship of transparent and opaque painting.

SCHIPPERS

You said this was more an effort toward luminosity in your work, less impasto.

NUTTING

Well, parts of it were quite impasto. But it had a rather nice relationship of opaque and impasto painting with lighter, more transparent areas as foils, one to another.

SCHIPPERS

We have some more figures here, two figures.

NUTTING

That was a small thing and one of the early things of Paris.

SCHIPPERS

When we were discussing some of these, you were pointing out that you were very much influenced by Rubens' dictum that shadows should be thin and light areas impasto.

NUTTING

Yes. When I spoke of the relationship of the opaque and the lights and the transparent shadows, that happened to be one which has some degree of success in applying the idea.

SCHIPPERS

Here's one of three figures, and this one was also destroyed in the fire.

NUTTING

Yes, that was in a way the most successful. What we were looking at before were things that led up to this. There are parts of this that I feel were not, but especially the right-hand side and the upper part of that figure. I grew to be more and more satisfied and more pleased with it.

SCHIPPERS

Could you say specifically why?

NUTTING

In the last analysis, of course, that is quite impossible. But one can do something about it. To go back to what I was saying about reality, I've experienced again and again that a very strong talent will sweep me off my feet until I don't see or feel other than what he seems to have seen and felt. But in the case of the ones that I have mentioned, it was the objective world, but that is also true of the more subjective feeling which has always been present in my problem. Although we look upon Thomas Eakins, for example, as one of the most powerful figures in American painting--after his years of neglect--that is also true of Ryder. Now both those men were painters with a tremendous sensitivity of the world around them, and although Ryder didn't actually take literally scenes from his environment but seemed to go into dreams, those dreams were based on a very strong feeling of the world in which he was living. It wasn't a man who was a recluse. People get the idea of Ryder as being a man who lives in a little room and so devoted to painting that the place was a rat's nest, that he never got around to straightening it up because he had to keep on painting. It wasn't altogether true. He'd take long walks, not for his health but because he wanted to see things. He wanted to see the marvels and the wonders of the world around him. He didn't however see them as things or functionings which are significant for this period, which have social significance or some other kind of meaning. It was just a sheer wonder and marvel which stirred up these visions, and which he was indefatigable in putting into his pictures. It's very unfortunate he didn't know more about painting, because so many of his things now are pretty badly wrecked. His working over and over in very bad technical procedures caused darkening and cracking and that sort of thing. He expressed that idea himself very beautifully. He was watching a little inchworm moving along a twig, and when it came to the end of the twig, it reached out and waved this way and that out into the mystery of the universe, and he said that's the way we are--when we're on the twig and we come to a place where we look out into the beyond. I think that expresses the feeling we get from his work, and what makes it so appealing to some of us. Not all of us. It still depends on temperamental feeling, of course. I have the conviction that he was really a very great artist in the history of American painting.

SCHIPPERS

In your figure study efforts, there's quite a number here of one-study and two-study things. Here's a rather unusual one. It's three figures. This was done in about 1928. It's an 8 x 12, and again was one that was burned in the fire.

NUTTING

Yes. That was quite small. It could have been developed into a large canvas.

SCHIPPERS

It seems to be rather a departure from...

NUTTING

In what do you feel it's a departure? It's interesting to have someone make a remark like that because it's undoubtedly based on a very definite...

SCHIPPERS

Well, I would say only in that the figures are less definitely described and the reliance is more on the paint aspects of conveying the form than in the line.

NUTTING

Yes. I was using more and more my feeling for a sensuous quality of pigment to put on paint--not to conceal my methods.

SCHIPPERS

And here we have a figure. This is quite out of order. This is one of your very early things.

NUTTING

Yes, that's quite an amusing thing. It's not very well done, even as a piece of schoolwork, but for some strange reason, I was rather spoiled in a way in Paris because I seemed to get more acceptance than one would normally expect. I'd send to the Spring Salon, which is very conservative, and I would get accepted. I sent some canvases to the Tuileries show, and that was supposed to be quite a select sort of a salon of what this group considered the most significant of the modern movement, and I was accepted. I used to show at the Autumn Salon. Somebody found an old catalogue of the Autumn Salon in which my name was listed, and I was surprised that I had four canvases in the Autumn Salon that year. [laughter] But in this case, I think it was quite undeserved. The Spring Salon was a huge show, and they had lots of pretty poor things, so I had lots of company. But on the other hand, I knew numbers of people who were painting in Paris for years and years--and they didn't paint badly at all--but they'd send to the salon every year and get turned down. I could never understand it.

SCHIPPERS

Here's one that you were preparing for the salon, which has an interesting tale about it. It's a figure, and you said it was done in about 1925.

NUTTING

Yes. Most of it was pretty well painted, and although it's an academic sort of thing in a way, it was by no means simply a school study and portions of it were quite successful. I seemed to have had it photographed before I was quite through with it, for some reason. I suppose the photographer happened to be around and took a picture of it. I saw a great deal of Paul Burlin in those days. He came and said, "Well, that's all right but you ought to do this or do that. It lacks this. Let me show you." So he took the palette and commenced to paint on it. That's all right. I thought Paul Burlin's ideas were pretty good. He was a very serious painter, very intelligent, and maybe he had something I could profit by. "Go ahead, go ahead. Paint on it all you want." He worked very hard

on that thing for three days. He worked all that morning, came back the next morning and worked all morning, came back the third morning and worked like the devil on that thing. When he got through, it had two or three little spots on it, I think, where a figure had been, and the rest was kind of jumbled up and hadn't gotten any place. [laughter] And so he said he'd give it up. So I didn't have anything for the salon that year.

SCHIPPERS

We have a number of small works here. This was a wash. Again it was burned in the fire. This is of three figures bathing.

NUTTING

Yes. From a purely decorative point of view, that was more or less in the spirit of the times. I thought it was rather successful. It had nice tone and color. On a large scale, it would be a very good decorative panel. I was using gouache quite a lot in those days. You can make your studies and sketches for compositions so rapidly with it.

SCHIPPERS

Now here's a photograph of a painting of three figures. You don't know where the original is?

NUTTING

I have no memory of what happened to that. It was a large canvas, too.

SCHIPPERS

It was about 30 x 40.

NUTTING

It was at least that. I have an idea it was bigger. I may have destroyed it when I left Paris. I don't know. I remember that what I disliked about it was that the more I had it around, the more I became unhappy with the color. It was a blue picture, but it wasn't blue in the interesting way in which Picasso's Blue Period is blue. It was rather an unpleasant cold kind of a blue and at odds with the general feeling of the composition, so it may be that I destroyed it--I'm not sure--which I think is unfortunate, because I could have done something with the canvas, and as a composition, it holds together quite well. It is obviously still under the not-too-well-assimilated influence of Lhote.

SCHIPPERS

Here is a study of a model that was done in 1925. It seems to suggest another trend in effort.

NUTTING

The tonal point of view was rather more successful than the photograph suggests, because it's obvious that the photographer didn't like it very well. Reflection spoils quite a lot of the picture, especially the lower half, and the strong shadows of the frame on the picture could have been avoided in some way by a better use of light. There's nothing very different there, except a little

bit more emphasis on the freedom of the form, not so much on calculated and obvious composition.

1.48. TAPE NUMBER: XXV, Side One (November 21, 1966)

SCHIPPERS

Before us this morning, we have a commission of a painting for the chapel in Saveterre de Béarn.

NUTTING

John Corbett, one of our Rome friends whom we used to visit on occasion, had this quite charming old manor house and estate in the south of France, and he was determined that I should do an important picture of some sort. He decided he'd make a present of a picture to the church in the vicinity of his place and asked me to do it. It resulted in this very bad painting. I don't know why, but a commission always paralyzes me to a large extent. I was rather relieved the other day when I was reading a book on the life and work of the very excellent French painter, Vuillard, because he also was always embarrassed at selling a picture, although it was his means of livelihood and he was a professional painter. At the same time, he never felt that putting a price on his work was quite the right thing. If I had done work systematically, having regular exhibitions, and getting more into the life of my colleagues, I would have gotten over that feeling almost of paralysis when I get a commission. The first thing that I think of is, "Well, they're going to spend maybe not too great a sum of money but a substantial sum, and they want to like it when I paint it." So the first thing I think of is, "What are their tastes? What kind of a thing would they feel to be a great success?" In spite of myself, I turn myself over to just trying to please them. And Mr. Corbett being an Englishman and having had an English education and with English tastes and who looked upon the Royal Academy as the quintessence of good art, I set about trying to do something that I thought that he would like of St. Paul preaching in Rome which was rather understandable, because if I had really even compromised my interest then (at that time I was under the influence of people like Lhote and some of the more cubistically influenced French painters), I naturally would do something that would be more abstract. If I did a thing which seemed to be my own feeling, my own line of research of that time, I probably would have made an even worse picture than I did do. I don't know. But also I was very much embarrassed that I didn't even know my iconology, because I put a halo on St. Paul before his martyrdom. Nobody ever seemed to mention that. I don't know why. I thought, "Well, saints have halos," so I put a halo on him. [laughter] Afterwards I saw the picture, and I was quite stunned how I pulled such a faux pas as that. I don't know what happened to the picture. I think it had to go

through not the church but the government control of art on things of that sort, and I imagine that they turned it down, which I'm very glad of. I'd be very sorry to think that it was hanging anyplace. I think I shall even dispose of the photograph. I don't know why, to that extent, it should survive for posterity.

SCHIPPERS

This one is called Three Figures and Child.

NUTTING

Yes. I did two large canvases, figure compositions of that sort, which I showed in Paris. I kept them until recently, when the fire destroyed them. On the whole, I don't think they're bad. They're very definitely the influence of that semicubistic feeling for the organization of the canvas, and it's an example of what one critic wrote of another thing I showed: "Nutting had some Davidian nudes seen through a Lhote prism." I think these were the ones he was referring to, which, as a matter of fact, I think was a rather apt description of them. In other words the emphasis on geometry is a little bit too obvious. That, along with a certain realism and interest in the handling of paint, makes for a conflict of feeling that hasn't been completely resolved. But it does more so in those large canvases than in anything that I did before.

SCHIPPERS

This one was about 6' x 4'.

NUTTING

Yes. It was a large canvas, large for me.

SCHIPPERS

Could you say something about the coloration on it?

NUTTING

The color in that case--and in most of the things of that period--was a matter, so far as I was concerned, of how it functioned in relation to form. I don't think at that time, for example, that I ever thought especially of a color scheme, and I also had a great yen to get away from just the idea of objective color. The result was that they were very restrained in color, but my efforts to get the transition from warm to cold color over a form were somewhat influenced by something that Cézanne said about modulating color, that color has its plenitudes, form has its... I've forgotten exactly how he expressed it. His idea was that color and form were the same thing in real painting, which goes back to my early experiences in color. The pictures that I had as a boy were mostly black-and-white reproductions. We didn't have color reproductions so much in those days--so I got to know many pictures very well in black and white. The first ones that really impressed me were those things that I saw in the Metropolitan Museum, and very often I liked the picture immensely, but the color didn't seem to add anything to the picture. I was right because very often they were simply colored pictures. In some of the old-fashioned academic paintings, after

they had gotten it beautifully drawn and very ably done, maybe they would make a handsome red robe or a nice blue over here; they sort of poured a pleasing sauce over the whole picture, which didn't add too much to what they said when they simply had it drawn on the canvas. But little by little, I commenced to see that color did have a function besides being something that was sensuously pleasant. Not that I'm against decorative color--no, by no means--but in painting of the great painters, the Velásquezs, the Titians, the Rembrandts, the Courbets and the Cézannes, one can feel there's something more to color than simply making it pleasant. That resulted I think in the canvases and paintings of this period being more restrained in color than I believe they would have been.

SCHIPPERS

Here's another large one of four figures and a child.

NUTTING

Yes. That was done at the same time, the same idea, the same treatment. There the drawing and modeling hold together rather better than the other one. It's the same sort of a canvas.

SCHIPPERS

You mentioned that Lhote criticized this.

NUTTING

He didn't tell me. He told somebody else who told me that it was all right, but that there were too many passages. Passage was where you break the contour and carry the form through without any contour. If you notice, there is no line on one side of the leg; on the front of the leg it goes around the leg and then disappears into an area and is picked up by another contour. He thought that I had broken down my composition too much by these passages, that I didn't make as much use of the contours of the figures as I should have. It may have been quite a just criticism, I don't know.

SCHIPPERS

Was the canvas as luminous in these light areas as the photograph suggests?

NUTTING

Not altogether. This photograph is obviously faded. The pictures would have been better if I had maintained that simplicity, even granting Lhote's criticism, if I had gotten some of those qualities of luminosity.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a canvas of two figures.

NUTTING

That's a somewhat earlier one. In the things of the early part of the twenties, I wasn't as self-conscious about certain principles, such as the idea you got from the Cubists as to the contrast of straight and curved, alternating straight and

curved, which were not exactly rules but part of their vocabulary. Instead I just painted, and in so doing, was in some ways more successful.

SCHIPPERS

Here we come to a photo of your studio, of a sitter and a canvas that you were working on. You said this was done in about 1927 or 1928.

NUTTING

Yes. That was in the latter part of the twenties after we had moved to our very nice studio on Rue Schoelcher. One of our neighbors in the same building was Saxe Cummings and his wife, Dorothy Berliner, who was a concert pianist. I started a large portrait of her. I eventually only saved the head part of the canvas. I wasn't satisfied with the canvas as a whole. It wasn't a commission; it was because she enjoyed posing. She was a new neighbor and a friend, which gave me plenty of time to do what I wanted to do. Here is a photograph of a portrait of Lucia Joyce which is now at Northwestern.

SCHIPPERS

I think we have a repeat on some of those. Here's another photograph of you in a studio with a sitter.

NUTTING

Yes. Again, that was a portrait of a friend; it wasn't a commission. Victor Llona, who was a South American by birth. I think it was Peru, but I'm not sure. He was a very interesting man. He was a writer and had aspirations of eventually becoming an academician.

SCHIPPERS

I don't believe I've ever asked you, but could you roughly estimate how many portraits you did in all?

NUTTING

Portraits or portrait commissions?

SCHIPPERS

Well, break it down.

NUTTING

Not too many portrait commissions. I did pastel heads and drawings. In Rome I did no portrait commissions. In Paris I commenced to get a few.

SCHIPPERS

Have you done two dozen or four dozen?

NUTTING

A couple of dozen, I suppose. It always rather puzzled me that Americans would come to Paris, and the first thing, they would want me to do something. You would think that they would be interested in getting some native French painter, especially with the standing the French painters have. But they'd be brought to my studio and the first thing I'd know I would have something in the

way of a portrait they wanted to take home, and they'd have it done by a compatriot instead of having some real souvenir of their stay in France.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have another photo.

NUTTING

In this case, that was of a model that I hired. She was a Russian. Her husband had been an admiral in the Navy before the Revolution, and I think her husband was killed in the war. She was living in Paris in very strained circumstances; so I employed her for two or three weeks and did quite an elaborate portrait study. The one down at the left is Muriel Ciolkowska, who was the correspondent for American Art News. Among other things. She did quite a lot of journalistic work. She was English by birth but her husband was Polish. Hence the name Ciolkowska.

SCHIPPERS

We just noted that there's a note on the back, referring to the painting of four figures in the background, and it mentions that it won the Paillard Prize. You said that was in error.

NUTTING

Yes. That's a mistake. I don't know how that happened to be made. Apparently the photograph was used someplace in a magazine, but the Paillard Prize was quite a different looking picture.

SCHIPPERS

I believe we've made mention of this one before, haven't we?

NUTTING

Well, I just spoke about her, the Russian.

SCHIPPERS

Right. Now we have this photograph of six paintings. The most important--we've talked about the others--is the center one called The Huntress which was destroyed in the fire.

NUTTING

Yes. It's very curious. I worked very hard on that canvas, and in many ways I think very successfully. There were only one or two places that I could question. It was shown at the Autumn Salon, next to an enormous picture which was almost a life-size portrait of an ocean liner. So this thing looked very small, and it was completely squelched by this big canvas. But that wasn't altogether the reason for my feeling about it. It was rather curious that after doing it and having shown it at a very good exhibition, I got terribly depressed about it. I felt that everything about it was wrong, that I was on the wrong path. A strange reaction set in that lasted for a long time. Only until long afterwards did I commence to feel that I misjudged it. Afterwards I showed it quite a bit, and it was one of the canvases that Professor Karl With of UCLA spoke about

one evening when he came into the studio. He spoke very nicely about it and said it reminded him of Hans von Marées, which rather surprised me because I certainly wasn't thinking about Von Marées when I did it, in spite of the fact that he's one of the few German painters of the nineteenth century that I have really great admiration for.

SCHIPPERS

This certainly was one of the best expressions of your explorations in this period.

NUTTING

Yes. I feel that what I had learned from a painter like Lhote, I assimilated it. So that this painting has more integrity, both as painting and as form, than I feel a good many of my things of that period had. There's a little bit of the upper corners that I always have been a little bit annoyed with. It is a little bit too much on the decorative side and put in for superficial ornament. This reverse curve up here and that sort of thing is kind of an easy way to pull the composition together, instead of really carrying the mood of the picture clear to the top. But maybe I'm wrong there. I don't know.

SCHIPPERS

You also mentioned that it may show some of the El Greco influence.

NUTTING

Well, yes. I think that's obvious in a way. One of the rather striking things about Greco--and especially in the case of his son who painted in his manner, and in some other paintings that are attributed to Greco--is that alternate light and dark is used more or less as a formula in order to hold the forms on the picture plane. I don't think I'm too guilty of that here, but it means a certain accentuation of the reflected lights on a form, where it meets a dark and then a light and then a dark, so that you get a sequence, and although you have space and distance as your problems, at the same time the picture plane is much more maintained than it would be in a more realistic painting. That's true of the other pictures on the same photo.

SCHIPPERS

Here's one that reverts to your earlier efforts with the circus.

NUTTING

La Petite Acrobat. My wife gave it that name because there was a family--a father and a mother and two or three kids, a little boy and an adolescent girl--who used to go around and spread the carpet in front of the cafe and put on a little acrobatic show and then pass the hat. The father always spoke of his daughter as "la petite acrobate." And when I did that picture my wife called it La Petite Acrobat. In 1927 when I came to New York, some publisher in Paris circulated among all the painters in Paris a request for submission of examples of anything that had to do with the theater or the circus in their

paintings, and my wife took this picture down, and it was published in rather of a nice book of the circus and theater in art. I was an American representative, and a very good woman painter in England represented England.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a photo of an exhibit.

NUTTING

The Knoedler Gallery in Paris.

SCHIPPERS

Yes. Four of these are yours. The large one over the mantelpiece is of significance.

NUTTING

Yes. That was from the period of *The Huntresses*. It must have been 1930 because I know it was very soon after I came back and was in Milwaukee. I sent it to the Pennsylvania Academy in Philadelphia, and it was accepted that year. It was one of the few times that I've shipped my larger canvases very far from home. As for the other pictures, there's a portrait of mine (that was a commissioned portrait, not a very good painting, I don't know why I showed it there), and *The Corsican Boy*, and a decorative composition, and two paintings by Frederick Frieseke. The photograph was a part of an exhibition of the group we had in Paris, the Paris-American Painters and Sculptors, which showed at Knoedler Galleries; and afterwards it went to the Brooklyn Museum and several other places in this country. I don't think it came out West, but it went to several galleries and museums in the East.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a photograph of your studio.

NUTTING

That's in the earlier part of the twenties because that's the first studio that I had in Paris.

SCHIPPERS

The photograph in the top left corner is of a gypsy model.

NUTTING

Yes. That's a study. Some gypsies came to Paris and were there for a while, and they wandered around the Latin Quarter getting jobs posing. In the case of this girl, she had a colorful gypsy costume, and I did that for a study. Next to that is a strange Russian girl who turned up one day looking very chic in her black costume. It turned out that it was her own handiwork, though it looked really as though it might have come out of *Vogue* or something. She was certainly very clever, because the dress was sort of wrapped around and pinned. It wasn't a made costume. She could put it on and pin it here and there, and it looked like a very nice dress. I engaged her and painted her portrait. She was the one that I spoke about before who had learned English in Constantinople. She went from

Russia to Constantinople, and she wasn't at all timid about using her few words of English. I was working in very hot weather and she said, "Are you hot not? Now take your dress off!" [laughter]

SCHIPPERS

Below that is a portrait of your wife's niece.

NUTTING

Yes, of Helen Kieffer, who stayed with us a year in Paris and went to school there. I think she enjoyed and profited very much by her year in Paris.

SCHIPPERS

And to the left of that?

NUTTING

That was sort of concocted by my wife. She had a costume for a ball. That was a period when they had so many costume balls. Everybody went crazy about costume balls and would improvise costume balls in the studios, and they had big artists' balls and all sorts of things. So we used to have costumes. She got a Spanish effect, but I didn't do very much with it. It was a very much nicer costume than that. Below that is a lithograph from Roman days, and another lithograph from Roman days on the extreme left.

SCHIPPERS

We have here something called A Potted Flower, done in 1923 or 1924.

NUTTING

It isn't a flower, though, it's a succulent.

SCHIPPERS

It is a still life, which you didn't do too many of.

NUTTING

No. Unfortunately, I wish I had done more, because still life is a wonderful school of painting. This, as one can see, is very carefree and not tied by any theory or special effort, just the pleasure of using paint on these strange forms. The next one also is a still life in the same spirit, rather more colorful than this. This was tones of sort of olive green and warm red and one thing and another; whereas, the other had more positive color in it.

SCHIPPERS

Now we have a folder that would take you back to the United States. The first one is a photograph of an exhibit that was at the Layton Gallery, showing many of the paintings that we've already discussed. It certainly is a handsome exhibit.

NUTTING

I think I told how I came to go to Milwaukee.

SCHIPPERS

Yes, you have.

NUTTING

I gave you an account of that. Well, I went there to take that position at the Layton Art School, and so naturally the school would want to put on an exhibition of my work. So as soon as it arrived and was unpacked, they turned over a large gallery and I had quite a big show of everything I had done up to the date, a large proportion of which shows in this photo. There ought to be another photo showing the other end of the gallery. All the things I've talked about are recognizable in this photo. The only one that I see that I haven't mentioned is one in the extreme lower right. The others we have been looking at. But this portrait was rather nice. It was silvery sort of tones. The color was getting more pleasing. It was still restrained. It wasn't Whistlerian at all, but warm, cool colors and a rather nice quality.

SCHIPPERS

Here's an oil that you did in about 1934 in Milwaukee.

NUTTING

That was of Herbert Weinstock, the music critic. I see his criticism now in Saturday Review. At that time, he was living with his parents in Milwaukee and had a very nice little bookstore as a means of livelihood. He played the piano beautifully and was a very interesting friend. He would drop around and I did a couple of studies of this sort at one sitting.

SCHIPPERS

This is the second study.

NUTTING

That's the other one. I may have done more, I don't know. These are the only ones that I remember, and I seem to have photographs of them. Otherwise I would have probably forgotten them.

SCHIPPERS

They're rather good.

NUTTING

Muriel was saying the other day that I do my best things when I do them quickly.

SCHIPPERS

And these were done in one sitting.

NUTTING

When I get to tormenting myself about work, why, it's bound to show.

[laughter]

SCHIPPERS

Here's a charcoal sketch of [Judge] John D. Wickhem.

NUTTING

He was running for office in Milwaukee, and a friend of mine who was doing publicity for him asked if I would do a charcoal sketch for the newspaper. Unfortunately, I did a pretty poor drawing.

SCHIPPERS

Here's another charcoal of Carl Eppert.

NUTTING

Yes. That's rather of a more developed charcoal drawing of Carl. The Epperts became great friends of ours. He was a composer and a winner of a \$2,000 prize for an orchestral composition given by the NBC network, I think. I'll have to check on that. I'm in correspondence now with his widow. I had a very nice letter from her not long ago. A very hard working, very well-trained musician. His father was more or less affluent and was determined that the boy should have all the advantages, and after organizing a little band and one thing and another in his hometown in Indiana, he went to Berlin and became a pupil of [Arthur] Nikisch in orchestral conducting. After he came back, he didn't do very much conducting, but he did a great deal of very serious work in composition. He didn't make any very great name for himself, but he did this thing that he won the prize on, called City Nights, which was inspired by his living in Cleveland. His father had lost his money, and he had to come back and support himself. I believe he told me his first job was in a cigar store in Cleveland. When I knew them, they were better off than that. He taught, and this gave him a source of income as well as from his music.

SCHIPPERS

Here is a brown chalk drawing of Miriam Frink.

NUTTING

Yes. Miriam Frink and Charlotte Partridge were teachers, and after World War I, they started the Layton Art School.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a rather whimsical sketch made of Fritz Feld.

NUTTING

Fritz Feld, yes. Fritz Feld is an actor in Los Angeles now and was in the Max Reinhardt production of The Miracle that came to Milwaukee. Somebody who was in the theater business and also a member of the men's sketch club, brought him around to the men's sketch club at the Art Institute, which was next door to the Layton Art Gallery. He posed there one evening, and I did several charcoal sketches of him. This one he signed for me. I've forgotten exactly what, but he had a very agile, whimsical sort of a part, and played a pipe.

SCHIPPERS

We have a portrait here which was done in about 1935 or 1936, and you said it was the wife of the janitor...

NUTTING

Yes--of the building that we lived in. It was the sort of thing I would do once in a while, purely for study, and I still have the idea that portraiture should be part of my career.

SCHIPPERS

And that explains its very realistic approach.

NUTTING

Yes. It is straight art-student kind of painting from the model. Part of it was probably one of the most nicely done paintings that I ever did in the way of a portrait. Not at the time but later I sold a portion of the canvas. When I left Texas, I decided that in spite of some very nice painting in the left arm--the color, and this flower here was quite nice--I was very much dissatisfied with the lower part of it; so I only saved the upper part, and a few years ago I sold it to her family.

SCHIPPERS

And this is Dorothy Norris, right?

NUTTING

Yes.

SCHIPPERS

Done in about 1936.

NUTTING

They were very charming people. He was quite a talented man, with a very lively mind, and he was on the staff of the Milwaukee Sentinel.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a 1935 portrait of a very handsome young man.

NUTTING

Yes, but quite a lousy painting. I don't know why I got that head so badly drawn, because I knew better. [laughter]

SCHIPPERS

And this is a self-portrait.

NUTTING

Yes. I eventually destroyed it. I did get a little money out of it, although I just did it for my own fun. There was some lithographic concern that had some new process of reproduction of color and I sold them the rights to use it for reproduction in some kind of a trade magazine that they had. One page was in a regular three-color process, or four-color process, and the other page was reproduced in the process that they were advertising.

SCHIPPERS

And this is another portrait done in about 1935. This is Mrs. Tillama?

NUTTING

That was not a commission. Funny, I have hardly any photographs of anything that was ever commissioned.

SCHIPPERS

Here we come to a sort of a transition period for you. This was done, you said, in the latter part of the thirties. It's a study of the nude.

NUTTING

Yes. It was rather of a better painting than the photograph suggests, but not too good a one. It was an effort to combine a painterly feeling with a formal treatment of the composition. Mildly successful.

SCHIPPERS

You said that it in some ways reflects the impact of Orozco in the Mexican Aztec art.

NUTTING

Well, maybe not so much Orozco himself, except in that you are influenced, I suppose, by anything that you're enthusiastic about or feel very deeply. As I said the other day, it's really disconcerting, because I found that if you become immersed in a painter's work, all of a sudden you see the world through their eyes. They had a very fine exhibition of Mexican art in Milwaukee, organized by the man who is now director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. René d'Harnoncourt was in for a while with this exhibition that he had organized. D'Harnoncourt, who is now head of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, was a very delightful person and very highly educated and apparently in his youth was used to considerable affluence. But the family fortunes were lost in World War I, and the story that he told me was that he settled up his affairs in Austria and used up nearly all of his little remaining cash to set up one of his family retainers in a little business in Vienna. Then he went down to a travel agency and found passage to Mexico. It was about the cheapest thing he could find, and he wanted to go someplace, so he booked passage to Mexico. In Mexico he made good use of his time. He drew very nicely; he made very nice drawings for some books he wrote, a couple of which I was trying to find just now. In Mexico he made the acquaintance of the ambassador [Dwight W. Morrow]. He was the sort of a person to make his way among people with the greatest of ease. He had great charm and was a delightful talker. In any company he would be very acceptable, and he apparently made a great hit with the people in Mexico. He organized an exhibition of Mexican art, which included everything from just five-cent little objects of native art, to things of Rivera and Orozco, very representative, somewhat on the order of that very large Mexican show we had here, though the one here was of course much bigger. But the same idea--the total feeling of Mexican art. So what I may have meant was that maybe the certain austerity of Aztec forms influenced me in some of the things I did at that time. I remember it did very much in one case that I've always rather regretted. I was on a jury for the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors and the choice for the prize came up between the work of two people: one was a person who was very accomplished in his modeling, and the other was a student in the art department of what is now, I think, the junior college in Milwaukee. Well, I disliked the work of the

accomplished sculptor. It was of a slightly rococo feeling, which I didn't object to, but it wasn't utilized, it seemed to me, to give it any real distinction. On the other hand, you had to admit that the fellow really could make things rather beautifully. On the other hand, this girl had some pieces in the exhibition that were very simple in form, not especially with the idea of being modern, in the sense of a Zadkine or Lipchitz, but a very fine feeling of formal relationships without any too great skills. So the question of to whom to give the prize worried me to death. I finally gave it to her. Afterwards, I think I was mistaken. I don't think she had as much talent as I gave her credit for, and the other fellow was a serious artist and really deserved it.

SCHIPPERS

Well, if you deny it in the previous one, here's another nude that you did in the late thirties.

NUTTING

The same idea.

SCHIPPERS

Wouldn't you say there is a very definite reference to the Mexican in the face and perhaps in the arm form. However, one would certainly say this is a blending of your previous emphasis on sculpture-like qualities.

NUTTING

Yes. A certain exaggeration of the forms.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a nude that was done perhaps around 1934.

NUTTING

That was a small sketch. Probably about that period.

SCHIPPERS

It is decidedly different from the others. This one is called Sibyl. It's done in 1939.

NUTTING

That lasted over several years, and it was recast continually. I was fascinated by it. In the final version, I took out the figure and turned it, moving in the other direction. I did all sorts of things. I modified the tree and the sky a great deal. That is the only one among these photographs which represents a certain influence. I won't say it's an influence because it was a feeling I had almost from the beginning. The reason I went to Germany, for example, was because of people like Hans von Marées and also some other painters who interested me, who are forgotten now, and if they're mentioned, usually somewhat disparagingly, people like Arnold Böcklin and Max Klinger. It was a feeling that was revived by my friend Ramon Guthrie, who was then teaching at Dartmouth. He sent me a copy of a magazine, *The Minotaur*. *The Minotaur* was a beautifully made magazine and one of the first really ambitious ones with the

surrealistic tendencies. When I finally got this thing to express partially what I had in mind, it had a slightly dream-like quality--the deserted street, the house, the strange figure passing by--which would evoke a mood without being at all illustrative. I think the only reason I called it Sibyl was that my friend Elihu Vedder, who today is dead, did a thing of a strange figure striding across a landscape which he called The Cumaen Sibyl. Maybe in the back of my mind I had that memory of his picture that I had enjoyed when I was a boy and I came out with my own version of it. I don't know.

SCHIPPERS

Now we get into another aspect of your activities in Milwaukee about 1934 or 1935.

NUTTING

Well, it was during the Federal Art Project, whatever period or years those were.

SCHIPPERS

This is a sketch for a mural, but it was really a panel, wasn't it?

NUTTING

They called them murals. It was on canvas and hung up on the wall. It didn't have much to do with being a mural.

SCHIPPERS

The subject was to depict the Druids.

NUTTING

Yes. It was done in the days of the Depression, and work was given in the art project to a great many of the painters and writers. Those were the days when they did those beautifully written guides to the states, and the American Index of Design was a wonderful project. They got me to take on the idea of doing these paintings for the Museum of Natural History in Milwaukee. It's quite a fine museum, pretty well financed by wealthy people there. The director had a German, whose name I've forgotten, but he was a friendly old man who retired very soon after I went down to the museum. He had been with them a good many years. He came to this country to work on the cycloramas that they used to do in the old days. I think he specialized in horses, the cavalry parts for these huge paintings. He stayed on in Milwaukee, and then they gave him this job at the museum to do paintings illustrating Indian life and all sorts of things. His paintings got worse and worse. He was very industrious, but he would sort of improvise these things without any special care for his use of nature. So long as the director of the museum was satisfied that they were right in the costumes and designs and all that sort of thing, why, pictorially he wasn't interested. They had to be good illustrations. I've often wondered what they did with all those rather terrible things that were all over the place. He suggested that I do a series of large panels on the religions, and I did one of the Acropolis, with a

procession down at the base of the Acropolis. It was supposed to be a religious procession. He seemed to like that pretty well. Then, "What about the Druids?" I suggested that we didn't know very much about what they looked like or what their activities were, except their being sun worshippers. "Well, sun worshipping, that's fine." Then we put in Stonehenge. I did the sketch, and he liked it. I set to work on the big canvas. The big canvas in its present state was just the beginning. Unlike my colleague the German painter, I went to great pains in the drawing of the figures to really make a proficiently painted picture. Of course, it had to be as realistic as possible. There was no idea of modern art in those problems. That's the last thing that they would allow. When I started to do them somewhat in a mural sense, with being rather decorative, that was one thing they always jumped on me. They didn't want that. They wanted a picture of what it probably looked like. There was a young fellow, working there, who turned out to be an awfully good model, and he posed for me. The photographic department provided the photographs that I wanted. I got the thing drawn in, and the director came to see it. (They gave me a big room to work in during the latter part of my stay.) He came to see it and said, "No. That won't do at all. It won't do at all. You've got to have this remains and that remains." Well, heck, if he'd said so in the first place, I'd have composed my picture accordingly. But I felt my picture was composed, and I wasn't going to just stick things in hither and yon. So after he went away, I put what Kipling called his "traps and calamities" into a suitcase and walked out without saying anything at all. I never went back [laughter], which maybe wasn't a very nice thing to do. I don't know. Anyway that's as far as it got.

SCHIPPERS

Did that bring to an end your dealings with the Federal Art Project?

NUTTING

No. They were quite nice and didn't complain at all because of my bad behavior. I did some portraits.

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SCHIPPERS

At the close of our last session I asked you if you did any more Federal Art Project work after you left the museum.

NUTTING

Well, yes. After that they asked me to do some portraits. I've forgotten how many I did. I did one, portrait of the head of the medical affairs at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. That was easier to do because I could have sittings from life. Then I remember there was another that caused me a lot of trouble. It was for somebody who founded one of the schools, the first

director of a normal school--or something, someplace--and they wanted a portrait. They sent me a lot of photographs and some descriptions of the man by people who were old enough to remember him. I remember slaving over that thing quite a long time. I think there were some others, too, that I was glad to forget, because it wasn't a very pleasant job. I usually had to work with people who wanted to fill up the pictorial records of their schools, especially schools, and I think that was the end of my efforts in the Federal Art Project. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

We have here a photograph of a rather large canvas.

NUTTING

That was really one of the early things that I did after going to Milwaukee; it was for the Walrus Ball. There was a committee formed to supervise and make the decorations for the ballroom of the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee, and for some strange reason I suddenly had an idea of doing a large panel for the affair. The others worked on small things all around the room and did quite a successful job. The subject of the ball that year was Dante's Inferno. The whole scheme was designed around this, costuming and decorations and everything else. I've forgotten the medium I used. I remember getting a very large stretcher made; if I remember, it would be about a 10' x 12' stretcher. I had it stretched with cotton, not cotton canvas, because I think I used some kind of watercolor medium. I could work faster that way than with oil, more like a scene painter's medium with glue color. I imagine I thought to use poster color would be the simplest thing. I put glue over the cotton and then I could brush this thing rather rapidly. So I did this big thing which was supposed to set the mood of the Inferno, which of course was rather of a rough performance, especially a thing of that size. But nicely lighted, it was quite effective. It made a big panel at the end of the room. I think I described my own performance there, earlier in the game.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a photograph of a canvas.

NUTTING

That's a canvas that I destroyed. I didn't like it. It was rather large.

SCHIPPERS

You said 5' x 4'.

NUTTING

Yes. I imagine it would be at least that.

SCHIPPERS

Why did you destroy it?

NUTTING

About that time, I did quite a number of canvases that were good-sized. I remember a couple of them must have been about 5' x 6' at least. And just exactly why, I don't know.

SCHIPPERS

Again, doesn't this show some of the influence of the mural approach, also the aspect of Mexican art?

NUTTING

I suppose it does to a certain extent. I don't remember what I was thinking about at that time, especially what painters I was especially enthusiastic about. I think I was under some sort of influence and probably they were part of it. I can see that it was obviously an unfinished canvas. These large things being rather cumbersome things to pack and to ship was probably one of the reasons that I destroyed them. It's especially unfinished from its point of view of design. The riding boy on the horse, for example, is not well planned. There would be a lot of revisions to make to make it a composition that really had any vitality. That period was during my wife's illness, and my ambitions had more or less cooled in even thinking about those things.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a drawing.

NUTTING

Yes, a line drawing. They had a national exhibition of drawing here in Los Angeles in 1945, and I submitted some drawings. This is one of the ones they accepted. It traveled around the country and was exhibited in other places. I think at the time they had an idea of having a drawing exhibition periodically, once every two years or something of that sort. It didn't materialize. It was fairly large, a rather interesting national exhibition of that sort of thing.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a nude that you did in about 1937.

NUTTING

Yes. If this canvas that I just spoke about, with the few figures and the boy on the horse, had been conceived more in this way, I think that I might have had quite a successful canvas, in spite of a certain banality of subject matter and approach. This canvas is one that I showed several times. It's not one that was especially noticed. This was lost, wasn't it?

SCHIPPERS

That was burned in the fire.

NUTTING

I did a version of it which is now owned in Milwaukee.

SCHIPPERS

By Mrs. Holtz?

NUTTING

Yes, by Adelle Holtz. She had liked it very much and I didn't want to part with this, and so I painted a sort of slight variation of it for her.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a photo of a rather whimsical sketch of a Christmas tree.

NUTTING

That is now owned by someone who was in Milwaukee at the time. I don't think that he lives there now. I haven't heard from him for a great many years. It was a rather smallish canvas painted one Christmas. We had a small tree and the four little toy animals attracted my attention, both for their character and their color. Contrasting that with the one we've just been looking at shows that I still had not found a form that I was completely satisfied with, which exists even to this day. In working directly from nature, with complete spontaneity, I forget what I have felt was so essential to the success of a canvas, and that is the more abstract qualities of a certain geometrical organization. It has led me to think that probably my concern with that sort of thing has been exaggerated, that it started primarily in the days that I dreamt of doing very large things, such as mural painting, which would cause one to be interested in such things as dynamic symmetry. For example, at one time I got ahold of Hambidge's books and other things on dynamic symmetry, with the idea that that would be a good tool in composing a picture that would relate well architecturally, that there should be an architectonic feeling in a fine mural and that might help in that sort of a problem. But to this day, I don't know whether or not I have denied myself certain experiences along those lines that ought to have had expression for the complete fulfillment of whatever I was trying to do. More and more, I have been convinced that wherever I would find a vitality in my work, it came from something that was more spontaneous, more expressionistic, more subjective. It's a little hard to give a very clear example, but just recently I thought of it in connection with the American painters who have become most significant in the history of our painting in this country, and three of them whose stars seem to be continually rising are Winslow Homer and Albert Ryder and Thomas Eakins, men who were personally very different and who in their work of course were very different. But each had such complete faith and seemed to have found himself rather early and didn't seem apparently to be too much worried about directions, except possibly in the case of Winslow Homer. But think of those two very contrasting figures of Ryder and Eakins--Eakins with his rather mathematical, scientific mind, his vigorous realism, his minute and arduous study of his motif, especially of the figure; and the complete dream world in which Ryder lived. At the same time, one feels that the very fact that they understood themselves sufficiently to follow their paths so courageously is evident that that is something that can't be thought out.

It must be lived out, and was lived out comparatively successfully in both cases.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a photograph of an exhibit at the Atelier.

NUTTING

One of our annual shows. In the picture I'm holding my charcoal drawing of Carl Eppert, while on the wall are the works of my students, with the exception of the larger thing which is a combination figure-landscape with what one might speak of as kind of a Daphne motif, that is to say, the figure of a young girl which is also a tree. [laughter] I've noticed that several times in my work there seems to be an effort to merge the figure and the environment in one, so that the landscape becomes the figure, the figure becomes the landscape, without breaking them up to superimpose but simply through characterization. The figure and the sea is also sort of the sea and the figure. Not intentionally so. Never in that sort of thing did I plan it ahead of time or think it out, but in the effort to express the feeling of my composition, that sort of thing seemed to happen. [tape off] Where you're using a figure and a landscape, where they both are described in a degree of realism, when there is a conflict between the two where you didn't know if it was a figure in a landscape or a landscape with a figure, you are not completely happy. There must be an emphasis one way or the other. I got into the habit of asking myself, "Now am I painting a landscape with a figure, or is this a figure with a landscape?" Later I ceased to think of that so much because of the fact that once they went together and in some way became one in my composition, it didn't make any difference. It sounds as though you had to make a wave look like a human being or a human being take on some kind of an anthropomorphic significance, but it didn't go as far as that.

SCHIPPERS

Now we have a folder of photos of things you might call your Los Angeles efforts. First, there is a whole series of little sketches that are very interesting.

NUTTING

Yes. Those were small things. I think they were about 8" x 10" little circus things. One is always very happy to do things for people who enjoy your work and appreciate it. We had a man who was doing building for us, and it turned out that he was quite an enthusiastic collector of circus material. He belonged to some society of amateurs of the circus who had models of circuses, and he had made, very beautifully, a whole circus parade, wagons and all the things that went into the old-fashioned circus. He said that he did wish he had somebody to paint some of these circus posters to go on the sides of these wagons. Well, I couldn't resist it, and it sounded like an interesting project. I knew that it was a chance to give somebody real pleasure if I could do something he liked. So I said, "Well, I'll do them" But I didn't realize that I was

biting off quite a lot [laughter] because I did quite a number of them. In spite of doing what research I could do in the library, I couldn't find too much of the real style of old-fashioned circus posters. They were lithographed by hand in those days on large sheets of zinc. They had a special character that's rather hard to imitate. But I finished doing these little things to paste on the sides of his circus wagons. Taking all the various characters in the circus--the fat woman, the sword-swallower, the lion-tamer and everything I could think of--I made these little paintings, I think I did them in oil on thin prepared panels. Anyway he was appreciative, and in spite of the fact that it was really quite a lot of work, I enjoyed it quite a lot.

SCHIPPERS

It's certainly remarkably successful work.

NUTTING

The only thing I regret about them: I'd have liked to have had some of the dryness and awkwardness of the real old-fashioned circus poster, but I didn't succeed. I was too free; there is too much of myself in it. It ought to have been the real pastiche of old-fashioned advertising. But I couldn't find enough stuff to imitate and to copy to really inject that element. However, I think that it had the circus spirit, anyway. Is this the only one there is?

SCHIPPERS

No. There are about fourteen of them.

NUTTING

That's all right. We have the whole set.

MURIEL NUTTING

He had them reproduced in a circus magazine, too.

NUTTING

If I remember rightly, he didn't paste them on his wagons. I think he put them in little frames up along the walls or something.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a photograph of an ink drawing. It says that it was photographed during the Esther Robles gallery show.

NUTTING

Yes. I had a number of drawings in that exhibition or showing, and one of the few cases in which I had my work photographed. I've forgotten who did it.

SCHIPPERS

Floyd Faxon.

NUTTING

He is an excellent photographer of painting and does a lot of work for the artist. But I think this was before I knew him. I don't remember whether I picked out the pictures to be photographed for publicity or whether Esther Robles did it. Probably she did. It was one of the few occasions which I have had any

systematic photographing of my work. Of course, as we have noted before, most of the photographs were rather casual and missed probably much more significant examples of my work.

SCHIPPERS

Do you have any comment on the drawings?

NUTTING

These drawings were not for any special purpose. It's the sort of thing that's happened all my life. My first wife, Helen Nutting, said that I was a spendthrift in drawing, and I realized that she was right, but I didn't really realize it. The experience of this past summer has had rather a terrific impact on a lot of my thinking about what I have been doing, the realization that an immense amount of energy has gone off into thin air. I think I mentioned my friend Shaler who died when I was in Italy and he was visiting Sicily. He seemed to be able to so organize his efforts that he knew how every little piece he did would fit into his general activity, so even his most casual sketch, he'd put carefully aside and relate it to some other line of thought and that to something else, or maybe that it ought to be thrown away, but then, from that would eventually come maybe quite an important canvas. Another man that's supposed to be a very prime example of that sort of control of one's activity would be Joyce, who was an inveterate notetaker. Whether his eyes were bandaged, or whether he was walking down the street or wherever he was, he was jotting things down. Nothing went to waste. He'd organize and relate them to this famous chart of his, this big piece of wrapping paper, and when he got through, he tied up in a neat, twelve-kilo bundle the unused notes for Ulysses. So he knew his activity very clearly. After this summer's experience, I feel very poignantly that my own activity has been one of tremendous waste, so now I am making rather a definite effort to reform in what remains of my activity.

SCHIPPERS

You have a number of these little folders of sketches.

NUTTING

Well, one has survived; it's framed in the other room. I think: most of them are gone.

SCHIPPERS

Your pen-and-ink drawings carry quite a bit of force.

NUTTING

I've used pen a great deal--the sharpness and clarity of the line. They ought not to have been done so casually. The paper very often I find is yellowing. I would use most any ballpoint or other kind of a pen that happened to be lying around, and there's no reason why they shouldn't have been done in India ink and on decent material and therefore have more chance of living, rather than to be treated as casually as that, even if they were unsuccessful.

SCHIPPERS

Now there's an industrious India ink effort. It's on Bristol.

NUTTING

Yes. I did a series of those drawings--not a series but quite a number during whatever year it was. I don't remember.

SCHIPPERS

It would be the early 1940s.

NUTTING

Yes. It was during the first years of my life in California. In this case, I did get the best quality of Bristol board, and this was a definite project on my part in study. They were sheer improvisations without any preparation at all. I simply took the Bristol board and started drawing. I dipped the pen in the ink and gritted my teeth and plunged right in and started to make something happen. The advantage of using the board, and the reason I did use it, was to expand the use of line a little bit more into tone without using wash or brush, but by simply rubbing the ink onto the paper. By using a hard ink eraser, you could rub down lights, a little bit on the same principle as the mezzotint engravings. It had a certain quality which I found was unattainable, which I liked very much. This was the only one of the series that was exhibited. I remember that when Frank Perls was head of a gallery of American artists, he showed that in an exhibition in the gallery and he seemed to like it quite a lot. Another one I remember selling. What became of the others, I've forgotten.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have some photos of things you did with Maroger's medium.

NUTTING

Yes, Maroger's medium. I first heard about Maroger in Milwaukee when some of the boys were asking me if I knew anything about Maroger's medium. I never heard of Maroger. I don't know where they got a hold of that idea, because at that time his book wasn't published. Later, he published a book which was supposed to be sort of the secret of the old masters, and it did sound rather fascinating. He was apparently connected with the department of restoration or care of the paintings in the Louvre, and knew quite a lot about the subject of painting. He came to this country and he had quite a following. He taught in New York and in Baltimore and quite a number of well-known painters studied with him. It turned out that it was not a good technique. It really amounts to rather of an old and completely outdated medium for painting, that was called meglip, which was sort of a slightly jelly-like substance that was made with mastic and linseed oil. I think it is only mastic resin that will form that sort of a substance. The principal characteristic of this man's medium was using litharge, which is a very powerful drier, with the resins and oil, to make black oil. Well, it was very delightful to handle because

even a very thin application of paint seemed to have a certain quality and didn't simply stain your surface. Of course, that's true if you use resin straight. But this also had an ease in getting the relationship of the impasto and the transparent color, which was quite fascinating. I prepared the black oil, which is a dangerous thing to do because you have to heat the oil to high temperature, and I did manage to burn a hole through a piece of furniture. [laughter] That didn't set the house afire, fortunately. I prepared this material and painted quite a number of small panels, with a ground which he recommended. I've forgotten now what combination it was. These little things are now I suppose about twenty-years old, but I can see that in another twenty years, they won't be in too good shape. Incidentally, I think that the Maroger medium and all that idea of painting has been completely discredited; I don't think anybody pays any attention to it anymore. I did read in a magazine article the other day where somebody said he always used it. It was rather startling to read of anybody even mentioning the process.

SCHIPPERS

Now here's a photo of a nude apparently against a seascape. Was this also done in that medium?

NUTTING

No. I didn't do anything of any size. The only things that I did were rather small. The one we're just looking at is owned by Ruth Ludlow, my daughter, and I think I have the only others that exist. I have a few, not many, that I saved.

SCHIPPERS

There seem to be quite a number of paintings in this period of the forties that have to do with the same conjunction of subject matter--nudes and the rocks and sea.

NUTTING

Yes. As I mentioned before, I imagine that my experiences as a boy, all those long days by myself with my big dog on the coast of Washington, where maybe I wouldn't see a soul all day long, and living with the turbulence and the rocks, may have become somewhat an obsession with me in composition. It hasn't been for a long time. I still introduce water and sea, usually quiet though, and no special turbulence. Maybe I take life more calmly, I don't know. But it seemed to have very definite meaning for me.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a rather interesting effort of a girl by the sea holding a basket of fish. It's owned by Mrs. Tyrrell up in Paradise, California.

NUTTING

I remember she was showing it once at a gallery in Palm Springs. Unless she sold it, why, she still has it. She sold a great many of my things that she had.

Well, it is that same theme over again. I was wondering about these things the other day, the fact that in my boyhood there was a tendency to skip over, really, the biggest part of American life. In other words, there were two things that interested me very much: one was just the timeless, eternal sort of things of wild nature. You'd look at the sea and you'd feel that it has been that way for untold ages, the waves crashing on rocks. Long before there was anybody to dream that there was such a thing existing, that thing was happening. I don't know why the time-and-space concern entered my thinking so very early. And I thought of human beings, not as of a certain place, a certain time, a certain character, and a certain culture, but simply as an abstract human being. I think this accounted somewhat for my interest in the nude, because a person's clothes are already works of art, so an artist making a work of art of another work of art [laughter] was nothing that interested me. At the same time, I was very conscious of it, and so I loved being out in complete wilderness, and I was never quite happy in a small town. A Winesburg, Ohio was an atmosphere that I found suffocating. In the meantime, I could get into something that seemed to break down these confines of that sort of a life, and it might simply be that the reading room of a big library would give me a sense of liberation. What did it most of all, was some tremendous place like the Metropolitan Museum, or a bigger city which had character. I found this to be true very much in Europe, because then there was such an extension of time. Rome, you start down layers underneath and you keep coming up to the present moment. The whole sweep of history is right around you. Wherever I got that sensation, I'd get great exhilaration. This, of course, is another one of those very large series of compositions which were getting freer in handling and approach, more integrated, with less concern about how things ought to be, but rather letting things happen.

SCHIPPERS

Could you comment on the difference between the form of the figure in the one you're speaking of now, and the one that preceded it. The one that preceded it (the girl with the basket of the fish), is a fuller, more conventionally proportioned form. Here you seem to have started to take a liberty with the anatomy that seems to characterize some of your works after this point.

NUTTING

Well, in a way I think it's what I was trying to do, and it may have a little bit of the same sort of thing that Cézanne said when he tried to realize his "little sensation." You start with a certain feeling, and the only thing is not to question it but let it happen, to look upon what you're trying to do as something that has a life and a will to being of its own, apart from you. And if that's what it wants to be, go ahead and let it be that. And then, when it's realized as much as you can, criticize it and maybe condemn it or accept it as you like. But don't try to

do both at the same time. In other words, don't be a thinker and a painter at the same time. Do a lot of hard thinking, but when you think, think. When you paint, paint.

SCHIPPERS

I notice that element that I am referring to is very highly developed in your figure seascape, *The Daughter of Nereus*.

NUTTING

I think I redid that about three or four times, each effort starting from the very beginning and going very steadily through. Finally I arrived at this conclusion. That's an example, a little bit, of what I was speaking about. There is this reformation of anatomy, but it's not a marine with figures, nor figures in a marine, but part of the whole.

SCHIPPERS

Quite.

NUTTING

I mean I can see that that is what was trying to happen, not that I tried to make it happen, but to realize my feelings about this thing, that is what resulted.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a monochrome.

NUTTING

Yes. That was a charcoal and wash drawing, a small one. It was one of innumerable studies of that sort. In trying to find the significance of my material, at various periods of my life I would take certain definite approaches. It might be, for example, to simply stop everything but take a good long look at the world, uncritically, and see what's happened, not what I think a thing ought to be, but what it is--as Kepler would say, "Why are things as they are and not otherwise?" Accept them, which in its way is a kind of self-acceptance, because naturally any object that you're trying to draw or look at is in some way a projection of yourself. You feel that, and you can't get away from it. You'd like to break down the barrier and find some sort of reality. One is evident of that in the great mass of studies of this sort that I've done and it is allied to what I just mentioned: not to be critical of what you're doing. It is trying to be. It's almost as though you were in what has been expressed in very early thinking along these lines, the Greek idea of the genius, this little spirit sitting up on your shoulder whispering in your ear. Without subscribing to anything of that sort, you do realize, I think, that the writer or the creative worker, as Ruskin says, has the feeling that things are not done by him but through him. If he doesn't know, there is no way of knowing where the thing starts and what it's all about, but only the fact that the realization brings a certain state of mind, a certain consciousness or awareness, which contributes to the value of living. So Balzac will turn out reams and reams of novels, and Beethoven wonderful masses of

sound, fundamentally for that reason. There comes a place that he knows nothing except that he's on his way. And it does seem, so far as his sense of life is concerned, to be valid or worthwhile.

SCHIPPERS

Here we are looking at something what you called an exploration in composition and paint. It's a figure and also a head study of the same model, apparently.

NUTTING

As I have found in my own effort, the tremendous problem is the relation between your objective experience and what's happening inside of you. You're sort of standing on a dividing line at a certain height where you see to infinity in both directions. You look inward and it's infinity, and you look outward and it's infinity. And it's where these two experiences come together that something happens, that the book gets written or the symphony composed or the cathedral built. When it comes to the objective part, thought has much more use; when it comes to the interior part, you have hardly anything but sheer intuition to work with. From the objective point of view, you have the tremendous interest of nature and to find out what it's all about. You can measure it; you can weigh it; you can do all sorts of exciting things. You can watch the way it behaves; you can look at the way things function, such as this mysterious thing: your own hand, the mechanism of it and how it's put together. You can get all excited about it, as Da Vinci did, for example, or the other Renaissance painters. Even a man like Ryder, who seems so completely visionary, was very sensitive to the world around him. He didn't analyze it in the mathematics of the painter, but he also happened to be interested in the mathematical aspects of the world. He wasn't a complete introvert by any means. He was a man who took his long walks and was keenly aware of what he saw and what he experienced, which contributed to his work. Even though there might be a fair carelessness in the drawing of these compositions, I think it shows what I believe is known as a haptic approach or a tactile-sensual appreciation of environment. The things have weight; they have mood; they have qualities. In other words in the final accomplishment, your touch, your hearing--all your sensibilities, all your senses--contribute.

SCHIPPERS

Now we have before us one of your works that you said was a major effort. It's two figures against a seascape and rocks.

NUTTING

Yes. My motifs don't seem to change very much. That is obviously not as improvised as these smaller things we've been looking at, and the fact is that I worked quite a long time on it. I've used a device, but I don't think I used it consciously. It amounted to the same thing, that the figures and environment

should in some way become one. The device I used here of course is the breaking of the contours, so that the figure flows outward and the outside flows inward, what Lhote called passage. You have a very sharp contour carried in, then a hiatus, and then picked up by another contour. In that way you got an interlocking of areas of what would be commonly called the background and the figure, but in this case you can't, because there is no background, and in places there is no figure. You can't say where one leaves off and the other begins.

SCHIPPERS

In this particular effort, it appears that one figure is disrobing. The other one is still in robes. As you were saying about the Lhote influence in it, it certainly is representative of the many influences and the very many things that you had been trying. More or less, it's all put out together in this one very carefully worked out effort. It looks almost like a summa.

NUTTING

Yes. I think it is to a large extent. It has a certain richness of paint quality which is something that I can't get away from--it always has great meaning to me--the real painter, instead of simply the man who makes color designs, or who conceals his handling by extreme smoothness.

SCHIPPERS

The modeling on the nude body is particularly sculpturesque.

NUTTING

Yes. I'm sorry that I haven't done more modeling. I think it would have contributed quite a lot to finding myself along these lines.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have another major effort that was unfortunately destroyed in the fire. It's called, Remembrance of Things Past. You did this in about 1948.

NUTTING

I took a portion of a title of Proust's work [*À La recherche du temps perdu*], largely because of the use of a mask of myself (which was made when I was about sixteen or seventeen years old) as part of the composition. Again, it wasn't a composition in which I set out to do a biographical sort of thing. If I remember, in the beginning of that, I got a little projector which we both used. It's quite a useful little object, and it's very cheap. In making a composition, we could do them on a very small scale, and after deciding upon the design that we wanted to use, we could throw this up on the canvas and trace it very quickly, which is much faster than squaring up your drawing and copying it that way. You can do it in a very much less time. One day I was playing with this, and I put some bits of drawing and I think a thumbtack and some other little object in the thing, and threw them up on the screen. I was rather impressed, and as I was watching what was happening, this kind of a dream developed and I drew it in

in charcoal. This I think was the thumbtack. I went ahead and used some of my other materials: my bottle of linseed oil and a paint rag and a bottle of brushes and a triangle from my drawing equipment and I put the mask up in the corner. For some reason, I had a yen to give it a moonlight sort of effect, the beginning of night, I suppose to accentuate, subconsciously anyway, some kind of an idea of a dream. Part of your equipment is paper; so I had to spread out a big sheet of paper and thumbtack it on a board, with part of it rolled up and some sort of experimental figure drawing on the paper, which was of things past, in the sense that they represent continual research all my life. So I suppose it's a subconscious idea of myself as a young fellow, due to the mask and my struggles with the problems of drawing and of painting, and a certain enjoyment of his actual materials, which I think is an essential part. If you don't love paint, if you don't love paper, if you don't love the wonder of a beautiful tool, you're not an artist. That's where things begin.

SCHIPPERS

It certainly was a very impressive canvas as far as the color scale on it was concerned.

NUTTING

Well, I was talking last night to a man who teaches color, and I said I was regretting that I didn't know more of the theory of color; but I never could get especially interested in it. I still feel that a greater knowledge of what has been accomplished in research in color, and its significance, would be valuable, but of course a lot of very marvelous things have been done by people who had no scientific idea of color. I imagine maybe Goethe was one of the first ones to think of color scientifically. In the nineteenth century, [Michel Eugène] Chevreul and Delacroix gave it very thoughtful consideration by studying and analyzing color. Color is an emotional thing. In the last analysis, it is purely a matter of feeling. Even though you can make color organs and find analogies between color and music, it's qualitative appeal more than quantitative. You can't tune a palette like you can tune a piano [laughter], that a note is exactly in tune because of so many vibrations. Color is not to be measured that way, or if it could, it wouldn't have any special meaning. But we are extremely sensitive to the quality--that's a beautiful red, or a beautiful violet, or something--from a decorative point of view. The relationships too give us pleasure or we find dissonance. Some of those facts can be observed but not measured sufficiently to make it something that one can handle in one's painting scientifically. That is especially true when it has to do with the treatment of form and of space. I've always had a very definite feeling that I didn't want color in my painting to be an addition, a superimposed decoration to something really thought of in other terms. If it's going to be a monochrome, let it be a monochrome. If it can be orchestrated by color, so as to be enriched in the essential quality of the picture,

why then, I am extremely happy. I've never been able to carry color into something that was very clear, very brilliant, or very high-keyed.

SCHIPPERS

Another thing that struck me about this painting was the high glaze on it, which is unusual for your work.

NUTTING

Yes. I don't know why I did that exactly. I painted it on a rather smooth ground and not very much impasto. I kept the handling and everything very quiet. I don't know exactly, but in all probability I used a medium containing, not only resin but probably stand oil or something of that sort, which gives an enamel sort of quality to the painting instead of a mat feeling, that so many painters find most desirable. Possibly [I used it] because of my great admiration for the seventeenth-century Flemish painters.

SCHIPPERS

Were you trying particularly for the transparency, for example, that the bottle has?

NUTTING

I don't think there is very much transparency in the bottle. I think that is rather impasto, and the lights give it the [transparency].

SCHIPPERS

I see.

NUTTING

Some of the qualities of the light and the transparency of the shadows on the paper and that sort of thing, I could gain by using more transparent color, and then unifying it by probably a final varnish.

SCHIPPERS

We have one here called Goyesca.

NUTTING

Yeah, I don't know why, because it isn't very much like Goya, but for some reason I seemed to have him in mind. When I showed the canvas, I had to have it titled, and the first thing that occurred to me was Goya and also [Enrique] Granados' music Goyescas. So I said, "Well, call it Goyesca."

SCHIPPERS

Again there's a certain elongation of the upper regions of the forms in this one.

NUTTING

The only Goya thing about it was in its tonality, I think, in the use of black, which was rather successful, if I remember rightly, and the warm tones of flesh was something of Goya and also a certain exuberance of handling.

SCHIPPERS

You mentioned for the next one that we're looking at that also there was a dark tone value of this particular period that you were exploring.

NUTTING

The photograph is extremely unsatisfactory, because apparently the photographer tried to get more contrast than there was in the painting. The values are very close and the whole picture was quite low in tone. There the body has a lot of strong lights, which in the original are quite absent. That was just very subtle modeling, not this chalky contrast.

SCHIPPERS

I have here a head. It's very expressionistic. You said that in the middle forties you did quite a few of these.

NUTTING

Yes. I don't know how that one survived. I think probably Tyrrell acquired it.

SCHIPPERS

And again this was just a period of exploration for you.

NUTTING

Yes.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have one that's a bit more formal.

NUTTING

This is a small one.

SCHIPPERS

Yes, 8" x 12" you, said, approximately.

NUTTING

I don't know what possessed me to do that composition, what I had in mind. I can remember that I did that little picture quite well. I was interested then in indirect methods of painting, and I painted a little figure and overpainted and then glazed it. I tried out a number of techniques. It seemed to work quite well because although it sounds as though I did it in a very fussy sort of way, the final result was quite spontaneous, quite fresh, and it holds together. The picture itself looks like an illustration for an old romance.

1.50. TAPE NUMBER: XXVI, Side Two (December 5, 1966)

SCHIPPERS

Again we have a folder of photographs of your paintings open, and this one of Ensenada. You mentioned that you had done several versions of this, and you said the original was burned in the fire. [tape off]

NUTTING

Well, it's a landscape which I made from this sketch in Mexico after a long drive south from Ensenada one day. Coming back in the evening, we got into town towards sunset, and there was quite a dramatic sky, with the effects of light on the buildings. I stopped and made some notes and tried to memorize it.

Afterwards I was interested in developing them. I've forgotten how many attempts I made to establish my feeling for the subject. It's not at all literal. The actual material, of course, was taken from certain spots, at a certain time, but without any effort to really make it a view of a street in Ensenada, but rather the mood of evening. There had been a shower. The streets were wet. It was more a matter of feeling than of anything geographic in the subject.

SCHIPPERS

This version of it is hanging out in the hallway?

NUTTING

No. The one in the hallway is this last one. The sky is much more developed in that one, possibly even overdramatized, I'm not sure. When I did those Corsican things, they were all done on location, directly from nature, and an effort really to learn to paint a landscape. I have never taken landscape very seriously with the idea of becoming a landscape painter. I have exhibited landscapes. I'm rather sorry in a way that I haven't really done more continuous work, especially out-of-doors. That is something that is not done very much now. I think it's a very interesting problem in painting, that we have a period in which landscape has been very important, so that for even some of our most significant painters, their motifs have been purely landscape--in England, people like Constable and Turner, and through the nineteenth century the Barbizon school, and the Impressionists. The Impressionists maybe especially, because true Impressionist painting was always done directly from the motif; they left their studios and made the outdoors their studio, which doesn't mean they weren't Impressionists when they were painting indoors, but they painted indoors with the same attitude towards the motif that they did anyplace else. Very few of my colleagues now systematically paint out-of-doors. The few who I can think of are among the older painters. Of the men who have really influenced modern painting--Matisse of course in the beginning did a great deal. I never saw anything of Picasso's that gave me the feeling that he ever actually took his easel out before nature and painted. Very, very few of his things really are landscape motifs. Their contemporaries, like Derain, and some who were very excellent painters but not so well-known, like [Albert] Marquet, did quite wonderful things out-of-doors. In the painting of landscape now--and I think of it quite often and occasionally do something--I have a rather different approach. I feel that [when I am] directly before the motif, I'm too much bound by it. I say, "Well, there is this object, and there is that, and I must put it in just because I see it." And not what the thing really means in its totality, as a whole, instead of being an aggregation of recognizable forms. That of course was recognized, I think, by all of the important painters of the modern movement, including Matisse and Derain, that memory plays an enormous part in anything that is really significant. Even as much of a realist as Degas was (Degas of

course was not a landscape painter and he didn't paint out-of-doors), he said, "After all, painting isn't a sport." What landscapes we have of his seem to have been done from sketches or notes in pastel and then developed in his studio. But even his other work was not of the academic idea of having always a posed model. I read someplace where he said that if he had a school--so far as I know he never had real pupils, he influenced his friends, like Mary Cassatt and one English painter, a friend of his, was very much influenced by him--when they were learning to draw, he would have the model posing on the top floor of a six-story building. The beginners would work directly from the model, and as they advanced, they'd go down a floor, so that the advanced students would have to run up six flights of stairs to take a look at the model. [laughter] In other words, he insisted upon knowing your subject, not simply representing it. To cultivate analysis and observation and your feeling was the important thing. It seems to me to be especially true in landscape painting. In the earlier days, views of this, that and the other thing were prized and it gave the painter an opportunity to express himself in landscape, but nowadays we have such a surfeit of pictures of things and of places (National Geographic or Westways or Arizona Highways provides you with magnificent illustrative material that nobody ever looks at more than once and then they forget about them), so that feeling has disappeared. I think that a young painter loses quite a bit by not having more disciplined research in the world about him, what it actually looks like. This happens to be one of the things that I did which was along that line of thought. I was rather haunted by the subject. Very often you'll do a canvas and you'll feel exhausted. You may try to do it again, or try to do it better, but nothing happens. Your first effort is the best, no matter how serious or how hard you try to push it just a little further or to do something a little more important. In this case, though, for some reason--I don't know why--I enjoyed trying it once more and then once more. Two of the efforts I saved; one I still have, but the last one, the one here photographed, was lost in the fire.

SCHIPPERS

It certainly shows, shall we say, quite an evolution in the handling of the paint.

NUTTING

It's freer and I think more creative in color. It's quite a long way from the somewhat drab things I did in Corsica, in which I was rather timid about color.

SCHIPPERS

We have here a still life.

NUTTING

Yes. Amaryllis. It is a still life of flowers. Another phase of painting I wish that I had given more consideration to is the painting of still life. After all, you think what it meant to a man like Cézanne; it is something which has a chance for

much deeper experience, especially than is realized by the student. They really feel rather bored to set up a still life and paint that. They want to paint something that is a real picture, you know. A still life has a little bit the feeling to them of something for the beginner to study, which is not at all true. This was a very rapidly done study of flowers, and it was one of the first things that I sold when I came to Los Angeles. Someone called me up on the telephone, who had seen it at a show and wanted to know how much I wanted for it, and eventually bought it.

SCHIPPERS

Here we have a photo of an exhibit at the County Museum that was given in 1947 approximately. I think we've discussed most of them.

NUTTING

I had that, a showing on one wall in a large gallery down in the County Museum, in the old museum, and there were other groups in that showing. I've forgotten now who they were. At least four in the showing were done here, and the others were done in Milwaukee. One was done in Paris--the large one. The Daughters of Nereus was done in Los Angeles.

SCHIPPERS

The original of that is hanging in your hallway.

NUTTING

Yes. That was saved because it was in the apartment and not in the studio during the fire. The one at the extreme left was a gouache, which I sold.

SCHIPPERS

The Daughters is one that was used on the brochure for your exhibit.

NUTTING

Yes, very badly photographed. I don't know whether it was the fault of the photographer or the fault of the engraver. As a matter of fact, it photographs very nicely; I did have some rather beautiful photographs of it.

SCHIPPERS

And this show was given at the Royce Galleries.

NUTTING

That was the last showing that I had of my work.

SCHIPPERS

Why don't you comment on The Daughters?

NUTTING

Well, that was another canvas which I did several times. It started out as a small sketch. It was one of these things that haunted you, and for some reason, you want to try again and try again. This is the final version and the only one that I sold. I think it's more representative of that period of my painting than anything that I did. I don't say it was the best. I don't know that I could really make an analysis of it, except that so far as the materials are concerned--the use

of the figure, the use of nature and still the tremendous appeal of the sea and the moving waters--that always has had a very curious fascination for me. Not in the tremendous and rather tragic way of Winslow Homer, but with some analogous kind of significance to me. I don't know if I'm right, but I think I succeeded in making a suggestion of figure and nature [being as] one, to a larger extent than I ever had before. In some vague way, I always was disturbed by the idea that you were taking a landscape in which you put figures or else you had figures which were in a landscape, and I wanted to get an interpenetration of feeling from one to the other so that it would have a certain oneness of material instead of simply related forms and objects. That is in the sense of their being nameable: that is a figure; this is a rock; this is a tree or this is something else. When I was a youngster I used to take my drawings and show them to my grandmother, and she would pull her spectacles down off the top of her head and place them on her nose very carefully and examine my drawing and say, "Now, what is this supposed to represent?" [laughter] It always rather disturbed me. I thought it was quite obvious what it was supposed to represent. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

We're now going to walk around the apartment and identify and comment on some of the canvases that are hanging. There is a small one that you said was about 14" X 18". It's a landscape.

NUTTING

Yes. That was a landscape that I did, from memory to a certain extent, driving down to La Jolla or someplace else. I was not doing the driving, so I had a chance to watch the landscape. I was very much interested in the sky and the hills, and I made a lot of little pencil notes, partly written and partly drawn, and this is one of the results of that day's drive. In the landscape, the emphasis is on the clouds and hills in the lower parts and is more or less subdued.

SCHIPPERS

There's another landscape on the far wall.

NUTTING

That's the same inspiration.

SCHIPPERS

And when was that done?

NUTTING

A few years ago. I've forgotten when it was.

SCHIPPERS

And also of California?

NUTTING

Yes. It's in the direction of San Antonio, Texas. It's a 14" x 18" canvas. This is of Morro Bay. It's an 8" X 12". It was done, curiously enough, directly from

nature, but one in which I was not so bound by literalness as I usually am when painting directly from nature. It's very close to an actual drawing; the tones are somewhat translated to emphasize what I felt--it seemed to me--rather than to actually copy carefully the color and tone values of the subject--one, incidentally, which personally I always have been very fond of. I don't know why. But I kept it.

SCHIPPERS

One of your first is in the library now.

NUTTING

It's a panel, 8" x 10". That was done in Mexico, and I have rather personal reasons for liking it. It happens to be down in southern Tamaulipas when I was down there with my mother. My father was working for El Aguila Oil Company putting in a railroad down there into the oil field, and it's rather near where she is buried. It's not far from the village called Tierra Amarilla. I used to take long horseback rides around that part of the country, and I took my paint box with me. This is about the only thing that has survived of my outdoor painting at that time. It's not one of my first; but it's a very early one. I mean I hadn't done much outdoor painting at the time.

SCHIPPERS

It's very interesting in comparing this very early effort with these recent ones, in that the division of the canvas is approximately the same, with the emphasis on sky and clouds, although there is certainly a development of skill in the handling of the paint and perhaps a change in color.

NUTTING

Yes. I hadn't noticed that myself. It is rather interesting. One thing is that when out-of-doors, I'm really as conscious of the sky as of anything else, and maybe often more so. I have always been very much impressed by skies, the enormous variety of forms and colors and effects of the sky.

SCHIPPERS

Now over on the side there are some other large canvases. There's one down in the corner that is about, what? It's a figure of the back of a nude.

NUTTING

I'm rather surprised that people are sometimes confused, because they think it is a real figure, in spite of it being headless. But the idea was a fragment of sculpture. It's rather monochromatic, and I suppose the fact that I didn't make it definitely the feeling of marble or some special stone is rather ambiguous. It's halfway between being a real figure and being a fragment of sculpture. But it is headless and armless, so it's obviously a sculpture, not a living figure. It's a very romantic sort of thing, one of a mood; it's an example of the influence that people have had on me, such as ones I have mentioned, like Pastoral Concert,

for example, or the painting of Hans von Marées. It has a certain dream-like quality in its feeling.

SCHIPPERS

When was it done?

NUTTING

It was done in the early fifties, in Los Angeles; it was done after I built the studio on Clark Street. That's where I painted it.

SCHIPPERS

Now, is there anything more on this wall we [should comment on]?

NUTTING

I'm surprised how many people seem to like this landscape very much. It's a thing that I did in Texas. We had more snow there than we get in Los Angeles.

SCHIPPERS

And its size is about?

NUTTING

It's a strange size. It seems to be 17" x 22".

SCHIPPERS

And it's a composition mostly of trees on snow.

NUTTING

Yes. I remember painting it and putting it away, and I don't think anybody even saw it for years. Then it was shown at the Royce Galleries in the showing I had there. I had it framed and I found that it turned out to be rather more interesting than I imagined at first. As I say, I'm surprised to find that many people seem to enjoy it far more than I would expect because at the time that I did it, I didn't value it at all. That very often happens with my work. Things that I have been on the point of throwing away, afterwards I haul them out and find that they're not at all what I thought they were when I painted them, which gives me reason to think that I have destroyed an immense amount of work, which would include maybe some of my best paintings.

SCHIPPERS

It certainly is very low in key and color.

NUTTING

Yes. It's very moody. It's almost monochromatic, a little shift between the dried leaves and rain on winter trees.

SCHIPPERS

We have a little one down there.

NUTTING

That was a part of a series; it seems to be about 5 1/2" X 7 1/2", which was a number of small panels. I think that was one of the things that I did when I was experimenting with the Maroger medium, a few of which have survived. Although it is now old enough to show signs of deterioration, it doesn't show

any. One or two of the others do seem to show the bad effects of using the Maroger medium.

SCHIPPERS

And it's a nude.

NUTTING

Yes, a little male nude. I remember it was shown at the Esther Robles Gallery when I had an exhibition there. She was considering buying it, but I don't sell my things, curiously enough, very easily, and I didn't bring the price down to make any bargain with her. I think partly because I liked it myself quite a lot. It's rather, in some ways, a bit unique. I think it's nicely painted, and it represents something in the quality of paint and composition that I wanted to have at least for reference.

SCHIPPERS

Does it have that big feeling for being so small? [laughter]

NUTTING

I think if it were photographed you wouldn't think it was as small as that, would you?

SCHIPPERS

No. You wouldn't. It's rather remarkable how much of the proportion comes through. On this wall we have, on one corner to the right, a what?

NUTTING

That's a 16" x 20" of my wife in a red gown.

SCHIPPERS

This is the one that when I asked who it was, Muriel said that everyone recognizes it's me. It's one of my favorites. I wonder if you could tell me why?

NUTTING

There's one thing that I've always tried to encourage in a student when I'm teaching, because I think it means a great deal. I don't know how to express it other than to say that you must have a great deal of self-acceptance. You may want to be different, or you may want to be like somebody else--you want to do this, or you want to do that. But it's not in your nature really, and you mustn't torment yourself if you can't do it. Be what you are and you'll have much more chance of success. I didn't subscribe to that idea. During the years, I find it meant much more to me, and I think it takes really a very talented person who has much more a sense of freedom than most young artists have. You have to fight for it. What I'm leading up to is that as a painter, to paint very directly and don't anticipate either success or failure, but let the thing be when it wants to be, and you will have a chance not only of getting satisfaction for yourself (the experience itself is worthwhile), but you have much more chance of giving pleasure to other people in your work. Otherwise they'll say, "Well, that's very well done, but it looks like So-and-so's. It's all right." I think that, although they

may rationalize their appreciation of a piece of work, what they're really enjoying is something that can not be put into words. It appeals to them and they get a certain experience from it, and that is evidence that it has something that is real. Although the picture that we were just speaking of (the ambiguous broken statue, or something that looks something like a real figure) was worked on quite a long time and studied very carefully, I think that probably in things of this sort, my real ability--whatever it may be--comes out. The real significance of my work is in things that are done, starting and going straight through, just as you would with a piece of music; if you don't play it well, you do it again until you can do it well. That Daughters of Nereus, for example, if I had hung onto that same canvas day after day and day after day, I don't think it would have succeeded. But it didn't quite come off and, maybe a few days later, I would take a day and do it again. It was finally done in a very few hours because I had all the materials at my fingertips and it was just a matter of trying to play that sonata better than I had ever done before.

SCHIPPERS

It certainly is one of your very good efforts in bringing light and texture together in composition, without slaving it, to create quite an impact. When was the one of Muriel in the red dress done?

MURIEL NUTTING

I had been ill up in Cambria, and it was done then. He did it at one quick time.

SCHIPPERS

About what year was that?

NUTTING

That we can verify in our diaries. [1955].

SCHIPPERS

There's another one of Muriel over there on the far wall. That's about 16" x 22".

NUTTING

Yes. It looks a little bit big on account of the composition.

SCHIPPERS

Apparently she's standing in this one, correct?

NUTTING

Yes.

SCHIPPERS

And the background is rock and sky?

NUTTING

I have no very clear memory of doing it, but a few things I do remember. I don't know whether I did it from sketches or not, especially the use of the background. I can remember more or less what was in the back of my mind--the figure and my memories of Italian hill towns and rocks and buildings up on top of cliffs, such as I saw in Corsica and in certain parts of Italy. The color,

curiously enough, was influenced by Veronese, though that would probably make people laugh if they know Veronese very well, because the material was not from nature nor from any special documentation. I remember that I had been looking at reproductions of Veronese with tremendous enthusiasm and I had studied his use of color very closely at one time. Even though I had the memory, maybe the influence isn't there. At least it's not anything one can put one's finger on.

SCHIPPERS

I might add, for those of us who know her, that you certainly captured one of her most characteristic poses in both of these portrait paintings.

NUTTING

Well, I've done an awful lot of drawing from her. [laughter]

MURIEL NUTTING

I did not pose for that one.

NUTTING

You did not? No. I find it more and more difficult to work directly from life. For example, I'm doing a portrait now, a little portrait, and every time I see the girl, I look at her very closely and watch her, and make notes. I've also taken a couple of Polaroid photographs of her, and I take a magnifying glass and see what kind of an eye she has and what kind of a mouth she has. When I can really absorb her, I will have some hopes of doing something that may be rather interesting, that I would not get if I were right there and copying it piece by piece. Although these two portraits may be considered as abstractions, very definitely, at least if you recognize that, it shows that I have abstracted something that I really felt and not something that was simply a visual experience.

SCHIPPERS

On this wall we have a painting of a man with a beard, and a mountainscape behind him with some clouds. The color of them is rather interesting. You've used a pretty rich green there.

NUTTING

Yes. I am rather more courageous in some use of color. Not especially colorful, but at least it's not so much the purely tonal thing that I usually do. Well, this again is 16" x 20". I don't know whether with things of this sort it is worthwhile to give a history of it or not, or what inspired it because again, we get down to looking at things [from the point of view]--"What is this supposed to represent? What's it about?" If you commence to say what inspired it or what was in your mind while doing it, you don't contribute. The thing exists in itself, and if it's any good, why, it's enjoyed for its own sake. It's not something that you can put into words. But it so happens that this did have a very definite, shall we call it inspiration or stimulus, which was the Oedipus at Colonus of Sophocles.

From Antigone, I think I also got very much the same kind of a lift. But in this case, I thought it was a grand thing, and there was something about Oedipus in his old age at Colonus that I found impressive. I really was not trying to illustrate it or anything of that sort, but I remember I had it in mind. I was under the influence of my reading in the process of painting it. But it was only an influence; it was not an illustration of Sophocles by any means.

SCHIPPERS

When did you do it? Do you remember, about what year?

NUTTING

Within the last three or four years.

SCHIPPERS

Now the big one here, which is how large?

NUTTING

That is 30" x 40"

SCHIPPERS

And when was that done?

NUTTING

That was done at the studio on Clark Street.

SCHIPPERS

And it's a model.

NUTTING

Well, no. It's not a model. It's again one of these things. I make these thousands of sketches, not with anything special in mind but every once in a while something will sort of germinate. I've forgotten where I got the motif, or what stimulated it. In the case of the Sophocles, I happen to remember it rather distinctly, but in this case I don't. I don't think that I had anything definite in mind, except a certain quality of painting, which in passages shows what I was driving at--a certain transparency of tone, a certain solidity to the impasto, without using any excessive amount of paint to get a rich and vigorous feeling of painting.

SCHIPPERS

Does it have a name?

NUTTING

No. I never thought of a name for it.

SCHIPPERS

It's simply a figure, very dark complected.

NUTTING

Yes. I may have been looking at Delacroix, or the idea of Africa, or a colored mural, or a dancer, or a biblical figure. Heavens, it could be most anything. It has a sort of exotic feeling. I may have been especially inspired by something I saw of that sort.

SCHIPPERS

It is rather darker in mood than most of the things that you did at that time.

NUTTING

Yes. It's lower in tone. I think that the theme is really a way of painting more than anything else.

SCHIPPERS

I just pointed out that there's a small abstract of about 6" x 8". That one I think I would not know was yours. It has a certain almost watercolor effect, for an oil.

NUTTING

As a matter of fact, there is a certain reason for that. There is a very old trick that painters have used. It goes back to Da Vinci who looked at the stains on the wall and wrote down very carefully in his notebook how useful it could be to study these because you could imagine all sorts of things in these stains-- battles and clouds and one thing and another. I remember as art students, we used to have quite a lot of fun in cleaning up the palette after a day's work; we'd spread some of the palette scrapings on a piece of paper, fold it over and unfold it, and we would get curious patterns and strange shapes. And this is a little bit of that same sort of thing. There's a way of splashing some color on a piece of paper and then by pressing another piece of paper down and lifting it up, the colors would run together in an interesting form. I mounted one of these things on a panel and painted over it, modifying here and there, and developing a special color scheme that was appropriate to the interest of the pattern. So it's partly the pure accident of splashing color on a piece of paper and partly the reading of something into it and trying to reinforce and develop what you found interesting in the subject.

SCHIPPERS

Now we have discussed Muriel's portrait, and we've discussed the Vedder one before. What are the other things up on that wall? The large portrait [tape off] is 20" X 24", and who is it?

NUTTING

Curiously enough, I have no idea. For example, if I am making a copy--which I do sometimes, a so-called copy for study, say from a Velásquez or a Rembrandt--I'm inclined to work in variations, because to translate what is there into something else, sometimes is more illuminating than actually trying to copy it literally. If you make it just the way it is there, you may learn something, but if you take that and do this to see what will happen, then you understand the original source sometimes more than by actually trying to make a replica. I think this was not done from life; it was done in some spirit of that sort. But I don't remember what I was using. I took something, and while I painted, I was thinking, "Well, I'll take this and it looks sort of like this." I might have had something like Sargent or somebody in mind. I was trying to

paint very freely and get a certain luminosity and character in the quality of painting.

SCHIPPERS

So it's a nameless portrait? [laughter]

NUTTING

I did that in San Antonio because I remember our friend there from Austin looking at it and was very much impressed by it. He said that I was better than Adams. [laughter]

SCHIPPERS

There's a drawing on the wall over there.

NUTTING

It's a matted drawing, and I don't know how much I profited from it. The window of the mat is 15" x 18". It's one of quite a number of drawings that I did up around Cambria. It was done with felt pen. I had just been introduced to the felt pen, and I bought one and found it was a very delightful thing to use for sketching because it's a very versatile tool. It is also good for that sort of thing; there's no danger of its rubbing, as with a crayon or pastel or pencil or things of that sort, which have to be treated very gently. This dries immediately, and I made myself a large sketchbook and made a lot of drawings with a felt pen. This is of an old abandoned farm near Cambria.

SCHIPPERS

It certainly has almost a lithographic quality.

NUTTING

You can get something with a lithographic quality by using various points. You can even make your own points by taking the razor blade and sharpening your piece of felt to get a sharp point which will make a fine line, or if you let it dry a little bit, you get some very delicate tones--it is surprising--and of course with a full ink you get a deep rich black, unfortunately, I don't think that it's very permanent. One thing, if a draftsman is going to make drawings that people might want to save, or even buy, he should use good materials and everything else. I'm afraid that [particular drawing] will fade in the course of time, though that hasn't shown the slightest semblance of fading so far, and that's a number of years old. I saw a rather delicate drawing at home not too long ago that was done at about the same time which I felt had weakened somewhat in time.

SCHIPPERS

We have another painting on the wall over there, a small one, a study of a head against a rather low-level landscape, a bay.

NUTTING

That is a small panel. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

It is 6" x 8". When did you do it?

NUTTING

That was done in this studio, so it's been done in the last three years. It's another case in point, and it's one of a great many things I've done of that sort: I feel in the mood to paint and I just start painting. [laughter] In this case, I did it and put it away, and nobody saw it until this show of mine at the Royce Galleries was being organized. It was hauled out and taken to be framed. To my surprise it was one of the most successful things in the show, and more people remarked upon it and more people seemed to enjoy it, both painters and laymen.

SCHIPPERS

There's something forlorn about the line and the mood that it creates.

NUTTING

I have no idea. Again, it's very hard to rationalize. It's like this winter landscape--people never say a word about a thing that I think is not too bad, and then all of a sudden they say, "Oh, I like that!" So I open my eyes and go look at it myself. [laughter] This seems to be in perfect condition. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

We're out in the hallway now. There are a couple of small things, that you were just describing, done in Maroger's medium. You mentioned that one was twenty-years old and still held up.

NUTTING

They're all the same age. I prepared a stack of little panels, and I wanted to experiment with the medium to see if it was something that I wanted to make use of. I made the stuff according to Maroger's recipe and painted a whole series of little compositions.

SCHIPPERS

We have one that you said is showing some age, and this is a back of a nude male, up against a rock.

NUTTING

All of these things are sheer improvisations. This is sort of a somewhat Surrealistic approach--bare trees and rocks. One of the panels is downstairs, and there's one here showing a little cracking, but I don't think that's the fault of the medium. I think it's a fault of the way I painted it. What's supposed to happen, I'm not sure. I've been watching for deterioration.

SCHIPPERS

We have a interesting portrait here.

NUTTING

That's Edgar Allan Poe. It was another one of these occasions where, "Well, I've got a little time. I can do a little painting." I happened to see in a magazine a reproduction of an old daguerreotype of Poe. I thought it was a very

interesting head; so I made a quick sketch of him. It was low in tone, and you can see the person was a lover of Velásquez. I don't say anymore than that.

SCHIPPERS

We have out here a rather powerful drawing. It's a very wild sort of subject.

NUTTING

That was another series of drawings I made. I don't think I have any now. I have this one, and another that was one of my more successful ones I sold. It's an ink drawing, Indian ink on good Bristol board, which of course will take more punishment than most paper will. It was done with a certain definite approach, as were the other drawings in the series. It was done without any preparatory sketches or any preparatory penciling on the paper, but simply taking the ink and pen and brush and making a drawing. I think it was an important kind of experience for me, because a painter must be very careful of his preparation. Otherwise, he's exhausted himself getting ready to make the picture, and when he makes the picture, why, he's given what he has to give and the thing will lack vitality because it's gone into all sorts of preparation. In reading the biographies of painters, I've found that they've all been conscious of that to a very large extent. The painter [Ignacio] Zuloaga, a Spanish painter, who in his day was very well-known--a forgotten painter now, though his things I think are far more interesting than people seem to find them--made no sketches. He used to write all his ideas in a little notebook. He would carry an idea around in his head maybe for years, and finally when it jelled in his mind, he'd take a canvas and paint and make his picture. These drawings I think had a certain vitality that I obtain. Again it goes back to the fact that you have to have self-acceptance. The Flemish painters undoubtedly made very careful preparations, step by step, and did marvelous things. One will say, "Well, if I could only do that." But you try to do it, and find that you're simply slugging along and nothing very much happens. You get a little comfort when you find that other painters in the same boat were very great painters. I can't imagine Goya, for example, mooning over the thing and tracing his drawings and rearranging this and juggling that and making studies and sketches and so forth. If he had, he would have never gotten anything done. But that doesn't mean that he's any less one of the very great ones. Hans Holbein's work, for example, was the antithesis to that sort of a feeling; so that your temperament, your feeling, what you can do, the way in which it wants to exist, is what one must search for. Frank Perls had an exhibition years ago when he was directing the American Artists' Galleries. He liked this drawing quite a lot. I don't know how much he liked it, but he was very nice about it. He had it in a showing at the gallery. Nobody bought it. This is one of the Maroger things that's crackling. As I say, it's the only one that's done that, so I don't blame Maroger for that. The rest of it seems to be in very good shape.

SCHIPPERS

Now, below it is one of the...?

NUTTING

It is a little palette knife sketch inspired by, not representing, a church not far from Monterey, Mexico, and is in a little Mexican frame.

SCHIPPERS

And that was one you did very early?

NUTTING

No. That was done on a trip to Mexico in the fifties [1952]. Again I can verify that because I have a diary of that period.

SCHIPPERS

Apparently we have another one of your small ones that was done fairly early.

NUTTING

This is the one we were just looking at a while ago. That was done sometime in the fifties.

SCHIPPERS

And it's a woman in white, standing before a table.

NUTTING

Yes. It is a framed picture and a suggestion of art objects. [tape off] It seems to be about 10" x 11". That was a memory sketch, or rather an adaptation of memory. I'm continually these days trying to store my memory with sensations and visions and feelings, using them more than direct painting from nature.

SCHIPPERS

That green is rather an interesting hue for you. I think I see that popping up more in some of your more recent efforts.

NUTTING

I've found I have to be careful of green. I'm inclined sometimes to get rather an unpleasant green, but I would like to use it and control it well.

1.51. TAPE NUMBER: XXVII, Side One (December 8, 1966)

SCHIPPERS

This week we're continuing the tour of the house to make comments on your paintings, and we're in the bedroom. Starting on this wall, there are several drawings. This one in the center is very much like several of the ones that have been photographed and that we have talked about. About when were they done?

NUTTING

A few years ago. I don't remember just when. I do an immense amount of this sort of thing. On the wall here, one is rather old, a curiously baroque sort of figure drawing, and next to that is a sheet of pen studies: a little composition

sketch of three figures and some figure studies and a couple of heads. They seem to be more or less either memories or improvisations, I don't remember exactly which. I'm very fond of using a pen. Next to that is a composition of figures and some forms, more or less the sort of thing you'd see along the beach--rotten pieces of wood, piers, bits of rock and one thing and another. It is definitely a romantic sort of a composition, more a feeling of, or a searching for a mood than anything else, in contrast to the one next to it, which is more a research in natural form. If anybody wants to figure out exactly what it's all about, the composition would be a little bit confusing, but it reminds me of a little cartoon I saw in a French paper once, of a man looking at a rather abstract painting of a still life and says, "Hm. Evidently, an allusion to some well-known comesti." [laughter] This of course has a little more obvious feeling of figures in relation to rock and water, and even a suggestion of a sailboat in it. Next to it is the sort of thing that one does an immense amount of, if one draws very much, a number of sketches on a rather somewhat toned paper, with sepia or possibly burnt umber. Like so many of my drawings, they have not gone any further than the sketches, which I think is one of the very definite weaknesses of my activities in drawing. I draw too much just for the pleasure of drawing. Looking at great collections of drawings, those of people who did a great deal, such as Paolo Veronese or Rubens, you can feel that they were all definitely in relation to other activities. The drawing might be quite beautiful in itself, but it was always some development on a larger scale in mind, either a search for a composition or for procuring data and studies for the use in painting. Of course, some painters did very little drawing. There are hardly any drawings of Greco or Velázquez or Caravaggio. Apparently they painted; they didn't draw very much. In contrast to Rembrandt, who did thousands of these marvelous little drawings--landscapes, figures, compositions--and apparently largely for the delight of drawing. Some of them are studies for his paintings or his etchings, but again his etchings are the same love of graphic expression that would parallel his work in painting.

SCHIPPERS

Here's a drawing over on this back wall.

NUTTING

That's a drawing from nature, a sketch of my wife.

SCHIPPERS

Was that in any way a preparation for one of the paintings?

NUTTING

No, not directly. If people knew the amount of drawing that I've done, they'd rather wonder that I didn't draw better, because it must run into quite a fabulous number. I don't know the actual quantity that I have turned out in the course of

my life, and so much of it of course has fallen by the wayside, which is regrettable.

SCHIPPERS

There are also a number of your paintings in the room. This one that we're looking at is what?

NUTTING

That is a small canvas; it's about 14" x 18".

SCHIPPERS

And do you recall when that was done?

NUTTING

Well, that was done about five, six, seven years ago.

SCHIPPERS

And it's very definitely a figure with clothes on, which is something of a departure for you.

NUTTING

It didn't have any special theme. I've forgotten what inspired it. If it were more successfully developed, there'd be a feeling of light shining into the room, with a woman descending stairs, and the bare suggestion of other people outside this house. To be successful, it would be something that would be very subtly painted in tonal relations, the light quality, the reflected light, tone, color. It's abstract in the sense that it is no special costume, no special place, no special feeling of trying to represent nature, but rather the appeal of light and form and a certain movement. Again, it is definitely [an example of] the romantic side of my work. As I've described myself before: people ask me what sort of work do you do, and I sometimes say, "Well, I'm an incorrigible romanticist." It is something I have had the idea that I would work out of. I am very much against trying to force yourself into something that is different from what you're trying to do--to intellectualize too much. If you change in your feeling and your attitude, the picture will take care of itself. An idea that I think is very useful for the student is not to will your picture too much into being and not to criticize it while you're doing it. Look upon it as something rather living in itself. It wants to be, and it's your business to find out--what does it want to be? What sort of life does it want to live? It's a sort of an "as if" approach to the thing, instead of criticizing it because the composition is not good because of this; or the color is not good because of that; or the drawing is not good because of some preconceived idea. There must be that period in which you're absolutely uncritical and in which you accept what you are and what happens. Then, go on from there and use your intellect in-between times. Do some hard thinking the next day, or after the thing cools off and you see it objectively, but don't smash it on the head while it's trying to be. If it's going to be a very strong romantic feeling, as in my case, and has been all through my life, I don't resist

it, even though I may intellectually resist it or criticize it. That is, its life, not mine really.

SCHIPPERS

Does the romantic show up in that still life over there?

NUTTING

To a certain extent, yes. I don't know if I'm wrong or not, but I feel that it does. There were some objects on a table before me when I painted it. But I used it as a point of departure more than an actual rendering of the thing. Mr. Chase would criticize it right away because of a certain falsity of values, because I hadn't got the color of the object, and he'd talk about handling and light and texture and things--"Now look at nature, you must represent nature." I wasn't too keen about representing nature. Back of those things, in abstract forms, in a certain tonality of grays, there was a quality I found appealing.

SCHIPPERS

Again it's about 14" x 18". It is several bottles and a bowl. When was it done?

NUTTING

About the same time as this thing of the woman descending the steps. I imagine between five and eight years ago.

SCHIPPERS

When was the landscape done?

NUTTING

The landscape was done after one of our trips to Texas in the trailer. We made a good many trips back and forth between California and Texas, and I always enjoyed them very much. The only really tiresome part to me was west Texas, but I always got a great feeling of exhilaration in the states of New Mexico and Arizona. I didn't make very elaborate sketches or studies, but I used to watch the bare hills and plains and make notes in small pocket sketchbooks, trying to memorize and understand things. The skies especially in that part of the country seem to be especially beautiful. One thing that I miss in southern California are those wonderful dramatic skies. This was not exactly a memory thing, but composed from my notes and sketches in my pocket sketchbook, after getting back to Los Angeles.

SCHIPPERS

It's about 12" x 16". And the texture on it is very deceptive.

NUTTING

It's an oil. It is very roughly framed; a lot of my things are just casually framed, with most anything I happen to have around to stick my pictures into. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

Would you say it is one of your more successful or more carefully worked out landscapes?

NUTTING

Yes. I think it's rather successful. It's rather literal, in a way rather illustrative. There's not much search for anything. It's very simply to express a feeling and the pleasure that I had in that sort of motif--the hills and the impressive horizontal feeling, plain and flat, the bare sculpturesque rocks and hills and mountains, also a certain sense of loneliness that you can get out in that part of the world that's not so common elsewhere.

SCHIPPERS

We have some over here, starting left to right.

NUTTING

A study of a head, which is 11" x 14". This has a certain amount of significance to me. The idea of portraiture in which you're naturalistic is something that I have struggled against, and one reason why I don't like to do commissioned portraits too much is because the average person wants something that is life-like; and on the other hand, I don't want to willfully get too abstract. Not that I don't think that some of the portraits that Vuillard did in the last years of his life aren't quite remarkable, but to make it more of a painting and convincing in simplification is what I was trying to attain in this study.

SCHIPPERS

Do you recall when you did it?

NUTTING

Well, it's since 1960, I think. Some years ago, but not too old.

SCHIPPERS

The one next to it is 16" x 20".

NUTTING

Sometimes the forms in the canvas seem to influence one's feeling for size.

SCHIPPERS

Now when was that done?

NUTTING

At about the same time as the head.

SCHIPPERS

And that really is a departure for you, isn't it, as far as subject matter?

NUTTING

Yes. That seems to be. All of the things in here, I think, are Mrs. Nutting's choice among my pictures. I don't know that they're the ones that I would have chosen, but if people enjoy them, of course I'm glad to have them up. And she likes that.

SCHIPPERS

It is the buildings and the bay and railroad tracks.

NUTTING

Yes. I see the top of a freight car there. It's a composed picture, resulting more from looking at things than actually painting a scene. I had the idea of a

waterfront, I suppose, with a freight car, and also to make use of the various simplified forms of architecture that we see so much of nowadays.

SCHIPPERS

The one on the right over there is 16" x 20".

NUTTING

I'm sorry because that was so close to being a successful thing and it could very easily have been, if I had been a little more courageous in my use of my paint. It was done out-of-doors, directly from nature, in a comparatively short time, but it's typical of the sort of thing that I have done quite a lot of--to the extent which I've painted out-of-doors--except for my Corsican things. It is a going back to my boyish enthusiasm for the Impressionist painters. In other words, my one idea was to translate, as well as I could, what I saw before me, but under the influence of Impressionism. We went on a painting expedition down to Venice with a couple of friends of ours.

SCHIPPERS

And that was done how many years ago?

NUTTING

About 1950. A little more clarity of color through some of these passages here, I think, would strengthen the painting. Of course, the framing is a disadvantage. Properly framed, it would probably have a little more life. I'm sorry that I haven't done a great deal more of that sort of work. I really have more faith in it now than I've had recently, a certain penetration of nature and the things that you see around you, which then could be assimilated into more subjective things if you feel your work demands it.

SCHIPPERS

Now we have an outdoor [scene]. That's 16" X 20".

NUTTING

That was rather quickly done, of necessity because it was done late in the evening when the light was changing so very fast. It was of some trees down in Santa Monica Canyon. That has one quality which this other thing I was just speaking of needs, because there the quality, what the French speak of as being well-nourished, is present. I mean it's not exaggerated; at the same time, it has texture, richness, and a feeling of the light and the out-of-doors. These I think were the only two things that have survived of that sort of painting, of the direct objective translation of the effects before me, with as little as possible any preconceptions, the influences being inevitable, because one doesn't learn to paint from nature, one learns to paint from other painters. They asked Renoir, "How does one learn to paint?" Renoir's reply, I think, was probably rather unorthodox so far as his fellow painters at that time were concerned, such as Monet and Sisley and others, whose one idea was to look at nature and forget all about museums. But Renoir's reply was: "Dans le musée, parbleu!" (In the

museum, by Jove, one learns to paint!) [laughter] But I wasn't thinking of Impressionism. I wasn't thinking of anything except that I experienced this sunlight on a very late afternoon. The sun was setting, and it was getting very warm.

SCHIPPERS

How was the seascape done?

NUTTING

That is memory. It is up at Cambria. I spent a lot of time on the seashore, and I did a large number of things of that size from nature. But this one was not done from nature. It was an effort to use what I had learned in painting from nature to express a feeling more than an objective immediate experience. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

This is 16" x 17". And that looks like Maroger's medium?

NUTTING

Yes. That is Maroger's medium, curiously enough. You're right. I had forgotten about that. It seems to be in very solid condition. That Maroger's medium is rather mysterious. They prophesy that all sorts of horrible things are going to happen to your pictures, but that is fairly old. I don't know how old that would be now, but ten years anyway. I remember that Karl With was the last director of that Museum of Modern Arts that they had in Beverly Hills, and he picked that out for an exhibition, much to my surprise, and I did it just as an experiment in the use of the medium. It's just a spontaneous improvisation.

SCHIPPERS

And almost completely abstract, although there's a definite reference to a small form over on the right.

NUTTING

Like the man with his comesti is delivering them to the ship, which seems to be in a rather tattered condition, and a figure and water and sky, a certain drama of movement. The little one next to it over here is one of the oldest ones that have survived of my work. That was very shortly after my first marriage. We went down to Florence and spent the summer there, and I had a paint box of that size. I used to go out and paint out-of-doors quite a lot. It's about a 9" x 12" panel. It was done on the banks of the Arno, with a palette knife. That quiet-looking water is the one that has been so disastrously on the rampage recently. Then the little painting of my wife's of nasturtiums. [tape off] The one on the chair is another one of that series of small things that I did with the Maroger's medium. It seems to be square, about 11" x 11". A curious size. Again, it seems to be surviving quite well. I'm not quite sure whether anything is happening to it or not. I have a little feeling that it's going down in tone a bit, but I'm not sure. They were all done at the same time. I suppose it was along about 1948, somewhere in the latter part of the forties.

SCHIPPERS

And there are five figures on it, some draped and one nude.

NUTTING

And that theme which has been so common in my work--sea, sky and arrangements of figures.

SCHIPPERS

That red or crimson is quite a vivid bit of color in that particular relationship.

NUTTING

Yes, it has a quality that I like very much.

SCHIPPERS

And is that because of a certain viscosity of the medium that you were able to achieve that?

NUTTING

I can't quite analyze it. It did help. I mean, if you have a medium that's very responsive, very pleasant to use, your feeling comes out more easily. All of the forms hold their place so well on the picture plane; at the same time the recession of the figures in the distance is very evident without using the differences in tonal value that you'd be studying in Impressionism, that the shadows in the distance would be lighter and cooler than they would in figures near you. It is partly in the actual feeling of the paint. It gives you, I think, that feeling, and the fact that the medium did help me out quite a lot, in being able to paint lightly and yet with a certain feeling of solidity, in contrast to the impasto.

SCHIPPERS

And we have one over the fireplace?

NUTTING

Yes. The other day I got out that sketch, which I've always liked quite a lot. It was done directly from nature, up near Cambria. I thought it was completely ruined because the heat and the smoke had reduced it to a ghost of a picture, and I thought that it had completely destroyed it. But apparently a lot of the damage was surface damage. So I gave it a good scrubbing with Ajax [laughter] and got off a lot of I-don't-know-what. I suppose the combination of the heated paint and the smoke made this ghostly brown landscape. Well, it did destroy the color quite a bit. It's now much more of a monochrome than it was originally, but all of my drawing of the trees and the composition is there. It may be even improved, I don't know. I can't tell. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

Now we're back in the studio. There are a number of things. One's on the floor here; that's a watercolor.

NUTTING

That of course is obviously a sketch directly from nature. It was done inside the trailer on one of our trips to Texas. A still life, very rapidly brushed in. A study from nature. More or less of the same spirit as the one on the middle wall above it. A still life with autumn leaves and a champagne bottle and one of my own watercolors in the background.

SCHIPPERS

And when was that one done?

NUTTING

It was done in the studio across the street from Clark, my first studio that we built. In the middle fifties, I'd say.

SCHIPPERS

And is there another watercolor up there?

NUTTING

No. The watercolor we were speaking of is in the middle, and to the left is a sketch done one evening of my first wife. It's another one of these things where if I stop soon enough, I seem to retain some of the real reason for doing it. To me, it's very evocative of her, much more so than a complete portrait would be. If I had it around, I would always feel that I had more a picture of her than any photograph, for example, or even one of my more elaborate efforts. It seems to be more her, for some strange reason. It was done very, very quickly and was done by lamplight and on a small panel, 8" x 10". And two very charming things of Muriel's on each side of my watercolor. They are oil, small panels.

SCHIPPERS

Now there's one just around the corner.

NUTTING

That was a composition made by putting two plaster casts together in a rather unusual position.

SCHIPPERS

Yes, 16" x 12".

NUTTING

Two plaster casts: one of a horse in rather active movement; and Venus de Milo which I have laid beside it in a prone position, with the head towards us, making two rather strong diagonals across the canvas, with the line movement of the horse in one direction, and I think there's sort of a downward feeling of the movement of the figure in the other direction. In other words, I was not making a setup of anything that you'd see naturally in relating any of the objects, but was finding an interesting relationship--and a rather dramatic one--of the two figures, so the painting is rather indirect. It's painted over again and glazed and painted into, an effort to get depths.

SCHIPPERS

And when did you do that?

NUTTING

I would imagine that was in the late fifties. That was done in the studio after this watercolor that I just mentioned. That was before I had my present studio.

SCHIPPERS

We have a small one up here on the wall.

NUTTING

Yes, a little composition sketch, more or less in the same mood as those figure compositions done in the Maroger medium, though this was not done with that medium. It's a simple painting in oil, without any tricks whatsoever, the sort of thing I did a great deal of--small compositions, searching for color and tone.

SCHIPPERS

Now these things over here on the window side are some of your very latest efforts.

NUTTING

Yes. I wouldn't say "efforts" in the sense that I gave them too much consideration, but after the fire and not having had a chance to do anything for some time, I just picked up my paint and started to paint. One is a figure composition, again the old theme of the ocean, sea, sky, and nude figures. Another is a quick study of a still life. And a head which is very superficial. A head of Rubens that fascinated me quite a lot and I made sort of a variation of Rubens in an effort to get a little more acquainted with him from a reproduction or print.

SCHIPPERS

Would you say something is happening to your color?

NUTTING

Yes, I think there is. Again without planning ahead, as I say, I'm watching what happens more than trying to make something happen, and I think there's going to be more clarity of color, more pleasure in colorful things. I was speaking the other day that I was inclined not to notice the actual hue. Instead, I notice relations of light and dark, warm and cold, but if you asked me whether a tone was towards the green or the violet, I wouldn't think for a moment. I'd think of it as a certain cool tone against a light one, or maybe against a dark, warm tone. And when somebody would say, "Well, that tone was green." Why, then I'd suddenly realize that it was green. [laughter] But it didn't impress me too much in that direction; I was looking for its function as color in particular. Now I think I am getting rather younger in my feeling for the gaiety of hue, that in my early work is completely absent, in a way. It seems to be gaining on me in my late things, which has happened, I've noticed, with a great many painters. It happened with Bonnard--his amazingly inventive use of color when he was quite an old man. Beautiful, joyous, wonderful color. His earlier things are more tonal and more subdued and quiet. Early Delacroixs are not very colorful,

but get marvelously colorful towards the end. With Van Gogh, the same thing happened. So the same sort of psychological development may be taking place in my work. I don't really know, but I think it's very probable. [tape off]

SCHIPPERS

I was just taking notice of some of the little oil sketches here on the desk.

NUTTING

Well, they are the sort of things that accumulate through the years. You forget when you did them or why you did them. The first one I remember very distinctly. It was done in Italy after my first marriage, in Venice. I got myself a little thumb box, a little paint box that you can hold in your left hand, more or less as you would a palette. It was very small, and you could set the palette and wrap up a couple of brushes and a rag and put them in your pocket, and you could go out and stop and make a sketch. In those days, I felt I must do a great deal of work out-of-doors. As I have said before, those were the days when painting out-of-doors was looked upon as a much more essential part of an artist's experience than it is now. I did a great many of these things. I said that the oldest thing in the way of a painting that survived was the one in the bathroom, but as a matter of fact, this was done a month or so before [the other], because this was done in Venice before we went to Florence. It is the Piazza San Marco during some sort of a festive occasion, when they had huge banners floating in the breeze in front of the Church of St. Mark. Here is a little composition of nude figures.

SCHIPPERS

That's a rather unusual watercolor.

NUTTING

That, curiously enough, is by the brother of Raoul Dufy. That's by Jean Dufy. I don't remember how or when I acquired it. I bought it, I think, in Paris at some sale or exhibition.

SCHIPPERS

One of your own above it was of Muriel, right?

NUTTING

Yes. That was a little demonstration. Not long ago, one of my pupils had a way of painting in which she would do the thing piece by piece without consideration of her picture as a whole. So I made a ten-minute sketch in which I tried to show her that by keeping the thing going all at once you had much more chance of success than when you pieced on, piece by piece, without any idea of what your final effect was going to be. You get relationships of values and shapes. It would be extremely difficult [to paint piece by piece], unless you had extraordinary powers of visualization. There are painters who can, and I had a friend who was rather wonderful that way. He could begin up at one corner of the canvas and paint that part and keep on going. When he got to the

other corners of the canvas, the picture was finished, and perfectly. But apparently he had an almost eidetic sort of vision, that he could project on the canvas what he was going to do, and all he had to do was go in and put the paint as the picture demanded. But there are very few of us who have that. It's sort of like the sense of absolute pitch that some musicians have. It doesn't mean that having it makes him a talented musician, or having that faculty makes him essentially a better painter, but it's a very convenient one to have. A vast majority of us, especially in direct painting, have some means of keeping the thing going as a whole, with a sense of the relative arrangement of part to part to keep the integrity of the picture. In other words, if one does a painting that way, it is really finished from the very beginning. You could stop any place and it would be one picture.

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