Smithsonian
*Archives of American Art*

# Oral history interview with Edward Dugmore, 1994 May 13-June 9

Funding for the digital preservation of this interview was provided by a grant from the Save America's Treasures Program of the National Park Service.

**Contact Information**
Reference Department
Archives of American Art
Smithsonian Institution
Washington. D.C. 20560
www.aaa.si.edu/askus

## Transcript

### Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Edward Dugmore on May 13, 1993. The interview was conducted at Edward Dugmore's home in New York by Tram Combs for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Interview

ED: EDWARD DUGMORE
MD: EDIE DUGMORE [MRS. DUGMORE]
TC: TRAM COMBS

Tape 1, Side A (45-minute tape sides)

TC: This is an interview for the Archives of American Art, conducted by Tram Combs for the Archives with Edward Dugmore. There will be three voices on the tape. This is Tram Combs speaking.

ED: This is Edward Dugmore.

MD: And this is Edie Dugmore.

TC: Edie is Mrs. Dugmore. She is sitting in on the interview for information that doesn't come immediately to mind, and any disagreements about [our accuracy]. [all chuckle]
Ed, tell us about your background, your family.

ED: Okay, I was born in 1915. I have two brothers, approximately four years apart. Older brother and a younger brother.

TC: Their names?

ED: There's Leonard, and then myself, and then Stanley is the youngest. My father came over from England, and my mother, and he was a photographer.

TC: With your mother?

MD: No.

ED: No, he didn't do that; that's right. I forgot that. He was a photographer there, so when he came to this country he carried through on his photography, and I used to walk around with him when he carried his gear. He had so much stuff with his cameras. His cameras with a tripod and special things for it. And then. . . .

MD: He had to work.

ED: I know.

TC: Was he an amateur photographer?

ED: Not necessarily, no. I still have some of the cards that he'd put out when he'd travel around on a bicycle, [all] from Birmingham—Birmingham, all through the middle country and then go right out to London—and try to sell these photographs, right then and there on the spot.

TC: What kind of photographs did he make?

ED: Well, most of the ones of the early days were glass plates.

TC: And they were of architecture? Or landscape portraits?

ED: Well, he did architecture, too, but mostly he was interested in people that would want him to take a photograph of their place. For instance, I have a photograph up there of his on the wall, which is the Heublein Tower in Connecticut. It's on top of a mountain, and he took that for that group of men who had that tower. They put it up there; they were very wealthy people.

TC: That's the Heublein, H-e-u. . . .

ED: Yeah, the Heublein is the same as the Heublein distillers.

TC: H-e-u-b-l-e-i-n.

ED: That's it, yeah.

TC: Thank you.

ED: And that was printed in the Hartford Current of nineteen thirty . . . probably '32 or '33, right in there. And it's a rotogravure—a brownish rotogravure, in those days. And anyhow, the thing with my father was, as a photographer. . . . He worked in different factories, like we all had to do probably in those days, but he. . . .

TC: But not in photography?

ED: Well, he worked on his own photography on his own. He did things between times, like on weekends or something, he'd do that. And sometimes he would take a building, because I know buildings in Connecticut down on Main Street that were very well known. He'd take a shot of that, and that was it; he just took it on his own. And these were all glass plates. So one of the things about him was that we thought, he assumed, as I grew, well, he'd take me to the darkroom, which was the pantry. In the bathroom, the big tub, is where he printed it, where he would develop them, which is always. . . . When I realized what we were doing. . . . He was doing it in the bathroom because we hadn't got any other room. He has these plates, so you couldn't move. Pots, pans. But he said, "Now I want you to see the thing that I'm that doing." So he'd get in the pantry. He'd have it cleaned out a bit. My mother always said, "Well, here we go again." [chuckles] And then he'd have to put a light in there—a red light or orange light; red light—and then outside, "Don't open the door," and so forth, and then he'd say, "Okay, come in, Francis." He'd call me by my middle name. And I'd go in and I'd stand there, and he'd say, "Now watch." This is the way [it is]. [gesturing:] And in a [little lights in], and I'd watch this thing, and he'd do this with one, take it out of there with a clipper, put it in there, and then he'd say, "Now, watch this." And I'm right there, and I watched it, and he'd get me to do this, and he kept coming up and get this images, comes right out till it's perfect, he'd say, "Now that's magic. That really magic. From there to there." [patting, to illustrate] "You got that?" I'd say, "Yep." You know, okay, and I was so exited I'd tell everybody outdoors that I saw my father make photographs that were magic, and all this stuff.

But I worked with him a long time. He had me go with him some places, to these different houses, and these people were like on Prospect Avenue, on the north end, just before West Hartford. These were all wealthy men that found out that he was this photographer that was going around taking pictures of 'em, why don't he take some of them. So he'd go over and do that. So I'd go with him, and sometimes Leonard would do it—my oldest brother. Because he was older and he was already working somewhere. And so I'd meet all these fellows and [get, got] to know them later, you know. And anyhow, my father, between times he'd work in the Underwood . . . I guess, the Underwood Tool Factory.

MD: Typewriter.

ED: Typewriter factory, rather, and then the Pratt and Whitney small tool. And that's where he stayed, I think, is Pratt and Whitney. He didn't work anywhere else. That's what he did between times. But he was also in the National Guard. He joined that thing—you know, the march and the. . . . But my mother, she saw me drawing. She saw my drawings. I still have some of what she did.

TC: How early did she. . . .

ED: Oh, this is very early, when I was very young, just I'd make some. . . .

TC: How young?

ED: I don't know. I had to be. . . . What was it?

MD: Well, you had one on the wall that you did when you were eight.

ED: That's nine or eight, is when that. . . .

MD: Yeah.

ED: But I had done other drawings, but I just, with a pencil or anything, I'd just draw anything, whatever I thought of—a squirrel or anything. I didn't look at anything; I just remembered it and said, "I'll draw it." And so she was the one who saw that, and then as time went on, by the time I went to. . . . All the jobs I had, you know! I worked in all those places. My father wanted me to work in a factory. I said no. He says, "You've got to work in a factory." So I had to work in a factory to get the money to help pay the bills. But my mother said, "No, he's going to go to an art school." And my father said, "Oh, no, he isn't. He's going to be a photographer. There's more money in photography. There's nothing in an art school." You know, nothing in [painting, paying]—art—for him.

So, okay, before that. My mother was a seamstress—at home—and she would make all these clothes for people around the neighborhood, or she was in all these lodges. People went to a lodge, and they'd live in a lodge. I mean, they'd join a lodge of whatever it was. She was in the Royal Neighbors of America. My father was in all of them. He said, "You have to go to these because this is where you can get people to know you, and they'll be able to get you a job. You know, all of those things. Which I saw, yes, but it didn't bother me any at the time. And so my mother said one day, she said, "You know, Francis, they have a thing they call the Civilian Conservation Corps."

TC: That's CCC.

ED: Yeah, the CCC. And then so she said, "I think maybe you could go there." I said, "Well, what is it?" And she told me, and I said, "Oh! Great! I'd like to go there." It was forestry, and I liked forestry. And so off I went there, and that brought in some of the income—very little of course—but I enjoyed it very much. I got pretty strong. I think I was eighteen then. And back then I was like one of these heavy . . . a muscle guy. So that helped. But by that time—and I'd gone to CC camp—that's '34, '33.

MD: 1933.

ED: '33. I got out of there.

MD: Hm mm.

ED: And it was 1934. By that time I was ready to. . . . I had done some drawings up there of the guys like I did in the Marine Corps much, much later on. Sitting around, and they'd say, "Can you draw me?" I said, "Sure." So I draw these other characters, you know. And they'd say, "Hey! What do you want for it?" I'd say, "Ah, keep it." But so that got me into another whole thing that I would. . . . I wanted to go to an art school now, after this. So when I got back, right away I said, "I want to go to an art school," and my father said, "No. At this point, it's not a good time." But my mother argued with him, obviously, because she said, "You're going to art school."

TC: This was about age. . . .

ED: Oh, 1934 was. . . .

MD: Nineteen; it was nineteen.

ED: Yeah, and right back. Eighteen, nineteen from a CC camp. And so that was one of the. . . . And the scholarship—I had a scholarship. If I remember right, they gave me a five-year scholarship, for some reason. Because they said, "Bring your stuff down," so I brought all my stuff that I had painted. There are paintings in there [_____ (in the portfolio he submitted to apply?)—Ed.], but I think they're mostly watercolors and some paint with oil.

TC: Which school was this?

ED: This was the Hartford Art School in Hartford, Connecticut. And so the thing there was that they had three or four different teachers. There was three or four different kinds of classes, of course. And what I liked about it was that when I went in everybody else just got in there, so we weren't separated. We all met each other and that was it. And so we all became friends and a lot of them I've seen recently.

TC: Oh, you're still in contact with them?

ED: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. One's down in Florida. A lot of them died, of course, but most of them are around, that I know of. And one of the girls, whose husband died, and I had to have some [idle auto joins], I'd go to him, [Jess] [Quickens], and Reata—she's Reata Rudolfo—is one of the students that came late at that school, and I got to know her and she saw my drawings, like she saw some of Jack's, because I knew Jack. Jack was a little older than she was. Jack Rudolfo. Reata Overman. . . .

MD: Oh, Reata O'Connell was her name in school.

ED: Reata O'Connell at the time, right.

MD: She's the one who did the ceramics.

ED: Oh, yeah, that's the one that did that. And so when. . . . Where the hell was I now?

MD: Jack, the___.

ED: Yeah. So when she came up here to see us. . . . She contacted us; used to come from New York with some

women to see these different things and found out we were here. She came to visit us, and she will be around again probably next week. But she came in and she said, “All those drawings they used to throw on the floor.” And I said, “What do you mean?” She said, “Well, you used to sit there and draw these figures and then throw it on the floor.” And I said, “Well, what’s the matter?” She says, “Well, people were stealing those things.” I said, “What do you mean, they’re stealing them?” And they did. Now I didn’t know it. I didn’t know. I had some of them, but I realized. . . . I didn’t think so. I’d just go like that, you know, sitting on a stool and just holding it on my lap like that, and just [falling in a line, following a line] like I said [the last time], I would just make a line drawing like those I done right there [on the wall—Ed.] at the art school. That’s done in 1943.

MD: 1934.

ED: I mean, 1934. And ‘35.

MD: [Points to something?]

ED: Yeah, that’s what I’m going to get to. And so when the guy [in] [Yorandia] School looked at those, he said, “Those are going to go into the archives—like his archives.” So he got them.

MD: [gestures for caution?]

ED: I’m going to put it on tape anyhow. I don’t think he’s . . . I don’t know if he’s alive. [chuckles] But there’s another fellow who I mentioned before, was Leslie Lintelmann, and he was a guy from Germany, and he came over here about 1938. His family was in a. . . . During the war. And he was a teacher at the Hartford Art School.

TC: He was. . . .

ED: He was one of the teachers. There were three teachers. There was Frederick Hind, who was the director, Leslie Lintelmann, and this tall guy like. . . .

MD: Howard Ahrens.

TC: Do you know how their names are spelled? How is Lintelmann spelled?

ED: Lintelmann is L-i-n-t. . . .

MD: . . . t-e-l-m-a-n-n, Lintelmann.

ED: Lintelmann, yeah.

MD: Yeah, and it’s Leslie.

ED: Leslie—Leslie Lintelmann.

TC: And the other? The last one you mentioned was. . . .

ED: Oh, Fred. . . . No, no.

MD: Fred, yes. Frederick. . . .

ED: Frederick Hynd.

TC: And the third?

ED: The third was Howard Ahrens. I think it was A-h-r-e-n-s.

MD: Right.

ED: And each one. . . . Howard Ahrens was the fellow who just came out of this art school in New York, the. . . . I should know it.

MD: The Art Students?

ED: The Art Students League. As a student, and got this job teaching at our place. So he was all steeped in _____. Nickolaides and those men who . . . craftsman drawing of figures. And loose. Not tight. And Lintelmann unfortunately had the job of being the advertising sort of guy who was going to do calendars and stuff you had to do. I’ve got some around up in there. But he wasn’t that, see; he wasn’t that kind of a guy. Actually he was a great painter. But that was the job he accepted because he needed a job. He said, “I’ll take that job.” Which was fine for me.

And so he watched me quite a while. He'd see me doing these things and people taking them off the floor. I said, "That's all right." He said, "No, you should watch those things." When he saw those [gesturing], he said, "Gee, those are beautiful things. I don't know what to say about them. You should hold on to those," he said. But Fred Hynd came along and said those [were] what he wants for his office, and stuck it in there. So I said, "Well. . . ." And he said, "Gee, he shouldn't have done that." I said, "Well. . . ." And he was a little annoyed at me, because I said, "Well. . . ." See Hynd is the boss. And he said I could check, but he said, no, they were in their archives—whatever it is. So that was that. And then one Sunday. . . . My father knew the guy who was the keeper of the floors and whatnot in the Guard in the museum, and the museum was right part of the school, and so he said—his name was Wyse, an alcoholic—and he said. . . .

TC: W-i-s-e?

ED: Yep. And he's an old Englishman that my father knew from years back, but he was an alcoholic; he needed to stop drinking. But so I went in and rang and he come out and he said, "Hi, Eddie. [Freddie.] Come on in." So I'd walk around with him. I said, "Say, you got a key for that place up there?" "What place?" "Up in the back of Hynd's place." "What's in there?" "Well, he's got some things of mine that I wanted to get out today." He said, "Oh, sure." Because he didn't know the difference of what I was after. "Sure," he says. He let me in and I went around, and I took those two out of there.

TC: The two drawings that are now on your wall?

ED: Yeah, those two pen and ink.

TC: Were they on the wall of Hynd's office?

ED: Now, they were in a shelf or something like that. Not a cabinet; just a shelf, luckily, because I didn't know where they were. And at any rate that was that. I took them out and I said, "Thanks a lot." He said, "Oh, I'm glad to help you," and all that, and I said, "Gee." I had to get out of there in a hurry. I figured every minute I expected somebody. And nobody ever thought of that. And I don't think Hynd said anything about it, and so when I told him, and he says, "What did you do?" I said, "Well, I took them." He said, "Well, I didn't tell you to steal them!" I said, "No, I didn't do that." He said, "Well, but. . . ." The way he was like was, "Okay." In other words, because he says, "You should keep them. Actually," he says, "what they do in all art schools they take the best work of the students when they see them, when they're going by, and they say, "Well, take those _____. They all do that." So he says, "I didn't mean for you to take them." I said, "No, I know, but I mean. . . ." He said, "Well, you've got them now. That's good." And so we became quite close friends. He [tended to like] me and I liked him. Because we'd talk about a lot of things—of the war. He said, "There's a war coming up," and I'd say, "War?" and he'd say, "Yes, there's a war. You're just old enough, you guys, to get pitched in there, you know." So he said, "It's not going to be pleasant," so he said, "If you could you should go to north. Go to North Pole, anything like that." And. . . .

MD: [shows ED something?]

ED: That's what I wanted to get into, too. And so anyhow, Leslie. . . .

TC: Lintelmann?

ED: . . . Lintelmann. . . . Now, when Reata came. . . . See, Jack Rudolfo was in the class, but he was 28 at that time. We were younger, and he was an older guy—and very sharp, and a very great draftsman. You know, he could draw things just like you see them. I would say, "Now, there's a guy that's a real, artist." But then he saw what I was doing. "Hey," I said, "those are good. I like those." And so I liked his. But so I'd sit down and just make a quick drawing of him with a pencil and then make some other things with it. And so when Reata came up—that was his wife many years later. . . .

TC: Was Jack's wife?

ED: Jack's wife, yeah. Reata Rudolfo.

MD: [Forty years ago].

ED: That was his name, but she married twice since then, I think. But she came over. . . .

MD: Once since then.

ED: One, all right. [chuckles] I got to [make families] more, you know.

MD: Yeah.

ED: And so as we were standing around, she said, “I haven’t got anything from Jack at all, not even a _____, [anything] like him.” I said, “Reata, I got some right in there. I got the original right in there.” She says, “Where?” I said, “In a bunch of stuff there.” And I brought it out, and there’s Jack. . . . I’ve got the other ones. “Oh, my god!” she says. “Well, that’s the original.”

MD: It’s the original. It’s the drawing you did of Jack, your drawing.

ED: Yeah. And it’s partly sitting on a chair, part of his hands, and he’s like that, you know. [unintelligible, but probably describing how Jack was sitting—Ed.] And eyes like this. He’s like an eagle, you know. He’s one of those guys when he drew, he would, when I watched him would always. . . . Because I watched him a lot because we liked to go out and drink together, have a little drink between times, you know.

TC: Between classes?

ED: Well, no, classes was over, but afterwards we’d stop by the place where we’d get lunch at lunchtime, right not too far from the school, but sometimes we’d get a beer, which was okay beer. I never drank much at that time anyhow. And then Lintelmann used to say, “Well, let’s take a walk. . . .” He lived in a little place up on Park Street—on Main Street, I guess, up by Park Street—and so I went by there, and he said, “Come on, let’s go and have some lunch.” We’d have some lunch, and we’d have a beer, and that was good. He was like. . . . He said, “I like your work. I like you.” So that became the thing that we got to know each other very well. And he told me, he says, “The only thing you should is to make sure that you. . . . You have to work,” he said, “but you should stay [from] work, paintings, and just paint and paint and paint. Because that’s what you are. You’re a fine artist, so do it.” And I did. And then. . . . Let’s see if I can go jump right back up to here.

TC: Let me. . . .

ED: I gave her the regular Jack portrait, the original, so I kept the. . . . I give her the original, so I’ll make a copy. We had a copy . . . Edie had it made. So she has the original, which. . . .

MD: [inaudible, but probably prompting what ED says next.]

ED: Right, I was going to say for her son.

MD: Yeah.

ED: And so he got it, so now he knows. . . . There wasn’t any photographs around, either.

MD: He didn’t know what his father looked like.

ED: . . . looked like or anything.

MD: So he was so delighted to get this drawing of his father.

ED: He wrote me a nice letter. This was a drawing portrait, in pencil.

MD: Yes. It looked exactly like Jack.

ED: Yeah.

MD: Because he had wonderful cheekbones, and, you know, that kind of a face.

ED: He was a fiery Italian. When he didn’t like something he’d just [untranscribable sound signifying chopping motion]. But I have a lot of stories about him I won’t go into now, where he always done one of those of those things, and I’d know what he meant, so I’d side him, and he’d say, “Yeah, that’s it!” or something, and some of the other guys were like, you know, they weren’t. . . . He was kind of fierce. He looked always like he was mad as hell, but he wasn’t. He was just making a point, and his face had one of those looks on it if you don’t get something, you know, and anyhow. . . . So Reata, when she came up, I gave her the original drawing and Edie made a copy for myself, and the boy wrote a nice long letter that now he knows what he looked like. And I have other ones. I think I gave her a couple. That was when he was standing at the easel. He used to stand up at the easel. And she’s got them; I don’t. Sorry. I’d rather her had them.

TC: Let me ask. . . . Back up a couple of things. I think you told me there was another photographer in your family who was a wildlife photographer?

ED: Oh, yeah. This is. . . . Oh. . . .

MD: Radcliffe.

ED: Radcliffe Dugmore. I got the books over there, and there are copies of things in there. And my father knew him. Radcliffe came to this country when he wanted to see. . . . He'd heard about Canada, naturally, from England and that's how people were going to Canada and getting out and going here—many years ago. So he came to Canada, in the northwest, and he'd [tied] his cameras around with the same thing with the tripods and I'm sure they were glass plates because they didn't have the other ones yet. And he went all over the place with this camera on his back and so when he came to Connecticut for a talk on photography, like in this country, my father said, "We've got to go down and meet him." And he was down there at the Memorial, a big building called the. . . . What's the name of Memorial?

MD: Foot Guard Hall.

ED: Foot Guard Hall, was it? No, it wasn't the Foot Guard Hall.

MD: It's a _____.

ED: I thought it was the big new place. No?

MD: We can check that.

ED: Okay, Foot Guard Hall, then. And he showed these pictures of his. And he has the same face that I have, and I was astounded when I saw him. I said, "Well, you know, we have something in common." And we met him afterwards and talked with him, and then off he went.

TC: Let me ask about your earliest art instruction. Who other than your parents might have influenced you very early in life?

ED: Well, there was two grammar school teachers. One of them was. . . . [snaps fingers] Ah! I can't remember her name.

MD: Miss McCluney?

ED: Miss McCluney told me to stay writing poetry, because I was always writing when she was talking about something else. I'd be writing down there. And she told me one day, "Come up and see me after school." And she says, "Francis, you're not listening half the time when we're talking. I see you writing. What are you doing?" I said, "Well, I'm just. . . ." And she said, "Well, you shouldn't write in class, so write anytime afterwards. And by the way, would you come up after school? I want to take you to my place." She was an old lady—quite old. And so I says, "Yeah!" So she took me up and she showed me some of her things around, and I said, "Oh. . . ." She said now we can talk. And so she told me that, "You are an artist." I mean, you're a poet. You can write. You should write them. But don't do it in class." So she said, "Keep it up." And I'd do the things and show them to her. And she liked them and I probably give them [to her—Ed.] and I forgot what she got. But she said, "That's very good." And that's been poetry. But the other woman was. . . .

TC: What age were you at this time?

ED: I must have been twelve.

MD: I think seventh grade, twelve.

ED: Twelve? Yeah, somewhere around twelve. Feisty, just [sitting, getting] around to the thing, going to climb a mountain or something. And the art teacher was. . . .

MD: I don't. . . .

ED: What was it?

MD: Genevieve Anderson, I have.

ED: Genevieve Anderson, that's the one. There was two. And Squarey was another one. She was mostly drawing, but the other one is. . . .

TC: Squarey is S. . . .

ED: S-q. . . . I don't know Squarey. I don't think about. . . .

MD: I haven't heard the name.

ED: She was good, but she was talking about drawing. But Anderson said, "Why don't you copy one of these?"

And she gave me a picture to copy, so I just copied it, and this was in watercolor. And she said, “That’s very good.” So then she’d get me aside and say, “I’m going to take you to my house and see what I’ve got.” [chuckles at repetition] And she had all these different paintings. She knew. She’d bought paintings, and I said, “Oh! Wow! These are terrific.” She said, “Yeah.” But she says, “You can do those too, easy.” And so I decided, “Well, I’m going to paint, too.” So see those things—and this is before even art school—but I never got into oil paint much because I was too busy doing other things and I would do other things—watercolors or anything—crayons and things like that. So she was the one that really set me up. “You have to work somewhere, but” she says, “whatever you do don’t get hung up like”—that was my language—”don’t stay there. If you get in a factory. . . . You know, your father works in a factory. . . .” Which they all knew in those days, and everybody [knew] my father and mother. “Find your way and be an artist. I mean, you’re an artist; you stay that way. Just do it all around.” So that was good, because that’s exactly what I did. I just followed her advice right along—right into high school, and then out of art school, and things like that.

TC: Have you continued to write?

ED: Yes. Oh, yes. Letters. . . . I’ve ceased writing letters now, but I did write.

MD: Poems.

ED: No, in poems, I’ve got a whole bag, a whole [pack] of poems under there and _____ over there. Big pack of them from over the years.

TC: Have you published them?

ED: No. I almost did once, but I never did. By the time I got there, the guy had died or something. What happened to him? [chuckles]

MD: The man who was interested in publishing his poems—from some poet group—wrote and said, “I’m so sorry, Dugmore”—he had never met him—”I’ve looked forward to seeing your poetry. I’ve heard a lot about it. But I have just left the organization.”

ED: Something like that.

MD: That was it. He never tried again.

ED: So I didn’t bother. So I just left it. I’ve got a lot of them in there. But writes poetry, and does watercolors and so forth.

TC: You’re referring to Edie.

ED: Yeah. Edie does, I mean. Yeah, she does a lot of, as you know, watercolors. But the other thing I should mention is Harvey Harris, who is now down in Baton Rouge, down in there. He and I went to art school together, and became very close.

TC: In Hartford?

ED: In Hartford. Yeah, he lived in West Hartford, but he came to the school, which is across the border, _____ [it’s] the city. So he and I became very close. His family was very nice, and everybody I liked. But we used to always hike, liked to hike. So he’d just say, “Well, let’s go on a hike over to Avon Mountain,” or something like that. He was thinner then. Now he’s not so thin. He’s kind of a heavy guy down there, eating a lot of this food down in Baton Rouge. [chuckles] But he was always a gourmet. But we went down to see him a few years ago, and we had a great time. He’s painting, still painting. And drawing. But he never went to abstract painting. He was up here before once when we were living here—not too long ago actually; only a couple years ago—and he wanted to see some of my work. He said, “Gee, I don’t think I could do that.” I said, “Well, Harvey, you’re better off in what you’re doing. Abstract expressionism is something definitely another way.” But he did try a few, and they’re not bad, but they do have figures in them, abstract in a sense, but mostly a real figure than it is totally abstract. And he said, “I guess I stick to what I’m doing.” And I said, “You’re better off just going right along with it.” And he. . . .

MD: [passes note]

ED: Oh, yeah.

TC: Edie is passing notes to Ed occasionally.

MD: [laughs]

ED: [chuckling] See, got a couple things in my eyes, a couple of toothpicks. And when Thomas Benton. . . . Harvey was a figurative painter, in a sense, and he liked Benton, and I don't say I didn't like him, but he went out to. . . . I was going to go down to Mexico—I had it all worked out—and. . . .

TC: What year was this?

ED: This is nineteen. . . . Gee, let's forty. . . . Let's see, if I could just not. . . .

TC: After the war?

ED: Yeah. No. No, because he had a leave. He got trapped. . . . He got a note in the mail to come back. That's when we both came back, because of the war.

TC: So this is '40 or '41.

ED: '40 or '41. I wish Edie was there right now. I'll get into that in a minute. And so he went out there, and he's going out to Benton, well, like I said, I liked Benton, I liked his work—I hadn't met the guy—but that was another style. I didn't want to paint that style, and. . . . I've got to get this straight.

TC: How long were you out at Benton's?

ED: Well, about. . . . I didn't go out right away. He went out and stayed for a while. I think Harvey. . . . [calling to MD:] How long was Harvey there? Four years?

MD: At Kansas City? No, Harvey was there. . . .

ED: He didn't stay long did he?

MD: No. He was there about six months before you went out. . . .

ED: Yeah, I met Benton.

MD: . . . and then I went out after you, but we were only there like four months.

ED: Yeah, I met Benton. That's where I did that stone, one of the stones, there. Like that one of the. . . .

MD: The couple, yeah.

ED: Lithograph.

ED: And the couple in the picture.

TC: Did you get anything from Benton of value to you?

ED: Well, not in art. Not in. . . . It's what he did. He didn't care. . . . Actually, I started painting, I started doing some things, and he saw them. As a matter of fact his wife. . . . No. When I first went to see him. . . . See, I came later. Harvey went there. He said, "Come on out." I said, "I'm going down to Mexico with. . . ." Geez, what am I. . . .

MD: Orozco.

ED: Orozco. Orozco. And I said okay. But he died. I mean, it's right around at that time. And I said, "Now I can't go there." So I said, "Well, I better go to Mexico." And I said, "No, better not." So Harvey said, "Come on out. It's nice weather out here and all that, and they've got Indian girls here, some of the Indian tribes from around there." And I said, "Okay." but that didn't last long, now that I remember. He was out. . . . I don't know how long he was there before I was, but I know it wasn't very long and I didn't stay long either. That's when you came out.

MD: Yeah.

ED: And that was that trip when we all decided to leave.

TC: What trip?

ED: I drove out there, as a matter of fact. I went out there in an old Ford. I drove out there. And Edie was sick.

MD: With Stubby.

ED: Yeah, the dog—oh, my god! The dog. You know, I lived with that dog, so I couldn't. . . . He'd sit on my lap

and he'd moan and he'd "[untranscribable dog sound], I got to get out of here." And I'd say, "Okay," stop it, and he'd run out quick and take. . . .

MD: He was a springer.

ED: A springer spaniel. And his ears. He'd always step on his ears and fall right over and tumble up, and then he'd get up and howl, and I'd say, "You're a nice dog, but what am I doing with you out here in the middle of Kansas somewhere, coming across the plains?" He kept me alive. He kept me company, I'll tell you that. That dog! Anyhow, so Edie was supposed to go out with me, but she couldn't make it. She came up with this ear problem at the time.

MD: Eye problem.

ED: Eye problem, I mean. Yeah, well you had an ear thing, too?

MD: They didn't know it was my eyes. I was just very ill. And they put me in the hospital after you left.

ED: Yeah, and that scared the hell out of me.

MD: And it was something called [corioditis], which is probably related to my problem now, which is losing my sight.

ED: Yeah, back then.

MD: Back then. I kept it all these years, so. . . .

TC: But you did go out later?

MD: Yes, I did. I went out by train.

ED: Train. We met her at the railroad station.

MD: Oh, I should tell. . . .

ED: Tell him that.

MD: I should tell that story. I went out by train, very innocent me, very much in love.

ED: Waiting for her.

MD: Took the train up to Buffalo and then down through Chicago and then to Kansas City, and I sat with some woman from Chicago to Kansas City, and I was very excited about meeting my husband who was an art student out there. And I said, "Oh! I can't wait! He's going to meet me" She said, "How do you know he's going to meet you? He's been gone for two months." I said, "Of course, he's going to meet me." I got off the train, and I'm looking for Dug and I don't see him. And Harvey comes over, "Hi." [spoken in a drunken manner]

ED: But he was always plastered, too.

MD: I said, "Where's Dug?"

ED: At least he could walk. I couldn't. [chuckling]

MD: He said, "He's laying down on the bench. We went to a big ball last night."

ED: A big art school ball, and everybody drank. . . .

MD: Yeah. But I couldn't wait to get away so that that woman wouldn't see me looking for my husband. [laughs]

TC: She'd probably say she was right! [laughs]

ED: That's true. That was a funny story.

TC: How did you two meet? Oh, first, Edie, let me ask your name before marriage.

MD: It was Edith Ann Christina Oslund.

TC: Spelled. . . .

ED: O-s-l-u-n-d.

TC: And Christina is C-r-i-s-t. . . .

MD: C-h-r-i-s-t-i-n-a. And Ann was really Anna on the birth certificate. But I cut it down to Edith Ann. Edith Ann Oslund is what I went by.

TC: And you spell Ann without an E?

ED: That's right.

TC: And how did you meet?

ED: Well. . . .

MD: Your older brother. . . .

ED: Yeah, my oldest brother, who is living now out west, out in California, was going around with her second cousin, Florence Andersen. As a matter of fact, we just got a thing in the mail from my kid brother—I'll jump in here—who just sent us the whole thing of the beginning of the Dugmores. . .

MD: Family tree.

ED: . . . who married what and what. The tree. We just got it this morning. He's a PCPA and very sharp and knows all that, you know. And so, where was I?

MD: Leonard and Florence asked me who I was taking to my high school reception.

ED: Yeah, they were. . . . My brother said, "Well. . . ." Florence said, "Well, your brother's a good dancer." He said, "Yeah, he's a damn good dancer." Because I liked to dance. I used to dance a lot. We'd go to any of these halls and just grab somebody. "Dance?" "Sure." You know, and things like that. So that's how I met her. So we went over and went to this graduation . . . prom? What did they call it?

MD: Reception.

ED: Reception.

TC: High school graduation.

MD: High school reception.

ED: She was the south side of the town, and I went to Hartford High School. I never graduated; I just left and decided to be an artist, things like that. I never wanted to finish anything. That's the one thing. I just wanted to get to work, painting, training, running around, moving, moving around to see what to paint. And so that's how we met, see. We went to the thing, and then. . . . But I didn't see her for a while. I didn't. . . .

MD: That was January 1933, and we didn't see each other again till New Years' Day, 1934.

ED: Oh, yeah, I was with somebody else, I think. [laughs]

MD: Oh, in between, yes.

ED: In between, or something like that. I forget who. One of the art school's. . . . What was that again?

MD: Dorothy and I went to see I'm No Angel [We're No Angels?—Ed.]

ED: Oh, I know. See, I have to remember. She was walking, coming down the street, and I was with this other guy. Eugene [Losette, Lassett]. We called him "Legs." We called him Legs because he was so tall. He was a very tall guy, and he walked with this Ichabod Crane. He'd walk in a long stride, and he'd be way ahead, and I'd be always trying to hustle, so I'd tell him, "Now, slow down, and I'll catch up." And we're going down, and I looked. . . . We were on one side of the street, and there was two girls that were coming down on the other side of the street. So I said, "Gee, Legs, look at that couple over there!" Was that before or after you came out of the movies?

MD: Before.

ED: Yeah. And so they were right down and went into the movies. I said, "We ought to go to the movies and see who they are." [all laugh] So I don't know if we went in the movies. . . .

MD: No.

ED: But we didn't, so he wanted to go. I said, "You can go anywhere you want. I'm staying right here. That blond! That's the one I'm after." I said, "You can have the other one." The other one was a very nice girl, too, a Swedish girl.

MD: Dorothy Burgenholtz.

ED: Dorothy Burgenholtz. And so we waited, and he said, "I'm going." I said, "Go wherever you want. I'm going to stay right here." And don't know if he stayed or come back. All I remember is I waited till she came out, and I said, "Do you want to have a drink? Or you want something to eat? Or what?"

MD: No, I heard you say, "Oh, my god! I know her!" [laughs]

ED: Oh, that's it. See, I never. . . . The reason why I don't say that is because it sounds so dumb. But here I know her and I didn't even recognize her in that level.

MD: _____ was _____ _____.

ED: So that did that, so that's how we met—the second time—and then we. . . .

MD: And Dorothy invited us all to her place, and that's it.

ED: She said all come to her place, and so we went over there. . . .

MD: Yeah, that was the beginning.

ED: Yeah, we ate and we drank. . . . We couldn't drink in that house. In those days you didn't drink around much anyhow. But that was the beginning there. So from there on in, we went everywhere, for quite a while. It took us a while, didn't it?

MD: Oh, god, I could tell so many stories, but this is your story.

ED: I don't know why you shouldn't be on this thing instead of me. Two machines [two tape recorders—Ed.].

TC: When were you married?

ED: 1938.

MD: When were we married?

ED: 1938.

MD: August 20, 1938.

ED: August 20, yeah.

MD: So we went together a long time.

ED: Yeah.

TC: So you first began to go together in what year?

MD: In 1934. But in those days people did go together a long time, because it was Depression and we didn't have the money. [Dog or loud music (very odd sound) begins barking/screaming in background]

ED: It goes on at night, too. Get out of the way, shew! But her mother once she said, "Ooh! Why is he. . . ." I was in a CC camp, of course, when I came out, and I was already tan like . . . I was almost black, you know, dark. So her father said, "Who was that Italian she's going with?" [laughs] And her mother said, "He's not an Italian. He's a British." He said, "Oh, he's one of those limeys." She said, "No, his father was English, so he's English." He says, "Yeah, well. . . ." He didn't like it, because that was the first daughter, who was going around with somebody he didn't feel whether or not to let him be there. So that was an interesting part through there, with her family and my family—which took her in right away, of course. They liked her right away.

TC: Were you involved with the arts, Edie?

MD: No, except that I was an actress, growing up. Where I worked they had plays, and I was always the lead, because I liked to act. But I was not involved in the arts, but then, of course, we met so young I became involved. But I didn't work in the arts.

ED: She had at her school, she was Miss Millicent Montgomery, when I went to see that one. This is the south end, where her school. . . .

TC: This is a play.

ED: The play that they were in. What was the name of the play? Miss Montgomery? Your name was in there. Miss Millicent Montgomery, which is probably one of these tough dames who would come out there and say something in her own way, so became. . . . I was sitting there with this other guy.

MD: John Grilla.

ED: John Grilla.

TC: John Grilla, the sculptor?

MD: John Grilla, the painter.

ED: He's an old friend.

MD: He went to school with Dug—Hartford Art School.

ED: Yeah. We all had scholarships. And he says, "Who the hell is that?" And I said, "That's Edie." He said, "I wouldn't know her from a hole. . . ." And I said, "I wouldn't either." I mean, she's coming on like, I don't know, just sashaying around, swinging her hips, and I said, "Wow! She's good." I said, "You ought to stay and be an actress. I mean, you're right on top." She got some good reviews in the papers of the time, of the school, and, well, it was a big time. A lot of people came. As a matter of fact, the auditorium was pretty full of those students and other people. And so that became a thing for her, which I thought was good. Because she had that quality. But then time moves on, as this does.

MD: It does, yeah.

TC: You just said that you left high without graduating because you decided to be an artist. When did you make that decision? Did anything precipitate it?

ED: Well, if I can think of that. . . .

MD: [passes another note]

ED: Okay. Oh, the CC camp, yeah, that was when I left the CC camp. Because I knew. . . . The money we made there wasn't much anyhow, but it was enough, she [ED's mother?—Ed.] said, so we wish you to be back, so I came back. That's when I decided to quit high school. But what I did do, though, when I came back, I went to. . . . I know one other thing I did.

MD: Yeah, that's okay.

ED: I came to night school. They had a night school program, see. Of course I wasn't allowed to go in there because I wasn't one of the pupils, so. . . .

TC: This was at Hartford High School.?

ED: Yeah, they had a night class. And so I'd go in and sit in the back row of this thing and listen to all this and get all educated with this guy's stuff, and then finally one day the guy said he'd like to see me after school. I said, "Okay." He said, "Well, what are you doing here?" I said, "Well, I'm sitting in on this class." And he said, "Well, you can't. You're not on our list." I said, "No, I know it." He said, "Well, you can't do that." And I said, "Why?" He said, "Well, you have to list. . . . I mean, you have to get your name in here and. . . ." I said, "Well, I'm just listening. I'm just listening and I'm not bothering." He said, "I know. But," he said, 'you shouldn't do it. What we should do is you go down and check it out and see about. . . ." I said, "I have to work in the day," things like that. He said, "Well, you go down and check it out, and see if it works all right." But it wound up that I got a job—I forget what it was—but it was a Monday, the wrong days, so that by the time I tried . . . I didn't bother to go back to him, but I did get a job that was. . . . The date I didn't want it would be when I wanted to be up there, so I just stuck that out _____ and then left that thing, too.

TC: Left the job?

ED: Yeah, I left the job, but I didn't get back in there [the night art class—Ed.] either, because something else came up again, and so I got a. . . . I don't know what job it was, but it was either the Underwood. . . . It wasn't at [Patwoodie]; that was during the war. [The small tool, Small Tool], my father decided I should go there and work,

make a few dollars. So I one of the departments over there, I think. Did I?

MD: No, you did that later.

ED: Okay. That's good.

TC: How old were you at this time we're speaking of?

MD: Eighteen.

ED: Oh, eighteen was the CC camp, so eighteen, nineteen, around in there.

TC: When did you leave high school?

ED: Oh, three and a half years. . . .

MD: After three and a half years.

ED: Yeah, and the teachers told me, "You shouldn't do it." I said, "Well, actually. . . ." Well, that's a good point, because I said, "I'm not going to need it, because I'm going to be an artist, so I'm not going to . . . it won't make any difference if I got a degree. . . ." I mean, you don't get a degree. You get a. . . .

MD: Diploma.

ED: A diploma. He says, "Well, you should do. . . ."

MD: I'm sorry _____.

ED: But the other woman told that. . . . She practically told me the same thing. "You'll probably have to work, but stay with it. Don't let anybody turn you away from painting and being an artist," was the point of the thing. And a lot of people understood, so I was able to just get by with it. My father didn't like it all. If I quit anywhere he would say, "You have to get another job," or something like that. So I would do that.

TC: How long were you at Hartford Art School?

ED: Well, actually four years. Four. I didn't quit that one. I stayed right through the fourth. . . . I think it was that I did get a fifth . . . they had a fifth year tacked on that, because they saw my work and then they told me that, "You can have another year if you'd like. In other words, it's gratis, in other words." They liked the work. But I said, "No, I'm going to quit." I quit them. And I was getting jobs and everything like that. That's 1934 to 1938, when we got married.

TC: Is that the actual name of the school? The Hartford. . . .

ED: Yes, the Hartford Art School. And it's still the Hartford Art School.

MD: Well, no, it's part of the University of Hartford now.

ED: I know it is now, yeah.

MD: But it's still the Hartford Art School.

ED: Yeah. I got the new stuff. As a matter of fact, we had come up here from Hartford with all the. . . . They want—oh, I don't know—a lot things. They'll have a show there probably one day, and. . . .

MD: Yes, they want you to have a show there.

ED: And all that stuff. They wanted me. . . .

MD: Then they ran short of money, and it's really sad.

ED: As usual. That's what happens in schools like that. But they had moved. This was right in the center of town, practically, right underneath the Traveler's Insurance Company. It was a little tiny store in there. And I have a lot of books about that school, and people who added to it. It was a very great school, and some of the teachers in there were, as I say, Lintelmann and the other men, who had worked in a museum.

TC: Which museum was this?

ED: The museum right. . . . It's the museum. . . .

TC: The Hartford Atheneum?

MD: The Hartford Atheneum.

ED: The Hartford Atheneum. And that's right downstairs they had that, so they had the Paper Ball, what they called the Paper Ball. If you remember that? I've got all the copies on it. And this is an interesting little story, if I can bring it in a little bit, if it doesn't get too heavy. But the paper ball had very wealthy people backing it up, and it was one of those things that students couldn't go, but this fellow. . . .

MD: Clark [Voorhees]?

ED: Clark Voorhees, too, but, I mean, before that was the guy who. . . .

MD: Chick Austin.

ED: Chick Austin. He was one of these great guys. He's the first guy to bring to the art school Four Saints in Three Acts?

TC: The opera by Gertrude Stein?

ED: Yeah, and she was there. The whole thing, everything, was right there. The whole thing. We sat right down in front, and I said, "My, god, this is. . . ." We were saying, "It's right here, free!" All the people came and they said, "These seats are taken for the students over here," and that's where we sat. I [finally] got over there, and I said, "My god, I'm seeing this thing. . . ." And I can see Chick Austin now. Then he became what he called "a mazician" that was named Oram the Magician. [cross between musician and magician?—Ed.] And he was a very slight of hand, a very beautiful guy. And so he saw my work. Many times he came over, and he seen that I was very interested in him because he was sharp guy. He was always looking at things and doing things around, and I'd say, "Hey, do this and that." So he says, "You want some work?" "Sure, what do you want?" "Well, how about bringing over that settings over here, brining this?" So I got into that and he finally stuck with me, then he said, "This guy's pretty good. He does what I want." And he said, "Can you paint some of these things?" So I said, "Sure." He said, "Paper Ball." I said, "Sure." So I just quit everything else and said, "Yeah." So I helped him paint some of these things. It was just gouache, you know, just [brilliant] things. "No, not that way. The other way. Do it that way. Fine. Okay. You got it?" "Yep."

TC: _____ decorations?

ED: Yeah, there's a book of them over here, and he said. . . .

MD: Stage settings.

ED: Stage settings and things. So that got me into a lot of things. I mean, I could just be free with this gouache, whatever it was, and _____. [untranscribable sound signifying fast] He said, "That's it. But don't tighten up. Just, you know, like you do. Just keep it loose. It's a happy time." And he did all the screens for top of like balconies in Spain. And when you see the photographs and you go in there, I mean, you actually thought those were _____ people looking over there, and everything. So all these things I helped him with. And Harvey did some things. I know he did. I didn't ask him down there. Because he liked Harvey. Harvey was so slow, but he was. . . . He'd take his time, and getting heavy, but he would take his time. He would never rush something.

TC: Were you able to sell art during this period?

ED: Yeah. [chuckling] Actually, what happened was the people who backed you up. . . . In other words, there were scholarships; somebody puts some in. One of the Goodwins, which is a very big family in Connecticut, they were the ones who paid for my scholarship, see I found out from Fred Hynd, the guy. He said, "The one that's paying is so and so, so and so."

TC: And it's Goodman or Goodwin?

MD: Goodwin.

ED: Goodwin. G-o-o-d-w-i-n. Just one "n." And he said, "You should just write him a note and tell him thanks very much. So I write him a note and they come in and see, and when they'd look at the work and they'd say, "Gee, I love that." I'd say, "Well, you can have that." So he'd take that. But he said, "You're a very good artist," and all that stuff, so she turned people on to go and buy some work. You know, like drawings or watercolors that big, or something. [gestures: ___ inches by ___ inches—Ed.]

So they did buy them, and I've got a list of them somewhere. We just had it the other day. And I said, "Gee, I'd sell those for fifteen bucks!" [laughs] It was fifteen dollars then. And then some for seventy-five. I said, "Well,

now, that's not bad," but those were paintings. And there's just a whole bunch of things. Edie has them filed with. I don't think I'd even have them now if she didn't. . . . I collected them, but she put them together. So that was good, when you . . . I met the woman and then like that, and at times go out to West Hartford and I'd meet other friends, who were friends of friends. And they would, from the West Hartford High School, I had an evening. . . . They asked me if I'd teach an evening class of elders, you know, ____ ____ work. I said, "Sure." And I forgot what I made when I. . . . They said they'd give me ten dollars for an evening of three or four hours, or something like that. And so I'd go there and talk to these people. And they liked it very much, because it was free. I was free, then. I didn't have to. . . . I could say what I wanted and they wouldn't mind it, you know, and I met a lot of those people and became friends with them over the years.
And if I can get into another woman out there, was the one who had the arts. . . .

MD: Rebecca Field.

ED: Rebecca Fields. Rebecca Fields, I mean. Rebecca Fields, I said, "I know a Fields name." And she's one of the Fields, Rebecca Fields. And she was running this art school in West Hartford. Can I bring this in all right?

TC: Sure.

ED: Because is very important about what happened.

TC: That's what we want.

ED: This is where she came in, on top of the. . . . And she saw my. . . . She heard about me from the class that was there. So she said to me, "I'm a teacher. I'm teaching at the Little Red Schoolhouse." [unintelligible sentence]

TC: In West Hartford?

ED: In West Hartford, yeah, out in the . . . back by [Klain], by [Boardman]. And she said, "Why don't you come over and I've got some students that are older—old women and young women and young men—and after hearing you I think that they could get something out of it." I said, "Okay, I'll come over." So I'd give a talk and I'd write something down, and I'd forget it, and then I'd just talk away, as I'm doing now, make mistakes, but they all like it very much, and some of these older women come in and said, "Could you work with me? Could you come to my house?" And I said, "Well, gee, I don't know. Right now I've got to do what I'm doing." And then she said, "We have a kiln, you know, sculpture." And she said, "Would you mind working a little longer?" And I said, "No! I'd like to!" And she said, "Well, this would be a kiln thing, you know. You have to watch. It goes up to three thousand something, and then you have to make sure you're there and awake, and all that stuff, and it goes on into the evening. You can even stay there if you want." So I'd do that. So she'd pay me for that. It was kind of nice to watch. . . . The kiln—it's the first time I ever sat with a kiln and watched it, through those little hot holes in there, and see that. . . ." She says, "When it gets to a certain point, watch it. If one thing happens, it can blow the whole thing to pieces, like the last guy did." I said, "I'll never do that," which I didn't. She said, "You just have to watch it. Don't let it get by a certain heat, and then turn it off, let it sit." Because all these women, she said, there were just so many pieces [all over the place were her stand was]. She said, "The last person really just forgot it. He's been blown to pieces. You'd just get a nice piece and then it'd get all clay, you know, and blow it to pieces." So she says, "That won't happen?" I said, "No." So I did everything possible to stay awake, because it was an evening thing and I'd stay there sometimes, just stay right there with it. And she said, "Well, you might as well stay there, too." And then she got to know me pretty well, and she says, "Why don't you. . . ." Her husband—this is interesting—her husband is First World War veteran, and he was a beautiful guy, but he could never remember anything—like I don't! [laughs] And he'd come and say, "Doug, let's do this now." _____ say, "Okay." And he'd go _____, and _____ say, "Well, where you going?" And he says, "Well, I don't know where he is." And he'd finally show up, "Where were you?" I said, "I was where you said." He said, "Oh, I thought you meant the other side of the pond," or something like that. I'd say, "No, it's okay," you know, because we'd swim in there. And there was a lot of fun in that place. He made the pond himself. He was one of these beautiful guys that did everything. [This conversation makes little sense on paper, because here ED is speaking very quickly and indistinctly—Ed.]

MD: He restored houses, and you helped him.

ED: He restored houses, yes, but this is how I got into that. So he said, "I'm. . . . She told me, she says, "You know, are you a carpenter?" I said, "Sure." She says, "Well, he restores houses. You want to work on them?" I said, "Sure." So I had more fun with that guy than anybody I ever met. He would get mad, he'd say, "Now why did they want to do that? Don't they know how to build a house? Can't they think how. . . . That's not good. That's not a good wall!" I'd say, "Why is that?" He'd say, "Well, it isn't a good wall. That's _____ _____." He says, "But I can't do anything about it." So he'd go on ranting like that, which was kind of nice. He said, "Well, nevertheless, we'll just do what they say anyhow." And we went around in a little truck that he had, and he carried. . . . What did he have on the truck? He'd say. . . .

MD: [cautions ED?]

ED: This is a nice story. I don't think they'd mind it if they ever heard it, because he was that kind of a guy. He said, "You ever go to dumps any at all?" I said, "I was brought up around dumps. I found an old cat that was dying and I brought him home and got him alive." He says, "You like dumps!" I said, "Well, not necessarily, but it was right near the house over there." He said, "Well, I know a great place," he said. These people up here, they're so wealthy they'll throw anything away." So he says, "I'll tell you, we gotta. . . . Everything I got now, I got in the dump!" And this is this rich . . . he's a fairly well-to-do guy. And I said, "Okay." And I said, "This is a weird time I'm having, but I'm going to do it." Searching the dump. He said, "Look at that hat right there." And I'd pick it up. "Look at that. Look at the name on it." He said, "You know, he's got four hats like that. I don't know why he threw things like that." So he became a close friend, but then he'd get very depressed sometimes because of his being, you know, he just didn't connect once in a while.

TC: What was his name?

ED: Fred Jones. Yeah, Fred Jones. Then they had a boy, Oliver, and he grew up and he became a great kid. I remember him very well. But after a while I moved out from town. We were moving other places. But I always used to keep in touch with him. And it was one of the great times. Oh, I know what it was. She finally said, when I quit, she said, "We need a model. Would you model? There's no male models. There's a lot of females, but we never get a male model up there." I said, "Sure, I don't mind." So I didn't know whether she wanted to me a jock or what. I didn't know what the hell she wanted, so I had to ask her. She says, "Well, it's up to you." I said, "Well, I'd better wear something, these old ladies around." And so she'd say, when I would be modeling and then she'd say, "Wait," and these women would sit there and they'd look and they're still drawing, and she said, "Okay, break." She'd say, "You get a break now?" And I said, "No, I can stand here longer if you want me to." And she said, "You shouldn't say that. They'll just work you over." You know, I was just being nice. So that went on for a while, and pretty soon one of the women said something about drawing from _____ _____ [about] thing there, and she said, "Why don't you ask Mr. Dugmore over. He can tell you better than I can." He says, "He's the artist. I'm a painter, too, but he's the one who knows. You ask him." So I'd go over and talk with him, standing around there in a jock strap or something. I thought to myself, "This is insane! I mean, these old ladies and some young ones over there." And so she said, "Boy, they sure like you, walking around here and telling us all these stories." And it really knocked me out, so she said, "You're in with Flinn up here." So that's when I took care of the kilns, so they didn't break.

But I would write then, too. I have some things there. I used to sit there and draw and write things, and I'd have to remember that . . . I 'd put something to memory that I'd watch that, go down and look in that hole and see [all that] [pride, crud], and then turn it down so it would _____, turn it, so it would come up without breaking, so it never blew up, which for around there, they said, "That's very good." And I did meet a lot of people over there, who I knew for many years, and living there.

TC: The only teaching you did, though, at that school in West Hartford was that. . . .

ED: An evening, what they called the senior or whatever—class of seniors.

MD: Later you taught at St. Joseph's College in [the three] centers.

ED: And then from that somebody there said—as far as I got it. . . .

MD: Irving Katzenstein.

TC: Irving Katzenstein?

ED: Yeah, he was one of the great friends of all times.

TC: K-a-t-z-e-n-s-t-e-i-n?

ED: Yep.

MD: Yes.

ED: Irving Katzenstein. Right there, that's one of his things.

MD: That's one of Irving's paintings.

TC: We're looking at a postcard reproducing one of his paintings.

ED: Irving is I-r-v-i-n-g. That was quite a good size, too. I got some in here now, a couple other ones, that another friend of ours, [Lucian, Lucy] Day. . . .

TC: _____ Katzenstein.

ED: Yeah. He was a great guy. He had a studio on [the Silent, Lasallan, the Sound] Street. . . .

TC: In _____?

ED: In on [the Silent, Lasallan, the Sound] Street, Hartford, right next to this store. I forgot the name of it.

MD: Up over Wittkower's.

ED: Yeah, and a bookstore. And I look books anyway, so it was a very nice place to go. So I used to stop and see him, and he had another two or three women there and another guy—who went out west finally—but he said, "Why don't you come up here and draw from the model with us? I mean, we've got the model here." I says, "Sure, why not?" And he wasn't a heavy drinker, but he liked to have a little nip. And that was one of the things about him I liked. He wasn't a heavy drinker. And a very brilliant guy. He was so brilliant sometimes I used to think. . . . He sold of his things, but he sold them very reasonable, too. And I met a lot of people through him down there, and so they'd look at something, and they'd, "What do you want for that one?" I'd said, "You know. . . ." In those days giving a price was like pulling teeth. You said too much, they'd say to go down. But I did sell a few things then. He was selling some of his in a different way, for his own self.

MD: He was in Paris in the twenties.

ED: Yeah, he was the guy that went to Paris.

MD: An older man, yeah.

ED: A big, tall guy. He was really . . . this beautiful guy with this nose and this mustache, and a way of laughing hard. And when he'd laugh, you would just bust up watching. And he walked with this. . . . He walked like this, you know. [demonstrating] And the last time I. . . . I'd always bring a bottle. When I moved to New York, he'd say, "When you come up, stay around for a while. You're always going down in the rock piles in New York." So I'd bring back a good bottle of booze, and we'd sit it up, and "We got one right there," he said, but let's try that one, too." So he'd open the thing, pop, and we'd have two or three shots in a glass like that apiece. Or just enough. And then he'd say, "I think we better close that." And he'd go through his ha, ha, ha, and he'd close it up and I'd say, "I think so, too." But it was just enough to. . . . Because he wasn't a heavy drinker, but he liked that, just to have a drink. And the amazing thing was that. . . .

But then he got me a job modeling there, too, for this. . . . It was a black girl we had as a model. He wanted me to model the same time or something, _____ _____ that beautiful black girl. I can't remember her name. I said, "Sure." And so then a couple of the other ones. . . . There was a whole bunch of artists—four or five artists—in that building, and they said they could go. [Meaning they asked if they could sit in on the figure drawing—Ed.] He says, "Anybody, I don't care." So that was okay. But Irving, I found out later. . . . We moved to here and we didn't see him for a long time, and I found out from another fellow. I said, "How's Irving?" He said, "Well, he died." I said, "He died?! What happened?" He said, "He just went into a liquor store and came out, and he dropped dead." [chuckling] And I said, "That's Irving, all right. He wasn't gonna. . . ." It was very good. So it was. . . . He was one of the great guys. Well, he went to school in New York. He did all these. He went to the Art Students League. He was a very smart guy, and he was the one guy up there. . . . Like there was always one who knew [ that hollered] about what you paint, what you're drawing, what you're doing, and so he became one of the very close friends. He loved her [MD—Ed.], too, of course.

MD: I'm just remembering an interesting story about Irving. Through Irving, you met a man who played chess with Irving.

ED: Oh, yeah.

MD: This goes like the way life goes around. Giorgio Cavallon, who was a good friend here in New York. After he died, we went to his memorial, then we went to his home and met his sister.

ED: _____ _____ and said, "Hi, Dugmore."

MD: His sister, who was married to Mr. Shulman in Hartford.

ED: In Hartford. And Shulman was the guy.

MD: We never knew the combination, after all those years. You know, this is like how many years later?

ED: So she said, "Dugmore!" "What? You're so and so?" "Yeah." And she says, "Well, I married so and so." "Oh!" So it became one of those things.

MD: Well, you were remembering names more than people, but it was interesting.

ED: Yeah. Well, Giorgio said. . . .

MD: It was Giorgio's sister.

ED: Sister.

MD: Yeah, but Giorgio was dead then when we met her.

ED: Yeah, but I didn't know that was the one, you see.

TC: _____ here.

MD: Yes.

ED: And so we got to know Giorgio pretty well.

MD: She still lived in Hartford when we met her a couple years ago.

TC: Yeah, this sister.

MD: Giorgio Cavallon's sister.

ED: Yeah.

TC: Cavallon is spelled C-a-v (as in Victor) a-l-l-o-n.

ED: Yeah.

TC: You taught at a college in Hartford, you said?

ED: Well, St. Joseph's College. It was mostly nuns. That's why we got into Irving. Irving said, "I have a job, but you might want it." He says, "I've done it before. It's a beautiful job. It's teaching nuns." I said, "Nuns!?" I said, "I don't know about that. I come up with language that I don't think sometimes that I don't even know I'm saying it that I don't think is going to work out with nuns." He said, "Dugmore, just go up and take it, will you? You'll like them, they'll like you. Don't worry about it." So I said, "Okay." So I went over on a bicycle. We lived on Caine Drive. It was a housing project in those days. Linda [Dugmore] was about that big.

TC: What year was this?

ED: This is what?

MD: Oh, 1946, I think.

ED: I think it's '46, yeah.

MD: 1946 or '47. I think '46.

TC: And Linda is your daughter?

ED: Um hmm. She was at that time four.

MD: Four.

ED: Anyhow, so I used to get my bike—I always had a bike around there, because you had to ride the roads and to shop even—and so I'd ride on, get off the bike and walk in. Sister Mary Rosa was the chief. I used to call her the chief, and she'd laugh and she'd say, "Well, don't tell them that I'm a chief." I said, "No, I know, sister." But anyhow, right away she said, "Irving told me that you're a good artist. Have you got some work?" I said, "I brought [these]." She said, "Oh, those are beautiful!" And I said, "Well, whatever they are," but I said, "I haven't been taught now. I'm not a Catholic. I'm a high church of England Protestant. So I don't know what to do." She said, "Well, Irving told me that you were a good artist and you were a great talker, so what you have to do is go and do it and see what happens." I said, "Okay." But I was scared, because they'd come out and some of them had, the sisters, two or three Dominicans, and then two other kind. I forget. The purple things on. And all the rest of them was the normal ones. What do they call them?

MD: Sisters of Mercy, was it?

ED: Sisters of Mercy. So when I showed up on this bicycle, and I walked in and talked to Sister Mary Rosa, she said, “You’re just the guy I want.” I said, “Well, why?” She said, “Well, Irving said that you know a lot about art, and they need to know art. They have to know.” And Irving said, “What you have to do is push them.” I said, “Well, why?” She said, “Well, actually, they’re very good and they like to draw and they do have some drawings, but we’ve heard that you’re a very good artist and maybe you could bring some stuff in, or some things?” And she said, “Don’t worry.” This was half a day Saturday, and two days. I don’t know, a Tuesday and a Thursday, or something like that. And I said, “Okay.” When I got there there was this whole. . . . They had all come and they were all sitting there just deadpan, and they’re just there like that. And I walked in and I look all around and they just sit there. They don’t even smile. Old ones, young ones, and novitiates who aren’t even yet. They’re just with their little. . . . And I’m thinking, “What am I doing up here?” I’m not the guy to come up here. I’m going to come out with something like, “I mean, gee!” Or “Jesus!” Or something. [chuckles] And so they waited and nothing happened, so I said, “Well. . . .” A few words or something, and they looked. . . . You know, they’re like this. [demonstrates] And all I could get [over] was, “I can’t be up here teaching. Nuns just not my. . . . I don’t want to.” And so finally one woman put up [her hand?—Ed.]. She said, “Well, my name is. . . . Because she knew right away that I was just right out of it. And she says, “I will take the. . . .

MD: Attendance.

ED: . . . attendance.” Oh, I said, “That’s a good idea. You can do that. Fine.” [laughs] So everybody said, “Well, I can do this and I can do that.” And so they did that, and I said, “That’s very good.” So everybody had a job. They all took them. I didn’t have to give them one. Because they wanted to get out of some things too. They were sweet, you know, but I knew. Anyhow, I worked there for, oh, two years.

MD: Three summers.

ED: Three summers. And I even come back from San Francisco for the last one. They said, “You’ve got to come back. I mean, _____ survive going down here,” or something like that. I said, “No, I can’t.” She said, “Please.” So I said, “Okay.” So I came up. Flew. No, took the bus back as usual, came all the back and went out. She says, “You took a bus from there?” I said, “Well, yeah.” So they paid me a little extra for coming out on the bus. But those sisters were really something. They wrote letters to me. They still write letters to me. I don’t get them, but I mean. . . .

MD: Tell about the one that you told painted like Gaugin.

ED: Oh! You know, that. . . .

MD: Watch your _____, Dug. [cautioning about mike cord?]

ED: Oh, I’m sorry. I’m always moving around. I’d ask them questions about what they know about certain painters, and they’d say, well, they don’t know something. They studied a little bit, but, yes. So okay, so I’m walking around. By this time I’m free, walking around, behind and then forward, and talking, and I get up front and I say, “Well, now, for instance, one of the great painters I thought was Gaugin. I said that sounds. . . . Gaugin. What?

MD: You told this one sister that her painting looked like a Gaugin.

ED: I know that. I know that, but I said, I was very quiet, because they all knew there’s one girl and she says, “Well, Gaugin! I mean, Gaugin? He was married, he left his wife, he went to the islands, and he slept with these natives?” And I said, “Well, I’m not talking about. . . . I’m talking about him.” She says, “Well, that goes with it. If he does that then. . . .” And I said, “Well, okay, I guess you’re right.” I told Sister Mary Rosa that was the, I said. . . . Instead of going to lunch I’d go over to see her. And I said, “My God! Boy, they’re tough.” She said, “Well, what was it this time?” I said, “Well, they sure don’t like Gaugin!” She said, “Oh, that’s Sister Mary so and so. Don’t worry about her. She’s always coming up with something about Gaugin. She just hates Gaugin.” And I said, “Well, what’ll I do?” She says, “Well, maybe you better not talk about Gaugin then.”
The other thing that was nice was she said, “You know, you’re not tough enough with them. You have to get tough.” I said, “I can’t get tough. How can I get tough?” And she said, “Just try it.” And I said, “Well, okay.” She said, “You know, they don’t get enough exercise.” I says, “What does that mean?” She says, “There’s a pond. You know that pond, that little creek over there?” And I said, “Yeah.” She said, “Why don’t you take them over there?” I said, “But that’s all through these deep fields. There’s snakes in there.” She says, “Don’t worry. Do it.” And I said, “Well, okay.”

And I said, “Well, today we’re going to go off over to see the little pond over there and sit and talk about drawing the pond and the trees.” Oh, boy, that’s great until I got out there, and then they got these things on—the Dominicans had these heavy elaborate things on—and huffing through there. Finally, they said, “Do you mind if I. . . .” And I said no. And it’s just grass going through, and all of a sudden go, “Ahh!” Here’s a snake. And I said, “It’s just nothing. It’s just a grass snake. They won’t bother you.” But they said, “I’ve never been out

here.” Then they got to the pond and there’s this green place there and the water’s rushing down, and these big trees. And I said, “Now this is a great spot.” And they said, “Yeah,” and I said, “Well, now we sit down here.” “Sit on what?” I said, “Well. . . .” And I thought they looked pretty funny sitting there like crows on a wire. I said, “Well, you can just sit down on the little bump.” They said, “It’s not all ground going down.” I said, “I know.” So she said, “Well, we’ll do what we can.” So she said, “Do you mind if I take this off? This one petticoat off the top here?” I said, “No, it’s okay. I don’t mind. You can take that off, sure.” But it was one of those things. When I looked around I’d say, “I’m always into something!”

But then they settled down and started to draw this tree and then paint it. [She used] watercolors, because she like watercolors. And I liked watercolors. And they really got interested and they just sat there, and pretty soon they’d say, “Lot of flies here.” I said, “Yeah, but they won’t bother you. Just go like that.” And pretty soon, I’m sitting down there watching them, and talking to somebody about. . . . They said, “Can you tell me about that?” Pretty soon everybody is sitting there having a good time, and took their shoes off, a couple of them. ____ ____. One of them _____ something there. And I was up there, and I said, “God! I’m going to get in trouble with Sister Mary Rosa. So when we got back, they were bitten from the. . . . “God!” she said. “That’s beautiful!” I’m just the best thing that’s happened to them. I said, “What do you mean?” She said, “I mean they loved it.” I said, “Yeah, but they didn’t like it.” She says, “They loved it. They were free. They had to work for once. To walk through that field was really the best thing that ever happened to them. And now we won’t have to worry about them walking through fields on their own.” In other words, if they want to make some drawings. So I was like the one to tell them. . . . She said, “They have to do these things, because they need this.” [What do you know?] And Irving, I talked to Irving, and he said, “Yeah, they’re a tough bunch, all right. But the old ones like you better, don’t they?” I said, “Yeah, the older ones figured you out. They’d ask questions, very good questions. The young were a little uncertain. And they wanted to know right then, something. And it was hard to tell them because they weren’t quite sure of what I was going to say.”

MD: May I interrupt for just one second? This Gaugin story, I want to get it straight, because you came home very disturbed.

ED: Yeah.

MD: He told this one nun who did a beautiful painting, a watercolor. . . .

ED: I did so. I did say that.

MD: . . . and he said, “It’s like a Gaugin!”

ED: Didn’t I say that?

MD: And she left. She never came back.

ED: Yeah. Left the class.

MD: She never came back. And that was. . . .

ED: I told Sister Mary Rosa, and she said, “Don’t worry about her.” You know, like she has her rights. And I said, “Okay, that’s all right.” And she didn’t.

MD: She never came back.

ED: I have some sheets of those, of the classes, in some envelope somewhere there, which ones were there and what, and different notes around there. Edie stacks everything in envelopes. Under that table is thousands of letters, I guess. I don’t know.

TC: When you left Hartford Art School in ‘38, what was your work at that time? You drew a lot. Did you paint?

ED: Oh, yeah. I painted oil and watercolors and I have things up there that I. . . .

MD: Tempera.

ED: Egg tempera. That’s another thing about Hartford. That’s a good thing. At the Hartford Art School, you learned how to grind color—you know, hand grind it. And I never did that. _____ _____ and they said, “This is one of the things we’d like to teach you.” And I thought, “Boy, this is great.” You know, you can buy your pigment and you grind it up, make your own pigment, add this, put that, and so that started me, and I still have pigment over there yet.

TC: You still make your paint, sort of.

ED: Not any more, I can't. I can't grind it. My shoulders won't take it; my body won't take it. It's a lot of work.

TC: But how long did you make your own paints?

ED: Up until. . . . I miss it.

MD: The early eighties.

ED: Yeah. Because I miss it, now that I. . . . Yeah, when was it happened? I went in there once and I almost fell over. I said, "I can't. . . ." You know I have a way of doing it my way. Everybody has a certain way to do it. I figured out my way, and it works fine. Leave it overnight and let it settle and then stir it once and then you grind it yourself. I've got a knife, palette knife. I've got big ones in there. And I still got bags of it there. You can get it right down on the corner of Main Street down there.

TC: You didn't do photography as your father had hoped?

ED: No.

TC: Or three-dimensional art?

ED: Oh, three-dimensional, yeah. At the art school. I've got a drawer of art school drawings and figures and everything. That's. . . .

MD: And the sculptures?

ED: And the sculptures, I've got all the sculptures.

TC: When were they?

ED: The sculptures were not that long ago.

MD: Over at the Little Red Schoolhouse.

ED: Over at the Little Red Schoolhouse.

TC: Don't leave the table because _____ _____ the microphone is here.

ED: Okay.

TC: But in the thirties when you came out of art school, were you doing sculpture at that time?

ED: I did some sculpture. And I don't know where that is. I don't know if I have any from art school.

TC: What medium did you use?

ED: It's clay.

TC: So it was baked in the kilns that you attended at the West Hartford school? What was the name of that school in West Hartford?

ED: What was that, Edie? Do you know?

MD: The Little Red Schoolhouse. [spoken from background; apparently searching for examples of sculpture—Ed.]

ED: The Little Red Schoolhouse, as far as I know. Just the Little Red Schoolhouse.

MD: Little Red Schoolhouse.

ED: And the woman was, as you had, the name. . . . I can't remember her name again.

TC: Did you go to other art schools after. . . .

ED: Oh, this is what I did at night watching the kiln. I'd take a piece of. . . . And this is very good wood.

TC: Yes.

ED: I'd sit there with a knife. I made my own cutter, see. And when. . . . What was her name again, Edie, who ran the school?

MD: Rebecca.

ED: Rebecca came to me and she said, “What are you doing? That’s fabulous!” I said, “Well, I don’t know. I bought this piece of good wood.” And she said, “Well, that’s beautiful. How did you learn that?” I said, “Well, I know a guy. . . .” And he’s another guy that was a friend of Irving’s. He had TB and he died shortly later. And he was a wood carver, at Irving’s. And he’d take me down to the south end of town. He’d say, “Come on down and see what I do.” So I’d watch him. He’d say, “This is all you have to do. You take a band saw, one of those saws, and you just cut it straight across, and then you cut a piece there and a piece there—have somebody do it fore you—and have it so that the piece of thing is like this here.” It’s actually like this. It’s a round thing like that, but you cut a piece out, and it’s like this, like that, and like this.

TC: Ed is making a drawing now.

ED: And you put a tape on there for your hand, and this is the sharpest, this point right here, right through there, that’s where it’s the sharpest, right from there. And you hold that like that so you could get your finger like that. And that’s the first thing I did out there, just [grabbed, that] piece of old pine I picked up on the way out there. And it’s just making cuts. I was just trying to see how they cut, you see. But this I did when the kiln was going all the time. When Rebecca saw that, she said, “My, you do sculpture, too.” “Well, not really,” I said. “These are little things I’m whittling.” She says, “That’s nevertheless they may be whittles, but they’re sculpture.”

TC: This is approximately five and a half inches high by one and a half inches wide and an inch and a quarter deep, and on the bottom there is no signature. Rather—what shall we say?—influenced by African sculpture in its angularity.

ED: Um hmm.

TC: It’s a youngish woman with massive flowing hair.

ED: Yes. I called it Green Apples because somebody mentioned, “You can _____ this Green Apples because she’s holding her stomach from eating too many apples.” [both chuckle] So I called it Green Apples.
And this one was one piece of wood that. . . . This is ‘48, see. That’s when that was. All these are ‘48.

TC: This is a piece marked underneath, “Dugmore ‘48.”

ED: Now what I’m trying to do, remember, it’s very good wood. I can’t remember it now. And all could think of, when I started to do it, and I realized the way that looks is a gorilla. I mean, it’s like where they stand up. And this was a black . . . a post from a railing in a house. And when I was up there with [Prices], I worked in houses, too, where they were taking them down, and so I’d find and take some of it with me. So I made this out of one of the railings. And this was a black. . . . I took like with silver . . . wound silver wire around it.

TC: Around the long neck.

ED: Right up there, so it’s like the Umbango, the Umbangis, they’re Indian.

TC: The Ubangi.

ED: I think they’re Ubangis.

TC: And you _____ yourself?

ED: Stained the wood. I stained the wood, yeah.

TC: This is a figure about eleven and a half inches high, with a very tall negroid face. And below the breast it Reatains the post form, but with rounded corners toward the front. Did you go to other art schools after Hartford Art School?

ED: Not that I know of.

MD: Honey!

TC: I’m sure you went to San Francisco.

MD: San Francisco.

ED: Oh, San Francisco, of course! Where am I? Let’s see, I guess so.

TC: But you didn’t at this point come to any art schools in New York City, or other cities before that?

ED: No. No, that was where everybody would go, to the Art Students League.

TC: Say that again.

ED: Most everybody went to the Art Students League. But the guys that were teaching out there were from the Art Students League, so I was getting the information from those guys, which was a good thing, because I didn't want to go to the Art Students League. I wanted to, but it was in New York and it was the wrong time for me to go for my family. I just couldn't run off there. But Nickolaides was one of the guys that Lintelmann used to talk about, was one of the great draftsmen. I mean, so I studied like what Lintelmann told me, and I found out that I could draw a lot better by reading about Nickolaides and how he felt about art. Free. Don't try to tighten. Don't ever tighten up at all. Just do as free as you can, and any time never try to draw. Just do it. And so after that, it's all I've done is that, always, is just start in doing right away. Because you're already. . . . It's in you. You just follow what you're thinking, and what your hand's going to do, and let the Devil take the hindmost, so called. And it's worked out. I've got life drawings over there, thousands of them in drawers over there, and they were all just done sitting. Sometimes I never even looked down, you know. And every once in a while I'd look down, but most of the time it's just like I said. You're just looking at it. And you get the scale by the figure by just going like that, or something, like that. [demonstrating] And I had a lot of drawings. I've still got a lot of them. I'll show you some of those figure drawings and other things there. And a lot of things from the Hartford Art School. _____ these boxes, open those up, because those are thirties . . . forties. With art school some things. Not that much around of those. _____ _____ have some yet. The drawer there.

MD: In what file?

ED: Yeah, the flat files, I went through those.

TC: Did you do any traveling other than going out to Benton for four months?

ED: [laughs] She goes, "Ah!" I was always walking away from home.

MD: [laughs]

ED: I guess the thing was that I, I don't know, I always wanted to go to Boston for one of the things, so I said, "I'm going to Boston," and I said, "No, I can't do that. I mean, I just can't do it." So I said, "Well, I'm going to Boston anyhow." And I said, "No, I won't. I'll just go out and hitchhike." I always hitchhiked everywhere. Never had any trouble with anybody.

TC: And when was this?

ED: This is, what, thirty. . . .

MD: Before we were married, but while we were going together. In the thirties.

TC: Late thirties.

ED: Something like that. So I'd just go down and I'd stand here and go like that, and the guy would go right on by, and I'd say, "Well." Next guy would come by, he'd go like that. I'd say, "Whichever way they stop I'll go." So this guy happened to. . . . He says, "Where you going?" I says, Where you going?" "I'm going to Boston," he says. "That's just where I'm going." "Great!" [laughs] So this guy drives me all the way to Boston, takes me to lunch, and eating this, and [telling him I'm an] artist and stuff like that, and so, I don't know, he was a nice guy, so when I got to Boston I didn't have much money—couple dollars, if that—and so I just went around to the museum, and just wandered around there. I forget how it was, but somebody. . . . I don't know how it happened. I think I went to the YMCA to stay, and they said something. "Are you the guy from Hartford?" I said, "Yeah, I was." "Your parents wondered where you are." And I said, "Well, tell them I'm right here." He said, "Use the phone." He wouldn't tell them. So I'd tell them where I am. "What are doing up there?" I said, "Well, I just hitchhiked up there. I just wanted to see the museums, any paintings and all that stuff." "Are you safe?" "Okay." "And you got any money?" "No." [laughs] So my mother sent some money. My father wasn't very happy about that one. But my mother sent some money up and I got some money—or they gave me money and I'd pay them back. And so I came back in style. I took a bus back. But my mother said, "Francis"—she was always saying "Francis"—"you shouldn't do that. Walter won't like it." I said, "I know, but . . . I guess you're right, but I mean. . . ." That's the way I was. I would just take off. Being the middle guy, to me, was always. . . . I was always the guy, just when I'm going, my father would say, "Don't forget, you gotta do this and that in the garden."

[Another thing], they had gardens in the back yards. You always had to tend the garden or the rabbits. He had rabbits. And he said, "Don't forget to take that rabbit and take the male out and put it over there, otherwise they'll kill the young ones." I forgot that. He come home and I come home, and I said, "Gee, they killed all the rabbits," he said. He was breeding rabbits, different rabbits. He was a great guy for that, you know, and then he

give me a bonk on the head, and he said, “All you had to do was just take that and put them over there, let ‘em there.” And I said, “I forgot. I was doing something else.” So he always figured I’m not going to . . . I’d just forget.

TC: We didn’t ever get your parents’ names recorded. It was Walter. . . .

ED: Walter Dugmore.

TC: Mother?

ED: My mother’s name was Nellie.

MD: Ellen.

ED: Ellen, but they called her. . . .

MD: Ellen Sprague.

ED: Ellen Sprague, _____ as Sprague, [Baltimore]. Just Walter Dugmore, as far as I know. I don’t remember any middle name. I always thought there was only about ten in London or around there.

TC: Ten Dugmores?

ED: Yeah. But I found out . . . some fellow went over and he said, “I met about eighteen of them.” I said, “There’s that many?” He said, “Well, that’s not so bad.” Eighteen out of that many. So there’s a few relatives that we hear from on and off.

TC: Oh, really, you do still _____ English Dugmores?

ED: Oh, yeah, my oldest brother, Leonard, is the guy who was the writer. As a matter of fact, he wanted to write. He said, “I’m going to be a writer.” He says, “You’re going to be a painter. I’m going to be a writer.” And so he did. He wrote a lot things. I’ve got copies of the things, but he never wanted to bad enough. He just, I don’t know, he just. . . .

TC: He didn’t publish them?

ED: No. I gave _____ some home. I think there’s one over there somewhere that I found, the [man] that he’s writing this story about stuff, and so I started writing, too, because I liked it. I like to write. I’d write stories. I don’t know, I must have a lot of things around here. I do know that there’s many envelopes there from my brother. He used to write all the time. So he says, “You’ve got to write.” Oh, excuse me. “Write, because that’s the way. You just keep writing, that’s all.” So I’d write all these things down and send it to him and he’d say, “That’s good.” Now he’s not doing much at all like that. He doesn’t. . . . He writes, that’s about all. To us.

ED: We’re about at the end of. . . .

TC: . . . of tape one, so I’m going to close it at this point.

Tape 1, Side B

TC: . . . first tape of the interview by Tram Combs with Edward Dugmore. Ed, you were speaking of the painter Irving Katzenstein, who seems to have been a great influence on you.

ED: Very much so. When I first met him he was [at] a block on [the Silent, Lasallan, the Sound] Street, and he had a little place in the front, and there was another woman next door. I met her. But there was a number of little cubicles, and he would say, “Well, why don’t. . . .” When I first met him, he was telling about. . . . When is that, Edie? Nineteen . . . what?

MD: Oh, when you first met Irving?

ED: Yeah.

MD: Oh, dear. I guess you were still in art school, weren’t you?

ED: I don’t think so.

MD: Sure, mid thirties. You were still in art school. He was showing there at the. . . .

ED: Oh yeah!

MD: . . . [Hartford?—Ed.] Watercolor Society and the oil. . . . And both showed there.

ED: Oh, that's right. And that's where we got to know each other pretty well. He'd say, "Stop at any time when you go by, and we can about art and all that stuff," so I did. And we became very close friends then. And the girl was next door. I remember her and another guy, who went somewhere else, and then. . . .

MD: Dorothy Siegel?

ED: Dorothy Siegel. They were all. . . . So they figure paintings. He'd get these different women to come and pose. And he got this beautiful black girl. . . . This is like, you know, like a piece of iron. And he'd say, "You ought to come up. . . ." There's another guy name Frank Coltz, who died very early; he used to come up, too. So he'd say, "I've got this beautiful girl. She's a friend of mine." And we met her in New York later once, and we got to know her, and she said, "I used to. . . ." Anyhow, so I went up. I got drawings of her. She was just. . . . I mean, you couldn't take your eye off her. She was just round—but solid, like a piece of rock, and she would do these things. So I have a lot of drawings of that. And you chipped in a few cents for hiring her, is what he did.

TC: Were there any other artists during this period—that is, after art school—that had any significant influence on you?

ED: Not that I know of. I mean, as I said, Leslie Lintelmann [probably]. . . .

TC: In school.

MD: That was in school.

ED: . . . was the guy, the tall guy, the young guy from the school.

MD: Howard Ahrens.

ED: Howard Ahrens was a terrific guy. He could tell you about a lot of things and everything, but he'd see that he would. . . . He'd say, "Well, that's very good but. . . ." Things like that. "But in the art school we were at, they do it that way." Which was good from him, because Nickolaides. . . . Nickolaides was the one who wrote the book, The Natural Way to Draw, and to me all I wanted to know is what is the natural way to draw? Fred Hynd didn't mention it, of course, but he. . . . I don't think he went to the Art Students League. But so I took up on this guy Nickolaides. So I would go to New York and look at his stuff—you know, some of his _____. My god, this guy was. . . . You know, he'd take a pen and go like that [gestures], and it was like alive.

TC: You did come to New York occasionally?

ED: Oh, yeah. I was down here in the thirties. I used to take off and go down and stay in the thirties. Once I came down and just went up to Harlem and just stayed there.

TC: How long?

ED: Oh, about three or four days. I wanted to see all the musicians. Because I had the records. In the olden days, they first come out on these little kind of _____. I got some still there, and the new ones, too. Miles Davis now is. . . . See, I knew all these here in New York. Miles Davis, all those guys, hung around with us, see, because they liked art. I gave them a piece of stuff, and they lived down on [Briggs], and I lived in downtown. That's much later on. And when I came down in the thirties I said, "I want to go Harlem. I'm just going to go to Harlem and see what it's like there." I never would have thought of a thing, about going there and getting killed or something. In those days, it was just like a. . . . It was like going home. They had a good theater. Apollo was there and. . . .

TC: That's the Apollo Theater.

ED: Apollo Theater. This girl was on the stage. What's. . . .

MD: Sarah Vaughn.

ED: Sarah Vaughn. She was about seventeen then. So I was like. . . . I met another guy, and the guy said, "What are you doing?" And I said, "Well, I'm just down here, I'm just looking around. I always liked music, liked jazz, and all these guys, want to meet them." He says, "Well, they're all over here, _____ so come across the street." And there would be what's his name with the big white car. . . .

MD: Oh, Duke.

ED: Duke

MD: Ellington.

ED: Walk along, and he says, “This is Ellington. This is Dugmore.” “Hi.” And we shake hands and like that. You know, I’m thinking, “Wow!” So pretty soon he said, “Where you going? Where you staying tonight?” And I said I didn’t know where.” He says, “Well, stay with me.” So I stayed with the guy. “But don’t go to Spanish Harlem.” I said, “What for?”

MD: [passes note?]

ED: Oh, yeah. “What for?” He said, “Well, [they get] a little rough over there,” he says. “They don’t like [to see] _____ _____ just moving in on them.” I said, “Oh, thanks.” And I never did go to Spanish Harlem. That was another thing, [over the] [wall, world]. They must have had it with this Spanish, or the Puerto Rican _____. But anyhow I stay with this guy, stay the night, and another night he said, “Did you see a lot?” “I saw everybody, different guys and “This is so and so,” I’d say hi, you know. So I come back there, at home, and I said, “Geez, I just met all these guys, and it was like, you know, I gotta get all these records. I’ve got to get everything I can get.” So I did get all these records. I had a ton of them. And of course Thelonious Monk, as she said [in the note?—Ed.]. Thelonious Monk, he played in the Five Spot down here, when there was a Five Spot. Well, I lived across the street. Like Herman Cherry lived right there, too. So before Thelonious Monk got in was a guy who ran. . . . I lived upstairs over the bar, but it wasn’t called the Five Spot then. It was just a bar. And the guy downstairs. . . . His name is written somewhere.

MD: Gerald somebody or other.

ED: Yeah, well, so he’d say, “What are you going?” “I’m an artist. I _____ _____.” “Oh, yeah, another one of those guys. Sit around paint all day and don’t make any money,” kidding. [laughs] He says, “So. . . .” I’d need something, and he’d say, “Ah, forget it.” He wouldn’t. . . . He said, “I’ve got a couple of quarters, come on.” You know, like that. And he guys in there. . . . He’d pick out guys that come, the _____ _____ refugees of [Fifth Avenue, you know]. Not the bums. If they were really bad off, he’d. . . . He’d get to know them. I was in there one day, and I said, “Jesus, you have all these guys.” He said, “Look, these are the good ones. I let them come in and eat. I don’t charge them. I said, ‘As long as you don’t push around and don’t drink, you’re safe.’ ” And so they’d go in _____ _____. I know a lot of those guys, sitting around and everything, and I’d do a little drawing, something like that. So that’s when he said, “Well. . . .” And Cherry and I got together and he said, “Why don’t you. . . . This is a great place for some jazz in here, you know.” And he says, “Yeah, I don’t know.” He says, “Look, you can make some money here.” Cherry was the one who was really was right across the street from him. But Cherry and I said, “Let’s get this guy and tell him to put some music in here.” So that’s what we did. And he said, “Well, like what?” I said, “I don’t know. . . .” And what was the name of the band we got. . . .

MD: [searching through papers for name?]

ED: We finally got. . . . He’s playing downtown right now. Well, Thelonious, Thelonious was one of the guys we got there first. I got all those records. And he was something, Thelonious Monk. He could play . . . I don’t know. And then they three or four other guys, and they had a thing going so it become. . . . _____ _____ is number five, down there. I was living upstairs with him, called number four, next door. So that became the Five Spot, and from there on in it was like. . . . He’d never charge a thing. I’d say, “Hey!” I’d bring in. . . . Harvey Harris was down there one time in New York. I said, “Take in the Five Spot.” I had him and two or three other guys. But he says, “Dugmore, buzz off.” So he wouldn’t let me pay it. Never let me pay a thing. What they did was. . . . I don’t know whether it was Cherry or not. But Cherry said, “You know, you’re all artists. It’s an artists’ bar now.” “Yeah,” he says, “You telling him he’s going to be sorry, with all these artists in here.” But Cherry says, “Why don’t you put the. . . .” “What can I do? I need something on the wall, and Cherry says, “Why don’t you get the announcements and stick on the wall?” And he said, “Okay,” so he _____ go and put the announcements all over. So I’ve got photographs. There’s all this one wall of the announcements of the shows and the Stable Gallery and. . . . This is ‘52, ‘53, ‘51, even. And that became a hangout, so that’s where they brought down Monk, and that’s where I met most of these guys there. For real, I mean. But this is a long time since the thirties. So Thelonious was really, I mean, to just hear that guy. [imitates piano sound]

MD: Didn’t he. . . .

ED: Um hmm?

MD: He played the piano, and didn’t he play downstairs and live upstairs with his mother in Harlem when you went there?

ED: Yeah. I went to see him, yeah.

MD: That’s what I remember you telling me.

ED: Yeah, and he played the bull fiddle at times. And I said, “Could I go and see you?” “Eddie, why the hell not? Anybody goes and sees if you want to.” Just says. . . . But I never realized; he just stuck with his mother. He’s one of these guys. Looked nice. His mother was very nice. “Come in, come in.” And she’d yell out, “There’s a friend here for you. Come in.” And then we’d talk, and he’d say, “This is one I’m working on now,” maybe. It’s chords, you know, just playing these chords in his right. . . . And in the house, you know, his mother wanted him, you know, _____ here, too, because she was. . . . In those days. . . .

TC: Let me ask you. . . .

ED: . . . it was nothing to go around like that. I mean. . . .

TC: You said that you were very interested in the piano when you were. . . .

ED: Well, that’s how. That’s how we started, yeah.

TC: Okay.

ED: When I got the thing all figured out.

TC: This is the player piano mechanism.

ED: There are all the pieces in there, and the little boat _____ down in there, any little thing I could put in there—a bead or something with a hole in it—so when I hit the note, it would hit the string, it would make a noise, a sound—not a noise, a sound—with whatever was on there—a piece of tin or whatever. And my mother told me, “Your father will be coming home. You’d better get cleared up.” My father came in. “What’s wrong?” My mother said, “Well, he’s just. . . .” He come in there, he says, “What did you do to the piano?” You know, he’d just bought it and it was really. . . . To get a piano in those days—and even pay for it! He was till paying for it. Seventy-five dollars. And he just give me an awful hit in the head, and I almost fell off the stool there. “What did you do that for?” And he said, “Look! Oh, Nellie, what are we going to do with this kid?” So he says, “Get that out of there.” I said, “It’s not hurting anything.” “I don’t want to hear about,” he says. “Just get them out.” So I took all these things out. That was the end of the piano. But I liked piano. And as I _____, I went to play the piano. Oh, I played so much, but then it just didn’t make any sense after a while. I wanted to be a pianist. Pianists, because I heard them, you know. Like in the silent movies, this guy plays the organ down there. I’d say, “That’s what I like to play, and just watch the movie.” But I never got. . . . That’s as far as it got. John Cage. [chuckles]

TC: When did you go into the armed forces?

ED: 1943.

TC: You went into the Marines?

ED: Yeah. 1943, April.

TC: That’s a little late. That’s late.

ED: Well, it was actually. . . . I was working in the aircraft. . . .

TC: In the aircraft industry?

ED: Yeah.

MD: Pratt and Whitney.

ED: Building the big bombers, working there. I don’t know what made me do it. [laughs] Edie never got over it. My parents. . . .

TC: Oh, you volunteered?

ED: Yeah. I wasn’t drafted. A lot of guys were drafted, you know. I don’t know. . . .

MD: That was his urge to get away again. Remember he says he always wanted to move off, you know. He always wanted to move off.

ED: Well, I met guys who were in the aircraft. . . .

TC: In the air. . . .

MD: The aircraft.

ED: Actually, the Pratt and Whitney. . . .

MD: United.

ED: . . . United Aircraft. It's right over on the other side of the river. One of the big plants.

TC: At Hartford?

ED: Yeah.

MD: Yeah. It's in east Hartford.

ED: East Hartford. They put me on making . . . as an inspector. They wouldn't put me in with the machinery. They just said, "Machinery, we don't want that. We want you over here." And they want somebody who could catch anything in the. . . . "Look," he said, "this is a dangerous thing to be doing." He said, "Whatever you have to do. . . ." You had a glass, you know, like for teeth. They had glasses for that. One over here, one over there. Little lights on with a long hose. And these were made of magnicite base, you know. They got these big things like this, and you carried them around. You could pick them up. This was just one area. This is the high-altitude planes, extra power. So I working, and I got to know all of these guys. We all were close friends, all of us. And then the. . . .

TC: You went into the Marines?

ED: Yeah.

TC: When?

ED: Well. . . .

MD: April 1943.

ED: '43, April, but I went. . . . From Hartford in April?

MD: From the Aircraft to the Marine Center.

ED: As I remember, a lot of the guys were leaving from Pratt and Whitney. They were drafted. And they said, "Jesus, good luck," and all this stuff, and then I kept thinking about it, and I said, "I just. . . ." I always wanted to go to the Navy. I figured the Navy's one of the best. You know, the Navy, you're on a ship. You're not in a foxhole, you're not fighting anywhere, you're just on a ship. You're fighting there, but still your chances are you're going to go to this, to different ports, you go all over the world. Guys I knew were sailors, that I met, in Hartford there. We were friends from high school. They'd already joined up in the Navy. And I thought, "Boy, that would be great." But when I got there this guy comes walking over—and this is weird—this guy come over, and he says, "Where you heading for?" I said, "I'm standing over here with the Navy." He said, "Why don't you join the Marines?" I said, "I don't want to join the Marine Corps. I'm going to join the Navy, right now." He said, "You're not drafted?" I said, "No, I'm joining up." He says, "Well, why don't you join the Marine Corps?" I said, "I don't want to join the Marine Corps. No, I don't know about that." And whatever it was—the double talked—and the line moved down. You know, I was just moving. He says, "Well, what are you going to do? You going to be there, or be there?" [gesturing] He said, "The Marine Corps is fine. You go to Paris Island, and you go all through this, and there's tanks and there's this and that." I'm hitting the table. And I said, "Well, yeah, I. . . ." He said, "Look, why don't you just come on over and see what it's like. Get in line over here and see what it's like." So the guy says, "Okay, next." And I said, "No, I'm. . . ." "C'mon," he said. So I walked in. I said to Edie later, "I just joined the Marine Corps." She says, "You what?" I said, "I just joined the Marine Corps. I had no idea I was going to. I wanted to be in the Navy." But I just felt, at my age. . . . See, I was what? I was thirty. . . .

MD: Twenty-eight.

ED: Twenty-eight, twenty-nine. I started thinking, "I'm old. But then," I said, "I'm not old. I can go there with most of the young guys they were taking." And that's how I got in. And remember they sent me to Boston, and they said, "You're in charge." I said, "Me in charge?" He says, "Sure. You're in charge of the guys until you get down to where you go to take the train from. . . ."

MD: Springfield.

ED: ". . . Springfield. Have to go to Springfield, get signed and photographed and all that stuff, _____ _____. Down you go from Springfield, Massachusetts. You're in charge of the bunch as they go down." I said, "I'm not a very good thing." "You will be. You've just taken charge, right?" I said, "Okay."

TC: This is down to Paris Island.

ED: Yeah.

TC: Did you go through basic training there?

ED: Oh, yeah.

TC: And you got into art there, somehow.

ED: When you go through basic training, they give you a paper, and they set you up, and you have to tell what you do—artist or so forth, so forth. Then they can classify you. Well, I wrote down artist, you know. The next thing I know, I'm already. . . . And then, as a matter of fact, they were shipping guys out from. . . . I told you I did all the portraits of all the guys in the platoons?

TC: No, you didn't.

ED: I didn't?

TC: You didn't put it on here, tape here.

ED: Oh! Oh, well, this is how they found out. I'd sit around in there, and all the. . . . A fellow by the name of Shorty Latch, who lived in Hartford—his brother was a pilot over in Germany—he was standing there, so he became part of this outfit here. I think there's seventy in a barracks, something like that—sixty or seventy. And I'm sitting around _____ _____, and so this little kid, whose brother was a fighter pilot over there, flying over Germany, he comes in and he says, "Boy, I got us a job." I said, "What do you mean, a job?" "I got us a job." "What kind of a job?" He said, "I just got you set up for a great deal." [to MD:] What?

MD: [apparently signals ED not to pound his hand on the table as he talks, which is a mannerism that has accompanied ED's utterances throughout—Ed.]

ED: Oh, Jesus. I can't help. . . . My mother said, "Why don't you talk with your mouth?"

TC: Ed makes music on the table as he talks.

ED: That's a [bugaboo]. Anyhow, it's the piano coming up. [chuckling] "So what is that," I said. "I just got a great deal. Look, for all the guys in here. . . ." He'd seen me draw a couple guys, see. One guy said, "Would you. . . ." I'd be drawing something, and he said, "Did you draw that?" I said, "Sure." Do I draw him. I said, "How do you want to look?" He said, "Like that." [poses] I said, "Why don't you just relax?" So I draw the guy just as he is. You know, you put a hat on, he can _____ what he wants, so I had three or four going. And Latch come over and I said, "Well, I've just drawn a couple." And he said, "Yeah, I know. I got this job. That's part of the job." I said, "Hey, wait a minute! What do you mean?" He says, "Look, you get a dollar. I give you half; I take a half." I said, "Latch, I'm doing it. You're doing nothing. You get me a job and now I'm in trouble." He says, "That's all right. I mean. . . ." And so I said, "Okay." I did it because I figured the guys would say, "Hey, come on, Dugmore. You can draw them fast." So I drew everybody in that platoon and did another platoon before I got shipped out of there. But it was one of those things where it got around till five people were standing out there, and I'd say, "What? No, no, I'm not drawing. I can't draw." "You're the guy." "No, I'm not." So this captain. . . . No, was he a lieutenant? Wynn, but not him.

MD: Colonel Wynn.

ED: Yeah, but it wasn't him. It was another guy who said, "There's a guy over there who is an artist, and a damn good one. He's doing everybody in the barracks." The colonel said, "Run him over." So they brought me over there in the Jeep, and I walked in, and. . . . And I was never much of a G.I. What I mean by that, I was never, you know, an _____. I just didn't have time yet, if you know what I mean, because I had been there, just in boot camp. Next thing you know I'm over there, and there are these two guys—corporals—standing in front of the offices where the colonel sits, so I go up and I walk right in and they look at me like I'm walking around with. . . . I'm out of what they call uniform. I'm wearing my fatigue jeans, a poor old pair of boots, and a sweatshirt, and I come walking in there, and I walked right up, and he says, "You're Dugmore." I said, "Yes." Not "Yes, sir," and you're supposed to say, "Yes, sir," and like this, and these two corporals are on each side of the door, and I can hear them. "Hmm?" So he says, "Well, I've got a job for you." Who is the guy that sent me over?
[Interruption in taping]

ED: ". . . get this guy Dugmore. He's an artist." And that's what he said, "Can you draw my portrait?" I said, "Well, yeah, I guess so. I never thought of that." He said, "I'd like to have you do my portrait." I said, "Well, I've got these other . . . I'm doing all these other things." "Well, I'd like to have you do my portrait." And I said, "Okay." And that began this long thing of. . . . And this other guy said, "Gee, he's so good. Let him get into

illustrations." I got illustrations, some of the books and things like that. He said, "He's. . . .

TC: That's his thing, illustrations, that you did?

ED: Yeah.

TC: You have them now?

ED: Well, the ones in there, I'm the only. . . . Because when in there—see, I just got in there—and all I'd draw was the Marines, the guys' heads. But what he says. . . . It's in the book. I'll show you the book.

MD: It's called Marines at War.

ED: Marines at War. And to me [it, he] says, "He's the guy that adds the life to the title. Because I did things of the Army things in Connecticut when I was in the aircraft. They had aircraft around the city that were [shooting], you know. And so I'd go around and draw the Army, with the trenches. I've got all those in the book. Here, that's what they meant. He's the guy. . . . He wasn't a Marine then, but he was doing these. . . . And then I did all the illustrations, all kinds of things for him.

TC: How did this mural come about, at the Marine Corps?

ED: This other officer—I'm trying to think—said, "Get him to do this mural." I just wanted to know his name, and I can't think of his name.

TC: It doesn't matter here.

ED: It doesn't matter. So I went over there and he asked me if I'd do a mural. I said okay. And we're in the officers' club, see—it's not an officers' club; it's a small place, you know—but he said, "Could you do it?" I said, "Yeah. Well, I guess so. You want a long one?" He said, "No, it's not a big one. It's just one big . . . like that." I said, "Well, it's going to require some materials." He said, "What do you want in materials?" I said, "Well, I have to get this and that, and this and that." Then I said, "I could get oil, I figure, by tubes. I don't know where to get it. You'd have to go to some other town. But," I said, "Well, I've got pigment." I figured if I get pigment I could use it myself, so I said, "I'll use pigment."

TC: Let me interrupt. Is the mural still there?

ED: As far as I know, it's still up there. We almost went there when we were down in Georgia.

MD: I was just going to write to them, just now.

ED: Well, it's still there, I'm sure.

MD: No, I'm not positive.

ED: Because that space. . . . They don't fade, not that thing. That's painted in oil.

TC: How long were you in the Marines?

ED: Oh, '43. . . .

MD: Just over a year. [MD has moved away from mike]

ED: For about a year.

MD: Fourteen months.

TC: How did you come out?

ED: Well, that's what I was trying to tell you before. When they shipped me to. . . . What do you call that camp?

MD: Camp Lejeune?

ED: Camp Lejeune. And that was an. . . . What do you call it?
[Interruption in taping]

ED: . . . camouflage, see.

TC: That's a camouflage. . . .

ED: Yeah, because _____ is an artist. Because the colonel in Camp Lejeune was a friend of the colonel that I had. So he told this other colonel, “Get this guy. We’ll get him down there. He can take of those guys who don’t know a thing about camouflage.” And they had some young guy working in camouflage when I got there, and I’m working with him. They guy told me. . . .

TC: The colonel?

ED: The colonel in Camp Lejeune said, “How is it going over there, Dugmore?” And I never was very, you know, officer-like. I’d do something, I’d do that, and he’d let me go. The colonel says, “He’s not up to that. So,” he says, “why don’t you go over. These guys need somebody to tell him this camouflage. Do you know anything about it?” I said, “Sure. I know a lot about it.” “You do?” I said, “Sure. Read all about it.” “Oh. Well, there’s a young guy there.” He’s a major, and he’s this young kid, you know, and he says, “Who are you?” I said, “I’m the guy that’s coming over here to tell you how to do these things.” He says, “I’m doing it.” I said, “Yeah. That may be, but you have to go and. . . . You’d better call up your friend and go and see the Colonel over there.” So he went over and came back, he says, “Hey, how’d you do that?” I said, “Look, you’re not doing so hot, are you?” He said, “No.” I said, “Okay, you stick with me, then, all right? And I’ll say. . . . You get the credit for all I care, but I’ll tell you how to work camouflage.” I said, “I can make these guys. . . . I can do anything I want and make them, you won’t even see them if you’re right next to them.”

TC: How did you come to leave the corps?

ED: Oh, that’s the other part. Now, they had a thing that when I talked to the Colonel—Colonel . . . what’s his name? . . .Wynn—and they had a bunch of guys in from the Guadal Canal, guys who come from out of the different battles, and they had this what they called K-Ward. That’s the wounded guys, and the guys who are, you know, they’re bombed out of their head or. . . . Not the ones who are banged up, though; it’s just the shock, mostly shock. So they were in this ____, and then ____ most of these guys, and they’d sit there and they’d do all kinds of things. They had to draw and things like that. And then other guy come in—another colonel—said. . . . Colonel Wynn had called and said that, “If it’s possible, if you wanted to get out of Marine Corps, because they’re doing this with these guys what you’re doing. . . .” And there was another place where guys would try to run and they’d dive in with alligators down in there, and you’d have to get them out of there. He said, “I don’t think you should be here. If you want to. . . . They have a law—or a code—of if you stayed for three months _____ been _____ and three another months to stay, you can get your way out if you want to.” He said, “Now Colonel Wynn talked to me, all that stuff, he knows all about it.” You know, he was an artist. He said, “If you want to do that, you can do that. He said okay, because they had been down and gone back.” So I just did that, hung around, and the guy said, “Just do what you want.” So I’d go around and talk to different people. The captain there, he was a nice guy, in that outfit, in that place over there. He said, “But you don’t have to hang around. The camouflage doesn’t mean anything. You could go back there, too. But if you want to, you can. . . .” In other words. . . . My age was another thing. They used to call me. . . . Guys used to say, “Hey, Pops,” “Hey, Dad,” and tell the guy, “You call me that once more and I’ll drop you right on your foot.” And one guy says, “Hey, Pops.” He was on the ground, and he said, “What happened?” I looked around and I said, “Tell that guy.” And I walked away. So I give him one-two like that, you know, quick. So nobody ever called me that anymore. But anyhow, that’s what Wynn. . . . So Wynn said, “That’s what we can do.” And Wynn was the guy who set it up.

MD: He was your guardian angel. He didn’t want him to go overseas. Doug really wanted to go overseas.

ED: I know it.

MD: But Wynn didn’t. He wanted to save you.

ED: He figured it out, and this is the thing I didn’t tell you last time. He said, “Look, you’re crazy to do it. Your chances. . . . You see that battalion that’s going out as a replacement? You know what that is?” I said, “Yeah.” He said, “What?” I said, “They’re replacing.” He said, “That replacement battalion, there’s so many. You have no idea how many are coming and going back.” He said, “You shouldn’t do it.” Yeah, Wynn was. . . . As a matter of fact, he came to New York to see us—to see Edie and everything—and he said. . . . Oh, I fixed him like, you know. . . . This guy is a good guy; he shouldn’t be in the war. But see, I wanted to be a combat artist. And I figured if I. . . . That’s part of the things why I went in. When they said, “What classification?” I said, “Artist.” “Oh, ho!” And I met one of the great guys who were a combat artist. His pictures were in there, too, and he had all these drawings of. . . .

TC: In that book?

ED: In the book. I’ll show you the book.

TC: It’s called?

ED: Marines at War.

TC: Okay.

ED: So they said they want me in a book. “What have you got?” I said, “Well, I’ve only got the things I did when I was in Connecticut.” “Well, we can use those.” So they used those. It’s the same thing, except this is Army. Oh, you don’t have to look at them that way. In the same barracks in Connecticut. They had them around the aircraft. They had [fly, flight] supply planes all around during the war waiting, and all kinds of lights. They had to explain to me about for enemy, any kind of a body coming over. And I think that’s what got me involved, you know, from the aircraft and working on these machines, and talking to guys who had been in the Marine Corps earlier, and they’re older guys now, that said the Marine Corps. . . . That must have sunk in my head somewhere. Not the Army, Marine Corps. Harvey went into the Army.

TC: When you came out of the Marines, did you go back to Hartford?

MD: [nods?]

ED: Yeah, right. [chuckles] I have to think. Yes. Let’s see, nineteen thirty you worked?

MD: It’s not on now, is it? [referring to the tape recorder—Ed.]

TC: It is on.
[Interruption in taping]

ED: Oh, wait a minute. This is what we need.

MD: Yeah. It was 1944 when he came home. And then you went down to New York. You got the job in New York.

ED: Where?

MD: The job was working for a commercial, doing a Quaker. . . .

ED: Oh! Hal!

MD: Well, you worked for Hal Clark first, but then you worked for the other man doing Quaker Oats things.

ED: I know. I got it, I got it.

MD: You got that job through an agency.

ED: I got it.

MD: Wait a minute. Let me tell you now, so you’ve got it. Through an agency, you were getting seventy-five dollars a week, and we thought we were going to be the richest people in the world. Linda and I came down to New York. We got an apartment from another Marine up town. The job was through an agency. Six weeks you worked. You made seventy-five, but each week you gave twenty-five to the agency. And at the end of six weeks he was laid off. [chuckles]

ED: [chuckles] ____ I any money. I wasn’t making any money, because they were taking so much back.

MD: It was a commercial art. . . .

ED: But see, because I tell people, “I’m not a commercial artist.” He says, “I know.” But I brought my stuff, and he said, “You can’t be . . . you’re not a commercial. . . . You’re not even any good.” I said, “This is good paint.” He said, “I’m interested in the. . . .” He tried to get me into it. He said, “Try lettering.” So I tried lettering. And these guys. . . . The guy sits here, and the other guy here, and he sat up on the platform. [gesturing] And he says, “You sit down in front.” I remember sitting down there doing. . . . These were all hand-lettered. Take a brush and you just, you know. . . . I’ve seen these guys do it, and I say, “Jesus, how can they do that?” I mean, you gotta have this hand. So I did what I could, and I did pretty good, but. . . . He was an ex-Marine, too. But he told me, “You know, it’s better. . . .” He said, “You’re not helping any. In other words, you’re it doing well, but it takes you so long.” He said, “That guy, what he does. . . .” I said, “I know. He does ten things when I do even that one.” So he was nice about it, but still and all it was. . . . It’s the first time I tried commercial art.
And then I went to Hal.

MD: Sure. . . .

TC: Wait a minute. You went to Hal and he said, “Can you draw a mosquito?”

ED: This is the next door from the railroad station. Hal. . . .

MD: Hal Clark.

ED: Hal Clark.

TC: And here in New York?

ED: Yeah. Right up next to the railroad station.

MD: Grand Central.

ED: Grand Central, right there. He was right. . . . I used to live down on this station over there, and he'd say, "Make me a drawing of that thing, too." So I'd draw the station from the top, people going by, and he said, "I can use those, if you can just tighten it." I said, "Okay." "So can you draw me a mosquito? I want one for this. . . ." It was something to do with the. . . . What's the name of the mosquito in the Latin or whatever it is?

TC: Anopheles.

ED: Anopheles. He says, "I want a big one, so when I take it down it'll be just about that big." [indicating size] So I made a big mosquito. I know, and for me it's easier to make a mosquito than to make an advertise. [sic] I made this mosquito, he said, "Jesus! That's a mosquito, all right. That's one of those kind if it hit you it'd kill you." I said, "Well, you wanted it that big." So he took it down, and then he put them on, oh, a thinner paper, something like. . . . I think I might have some around. I kept them. But I never was that good with him, but they kept me because they liked me because I could do certain things other guys couldn't do. They knew that I could make a quick thing of a kind of drawing. But most people wanted just certain ones—the clients—had to be a certain way. Otherwise, I guess that was the last of my working around like that.

MD: Boot jackets.

ED: Oh, that's what happened! That's right. Hal—I think it was Hal Clark—says, "I know somebody down on Park Avenue and they make boot jackets. Maybe you'd like to do that. I said, "That sounds good to me, because I can make up what I want." And then so I did. I made a lot of boot jackets.

TC: Let me ask how you decided to go to San Francisco.

ED: Oh, I guess, way back, years before I even went to the idea of San Francisco, of looking at photographs of it. . . .

TC: Of the city?

ED: The city. And the city, it was just like, "That's where I want to live." Back to wanting to live. . . .

TC: But you hadn't heard about this California School of Fine Arts?

ED: Yes, I did, but that's what I went out for, see, because that was the G.I. Bill.

MD: John Grilla wrote to you.

ED: John Grilla was out there. He said that. . . . Because he lived right up with Jack Rudolfo, the other guy, and John Grilla were [with] the Times, and they lived up at the other end of town.

MD: In Hartford.

ED: He said, "Man, you've got to come out here. This is great! A great place to go." He says, "It's like it's a new world out here!" You know, he's Italian. So I said, "Why not?" So I went out there, took a bus. Didn't I take a bus?

MD: No, we drove. You, me, and Linda.

ED: Was that when we went out? The whole bunch of us? I always thought that I just went out. . . .

MD: 1948. We drove out. We drove a Kaiser Fraser that we drove for the people . . .

ED: Oh, gosh! We put an ad in the paper. We lived in a housing project. Put an ad in the paper, and the guy said, "Well, you pick it up in Denver." Do you have it here, or what?

MD: We picked it up in Hartford and drove it to . . .

ED: Drove it to Denver. I mean. . . .

MD: . . . to Burbank, California.

ED: I mean, Burbank, California. There's another one was when I did that for _____. They wanted me to go up on the border. So this guy said, "Write to the. . . ." He said, "You get paid. . . ." There's something he said.

MD: Fifty dollars when you get there.

ED: Yeah, fifty dollars. And I said, "Wait a minute. Fifty dollars!? I said, "I've got a kid in the car and all that." He said, "Well. . . ." No, he said something. . . . Did he give me more, because I know I got more when I got there.

TC: Well, so your destination was the California School.

ED: Oh, California School of Fine Arts, yeah. Oh, I signed right in, G.I. Bill, and that was it. I stayed. . . . That was in '46?

MD: '48. September '48 to the end of May, '50, he was at the school.

ED: Yep. And then after that one. . . .

TC: Who were the teachers there that mattered to you?

ED: [Mel, Now] Clay Spohn was one of the ones. And Clyfford Still. Mark Rothko wasn't there when I was there. He came later, when he _____ _____ _____. [telephone rings; MD answers, continuing conversation through next portion of tape]

TC: Rothko: He was not there at all when you were there at the school.

ED: Not when I was there. But according to. . . .

TC: He had been there before?

ED: According. . . . Now this is the thing I never knew. I always thought he came again after. But he'd been there, and one of those I saw. . . . And he'd been there from '45 or something like that.

TC: Not that early, I don't think.

ED: I don't, but somebody. . . . I'm not sure. And I say, "Well, I'm sure we saw. . . ." Edie will tell you later, afterwards. Because he came after Still.

TC: Yes, right.

ED: See, Still wrote a letter to Rothko.

TC: He came there to _____ _____.

ED: Because Still and I were very close. And Briggs. Briggs and I liked Still. Most people didn't like him.

TC: Did you meet Briggs there?

ED: Yeah! Didn't I tell you that—how I met him?

TC: No.

ED: I'll tell you quickly. Because I came in late, see. By the time I got there I had to go down here and _____ Wally up there, so I said to the guy, when I got the money, "Look, I'm going upstate. That's why I need more money. How about a couple bucks?" He says, "Another ten bucks," or something like that, to get up there. We took the train up anyhow. But the thing is with. . . . Rothko was it?

TC: Briggs.

ED: Briggs.

TC: You were talking about how you met him.

ED: So anyway, we get to the school. It was about two days later or something, we walked in and everybody's standing around. We got a little place to live on Laguna Street on the hill with Linda [Dane]. She brought her to school, started her at a school. She liked the [median, media], watched them come down the hills. I went right into school, signed in, and were there about maybe three or four days, and there was Hauptberg. A lot of guys

were moving [out, around].

TC: John Hauptberg.

ED: John Hauptberg. He'd come up from where he lived. And so I was getting a painting set up there in this area. . . . You pick your own area.

TC: At the school.

ED: Yeah, right at the school. Wherever you want to paint, you paint there. _____ _____ _____.

TC: Yeah.

ED: So I was just getting some. . . . Briggs came in just after I did, some years later coming in.

TC: In _____, you mean.

ED: What? When we first went into the school. You just went over and stood in that corner over here, and this guy said, "I'm so and so," and this guy said, "I'm so and so," and then Hauptberg—I knew of him. I said, "Hi, John." Then we talked, and all of a sudden this guy—and I was going off here—and this guy walks in. _____ _____. [walks away from mike, then back, to illustrate the story] Ernie's like this, and _____ _____ he's walking over. He comes walking over, and he said, "Hey! Are you Dugmore? Are you Dugmore, the guy who paints like Titian—twenty, thirty, forty glazes?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Hey!" I said, "Who are you?" I said, "My name is Briggs." _____ Briggs. "I met [Douglas]." "I know," he said. "I heard about you. Can you teach me, tell me how?" I said, "Sure. What do you want to do that for? You don't want do these things." "But I want to try it anyhow." He said, "Thirty, forty glazes, I don't believe it." I said, "It's been done. He did it." I said, "I won't do it, but I said, "I know about them." I said, "You have to do it." You know what I did? I said, "No, but I can _____ three or four glazes, maybe five, I don't know." "But thirty or forty glazes," [I, he] said, "No, that's for Titian. When you see one of these Titian paintings, and really see one, you know why he did it. There's still that glow in there." He said, "Well, that's just what I want, that glow," he said. "Like you see in there." I said, "Okay." But that's what I told him—what to do—and he did a couple. And I remember him putting a black on and then a red, and a little bit of white over that, a little brown [with it, over it], and then glazing it like that, and he said, "Jesus, that's beautiful!" But, you know, it wasn't as flat. It was a beautiful thing, though. And so then we became close friends. He says, "Okay," he says—the first time he tried it—he says. . . . I said, "We're going to get it, [right down in the corner]." See he was a drinker, too. He said, "[Right, We're right] down on the corner there was this bar." We used to live in that bar. See he and I were like the Bobsie Twins. Every once in a while somebody would yell, "Well, how's things going, boys?" [chuckling] Like, you know, and he'd go, "Watch it! Watch it!" And his wife—his girlfriend—was an Italian girl, younger _____ [Alice _____ Maria], and she was a. . . .

MD: Maria Kaminoff. She was Russian.

ED: Kaminoff. She was caught when the Japanese attacked Singapore, down in there, and they knocked her teeth out, broke her nose, banged her up. Ernie looked at her one day, and he said, "Whew! What happened to you?" She said, "I was in Singapore when the Japanese came and they beat me to death." And she said, "Where were you?" He says, "I was in India." He was in. . . . What's that city?

MD: The telegraph thing, like the. . . .

ED: Yeah, he worked in the telegraph. . . .

TC: Wireless.

MD: Wireless.

ED: Wireless, with army. This was of course after the war. So he said he worked in. . . . I can't remember the name of the town anyhow. So they got together and they finally got married, I think. They might not. But. . . .

TC: Let me ask you about Rothko. Rothko was no longer there when you arrived. Were people aware of him at the school?

ED: No, see, this is a two-way thing that we were just talking about. Didn't we just see somewhere that he was there before? Yeah! And I said, "I never heard of Rothko." Still said, "Get Rothko out here," see. And Still got Rothko. He says, "Come on out. I'll give you a great job." I was leaving when he was there. I was just getting out.

MD: Rothko was there the summer of '50, and we left the end of May, 1950.

ED: Yeah.

TC: So he arrived while you were there.

ED: I don't think I. . . .

MD: No, I think after we left.

TC: After you left.

MD: But we did know him here in New York, but not out there.

TC: Oh, you knew him here in New York.

MD: Yeah.

ED: Yeah. But see. . . .

TC: Did you have any particular sympathy for his work?

ED: Oh, yeah, very much. Rothko?

TC: Um-hmm.

ED: Yeah, what I liked. . . . His early work, too. Some of the early things _____ knocked me out.

TC: The representational things.

ED: Yeah, some of those things, you know, you could see things that he did, how he got to where he did his washes.

TC: Had you known him here before you went to California?

MD: I don't know, but [what I'm] working _____ _____.

ED: Okay, because this is his east coast. . . . Because you know he's a friend of Clyfford's anyhow.

TC: Say what?

ED: Clyfford Still.

TC: He was. . . .

ED: They were friends.

TC: A friend of Clyfford's, yes.

ED: Oh, yeah. Because they were in that [Ek-klah], and then there was this four or five other guys. [Pollock] _____. And so he asked me if I'd help him hang his show, so I helped him. . . .

TC: Here in New York City?

ED: Yeah. And these were the brown . . . the browns. . . .

TC: What year was that?

ED: Fifty-one. 1951.

TC: After you returned to New York.

ED: After I come back to New York.

TC: So when you left San Francisco, you came to New York City.

ED: Yeah.

TC: But this is the first time you ever. . . . Oh, no, you had lived here before, after you got out of the war.

ED: Yeah. But then. . . . He didn't go out right then, though. He had the show. . . .

MD: No, it was earlier he had the show.

ED: And I used to hang around with . . . Rothko. . . .

TC: When did he have the show?

MD: He had the show in April 1951 here at Betty Parsons. That's at least when you were helping him hang the show, as I recall.

ED: Yeah. Parsons was the big gallery. Still, Parsons. . . . I mean, and the other guy . . . Reinhardt—Ad Reinhardt. Geez, a couple other guys. Oh. . . .

MD: Newman.

ED: Newman—Barney Newman. And that's when Still used to say, "Well, Barney Newman. . . ." Still said, "This is where Barney Newman got the idea to make a one-line painting." And Still says, "I was telling Barney about how I feel," he said. "I stand on the earth and I point my finger in the sky." Newman says, "What, are you God or something?" Still says, "No, but that's how I feel when I'm painting." So Newman did one line—you know, made it one line here, and one here and there. I remember seeing those things. [We'd always] see Newman. See, I used to hang around. . . . Here's this thing I wanted to tell you. I hung around with the guys downtown, which is the Cedar Bar, and the bar over there, the White Horse. Can I make it? [meaning can he fit the story on the end of the tape side—Ed.]

TC: You better move fast.

ED: And would be "Who's side are you on," and I said, "I don't have any side." I said, "I can go Clyfford Still, Clay Spohn, anybody I want," and I go over there, and he said, "Yeah, but, I mean. . . " When you go up there, you drink. . . . You drink beer up there with the guys up there. You go to Still over there, and he doesn't even drink." I said, "Well, that's where I eat with him sometime." And so Rothko and Still used to hang around up there.

MD: At Jerry's Bar.

ED: At Jerry's Bar.

MD: Rothko did, anyway.

ED: Rothko. Still wouldn't; he'd never drink. He never could drink. He never argued. He said, "Just no _____." But Rothko, I used to sit there with Rothko and couple other guys—and Briggs. And so we became friends. But, I mean, I don't remember him being there before even I was there.

MD: At the school, you're talking about.

ED: Yeah, at the California School. See when I got back Still was saying to get Rothko out, so Rothko came out after even I got back, and I heard he was out there then. I said, "How do you like it?" He said, "Well, you know." I said, "_____ time then out there." But then he must have been there before, because somebody had a thing I saw, and I can't believe it. Whoever they were said that he was there before than, when the school was early. And Clay Spohn, of course, as you know, he came here and lived right up on Fourteenth Street, and we lived on. . . . He lived on the other end of Fourteenth Street, and we lived right over here, down on the corner, right on the corner. "I'm comin' on up, okay?" He said, "Okay." He'd come up with a bottle. "Well, we got a little nip here anyhow," and he'd sit down and we'd eat something, and then he'd say, "Well, I'll have another one of those." He could drink. I never got over Spohn.

TC: Clay. Yes, he could.

ED: And he was. . . . And then he just get on his. . . . You know what _____ _____.

[End of session]
Tape 2, Side A

ED: . . . another one of those." He could drink. I never got over Spohn.

TC: Clay. Yes, he could.

ED: And he was. . . . And then he just get on his. . . . You know what _____ _____. Stand like this, dive down and kick his feet up like mule, and give it a hee-haw, and he'd come out on Fourteenth Street, and he'd. . . .
[End of original tape side; conversation resumes over lunch or dinner]

TC: . . . with Edward Dugmore. The name at the beginning of Tape 1, Reta Overman, is spelled R-e-a-t-a O-v-e-r-m-a-n. She is a potter now, and the Dugmores are still in contact with her. Ed, you were talking about San

Francisco and the feeling of the place when you were there.

ED: San Francisco, after living in New York and in Connecticut. . . . Connecticut was a different kind of country there and New York was totally the other way. But in San Francisco it seemed to be that everybody was friendly. You know, everybody. No matter. . . . If you bumped somebody you'd say, "Excuse me." [chuckles] You see, no fights, except a few places. And Linda then was, I think, thirteen. [She] went to school there, our daughter.

TC: This is nineteen . . . what year?

ED: This is forty . . . forty. . . . Is that '46, Edie? '48? San Francisco.

MD: [from the background] 1948.

ED: '48. Because '48, '49, '50, '51 there. So Linda was right at that age . . . the school and girlfriends. She had Chinese girlfriends and. . . . It was in Chinatown practically, right on the border we lived. We had a great place. We lived two or three places, and then we found one that would be for her when she went to school. And she liked school and she liked her friends and the teachers and it was quite different than [it would have been]--to her, even, you know, which is . . . in those schooldays.

TC: How did you happen to go to San Francisco.

ED: Well, we'd been--or I had, any how--I know that many times I'd think, "I've got to go to San Francisco." One time or another, we're going to go to San Francisco and see what it's like. And gradually, as the time went by, and the jobs that we had in Connecticut and the things that we did there, we finally said, "Well. . . ." This is in '48. This is after, yeah, G.I., getting the. . . . That was the G.I. Bill, Edie?

MD: Yes. _____ _____ [back then]

ED: Yeah, see, then the G.I. Bill. And I stuck to it because everybody there was in Marine Corps. Some guys, they'd say, "Oh, you were in the Marine Corps, too." So. . . .

TC: This was at the California School of Fine Arts. . . .

ED: Yeah.

TC: And you went in there in '48, when you went out there?

ED: Yeah, as soon as we got out there.

TC: You didn't go there for the purpose of going to the school then?

ED: Yeah, I wanted to see it. I wanted to see what it was like, because I didn't know but I heard it was a kind of a. . . . It's a different living in San Francisco than it would be living here. This is a tight living.

MD: John Grilla.

ED: John Grilla.

TC: _____ _____ _____.

ED: John Grilla, he's the guy from Hartford. Now, John Grilla, he came out of the navy, and I was still living in New York and he was in Connecticut, I think, at that time. Or he came to New York. Well, he came here, too, and he said. . . . Yeah, he was here and I was in New York. No, I was in Connecticut then. He said that. . . .

MD: He had been there.

ED: He went out to San Francisco. . . .

MD: He landed in San Francisco from the navy . . .

ED: The navy.

MD: . . . in the Second World War, and he went to the school, and he did write to you in Connecticut and say he thought it was a great school.

ED: Yeah.

MD: That was one of the suggestions.

ED: But he wasn't there when I was there.

MD: No, he had left by then.

ED: See, he'd already gone. I don't know if he went a full term, but I don't think he did. Because he came right. . . . I think [when] he came back to Connecticut. . . .

TC: What did you do between the time you came out of the Marines in '44 and the time you went to San Francisco?

ED: Factories. I worked in . . . machine. . . . I worked even in machine guns. . .

MD: Honey, you were ill, remember? In 1945 he had a thyroid operation . . .

ED: Oh, I know. This is what happened.

MD: . . . and he was quite ill.

ED: It was very violent.

MD: So that he stayed home and I worked . . .

ED: I know, I know, go ahead.

MD: . . . and you took Linda to nursery school.

ED: Yeah, that's right. It was. . . .

MD: There was a period of recuperation, much of it.

ED: That was my wife's stint.

MD: And then by . . . I would say by '46, late '46, he was better again, and he did work odd jobs but . . .

ED: That was a dangerous. . . .

MD: . . . at the time I was the bread-winner.

TC: Did you paint. . . .

ED: I had no idea what happened. I used to go right out of my head. I was so violent. I had no idea. Nobody knew it. I went to a different place, they never said so. They call it. . . . I went to doctors, either here or somewhere else, and they'd say. . . . Out there they'd say, even when I went to the army hospital in Connecticut, when they said. . . . What did he call it, Edie?

MD: [from background] Oh, honey. . . .

ED: The guy in the hospital. I went all the way out there to see him, like this, you know, and he says, "Take it easy."

MD: It was an over-active thyroid.

ED: Yeah, but he didn't say that. No, he said. . . . No, I'm not talking about that guy. They would say, "It's only an anxiety complex."

MD: Oh, oh, I'm sorry. I wasn't here [at the start of the conversatoin—Ed.] so I didn't. . . .

ED: That's what I meant. Anxiety complex. I said, "Anxiety complex!?" And one guy, when he got back, called a guard, and he says, "Get this guy out of here." I said, "Don't give me any anxiety." And that's true. We lived upstate here, too. Way up by where everything is going on with all the riots. We lived right near that park where Linda could go. . . .

MD: Washington.

ED: Washington Heights. And I was still pretty. . . . That's right [near where] it's at.

MD: That was 1944.

ED: See?

TC: You came to live in New York?

MD: We came to live in New York, yes. Out of the Marines.

ED: I just wanted a job in there.

MD: You got a job. That's right.

ED: I got a job through a Marine. And I got a house, a place to live through a Marine. Marine Corps says, "We have a place here in New York City. Go there and they'll tell you where you can get a job. And get this: If you don't like it, don't take it. Try another place." So I got the job and I lasted. . . . The guy who ran it was another Marine. And he was the guy that said. . . . Oh, no, that's just terrible. That's the story that really. . . . He ran it like he was a colonel or he was a captain, and everybody had to say, "Sir," practically. I told him. . . .

MD: It was commercial art. You designed things like for Quaker Oats.

ED: Something like that. And I'd say. . . . He'd say, "You're not doing well." I said, "Well, that's your problem, not mine." I said, "I'm not interested in doing this." He said. . . . "Because I'm a fine artist, [not that] I can't be commercial. I just want to learn." I was being mad, then. So I said, "You should help me, too. Because I'd like to learn some commercial. . . ." I was being. . . . I just didn't want to be there. He said, "Oh, you know. . . ." I said, "Oh, you know. . . ." So I quit that one after six weeks. Because he would have guys. . . . He'd line you up. . . . He sat in a chair here, and another guy here, and another guy, and you're in the front row. You're the dunce. And if I didn't know, he'd ask him to come up there and you had to walk up these stairs. And I said, "Gee, this guys is a likes to put a crown on your head, you know, horns in it." [chuckles] This guy didn't like my attitude at all. But I got into a few of those, and that was it. I decided. . . . Those jobs you could get, though, you see. You know, that's the only time I did it. One guy. . . . One guy, Fred, next to the [Gr____, railroad] station. . . .

MD: Oh, Hal Clark.

ED: Hal Clark. Now Hal Clark was a nice guy. He was the only guy there--and another guy that worked with him—who understood it. You know, this is '45.

MD: '44.

ED: '44. Every time I go by there now, I look and I go, "Ah, gee!" But he was a good guy. He gave me the leeway. He says. . . . Once I had to draw a mosquito, you know--make a mosquito for some ad. So I made a mosquito. He says, "Jesus, that's awfully real." I said, "Well, you wanted a mosquito." He said, "That'll bite you for Christ's sake. It's so new." He said, "Well, you have to make 'em that size, larger or three or four times the size." And he said, "Well, I really wanted a commercial guy, but you stick with it and I'll keep you on for a while." He did, but it was pretty tough because he'd have to give me special things and have to show 'em, and he'd say, "Now that's a little too real." In other words it's too arty, you know. [chuckles] And I liked him. He'd take me out to lunch and tell me. . . . He had to bring me to [this, his] place to have lunch with him, [while, like] he'd say, "I know what you feel. You're _____ [ex-Marine]. But the thing is," he said, "You're not really a commercial artist. You know that." I said, "Right." And he says, "Well," he says, "I'll keep you on for a little while, pay you. . . ." And he did, and then I left him eventually, and that was good."

MD: Nettie King.

ED: And Nettie King . . .

MD: He was an agent.

ED: Nettie King was somebody who. . . . I don't know who the guy was who who I met there. . . .

TC: At that job?

ED: No, another place. Somewhere. . . . Was this from that same job, maybe? The guy said. . . .

MD: No . . .

ED: There were so many people.

MD: . . . Lesley. His last name was. . . . He's Doctor Lesley.

ED: Oh, I know, that's right. A guy by the name of Dr. Lesley. How did I meet him?

MD: When you were. . . .

ED: Not as a doctor, because, I mean, he wasn't a doctor as a. . . .

MD: When you did the illustration in the book No Good, the Dancing Donkey.

ED: Oh, he. . . . Dr. Lesley, you know, he put out a little book.

MD: Oh-h-h. . . .

ED: He put out a book, didn't he? And Nettie King was an. . . .

MD: Nettie King was an agent . . .

ED: She was an agent.

MD: . . . and she introduced you to Dr. Lesley, who was a very nice man . . .

ED: To help you.

MD: . . . from Europe who was helping all these artists . . .

ED: Artists, after the war _____ _____.

MD: . . . and so he tried to. . . . Then you tell it.

ED: Go ahead. What was it?

MD: You did No Good, the Dancing Donkey, and he sent you to a publisher. I think it was Viking Press, I'm not sure.

ED: I did it for Linda. It was a donkey that danced, you know? And, unfortunately, I used to go to the main library to check out all kinds of things about dancing, donkeys, dancer, or all these things, and I'd be sitting there and people would be watching you and all the time, and talking to you, and "What are you doing?" I says, "I'm doing a book," you know, and this was the thing, and without even thinking about it, and the next thing I know, I get the thing all done, and there's a book comes out--The Dancing Donkey--nothing to do with mine at all, all different [stuff]. And I said, "Jesus. . . ." to him, and he said, "Well, how did that happen!?" And that's because the guy had picked up on it and just did a quick _____ _____. Mine, I've still got the original.

MD: What happened is that was published by Rand McNally . . .

ED: Rand McNally.

MD: . . . but you did receive something like two hundred dollars . . .

ED: Yeah.

MD: . . . advance, which was a lot of money in those days.

ED: A lot of money.

MD: A lot of money.

ED: But they wouldn't touch that one. They said, "Well, maybe another time."

MD: But they wouldn't do it.

ED: No. Too bad.

TC: So it was not published?

MD: It was not published.

ED: No, because I. . . . I mean, he said, "Geez, you should never talk. . . . In this city, you don't talk to anybody what you're doing. They'll steal it right from under your face, right when you're there." And these guys in the library, whoever did it, and I got a copy of that [in, with, and] the guy's name or something. But it was nothing like mine. It was drawn like the same way as the cards that I made in the Marine Corps with a guy dancing and, you know, that real commercial thing. Mine was done with a. . . . Well, the way I did it was straight-out, like if I'm doing that, not making a cartoon out of it. This was the real dancing donkey. She's got the whole copy in there. In front of the book. . . . What?

MD: Be more clear.

ED: I know, I'm just trying to get rid of what's in my [teeth, tea]. [chuckles] Anyhow, I never was made for that business. There's no doubt about it. If I'd have been smart enough I would have known not to walk into the library and be friendly, somebody saying, "Oh, I saw you working on a book." "Yeah." Things like that. And that's how that happened. But we're friends--Doctor Lesley and I, just the same—but. . . . And he figured it out, too, but I don't know what else the thing was that had to do with that.

MD: Through Nettie King you did book jackets.

ED: Oh, that was it. Nettie King said, "Do you want to do book jackets?" I said, "Well, I think they're a hell of a lot better than making these commercial things. Could I make my [ideas]?" She said, "Go right ahead." So I made book jackets for a while. She said, "Those are good." Because I just. . . . "But," she said, "read the book and see." So I'd read the book, and then I'd make a jacket and bring it in to her. I mean, as an idea, and she'd say, "That's fine." So I did two or three books like that.

MD: About three of them, I think.

TC: Do you remember the names?

MD: No. I remember that one had a piano and a champagne glass on it.

ED: Oh yeah, a champagne glass. That was one of. . . .

MD: I don't remember.

ED: They're somewhere. I know they are.

MD: No, they're not.

ED: They're not?

TC: During this period, say before you went to San Francisco, did you ever sell paintings?

ED: Some. In West Hartford I sold some to some people.

MD: For fifteen and twenty dollars, I recall.

ED: Yeah, [when, and] they were. . . . I'll show you. I've got panels. Portraits, self-portraits, all the stuff in the drawers there. Because working on panels. . . .

MD: Yeah. When you were in art school, you did the man's portrait--from the photograph.

ED: Oh, yeah. Who was that?

MD: This woman and her daughter came in. . . .

ED: Oh, yeah! Oh, this is another one. Oh, that was in art. . . . Can we go back to art school for a minute? This woman came in, and they talked to Hynd--Fred Hynd; he was the director--and asked if they. . . . Her husband had died, and they wanted to know if somebody could do a portrait of him. "I've got some photographs and that's all, but I will help him all I can." She wants a life size, head-size painting of him. So he came over to me and asked me if I'd do it, and I said, "Well, what do got to do it from?" and he said, "Well, that photograph." This photograph was a brown, you know, piece. . . ." I said, "Well, I guess so." So I did it from the photograph. But it came out right. She loved it. She said. . . . Oh, she cried over it, and she said, "Oh, I. . . ." I think I got seventy-five dollars for it, but. . . .

MD: Yes, I think so too.

TC: Interesting.

MD: It was a lot in those days. . . .

ED: Sure. And she was very nice. She actually cried. She said, "Geez, it looks like he's real." You see, and that's where these things came in, where I had to make it look real, look like the guy is alive. The mustache. . . . I know what she said. She said, "How did you know that he had a twinkle in his eye, that he drank?" [laughs] And I said, "I don't know, but I suspected that he did, just the way he was looking at me," or something like that. And she goes, "Oh, yeah?" So, it's one of those things. But he did have that mustache, you know. And she wanted it like the photograph. I said, "Well, a photograph's a photograph, and I can't make it like the photo, [after] I make it

big and I'm going to make it in color, so you'll have to come in and _____ _____. You come in and see how it's going. Once a week or less. You just come any time you want and ask me. . . . You tell me what it's going like." She said, "It's going fine." And she liked. . . . All the way, she goes, "Oh my." She says, "It's beautiful." So she was very happy. And it was life-size. And to make a life-size. . . . It's hard to make life [size], because you can always make it bigger so you think. . . . Like your head and mine, see, if you put it there that size on a board, it doesn't come out right. You have to make it just slightly under so it looks right. Sometimes it's too big. And so I made that, and he had that mustache and that eye, and he had his hand and he had these stiff cuffs on there. His hands were just so beautiful there, you know. And he had that little cocked eye like that. [gestures]. So that was good. Seventy-five dollars _____ _____.

MD: The other thing that you did in art school was illustrate a book, The History of Religion.

ED: Oh, God, yeah. That's a really. . . .

MD: He illustrated that book, and we've been looking for it everywhere, but we can't find it. It's out of print.

ED: I think we've lost it. Somebody stole it.

MD: It was by Edna Baxter.

ED: She lived up here in Hartford. Seminary.

MD: She was at the seminary.

ED: She was in a seminary near the river and also. . . . The seminary was a. . . . I don't know what you'd call it. See, it wasn't Catholicism, it wasn't. . . .

MD: No, it was a religious seminary.

ED: It was a religious seminary, but it wasn't. . . . You could be any religion if you wanted. I mean, my point is. . . . Because I said, "Well, I don't know enough about that." She said, "Well, I'd like you to illustrate this new book, History of. . . . What was it?

MD: The History of Religion.

ED: Religion, yeah. And I said, "Well, how can I do that?" She said, "Well, you can make drawings, couldn't you?" And I said, "Sure," and _____ _____ make a print of them, make prints of them." And I said, "Well, that's another story. How big do you want them and how are they going to fit in the book?" She says, "Don't you worry about it. You just do it and I'll figure it out." So I did a few and she like them. So I did. . . .

MD: You did Nefertiti, I remember.

ED: Nefertiti and all these different ones, and I had to take them from photographs because I said, "I don't. . . ." So she had books with pictures in them and she said, "If you could get them close to that it would okay. Make them smaller."

TC: What year was this?

MD: It was 1938.

TC: And does the book say that you did the illustrations?

ED: Oh, yeah.

TC: It does?

ED: Yeah.

TC: While we're. . . .

ED: Well, I think she said illustrations from photographs or something.

MD: No, just illustrations. . . .

ED: No, illustrations by me. Wonder where that went?

TC: While we are looking backward there, there was a mistake about the hepatitis. You said you did not get it . . . or you did get it Guadalajara but you didn't know you had it until you got back to New York?

MD: That's right, that's right.

ED: That was it. That was it. Oh, no. . . . Yes, right. That's where we _____. See, I forgot there how that happened. I saw this friend of ours, this girl who I used to know in high school. She was a model. So I used to stay with her and her mother. And then I. . . . That's when I first came back.

MD: [Marilyn (later sounds like Marian)] [Searman], yeah.

ED: And she said one day, she said, "You're very aggressive. You run upstairs in the subway, and you're going to fall, and you're just too hyper like that." And she said. . . . Wait a minute now, let's see.

MD: She suggested that you get a job in the hospital because you didn't feel good.

ED: I was high. I was like this, too [gestures], a little bit on the . . . like that side and anybody around you. I was scared, because subways and everything. I really had a thing there. So she said, "Why don't you just get a job at the. . . . I'll get you a job at the. . . . Why don't you get a job painting in a hospital, so if anything happened you'd be in a hospital." She was very smart.

TC: [laughs]

ED: It's true.

MD: That's what happened, too.

ED: It's true. She lives right here around . . . not too far. She married some guy; he's a very nice guy. Every time he. . . . We have them over sometimes, and she looks at me like that, "Well?" And I say, "Yeah, I remember. I remember." So I did get a job in a hospital. It was Beth-Israel. Right in the hospital. She said, "Call up and ask them." And she said, "I'll call for you." And all that stuff like Edie would do. And so he says, "Well, come over and I'll check you out." So when I got over there, this guy said, "Okay, you paint hospitals?" I said, "I didn't paint hospitals but I know how to paint walls." And I said, "You've got them right here." He says, "The two colors. . . ." I get this ladder and I'm up and down this ladder. And every once in a while, you know, I'm. . . . I was afraid, because I'd get up and I'd look down, and I'm up three or four floors, and I'm on the window doing this window thing, too, at the same time, and I'm thinking. . . . So I got worried. Anyhow, I worked but I had a fever. There's no doubt about it. I was really bad off. But I wasn't going to tell them yet. I wanted to make sure that I had a job. The next thing, I'm just going down, and I slipped and I went all the down, bango, landed on the floor, and the next thing I know I'm lying on a stretcher and the guy is saying, "Wake up, wake up." [chuckles] And I'm, you know, like that. [gestures] And I said, "What happened? What happened?" He said you fell off a ladder. And I said, "I don't remember that." And then they tried to figure out what was wrong, and I couldn't . . . I didn't know what to tell them actually. I didn't know what to tell them.

MD: Well, they figured it out soon enough.

TC: How long was. . . .

ED: So my blood . . . my urine, urinary was black and, Jesus, they said. . . . They put me in a bed and they put me in another bed over. . . . They isolated me over there, and that was when I had that what she said. They had seven doctors come right off the bat when they found. . . . "Where's this guy?" "He's over here." Luckily, I went to that hospital. Because these seven guys come right over. Everybody that went. . . . The first guy just said, "What?" and they checked me all out. He said, "Jesus, his eyes are just as black. . . . I mean, he's going to die. He can't live long if we don't get at them." And they worked. They worked at me. I said, "No, I'm going to die. I don't want to live, because if I have to be like this. . . ." And this was terrible. Jesus, I was. . . . They said, "You're staying in here." And they said, "I'll tie you down if you. . . ." They were very nice. I mean, they were really. . . . The guys from the Holocaust. . . .

MD: Yeah, were there as patients, too.

ED: . . . and they were in the hospital. One guy, he was a patient so. . . . When I was calmed down, they said—you know, I told them I was an artist--they gave me a pad and everything, and Marian brought a pad or something, and I'd draw. And a guy said, "Will you draw me?" I said, "Sure I'll draw you." So I drawed him like that but I was still hyped, really hyped.

MD: He was a rabbi.

ED: A rabbi. The rabbi across the street. And I gave it to somebody. He said, "Don't ever get out of bed. You're not supposed to go. You're supposed to stay still and quiet. Be quiet. Be quiet. Don't talk so much." So I gave it to him, and he says, "Yeah, that's nice," and he tore it up. But I said, "Jesus!"

MD: That's not how he did it. You said, "If you don't like it you don't have to keep it," and he said, "Okay." [both laugh]

ED: "If you don't like it. . . ." He says, "Okay." He tore up. And I looked at him and I says, "Oh. . . ." You know, he was Jewish from the Holocaust. And a lot of them were there at that time. All of a sudden I realized these different people. And I thought, "Gee, there's nothing wrong with me. I mean, these guys. . . ." They were. . . . Some of these guys would just jump up in the air and scream, and I'd wake up like that. And then the nurses come and tell me, "I'm sorry, but that's the way it is." And the next door neighbor was. . . . They put a guy in there, and he was just like this. [gestures] Deadpan. He was like one of those guys, and he was out of the camp. They must have. . . . They beat him to death practically, so they put him over there, and he had to have liquor, he had to have a drink.

MD: He had to have a shot of whiskey every morning for his heart, the doctor said.

ED: A shot of whiskey every morning for his heart. That's what they did then. Because they knew what was wrong with his body. And so every time he took a drink, he would go, "Oh-h-h, _____." [imitating a weak voice]. He could talk English, but not much, and he was so tight. [whispers, inaudible, probably imitating the fellow asking ED to have a drink] "I'm not supposed to. I just came from Mexico, and they told me don't drink at all. "Please, please, if I don't they'll make me, they'll make me." And I watched him, saying, "Drink it," and he'd spit it out, and they'd give him another one. "So drink it will you?" So I said, "Okay." I took it. I run across, took it like that, I slugged it down, and put it back. Right there, [zan, zen (asound meaning something like "zoom")], _____ _____. "I saw you take that whiskey. It's his, not yours. He'll die and you won't. I mean, what's the matter with you guys?" So I said, "I'm sorry." "No, you're not. You're not supposed to do that." They were good, because they were telling you you're stupid, which was the first time I realized it. And the other guy says, ["You just need it"]. "He needs that. You don't. You'll die. . . . He'll die now because he can't have it. He has to have those." And I say, "Okay, okay." And then he got used to me and he figured, "Okay, well, all right." But when I left, I couldn't get my shoes on, I couldn't get my belt around me, and I felt like I was a big bowl of balloon. I wasn't, but I was heavy. And they said, "Well, you know, you're going to be hard walking now because you haven't walked for so long." And the shoes wouldn't fit right, and she says, "Your feet are swollen." And all that stuff. But that was a job that I . . . I was scared then. . . .

MD: Well, the smartest thing was that he was covered by insurance, because he had been working there like two weeks ahead, that's all.

ED: That's what Marian had figured out.

MD: It was fantastic because . . .

ED: . . . because otherwise I don't know what would have happened. It was one of those things that I don't. . . .

TC: Earlier you spoke of your father being a photographer.

ED: Yes.

TC: He was a photographer in England?

ED: In England, yeah. He had a bike. . . .

TC: What cities?

ED: Birmingham and. . . . Birmingham and. . . . I'm sorry.

MD: Wulverhampton.

ED: Wulverhampton. And also a town. . . . We went over there one time and looked around and saw [Draycot], all these little towns he talked about. We saw places where--the places are still there--where he used to hang around we he took photographs.

TC: Did you go with him?

ED: No, no, he was dead then. He died. . . .

MD: No, he was. . . . Stratford-on-Avon . . .

ED: Stratford-on-Avon.

MD: . . . that's one place that he did a lot of photographing.

ED: He used to go and he'd take. . . . He'd just sit right there. He had his bike, and he'd stay right there, and he'd see some women--_____ a lot of women sitting on a bank--and he'd say, "Could I take your photograph?" And they'd giggle. They had on long skirts and these big hats on, you know. And he'd say, "Look, it's okay. I'll take them. If they don't come out right, I'll _____ _____. They won't be very expensive anyhow." Things like that. They'd say, "Well, if you want to." So he'd take all these pictures on his bike.

TC: When was this?

ED: This is. . . .

MD: It would have to be. . . . He was born in 1885, so probably 1903, '04, '05, about like that.

ED: Yeah, right in there.

TC: And you still have his. . . .

MD: Glass plates.

ED: Oh, yeah. Camera, glass plates. . . . I have the camera. I have everything: the case, the carrier, and the hoods, the tripods. Warren Graham is an artist. I don't know if you know him, Warren Graham?

TC: Oh, right.

ED: Warren Graham once asked me, "Can I borrow that camera? The bellows are not working." I said, "I know. They're old." He said, "I'll have them fixed if you let me use the camera." So he fixed it. He fixed the bellows and he used the camera. He said, "My God. . . ." He had to, you know, get under the thing. He said, "Boy, they did a lot of work to get it, but," he said, "that's beautiful. It's clear as a bell." He had all the lenses, beautiful lenses. I've got all the lenses. It's all packed there.

TC: Was your father still photographing when you were a child?

ED: Oh, sure.

MD: Oh, god, lots.

TC: Was he a professional?

ED: No, because he always worked in those days.

TC: What did he do?

ED: He worked in the factories, he worked in the. . . . The first one was . . .

MD: He worked in Meridan as a silversmith.

ED: . . . a silversmith, firstly. And there are so many spoons I've got that he. . . . That's what he. . . . When they were in England that's true. He went to England and got a job. He went to a silversmith's place for a job, and they gave him the job, and he worked there like an apprentice for maybe seven years before your. . . . I think it's five or seven, he said. By that time, you know how to make a spoon, how to print it. So I've got some here.

TC: That's the name that he made.

ED: Yeah, he has a special stamp on it.

MD: Let's see now. Underwood?

ED: Underwood?

MD: He worked in the Underwood Typewriter in Hartford.

ED: Yep.

MD: He worked in Pratt and Whitney Small Tool. That was the longest job, I think he had.

ED: Yeah, that was the one where he wanted me to get in.

MD: That's where he worked until he retired.

ED: Yeah.

TC: You said there was some family. . . .

ED: He was an inspector then, in that time, not a machinist. He was an inspector at the. . . .

TC: You said there was some family connection to the wildlife photographer, A. Radcliffe Dugmore?

ED: Yeah, as far as. . . . When they met in the Avery. . . . Memorial, was it? Avery Memorial. . . .

TC: Oh, that is Radcliffe Dugmore and your father.

ED: Radcliffe gave a talk. As far as I know. The only thing that proves it to me, to my father, was there's a picture of Radcliffe standing by a tent and his face . . .

MD: Sitting in a tent.

ED: . . . and his face is the exactly the same face as mine . . .

MD: Looked like Doug.

ED: . . . with the same lines along the face. He's just standing outside with his boots and things on in Africa. It's one of those books there. And whether there's more Dugmores, I. . . . We don't know how many Dugmores.

MD: _____ _____ _____ positive.

ED: Huh? No.

TC: Well, you mentioned there were a couple of teachers in grammar school that had great influence on you.

ED: Oh yes, definitely. This was . . . Mrs. McClooney was an older woman, but when she found out one time. . . . I was in class and she said, "Could I see you after class, Edward?" She said, "You're listening, but you're also not listening. You understand, but you're not quite listening because you're thinking of something else." She says, "I think what you're thinking about is doing a drawing or doing something like that, aren't you?" I said, "No, I was writing poetry in my mind." She says, "Oh." So she said, "Well. . . ." She was never. . . . Some teachers are tough. They come in and say _____ _____. She didn't. She figured I was dreaming, you know. And actually I was; I was making up poetry while she was talking. She was an older woman but very positive about talking. I used to sit. . . . You're not supposed to do anything but sit. You're not supposed to do this [gestures], but I always was going like this. She'd tell you, "Sit back like everybody else." But then she said, "Would you. . . . I've got some things at home. I have books and I have some little paintings on the wall. Would you like to come and see them?" I said, "Sure." So she had somebody pick us up with the car and drive me out there and see this stuff. And she'd say, "You know, you should write poetry, because I know that you want to write poetry because I've seen, and I've heard that you write a lot of things but you throw them away. The kids . . . the other students tell me." She said, "I wondered if you had some." So I had a couple, some that I brought to her. She says, "I think those are very good, I think, for your age." And she says, "I would think about being a poet—or doing poetry anyhow." I said, "That's very nice, but I want to paint." [laughs] And she says, "Well, that's good, too." So the next teacher, another one, was--who knew her, too--was Genevieve Anderson. Miss Genevieve Anderson. She wasn't married. She was this beautiful woman. See, I could draw this and draw this, copy this and copy that. So I'd copy this very fast, and she would say, "Well, didn't that look like you did that awful fast?" And she'd say, "Can you draw this and draw that?" And I said, "Sure." Well, the next time I had some drawings of this and that, and she'd look them over and then she'd say, "Can you stay after school? I want to talk to you." So I stayed after school and she'd tell me all these things about, "You can draw all the time?" I said, "I'm always drawing." "You have any?" I said, "I'm sure my mother has a lot. She keeps them for me." She said, "Oh, well, bring them in." I brought them in, and she said, "Oh, well, you're an artist. I don't know what you want to be, but if you want to be an artist you are one. You're an artist if you keep it up. But you've got to get a job, don't you?" You know, they always worried. This is, like, early on. They said, "But there's no money in it." [laughs] In other words, they were very good. They said, "How can you go around and sell poems? How do you sell paintings? People have to buy them. And you've got to make them." I said, "I know, but I think I have to get jobs."
So I did. I used to get jobs all the time--they'd ask me, meet me, or call me up. When I was working in a hotel as an elevator operator and a bellhop, and this woman came in, walked in, and I stepped out of the elevator and she says, "Hello, Edward." [gasps, expression of surprise] And it's this other woman. I can't think of her name right now. She says, "How are you? I didn't know you were working here."

TC: Is this a teacher?

ED: Yeah. From high school. And she said. . . . I said, "What are you doing her?" Just very quick. She says, "Well, my father lives here." I said, "Oh, I didn't know that." So she says, "Of course." And I can't remember her name,

the one who went in the elevator when I was a hotel guard, running the elevator and being a bellhop.

MD: Oh, yeah. Miss Forester or something, was it?

ED: No. Anyhow, she said, “Well, now! That’s nice to see that you’re working, but you’re drawing, too.” And I said, “Oh, yes. I’m doing some drawings now of different people around here and so forth.”

MD: Did you say which year that was? ‘34.

ED: 1934.

MD: So we’re going back further and further.

ED: Oh well, it’s only because that job was. . . . Running an elevator, you know, is. . . . I didn’t want to. I felt like I. . . . I had a red. . . . Oh, that’s right, and the kids would go by and see me, they’d go like this, you know. [gestures] “Yeah!” you know, all the buttons.” There’s brass buttons. Like a bellhop.

MD: A maroon bellhop _____.

ED: . . . a real maroon. . . .

ED: And you had to wear a hat. [laughs] But I liked it. I met a lot of people in that place that were writers, they wrote. And one guy. . . . Is that the same guy, Clevinger

MD: Yes.

ED: Clevinger, Jimmy Clevinger.

MD: Jimmy Clevinger.

ED: He dialed me one time, and he said, “When you get through. . . . “ I said, “Okay.” So we went over to the little place next across the street and had a little drink. He liked to drink. He said, “You know, I don’t know why you’re working . . . you shouldn’t work in here.” He said, “This is no job for you. It’s demeaning, going up and down, up and down.” I said, “Well, you meet a lot of people.” And we got to be friends. I said, “Well, come on over.” So he came over and met Edie and we hung around together for a year or more. And he was a terrific guy. And he loved drawing, he loved. . . . He was trying to get me jobs even, somewhere. I forget where. But there were guys like that who picked you up like that. They saw you. “Like, this guy shouldn’t be on an elevator and doing all this,” because I’d be drawing all the time, anyhow. I’d go up on top the roof, between times, and sit there and draw out of the top of the building, just looking around, put them in a paste-it.

TC: Did you go on writing poetry?

ED: Oh, yeah. I guess. . . . Yeah, for years and years I still. . . . These are a lot of these, and a lot of my. . . .

TC: Do you still do it?

ED: Yeah, I still do it. I make up shorter ones. [laughs] I made one the other day. She says, “Well, that’s not bad.” I said, “Only four words and they’re all backwards. Forwards and backwards. I said, “You can’t miss. It’s a shorty.”

MD: He usually sends a poem to a young couple if they’re just married or something like that for. . . .

ED: Oh, yeah, all these friends when I see. . . . I was a visiting artist all around the country, you know, on that G.I. Bill--not the Bill, but on the grant. So they would say, “You want to go to Montana? You want to go here, go there?” And I’d say, “Well, gee, Montana, that’s way out. . . .” But I always want to go to Montana and see what it was like. That’s really Montana. I’ve seen all the pictures. I’ll go there.” So I’d go there and stay. And then where Linda is now, in Minneapolis, they sent me to Minneapolis. And they said. . . . Indians. I’m an Indian-lover. I tell everybody that, and they say, “Well, we’re not.” Oh boy, when I got into. . . .

MD: Great Falls.

ED: Great Falls, Montana. It was okay, it was going fine till all of a sudden, the next thing I know, I’m getting this look like, you know. . . . Now it’s tough. Montanans are still in 1885. They still live like that--they kill, they shoot. You know, you see places where they _____ _____ _____. Anyhow, so what I did was make the mistake of. . . . One of the. . . . No, that wasn’t the Indian. . . . One of the. . . . I wanted to know where the Indian bar was. See. . . . Well, no, first it was I was walking down the street and the Indian would have to step off the curb and walk down in the gutter. And I didn’t. . . . I said, “You don’t have to that.” He said, “I can’t do that.” I said, “Ah, come on,

what are you talking about?" He said, "We're not supposed to walk on the sidewalk." I said, "You mean you have to all walk in the street?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "Well, that's ridiculous."
But see you're in territory where they have to walk in the street. So I said, "Where's the Indian bar, now?" "Oh," he says, "right over there. You want to go over there?" I said, "Sure." So he walks me over to the Indian bar, _____ _____ in there, and there's a Scotchman [sic] running the bar, and all these people are Indians. And these are the drunks, they call them, you know. Well, they are, but they've been held down and. . . . You know, it's really a rough thing. So I'm sitting there, and all of a sudden I turn around, kind of like that [gestures], and there's a woman with no nose, and she smiles, like that. I said, "Hello." They spoke English in a way, not bad. They were pretty good. And then a guy looked at me and he says, "Oh, she wasn't supposed to go and sleep with that guy but she did and they cut your nose off when you do it." I said, "You mean, just because. . . ." He says, "That's what they do." I said, "Jesus. . . ." So the girl just accepted it, and that's what they did. He said they take the tip of your nose off. And when you turn around like that and you see two holes. . . . So, anyhow, a lot of guys started talking. The Scotchman kept looking at me and says, "You know, you're not supposed to be in here. You can be here. I'd like to have you.," he said, but they won't like it, you sitting around in this Indian bar, and you'll find that out." Sure enough, I went back and a [tough] guy gave me a hard time. "What the hell is bothering you?" He says, "Look . . .

MD: Speak up.

ED: . . . you're not supposed to go down there." I said, "Why? I'm visiting up here. It's none of your damn business, you know. It's my problem." He says, "You got a problem," you know, like right away. I said, "Hey, wait a minute. I've read books on all the Indians I can." He says, "There aren't any Indians here. They are where they are. We don't acknowledge them." I said, "Well. . . ." And I got in an argument, and I said, "Oh. . . ." I went out and this guy said, "I'm telling you," he says, "around here people. . . ." "How about the students?" I said. He said, "Well, some of them will probably wish . . . you shouldn't do it."

MD: Of course, that was almost thirty years ago. But there was an Indian, a full-blooded whatever tribe he was, who worked in the DeMolay Building where you had . . .

ED: Yeah.

MD: . . . he had paintings there.

ED: He was. . . . Yeah.

MD: And that's a very nice man that we got very friendly with, and he brought in all of his regalia--his feathers, his whole outfit--and we went upstairs and I took a whole roll of film of him. Brought the film in to a local store . . .

ED: Now just watch this one.

MD: . . . and it came back. . . .

ED: He said, "They didn't come out right. The thing wasn't made right. Didn't have the right film."

MD: Came out blank. They did not. . . .

ED: And I got a little pissed off.

MD: . . . So I did the wrong thing. I should have waited and brought it back east. But you wouldn't think of something like that.

ED: It was rough. It was rough.

TC: And this is after. . . . This is in the fifties?

MD: 1965.

TC: Sixties, my god.

ED: Yeah. You see, then not only that, but then I was walking across the street, you know, and the light says go, and a cop stopped me. "Where are you going?" I said, "What do you mean, where am I going? I'm going right there." He said, "The light said stop." I said, "It said go." He said, "It said stop." I said, "_____ _____ [to you]." He said, "Listen, you go back and stand right there or I'll have you run in." I said, "I'm going. . . ." He said, "Listen, I'm telling you. . . ." Like that. [gestures] I said, " You . . . bullshit." He said, "Hey listen, I'm telling you." I said, "Boy, this is a great place to be. I'm the visiting artist down here, and I couldn't give a shit about you because you don't give a shit about me." I said, "What's the big problem?" He says, "You're the big problem around

here." I thought, "Jesus, what is going on?" So I go back and I get in the DeMolay store. I said, "Look, what in the blah-blah-blah is going on with these guys?" He said, "Look, Dugmore, you're not playing the game." I says, "I'm not playing any game." I said, "They can't even walk on the sidewalk. I tried to cross the street and this guy stopped me, give me a hard time." Another time we went to a restaurant to eat, and they brought over a. . . . I was with somebody. . . .

MD: You were with the artist who was very well known there. I can't remember him. . . .

ED: Oh, yeah, a landscape guy . . .

MD: . . . and a woman . . .

ED: And a woman?!

MD: . . . and I was there, too. And we ordered four hamburgers.

ED: Four hamburgers.

MD: It's the truth.

ED: Everybody gets a hamburger and I wait for a hamburger . . .

MD: They brought all of us a hamburger . . .

ED: . . . and this is a dirty trick. The woman. . . .

MD: . . . and they didn't bring his right away. And about ten minutes later they brought his and it wasn't [hot].

ED: I said, "That's no good. I don't want it." "You've got to eat it."

MD: You can't believe those kinds of things.

ED: I said, "You can take it [right] yourself." I said, "You can take it back yourself." "You can't do. . . ." I said, "I just did it. Now what the hell you going to do about it." You know, I'm just getting so mad now that I think of it. The guy says, "Yeah. You're not welcome here." I says, "Course I wouldn't walk into this dump . . . if you ever come in here again." The next thing I know it's another story.

MD: That was a very fancy club, too, that they brought us to.

ED: So this other woman says, "Jesus. . . ." I read her off, too. I said, "What's wrong with you? You want to give me some clues, after all," I said, but she says, "Well, it was back when you were with the Indians, when you were going to the Indian bar." And I said, "Well, what's so bad about that?" So I said, "Well, hell, I'm going to get a drink anyhow." So I went on to another place. Were you there when I sat at the bar and waited for the guy?

MD: Oh, no, I don't remember that. Maybe I was, but I might have blanked it out.

ED: Yes, you sat there. And I said, "What. . . ." He's talking with one guy in the bar and I'm way over here. "Hello, _____ _____."

MD: Oh, yeah, that's a different time. Yeah.

ED: Well, that guy. . . . That's another time. But that guy, with nobody there, he liked me. He liked me. He said, "Bourbon and branch?" I said, "Sure. All the time." That was bourbon and water. "How you like it?" I said, "Well, you know. . . ." That was back then. So I walked in and sat down. I was really tired of this guy, so I was going to go. . . . And then I saw all the pictures, how they hang guys, and they had pictures all over the place--guys they hung, people they shot because of this. And I'm thinking, "These guys are back in 1910 or 1880," you know. And so I walk in and the guy looks around. I said, "Hi." He said, "A bourbon and branch. I'll be right with you." And I'm sitting there waiting, and he's still talking to this guy, laughing and laughing. I said, "Bourbon]. . . ." "Oh, yeah, wait a minute. Yeah, all right, I'll get it right away. Hold it, hold it." And so I went. . . . I said, "I'm going to wait and see what that son-of-a-bitch does." He just waits and waits. Finally I said, "Say! You remember me?" "Oh, Jesus, yeah." So he walks to me. "What did you have." I said [slowly, emphasizing the words:], "A bourbon and branch. About that big, a double." And he says. . . . We never paid for it. We always paid after. [Telephone rings]. You have to pay for it." So I looked at that thing for a while. "How much is it?" Looked at it for a while, and I said, "Well, you know what? [slaps hand on the table] There's five. You know what that is?" And I went like that. [gestures] _____ [at the same time, to save time]. _____ _____ _____. Now that's yours, too. You can have the five dollar bill. You are the biggest blah-blah-blah-blah-blah." He said, like this. [gestures]. I said, "Edie, I guess that. . . . [sound of message being left on an answering machine] Oh, that's. . . .

MD: That was Linda at the gallery, and they were very worried because they have a photograph of Venetian Red on Red, and she was driving the man in storage crazy because they couldn't find it, and we have it here. It's the one--Venetian Red on Red--that we showed at [Chapulsky]. Well, it's over there. Anyhow, so I told her we had it and she was. . . .

TC: Not your daughter Linda?

MD: No, Linda [Kawakami] at the Manny Silverman Gallery.

ED: Manny Silverman Gallery.

MD: That's why I picked up . . .

ED: She married a Japanese guy. So we talk Japanese to him. Like "_____ _____ _____." [pseudo-Japanese speech] And he says, "What?" I say, "I don't know. It sounds like Japanese." [laughs] But he's good. He's a nice guy. Anyhow. . . .

TC: Where in Montana was this?

ED: Great Falls.

TC: What?

ED: Great Falls.

TC: Great Falls. And you were there as a visiting artist?

ED: Um-hmm.

TC: How long?

ED: It was a short time.

MD: One month. The month of May in 1965. And it was through American Federation of Arts.

ED: I read the riot act to them, too. I mean, when I got out of there I said, "I mean, that's the worst bunch I've ever been to see. I'd never go there again." I said, "Those people are back in the 1890s."

TC: What institution was this?

MD: It was called Montana Fine Arts. It was just a group. Montana. . . . It wasn't an institution actually. He had a show there, a one-person show in the DeMolay.

ED: I sent them out there. Rolled them up. I still have the box over there, but I cut it in half so we'd have shelves. The box is that long, and it's full of these paintings. They had no idea that I was going to bring big paintings. But these were the black and white ones . . .

MD: The sixties, yeah.

ED: . . . like, you know, the big black, with the. . . . They call them [hides], and things like that. And other ones. And they'd fill up the thing up there and they'd go around look at it and they'd. . . .

MD: We came in there one day and there's a boy roller skating right at the paintings.

ED: Yeah, he's going around . . .

MD: Just skating around them.

ED: . . . and skating like that, and [sledding]. I said, "Hey, knock that off!" He says, "What do you mean?" I said, "Get the hell out of here. Those are my paintings. You're just bumping them all the time." He says, "I'm not bumping into them." I said, "No, but you're getting close." And so a guy come. He said, "What's the matter?" I said, "Well, this guy's. . . ." He said, "Well, he was allowed to." I said, "Not with those paintings up he's going to do that. I mean, that's the stupidest thing I ever heard of." I mean, I had to be that way, because, you know, I mean, Geez. "What's he doing? Geez!" So right away, it's like. . . . And then the woman--the one woman there--she was very nice. I can't remember her name.

TC: You said that you were a visiting artist on a grant. Is this that AFA _____?

ED: Well, actually. . . . Yeah.

MD: American Federation of Art.

ED: American Federation. What it is, you go for four weeks to six weeks--four to six. . . . Four weeks.

MD: No, this was a four week, one-month thing.

TC: In Montana?

MD: Yes, in Montana.

ED: I think most of them were four-week.

MD: No, the one in. . . .

ED: Another thing in that Montana place, though, was they gave me a place to paint. There was a hallway there and a door. So I put this stuff up and all of a sudden the door would swing out like that, and I said, “Hey, hey! Watch it.” “What?” I said, “I’m trying to paint” He says, “Oh you’re the guy that’s in here.” I said, “That’s right, I’m painting in here.” I said, “You got a place. . . .” They said they had a place. . . .

MD: Well, they felt like they had the right to come in anytime. You know, there was no privacy _____.

ED: So, they said. . . .

MD: It was poorly run.

ED: I said, “Well, do you have a studio?” When they asked me, I said, “I have to have a studio when I go out, because I want to paint, too. I want to paint.” They said, “Okay.” But I’d be standing there and another time a guy would walk right in and he’d start talking to me, and I said, “Look, I’m busy.” He says, “I can come in here and look at them if I want.” I said, “No, you can’t. I’m in here. I’ve got the door closed.” “Yeah,” but he said, “I can come in. . . .” “Well, you can’t come in and go out.” All these things were like, I’d say, “What is this about these people out here? They’re kind of western? They’re trying to show you that they’re western or something like that?” But the woman there was very nice and she came over and talked to me. She says, “No, they’re just . . . that’s the way they are. But, “ she said, “you shouldn’t talk to them like that.” “Talking like what?” I said, “Well, they’re coming in the door. Why don’t they knock at the door?”

Tape 2, Side A

ED: I said, “Well, they’re coming in the door. Why don’t they knock at the door, for Christ’s sake, and come in? Not. . . .” Well, I said it that way. I mean I said, “What’s the matter with them? Can’t they just realize I put a sign on the door, “Do not open the door,” and sure enough they came in. I said, “Listen. Out.” And I pushed them right out like this. “Hey!” I said, I said, “Never mind ‘hey’,” and closed the door. And then I sit there a while and I say, “Well, no sense of painting now.” It was things like that. It was like. . . . I just did the wrong. . . . I was the wrong guy. I don’t know who else went out there that I know of.

MD: I don’t either.

ED: Because I thought that was the worst. . . .
[End of original tape side]

TC: . . . Dugmore interview. Ellie Logan.

ED: Ellie Logan and her . . .

MD: . . . her husband Jim.

ED: . . . husband Jim. And they were so [beautiful] and they had three kids, one here. . . .

MD: Five.

ED: Five? Okay. And they were just bunch, and they were so beautiful. They said, “It’s rough here, I know it is. But that’s the way they are.” And she says, “We’re not either so. . . . And Harry’s [meant Jim—Ed.] not rough. I’m not rough.” She said, “But this is the way with the people. Don’t worry about them.” I said, “Look, they’ve got me so I can’t turn around.” She says, “Well, you know, you’re doing things wrong. But I can see why, it’s not your fault anyhow.”

MD: Jim was a painter . . .

ED: Jim was a painter.

MD: . . . who died a couple of years later.

ED: Right after that. But he painted, and he and I used to. . . . He said, “Let’s paint together sometime.” So I’d say, “Okay.” And I guess they were out _____, too.

MD: She was an actress.

ED: She was an actress here in New York.

MD: She was on TV.

ED: Right here on the Village, she used to be an actress. So she liked me. She said, “Look, it’s a rough thing. I mean, I’d get out if I was you. What the hell do you care?” In other words. . . . Harry—they didn’t like Harry because he. . . .

MD: Jim.

ED: . . . Jim—I thought it was Harry—painting, because he painted. It was one of those things that anybody who took art classes would sort of hem and haw. And some were good, though. Some were really people who wanted to do something. But it became more of a battle of wits and things, so the woman who ran it said, “Don’t worry about that. It’s just the way they are.” I said, “Well, in that case, I’m leaving. If that’s the way they are.” She said, “It’s just the way. . . .” [And she says to me], she says, “I wouldn’t do that.” I said, “Well, I’m doing it.” And that’s what I did. We left.

MD: We left two days ahead.

ED: Yep, right off like that.

TC: When you were in Hartford you said you had some connection with Chick Austin?

ED: Oh yeah, for quite a while. Edie, can you get the catalog for that? The Paper Ball? The Paper Ball was known. . . . They’d come from Europe even to see the Paper Ball.

TC: Was that an annual ball?

ED: It wasn’t an annual. . . .

MD: It was once in a lifetime [ball].

ED: . . . but it was once in a lifetime. [chuckles] [Pavel] Tchelitchew was there, and all the guys were there. And Chick Austin. . . . I liked him. See, he was a real blatant homosexual. He talked like that sometime, but he liked me because he said. . . .

TC: You said “blatant”?

ED: Blatant. But I don’t mean a show-off, because it was. . . . His nature was to stand like this and talk, you know. [gestures] And he did laugh, Edie’d laugh. He said to me, “Hey, Dugmore. . . .” Like the. . . .

MD: I’m sure that’s him. I can’t read it, but it looks like him.

TC: No, that’s Calder.

ED: No, that’s Calder’s.

MD: Oh, Calder. [chuckles]

TC: We’re looking at the Hartford Festival of 1936, exhibition at Wildenstein and Company. No date on the. . . .

MD: It was a Paper Ball.

ED: No, this isn’t Hartford. Paper Ball in Hartford.

TC: Oh, I see. This is the Wildenstein. . . . The first leaf says Wildenstein and Company, but it’s an advertisement.

ED: These are all ads. Pierre Matisse. And there’s the guys there.

MD: But that's when Doug was a student at Hartford Art School.

ED: There he is, right there. That's him. What a handsome guy. He was terrific. And here's all the other guys. We met all those other guys at the time. That's been in a flood, too, as you can see. All the names are there. There he is. There's even a drawing. . . .

MD: Chick Austin, they called him [Olram] the Magician when he did magic.

ED: He was a magician, too. He did it on the stage, too, you know. All these people are in the books that I met. I met a lot of those people—all these wealthy people from out in West [Hartford]. That's. . . .

TC: Virgil Thompson.

ED: Yeah, Virgil Thompson. He lives right here, for God's sake, right around the corner for a long. . . . Just died a little over a year ago. Right?

MD: Yeah, _____ _____ _____.

TC: This is an event called the First Hartford Festival . . .

ED: Yeah.

TC: . . . and this is the program for it.

MD: And it was a paper ball and everyone wore paper costumes.

ED: See, you had to wear paper costumes, which meant that half of them walked around naked most of the time. They actually wear the paper and. . . . [laughs]

MD: Clark [Voorhees, Worries].

ED: Clark Voorhees was. . . .

MD: And you.

ED: Yeah, he's a very wealthy guy from Connecticut, right near New London somewhere. His wife. She was very wealthy, and Clark . . .

MD: But you were dressed as Chirico's acrobats.

ED: Clark Voorhees says, "You want to be an acrobat like me? Chirico's acrobats?" [Giorgio de Chirico] I said, "Sure." He says, "All we have to do is. . . ." I said, "Well, hell, that's a lot of work." He says, "No it isn't. We just get some longjohns and dye them brown, okay?" "Okay." "You just wear a top on, show your muscles, and run around the pool." So I said, "Okay." So that's what we did, and everybody thought that was the living end. These two acrobats. . . . I can do acrobats. I used to stand on my head, do backflips, and all that stuff. He was a little more sedate. And then we slipped into the pool and fell in, and then Calder walked over and said, "What are you doing way over here?" and he stumbled. He went right smash into the pool, and this big fountain flew at this woman there, you know, with this _____ on and this tit [getting, hanging] down, and he said, "Somebody paint that tit!" or something like that. "Get that thing painted up there. Put a nipple on it." But that was a fabulous time. I mean, everybody was. . . . They had booze and drinks so much. . . .

MD: It was very unusual for staid Hartford, that was the thing. It was really, really. . . .

ED: You know, but the thing is, the book. . . . There's a book I read. . . . What was that book I read, somewhere, about the whole. . . .

MD: About the patron saints?

ED: [How] _____ _____ patron saints. [He] didn't name us, the kids . . .

MD: No, he didn't name the students.

ED: . . . because he couldn't, but he named the . . . what happened there, and all the names in there are all these very wealthy people from Hartford and West Hartford who put money into this, so that's why it became one of the big [things there]. And his father, Weber, was involved in that whole thing. It was a great time.

TC: This is the book—Nicholas Fox Weber, Patron Saints, published in 1992.

MD: 1992.

ED: We just got it when we saw him. We saw him then at another thing. The guy had a service for him, and we met and he said. . . .

MD: Wait a minute, Dug, darling. We met him first at Grace and Warren's [Graham?—Ed.] at a party.

ED: At a party years ago.

MD: A couple of years ago.

ED: And he said then but he did then the same time. . . . He said, "My father has one of your paintings." That was back at Warren and Grace's, way back at one of Grace's parties when we had parties all the time. And he said, "You've, We've got to talk sometime." I said, "Okay." But we never got around till this time, which was a couple of years ago, I guess, or more.
But all the people behind it, they all came to New York, but Chick Austin was a fireball. He knew what he wanted, and they said, "Gee, I don't know, you know." And he said, "Listen, believe me, I can do it." So he did all the balconies all around inside. It looked like a Spanish place with all the balconies with _____ _____ [with the square]. He had people in them made out of cardboard stuff. I'd help him do all these things. He says, "Can you help do some of this." I says, "Sure." He says, "Come on, let's just do this stuff." And it was a lot of fun working with that guy and he'd do. . . .

MD: He also bought some very famous painters that nobody bought in those days—that became famous, that became very valuable. He had an eye for good. . . .

ED: Well, Tchelitchew was there. Tchelitchew. He was another guy that somebody said, "Gee, they always show. . . ." But he did show all these sixteenth-century paintings, all around. I said, "Geez, he's getting tired. He's getting tired." He says, "Well, I sold a few but. . . ." And they said, "Well, yes. . . ." But they didn't trust him many ways because he was his own man. That's why. They didn't want anybody saying, "I know how to do it. I'll do it." They didn't like that. But he was a fireball and I every once in a while. . . . He was in a play onetime, and he said. . . . Oh, Four Saints in Three Acts." She was right here.

MD: He brought Gertrude Steins' play. . . .

ED: He brought it here to that theatre, right there. I mean, this was right there, right there, _____ and _____. [the corner of two streets—Ed.]

MD: That was the first time it came to America. So he was an innovator.

ED: Yeah, they came from Europe to see that play. And he was a fabulous guy, you know. But they always looked down on him a little bit because he was own way. But most of those wealthy guys that I read about that saw how he was said, "This is the way. . . . He has to do that way. We'll back him up." And they put a lot of money into doing this, doing that. He said, "Gee, it's going to cost a few thousand." He said, "So what's a few thousand? This is going to be the Paper Ball of all times." And it was. I mean, you see the shots of it there—I don't know if it's there—and it shows the balcony. And all these places, he had to make this thing like a balcony, paint it so it looked like a balcony. But some of them. . . . Then the museum is next door. And [there were] big bathtubs. There was Roman baths, and every once in a while you'd go by and look in there, and [one of those times] there'd be a couple laying in there in a tub, stark naked, when you'd go by. And all these old ladies would be going by with half their skirts off because they made them with real paper and they'd step on them and they'd lose the whole thing, just like in that movie with Rosalind Russell, was it? She walks through and they step. . . . No, Katherine Hepburn.

MD: I don't remember those old movies.

ED: Stepped on the skirt and it just ripped right off and she said, "Never mind," and walked right along with her hind sticking out. But it was one of those wild things. I left there some time around four o'clock in the morning and I had enough to drink there to. . . . I drank everything I could get, when I could do it. I remember walking home with this damn fool costume on. [laughs]

TC: _____ _____?

ED: With this costume on like De Chirico. And I got that thing on my head turned sideways and I was carrying a coat and a cop says, "Where the hell are you going?" I said, "I'm going home." He said, "What!? You can't walk around like that, in your underwear, brown underwear." I said, "Don't you know where the Paper Ball is, right there?" He says, "I don't know where any paper is. Tell me where." I walked over. I says, "Right there. I just came out of that door." He said, "Oh, you're one of them?" I said, "Yeah, I'm one of them. Let me go. I'm going

home.” He says, “Jesus, I’ll walk you a few blocks.” I didn’t want to fall in the river. The river was [down there, running]. He said, “What was on there?” He said, “Gee, I heard about that.” I says, “Yeah, well, it was a long night, you know, and thanks a lot,” and I walked home. And _____ _____ people in the street. About four in the morning everybody was up. But they did come from everywhere. Like the old saying, they came from New York, Europe. Come flying right over here to see that play. That play. I mean, Four [Saints, Scenes] in Three Acts. And he was living down here for years. He just died a while ago. We used to go and see him down at the hotel.

MD: Virgil Thompson, yes.

ED: Or we’d see him on the street and say, “Hello. Remember the old days?” “Oh, uh-huh,” and he’d just walk off. He didn’t want to hear about them anymore.

TC: Tell me about the founding of Met- art Gallery in San Francisco.

ED: Met-art? Just Met-art, you mean the sound?

MD: The Met-artGallery, darling. How did it start?

ED: Oh. Well, let’s see. George [Goya], Ernie Briggs, and I . . .

MD: Hubert Kriem.

ED: . . . and Hubert Kriem. Hub Kriem.

MD: Four of them.

ED: Wait a minute, there was another guy who got out. Anderson.

MD: Jeremy Anderson. He was still in on it with you.

ED: I know, but I said when we first started.

MD: Well, you four started it.

ED: George Goya.

MD: George Goya, Hub Kriem, Ernie Biggs, Ed Dugmore had the idea for a cooperative gallery.

ED: We used to go . . . we went to. . . . We used to go and drink together. We all drank very heavy. And we were sitting there and George Goya was the one, I think. I’m not sure, but I think he said. . . . You know, he was very bright. His wife is still alive; she’s out there on the west coast.

TC: That’s Sue

MD: Sue, yes.

ED: Sue Goya. She’s still alive. She’s all . . . operations . . . she’s all. . . . But she still is beautiful and still _____ feisty as ever. And she says, “We all drink too much. We’re always drinking too much.” [slurring speech] [laughs] And she says, “How about another one?” She still drinks but not quite as much. Neither do we. And so we were walking home and we stopped somewhere and started talking about it. He says, “_____ _____ open our own gallery? I mean, we don’t have to. . . .” “_____ _____ ask you.” He said, “No, next month, a year from now, things like that.” So we’re all sitting around and finally said, “Let’s start a gallery. Met-art Gallery. Why not make our own gallery. We’ll just show our stuff and to hell with everybody.” And then we _____ invitations for other people if we liked them, you know. And it doesn’t have to be abstract painting. It can be any kind of painting they do, so we’re not being held down like, ‘Oh, that’s that wise bunch [with the, of] abstract painters.’“ So that’s what happened, and it went on for. . . . Gee, that was [great, right, very]. . . . As a matter of fact, it was there the first time we went back, and now we went back, it’s gone. _____ that’s gone. It was known all over the place.

MD: The gallery itself was in existence for about a year and a half . . .

ED: Yeah.

MD: . . . but the original ones. . . . There were twelve original artists.

ED: Just before we left we got Clyfford Still to show [in there, at Ernie’s]. He said, “I can’t show there.” We said, “Look. . . .” It’s a big deal for us with Clyfford Still because we knew him in the same class, see. And he said, “Okay, I’ll show there.” And I think I left just around that time. We were leaving, so I didn’t. . . .

MD: Yeah, right after that.

ED: I already had to go with Linda and Edie. But they had the show and he said, “I’ll do it.” So it was like four. . . . I got photographs. We’ve got all kinds of photographs of it and pictures of shows. My show. That’s another thing: I had a camera, so I took pictures of different guys show quick.

MD: Snapshots, right.

ED: And they said, “Can I have that?” I said, “Sure, you can have it.” So I took snapshots of four or five painters’ shows.

TC: Do you have copies of the photos, still?

ED: Yeah, I’ve got them all somewhere in a drawer.

MD: Yeah, we have some of your show and some of Kriem’s and . . .

ED: Briggs?

MD: . . . no, Anderson’s.

ED: Anderson’s a sculptor, yeah.

MD: Yeah, the sculptor. Yeah, we have those. They’re just snapshots, but they’re quite good. They show you what they’re. . . .

ED: But they’re good, you know. I had the little Jiffy. . . .

MD: Jiffy Kodak.

ED: See, my father had. . . . He said, “Just take that Jiffy and you get a. . . . I mean, you can do it. Just do it.” You have to focus it; it wasn’t automatic.

MD: Oh, sure. You had work on it.

ED: But I can handle that little thing. And so they started making me take all of them. I said, “No, I don’t want to do everybody.

MD: So it was a nice gallery. There was a lot of room in it. There were one, two, three rooms.

ED: We built the inside. We built the whole thing ourselves, inside the rooms. See, the thing was, to get twelve people involved in it, that was. . . . Well, Japanese that was all. . . . Twelve people and a hundred and . . .

MD: A hundred and twenty dollars a month.

ED: . . . twenty dollars a month. And that’s cheap.

MD: Ten dollars each a month.

ED: So ten dollars a month, and you’d have a show. So we advertised by putting. . . . I put a big thing in the window. It said, “Met-art.” If somebody didn’t know what it means, you know, you have to tell them what it meant. Some people would just walk in and look, and you had to go. . . . You walked in like that and. . . . [gestures]

MD: You went downstairs a few steps, yeah . . .

ED: And you went down like that and. . . .

MD: . . and the window was on the street.

TC: It was half-submerged.

MD: Yes, the window was on the street. It was a nice place.

ED: All of San Francisco is on a hill, so everything is. . . . Yeah. Then there’s a big poster out there, and the stuff that we wrote on it—all kinds of things to let them know. And the guy who did the first review was the old boy. . . .

TC: Frankenstein?

MD: Frankenstein.

ED: Yeah, we talked about him.

MD: Alfred Frankenstein.

ED: He gave it, and he said. . . . He gave it a good review, but he said, “It’s a different review.” But he said, “I don’t understand some of them anyhow. But it’s a good show, and they do have. . . .” And he said that they have twelve. . . . Each one has a month. Instead of going into a gallery and having a two-week show and then walk out, you leave it there for a month so you have to go and look at them, or if you don’t it’s too late. It seems like for months. And then somebody had to be at the gallery to take turns. So it was one of those things that we all did. And then we put up other places. We found out another thing. Goya was the guy who. . . . Goya and Kriem, too. They were very sharp. And also Zoë. She’s still alive.

TC: Zoë?

MD: Zoë Longfield.

ED: Zoë Longfield’s alive.

MD: She was one of the artists there, and she’s a very good friend.

ED: And also the other girl. Yep. She’s pretty ill out there now. And then some of them dropped out. . . .

MD: Oh! Zoë’s not very ill. If this is going in the Archives, it’s got to be right. Zoë’s not very ill.

ED: Well, she seems it to me.

MD: Zoë has arthritis.

ED: I know, but her legs are bent and she can hardly walk and she’s in agony. So if that isn’t ill. . . . Maybe. . . . I don’t mean in mind.

TC: How was the name “Met-art” chosen?

ED: Well, “Met-art” means. . . . In Latin, it’s “change.” Met-art. . . . As far as I know. It was George Goya told us that. He was the guy that said, “That’s the best. . . .” We had all names for it but Met-art sounded good so. . . . But it worked. And across the river—across the bridge—there was a lot of artists from over there who had their own gallery over there. So it became a competition of their gallery. . . .

MD: Sausalito.

ED: Sausalito. And it became this big, big battle. If it’s shown over there, we have to go over there. “Come over,” and they’d come over, “Well, that’s not bad. Why don’t go over and see that one?” So we’d always go back and forth on the bridge. And we all had a car. One way we had to buy an old heap there, so we had a heap to drive around in.

TC: What was the gallery in Sausalito called?

ED: Geez, I don’t remember.

MD: I don’t remember.

TC: That wasn’t the one at the Ten Angel Bar, was it?

MD: I don’t think so. No, I think it was. . . . It was a gallery.

ED: No, it wasn’t at the bar. No, the bar that was a gallery, that was . . . it went off the wharf, the little one—Ten Angel.

TC: Right.

ED: This is back further. Geez, I forgot that.

MD: I don’t remember the name of it, no.

ED: [You must, _____s] know that.

TC: Had you done abstract art in any character before going to San Francisco?

ED: Yeah, but not. . . . Yeah. Oh, yeah, I got a lot of stuff under here that's all abstract.

TC: When were your earliest nonobjective images?

ED: Oh, boy. . . . Well, '48 was California.

MD: Well, that's the school, yeah. Before that, but not much before.

ED: Now I've got things that I would do . . . what I would do. I'll show you a couple pages of those things.

TC: Well. . . .

ED: Not now, but I mean. . . .

MD: This is for the tape.

ED: I know, but, I mean, I could show you anyhow, and you'll see what I mean. I found out that whoever told. . . . Excuse me. Whoever told me—it had to be Leslie Lintleman—says, "Do a lot of thumbnail. . . ."

TC: Had to be whom?

MD: Leslie Lintleman.

TC: Lintleman.

ED: [Lintleman]. The guy that I liked; he liked me. He said, "Do a lot of thumbnail sketches." Like, I think, "What does he mean?" "Like just little tiny ones like that." He said, "Then just start there and go right across the paper and just do anything you want to do on there—anything." Wait'll see them. I mean, they're precious to me. You know, like this. [drawing to illustrate] [Drawing at the line] and you're just doing it like that. You'll see them as figures and it isn't figures. It's just like sculpture.

TC: These are small line drawings?

ED: Yeah. Just. . . .

ED: Discrete, separate ones.

ED: Yeah, right next to each other. Same size, no lines, just that and follow it over, and go back down, _____ _____, and back that way, till the pages are full. Littleman used to say, "Those are pretty good. In other words," he said, "that's just straight out." I said, "Sure." He said, "Well, that's the way to do." He said, "Then you'll know about your painting because your painting. . . ." In other words, he was trying to tell me that. . . . Oh boy. He was trying to tell me. . . . I'd better not say it on the TV—on the thing. [meaning on the tape—Ed.] I'll. . . . Not right away. I'll tell you afterward. But, anyway, he said, "Those things are probably more important than making a painting that big." [gestures, probably to indicate a larger painting] He said, "If you keep doing those, you'll become used to what you're doing, so when the next time you do it you'll do it so normal you'll go further." So to get out of it again, you go further more, then you're becoming more abstract. Because I did figures like these, you know, and those are exacting, almost. . . . Excuse me. Like that, they're in space, you know.

TC: Yes, these are realistic drawings. Those are figurative.

ED: Yeah, those are realistic, and when he saw those. . . . As a matter of fact, I'll add it right here now, is that when the director. . . . When you left school, he said, "We have to have some of your work so we can have it on hand. I'll take that and that and that." I said, "No, you can't take those." That was not framed, and they were just. . . .

TC: These are the figure drawings that we are . . . have here on the wall now.

ED: Yeah. That's right. Yeah, Lintleman looked at those and he said, "Mon Dieu." He says, "I mean, those are perfect. Don't get rid of those." And so Monday he says, "Where did they go? I wanted to see them again." And I said, "Welll, they've got them down to the office. They're keeping them for the files." He said, "Gee, I don't know. I wouldn't get rid of those. Those are your best things I've ever seen, Dugmore. Those are right from the _____. They just is easy, just no big deal, just drawing it, you know. Just like that.

TC: These are all graphite?

MD: Yes, pencil. Yes.

ED: Well, that's this brown ink. I had a crow-quill—a crow-quill pen. You know what a crow quill is?

TC: Yeah, a brown. . . .

ED: It's like that, but it's so fine, the point. You go like that, and make it that thick and make it that thin. Make it easy _____ _____. But I did it just totally from. . . .

TC: This is brown ink from a crow-quill pen.

ED: Yeah.

TC: Over pencil? Or were you drawing the first drawings in the crow quill?

MD: [bringing something to show?] I saw that, but, let's see, I don't have. . . .

TC: Oh, yes, I see.

ED: I didn't have any pencil on there.

TC: All right.

ED: I just started like that. See even the pillow. . . . I mean, that's a debate. They had a model standing. They always do, you know, which I didn't want, so I left that out. I wanted to make it more real, you know, but then there had to be a block to get her leg up there. And then I would draw this, just the block first, like that, see. Then you can see it went right through. Not there, because most of the figure's got to be here anyhow, but I'd already done it, so I left that in there. But this was that cross-hatch that the Nicolaides. . . . The guy from the Art. . . .

TC: Art Students League.

ED: . . . League, and Lintleman said, "That's real." You know, he was saying, "That's real. He said they look like everything. Even that weight of that line. . . ." Instead of going out and then just going on just enough, I just put that little cross-hatch there. "You know, just that, put that to show, these things," he said. "They're delicate." "So," he said, "where are they?" I said, "Well, they have them in there." He said, "I wouldn't leave them there if I was you." So I said, "Gee, I don't know what. . . ." He didn't say anything. So one day I'm over there. [laughs] _____ [stealing art from] the art school, and Tommy Wise is working on Sundays over there, mopping up the place and drinking and taking care of the museum. I said, "Tommy, you got a key for that office? I got a couple of things I have to get out of there." "Sure." I went and found them and took them. They were just . . . not framed, you know.

MD: Yeah, just _____.

ED: So somebody asked where they went, and I said, "What? What do you mean? Somebody stole the things? Jesus Christ!"

TC: [laughs]

ED: I put that on [the tape recording—Ed.]. I should of not said that. I should have said, "Somebody stole them," and left it at that. And I didn't put that on. So you can wipe that off that I did, if you want. I'm sorry. But I don't care; it's too late; they can't hang me now.

MD: [laughs]

ED: So nobody could figure it out. They kept saying, "Well, how did that thing. . . ." "Who would. . . ." And I said, "Geez, that's a terrible thing." [all laugh] And when I told Lintleman I had them, he said, "You got them?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Geez, don't pass this." So when his wife came up there, I told her the story. She says, "Oh, that's the ones that he talked about." She says, "Those are beautiful. I could see why he'd tell you to get them out, because they would take your best pieces, you see." They did it everywhere, I guess. At that time I just didn't feel like parting with them. I mean, I wouldn't do that again like that. I've got thousands of drawings in there. _____ _____ on paper. They're not done like those.

TC: Were they on the wall in the office?

ED: No, they were in the side of one of the cupboards that. . . . They never locked them up, see? If they'd locked them I'd have never got them. Ah, well, crime is crime. [laughs] Crime and what, there's something _____ _____.

[perhaps suggesting that the escapade sounds like a book title?—Ed.]

TC: When you went to San Francisco, you knew that you were going to go to the C.S.—California School of Fine Arts?

ED: Oh, sure.

MD: Well, no I didn't. I wanted to go, but I had to. . . .

MD: Yeah, you wanted to go.

ED: We went right to L.A. and then I went up. We took the train up.

MD: No, we drove across the country, and then we stayed with your brother and my sister . . .

ED: Yeah, see, they lived down in a. . . .

MD: . . . and he got a job making Hollywood-bed legs. . .

ED: [laughs]

MD: . . . first, until we made enough money to go north.

ED: You'll have to believe all this. It's not going to sound true. It is not really a novel but I've had so many jobs, and they'll say, "What was that?" I said, "Hollywood bed legs." I said I worked in woodwork anyhow, so you just make the bed legs, cut them off [makes saw sound] like that, and then you cut them and take the rough parts off, throw it in a box. You keep doing them until I said. . . . Geez, I've got to remember this. It's terrible. I get so. . . . When I think of it sometimes, I go right into it. I'm right there. I mean, I'm not even sitting here now, just watching this going right through.

MD: We stayed a couple of months in Southern California and then he went on up.

ED: I said, "I'll go up alone."

MD: I guess you went by train. Yes. And then. . . .

ED: No I didn't. I took the bus.

MD: Oh, the bus, okay.

ED: Because it was cheaper, and that bus was all the way up the coast. It was beautiful. Who wants to take a train when you can take the bus and they stop all over and we get a drink there and an eat there and so many stops. . . . Twelve. . . .

TC: Was this up California 1, right up the coast?

ED: Yeah, the bus was right up to San Francisco. So when I got there I was late, of course, because we got there late anyhow. I mean. . . .

TC: That is, for the semester?

ED: Yeah, for the semester. But it was good. I forget who was in the office then right away.

MD: Linda and I joined you, maybe a couple of weeks later, and we . . .

ED: I had to find a place to live, see?

MD: He found a place to live, but it was one room in a rooming house . . .

ED: Yeah, this is. . . . [chuckles]

MD: . . . and we didn't have the money to pay for the room . . .

ED: But I got the place.

MD: . . . but I went out the next day and got my job at the Aetna, where I worked off and on all. . . . [laughs]

TC: Aetna Insurance.

MD: Aetna Insurance Company. In Hartford and California, in San Francisco, and in New York. I worked there off and on. But, anyhow, they trusted us—the woman and her daughter who had the house.

ED: That was not the one on the hill was it?

MD: Yeah, Laguna.

ED: Laguna. And the hill goes. . . . Fillmore is up there, and the hill comes like this [makes sound of a sheer drop] and it stops, then it goes [same sound again], and we're right on there, you know. And these cars go down, and all of a sudden you're waiting, and here's this awful crash at some corner, where [sound of car screeching to a halt], bang! One guy going the other way. It was both ways.

MD: But they did let you use the cellar to paint in.

ED: Yes, they were very nice. I said "I was a painter and I have some canvas and I'm going to paint." "Well, where you going to paint." "Well," I said, "I don't know." She says, "Well, you can't paint in the room." And I said, "No. I could use the cellar, couldn't I?" She says, "Yes! Okay." So I go down in the cellar and there was [real, little] light there. I put a bulb in a light anyhow, and stand there and start painting there, before I went in —before I went to school—right away. I didn't go in. . . . I went in, and they said, "Well, you'd have to wait." "Who was the head of it _____ there," or something, and I said, "Okay. I'll be in and out."

TC: Was that Doug McAgy?

MD: Doug McAgy was running the school.

ED: McAgy. Yeah, Doug McAgy and. . . . What's his wife's name?

MD: Germaine.

ED: Germaine. Germaine. She was very nice, too. So I said, "Well, I'm going to go over there and see what I can do." And I just, before they came, so I went over. . . . What?

MD: No, it's all right. I'm sorry for doing that, but I don't know what you mean, "before they came."

ED: To go to the school.

MD: Yeah. Oh, before we came up, yeah. Got you, got you.

ED: I'd been over to the school already, but they said, "The semester's started," and all this stuff, and I'm trying to argue and I'm trying to figure out, well, I was late getting up and all that stuff. I didn't know anybody there, if I can remember. I don't think I knew anybody then.

TC: Did you know about Clyfford Still?

ED: No, I don't think at that time? Did I?

MD: No, I don't think you did.

ED: I don't think so. People mentioned him, but I don't remember him at all. I remember Rothko, though. Rothko, I met.

MD: Yeah, but he wasn't there when you went.

ED: Not then. He wasn't there then, no.

MD: He might have been there before.

TC: Yeah. When did you actually start classes there?

ED: It was practically near the end of the term.

MD: No. It was September of 1948.

ED: That's what I said, September. Right. I said, the end of the term.

MD: That's the beginning of the term. September. Right?

ED: Yeah, I know, but I don't remember any term beginning in September. I know we got. . . .

TC: Well, they had a summer session. You may be thinking of the end of the summer session.

ED: Oh yeah, oh yeah. And even if it was late, it didn't make much difference as far as they said, you know?

MD: Right, right.

TC: Whom did you study with?

ED: It was Clay Spohn . . .

MD: Clay Spohn.

ED: . . . Clyfford Still. Who was the young guy? Diebenkorn was. . . . No, Diebenkorn was a teacher.

MD: Yeah, but did you study with him? I didn't. . . .

ED: No, no.

MD: No, no.

ED: I didn't like his work. He was more of a hard-edge stuff at the time, he was doing. And, Jesus, who else was there? Clay Spohn, I used to hang around with him all the time.

MD: Clay Spohn was a very good influence.

ED: And Clyfford Still, of course, too. Clyfford Still, Clay Spohn. . . .

TC: You hung around with each of them?

ED: Different times. Yeah, because they knew each other.

TC: They were the polarities of the school, too. [chuckles]

ED: Right, those guys. I mean, right away I knew who. . . . Still really liked me, and then. . . .

MD: They were really great. . . .

ED: Well, the other thing is. . . . I might pick up on that then, because Still. . . . It was a night thing, too, or something, but, I mean, I'd go in anytime and start working, because they had room there. One guy, the janitor said. . . . The janitor was [great, Fred, Ray]. He says, "You can't work in here at night." I said, "Why not?" He says, "There's no electricity." I said, "Ah, the hell with it. You want a drink?" He was a drinker. He lived in the tower. He said, "Sure." He said, "Okay, you can do it. But just stay in a corner or something like that." So a lot of us would just stay there and work. He was a nice guy. They finally fired the poor old guy. But he was stealing. They found he was stealing—that's another thing that came out of that . . .

MD: G.I. checks.

ED: . . . G.I. checks, you know! I was one of them. I said, "Geez, I had you figured out that you might have stolen them, so I was thinking. . . . Somebody found out that he was the guy that was lifting the checks out of the _____ at the times. That was terrible, wasn't it?

MD: Yeah, yeah. _____ _____.

ED: I also know that once we got in. . . . I'm trying to remember. . . . George [Arbin]? George Arbin was there.

MD: _____.

ED: When I walked into that class. . . . Coleman? You walked in, you said, "Take any spot you want and that's yours."

TC: Take any what you want?

ED: Spot.

TC: Spot.

ED: In other words, you want to be there to do it, because you're model's going to be over there or whatever, and you do it here or what, you know.

TC: What was Coleman's first name?

MD: Walt Coleman.

ED: Yeah, Walt Coleman, right. Coleman. So I remember walking in and just grabbing an easel and. . . . Hauptberg was there.

TC: John Hauptberg.

ED: John Hauptberg. [something pounding in the background] Is that still working? Geez, they're chopping. . . . They'll probably have a hole there pretty soon.

TC: That's noise from the building next door.

ED: Yeah, that's terrible isn't it. Anyhow. . . .

MD: But that's where you first met Ernie.

ED: Yeah, so it was. . . .

TC: Ernest Briggs.

ED: Yeah, well, Ernest Briggs. . . . I was standing over in the corner. It was late in the morning. I was just standing over by the painting, looking at it. I used to take one corner where I could get arms loose here, so I could put it on the wall, too. Hauptberg was over there, and he put a table up. I'll give you that story right away. Hauptberg would. . . . You'd have these tables to put stuff on. We'd just. . . . He'd go over there one day when everybody's washing, and he'd go over there and he'd. . . . [walks away from the microphone to illustrate]

TC: Don't go too far from the table. [laughter, probably at ED's imitation of Hauptberg]

ED: He just got up and he. . . . Somebody'd go like that, you know, and. . . . We see him once down here, too. And he'd go walking over like that and he'd stand back like that for a while and he'd look at the wall. Nothing on the wall, you know. And then he'd stand there for a while like that and he'd kick back and he'd go like this. [Sounds like Hauptberg may have just walked over and stared at the wall?—Ed.] You'd say, "What's he up to? He's painted the thing already." Which was true. He had a lot of it ready, you know. That was when he was this. . . . Like that stuff, you know. Strong. They were very good. I liked them. I liked him, too. I still do. He's a madman sometimes. And so the first time I was just standing watching him paint, and all of sudden he looked at me like that, and he just stands all the way back. . . . [backs away from table, jeopardizing the microphone again—Ed.] Well, I can't go all the way back. He gets all the way back like that, and he just runs like mad and he just jumps up on the table but, of course, and he just went [makes sound of revving motor] like this on the canvas, then he jumped off the table right after. He did it like an acrobat, I thought. Everybody thought he was going to break his neck. And he'd turn around like that and he'd give you that look like, "What's your problem?" I thought, "Now there's a guy that really. . . . He's like Dilling, you know, doing, and I said, "Boy!" So he backed up once and they said, "You're going to fall off that table." He says, "No, I won't. I never will." And I said, "Well, that's possible." And we got talking about that, and a little while later—maybe a day later—I'm standing, looking around, and waiting for some idea or watching people—because it's new—and all of sudden this guy comes walking over with his [imitates quick walk] very fast to me, and says, "You Dugmore?" And I said, "Yeah." He said, "You're the guy that somebody told me that knows how to do Titian's thirty or forty glazes?" I said, "Yeah, why?" He said, "You teach me how?" he says. "I don't know if I can teach you how," I said, but that's what he did. Just used to glaze over and over. He said, "Geez, I'd like to do it. I never did much painting." I said, "Oh, you haven't?" He said, "No." "Well, hey, let's go down and get a drink," he said. I said, "Okay, where's the place." He says, "Right down the corner." So I went down. That's where we lived from there on in, practically till I got my. . . .

MD: Who was that, Doug?

ED: Briggs.

MD: Oh.

ED: Till he got married. He married. . . . What's her name?

MD: Ernie Briggs was married to Maria Kaminoff then.

ED: Kaminoff, yeah. She was. . . . This is a very interesting story. Anyhow, Ernie and I got together right then and there, and I said, "This is how you do it." I said, "Get a small canvas, not a big one. Play around with it." I said, "The more you do it. . . . Yellow can help . . . can hurt it if you don't give it time. Otherwise," I said, "you could get some good things out of it." But I said, "I like to paint a little thinner, but that's okay." And he did it and he

did some things there, and he said, “Hey, man, this is great!” Because he’d do a black, and very thin, and an orange something, and a deep red _____, and all of a sudden he’d do that, put something. And he said, “Hey, that’s like you can see it.” And I said, “Yeah, it’s like a depth.” He said, “You’ve done them?” I said, “I’ve got them. Sure I’ve done them.” But I said, “This way I want to just pre-roll it right straight with a knife, and I don’t want to. . . . I scrape it off.” He says, “Oh, you do that way?” I said, “Yeah.” And that’s why there are fifties paintings out there, why Manny [Silverman] got them all, those old fifties. Those are all from that time.

TC: I was going to ask you about that, that kind of troweled color that I personally associate with the San Francisco Bay Area painting. Had you done anything like that before you went to California?

ED: Oh, yeah.

TC: You had?

ED: Sure, on the panels. Even in the thirties, in the forties. Like I did most of the portraits on the panels that I’ve got there with a knife. And some of them I just mixed the stuff together, and just put a knife and scratched it down and over, so it’d begin to. So instead of putting a lot of layers on, you put a ground on and maybe another. . . . I mean, size it and ground it—like white or off-white—or put another color over top of that. And you could get this glazed. . . . It’s almost glazing it at the same time. And they come out fine. They still are on panels, because they. . . . [If they were on panels, they lasted. But if they were on canvas in bold, I don’t think they would, because they’re heavy sometimes. They take it off, scrape it off again. I’ll show you those. Those are the self-portraits and things. You know, a lot of the other ones are just painted on panels with knives.
The knife. . . . Once I got a knife, it was like. . . . That’s like Michaelangelo with his chop. He knows just where to chop. The knife became. . . . That’s all I did. I’d always work with a knife. And then brushes. . . . When I was ill, I couldn’t use a brush much, so I just. . . . I mean, I’d use the knife. Now, I’m working back to washes again, because. . . . I mean, I’m cutting down sizes of my paintings because I can’t reach them any more. I can’t do that anymore.

TC: One thing you just said was not clear.

ED: Okay.

TC: You said when you were ill you couldn’t work with the brush. Did you mean the knife?

ED: Yeah. The knife, I meant to say.

TC: Okay.

ED: It’s too _____ _____. I don’t. . . . I use it, but I’m going to get into washes now and try them. I tried to work with my arms, but I’m out of breath before I. . . . You know, moving around. And I ground my own colors, by the way, for years.

TC: Yes.

ED: As a matter of fact, I told Ernie Briggs, when he first came East. . . . I didn’t tell you that. When Ernie. . . . I wrote to him. When Elinor opened the gallery—Elinor Ward—opened the Stable Gallery. . . .

TC: Stable Gallery.

ED: I don’t know if I mentioned that before. I don’t think I did.

TC: No.

ED: She had. . . . I had my first show there. She’d only shown two or three other people, and they were French.

TC: Your first show at the Stable.

ED: First show at the Stable.

MD: Yeah, in New York. First show.

ED: And she knows the date.

MD: February ‘53.

ED: ‘53. And other painters had shown there, but they were two French painters that she picked up. She was going to have another kind of a gallery at the time. And then I walked in on the thing, and she said that I’d be in

the gallery. So I said, “Okay.” The first show I had nobody came but all artists. [laughs] And Eleanor said, “This is a terrible thing. Nobody came.” I said, “Everybody’s here. There’s Pollock. Everybody’s here, telling that’s a good one and that’s a good one. What do you mean?” She says, “Well, I expect more people.” And I said, “Well, I don’t know anything about that. That’s the . . . you’re the gallery. I. . . .” And I was so happy. And everyone had a pint in their pocket, so they’d go in the backroom and have a drink. So I drank. Pretty soon I know I was smashed. But. . . . I’m talking loud now but actually I was always drinking half the time anyhow—not like that—so I said, “I’ll never make it.” And everybody, even Pollock, was like. . . . He was like [speaking in a slurry manner], “That’s a great one right there,” or something, and he [makes snoring/snorting sound]. And Eleanor said, “Jesus, get out of here you guys.” And then we went out and celebrated and I don’t know what the hell happened anymore, but they all came and I was surprised, and so you met them right away. Most everybody that did. . . . I don’t remember anybody saying anything bad about it. “It’s good.” They said, “This guy is a good painter.” These are all knife paintings, and they’re straight off the top of my head. I wasn’t copying anything. I was just doing what I wanted to do, and, “Gee, this guy’s competition.”

MD: Well, you got the show at The Stable because Bob John had some of his paintings . . .

ED: Ooh, that’s a _____ _____.

MD: . . . stored on Cooper Square when we went to Mexico.

ED: He bought. . . . Bob John was the first. . . .

MD: He bought two and he had a couple stored there.

ED: Yeah.

MD: And so someone came down there—I think it was Nick Corrone . . .

ED: Nick Corrone.

MD: . . . who worked for Eleanor—saw the paintings and said, “Boy, this guy should have a show.” So he spoke to Eleanor about it.

ED: But I was in Mexico at the. . . .

MD: He was in Mexico.

ED: I was in Mexico.

MD: And so when he came back from Mexico with all the paintings rolled, they were left in—I think it’s called American Express then—the Railway Express office.

ED: They just kept them in there. They wouldn’t give them to me until I’d paid for them . . .

MD: And he couldn’t pay for them, so they were there. . . .

ED: . . . so Eleanor said, “I want you in the gallery.” I said, “Okay.” “You’re in the gallery?” I said, “Yep.” “Okay, fine.” I said, “First of all I got to ask you a favor.” She said, “What?” I need eighty bucks.” “Eighty dollars! What for?” I said, “The paintings are in hock.” “Oh, my God! Where are they?” I said, “Well, they’re. . . . They won’t let me have them.” She said, “Well, I’ll get them out.” So that’s the first thing was, she says, “You’re going to cost money, huh? I don’t know.” But I said, “Get them out.” And she got them out and they were rolled a certain way. I rolled them so none of them were damaged. I rolled them on tubes, put them in a tube, and then wrapped them up in the paper that they had down there. It wasn’t foil; it’s paper. And each one was rolled up and one overlapped, overlapped, overlapped, overlapped, and made sure. And then put them in a roll like that. Then outside the roll I put two. . . . Because they said, “How are you going to get them out?” I said, “By bus?” They said, “You get them out of there by bus!?” I said, “I don’t want it by bus.” That’s what they do there, out of Mexico, they took them by bus. I said, “Jesus, they’ll never be any. . . .”

MD: On the top of the bus, _____ _____.

ED: On the top of the bus! I said, “They’ll never. . . . I mean, there’s no other way?” Unless you had a million dollars and they’ll pick them up and deliver them. And so I said, “Well, I’ll have to do it that way and take the risk.” So I got wood that wasn’t too thick, and I put them all around—one, two, three—all the way around.

TC: Slats.

MD: Slats. Yes, exactly.

ED: Slats. And then I took wire, and I tied that all up there so that. . . . Under each one of those slats, underneath, I put a lot of heavy board—cardboard or something—that would blend, to keep them straight at the same time it wouldn't bend at all, so they kept them there for the time. I kept worrying about it, see, they'd throw them out, or throw them around in this goddamn place, so I got worried. So Eleanor went, she had them sent down and they got them and brought them in, and she said, "Oh my! It's a lot of paintings." I said, "Oh yeah, this is quite a few paintings." "Can we open them up?" I said, "Why sure." So I opened them up in the gallery, and she said, "Oh, wow. How many you got?" I said, "I don't know." But I did; I forgot how many I did. She says, "Oh, that's a show right there." I said, "Yeah, well okay." So that was it. So she. . . . And then I had to stretch them all. And at that time buying stretcher bars for that, you couldn't buy them because they didn't fit. I just put wood that I. . . . I bought wood and made the sizes that I want anywhere. I didn't have it measured to sixty-eight, or something like that, at that time. Square ones and long ones and everything. Like in that book, they're all that. . . . Some are big and some are narrow in that catalog, the one from. . . .

TC: The Manny Silverman catalog?

ED: Yeah, because that's a lot of Mexican paintings in [there], too. A lot of those are Mexican. Half of those are Mexican. And she said, "Well, I guess we'll have to do something about that." I said, "I guess so. Because I don't know. . . ." And she said, "Could you stretch them?" I said, "Well, I guess I'll have to, huh?" So I did. So I was actually working for her at the same time, even though she was paying me something, to help her do that. So I stretched all of them myself, and boy that was one. . . . In those days, I was pretty strong, after all, you know, and then I'd take the canvas and I'd just bend it over the inside like that [illustrating with paper], pull that down, hold it there, and then. . . . They didn't have these . . .

TC: Guns.

ED: . . . guns at the time. You actually put a tack in there, and I was like, you know, like I had [a mouthful, the towel full] of tacks, and put them in there, just that far apart. And it worked. And then the first show was. . . . And then I did a lot of things on paper with. . . . There's one over there. '53. That's over on the wall, that black one over there. And it was. . . . I bought a can of . . .

MD: Asphaltum?

ED: . . . asphaltum, and I said. . . . I used to use that sometimes. And I'd think, "Geez, what a beautiful color." Just do like that. And it's this beautiful brown that you couldn't mix. Why mix it? And it lasts forever. So I did that, and I made a drawing on paper, all of these things, and Eleanor said, "We'll hang those up." And so she sold a lot of those. Those were. . . .
And this is a '53, too. And that's when I was very sick, too. When I was in Connecticut, I did that one. That was another. . . . What the hell did I have? And I would never sell it. It was sold, and I took it right back. I said, I told the person it was on there, "NFS," not for sale, and this woman bought it. I said, "It's not for sale, so I want it back." She says, "You can't." I said, "It says right on there 'Not for sale,' and you were a collector and you knew better than to take it because it's one that I wanted." That's the only one I did like that. That's done with match covers. I was in bed. . . .

TC: What do you mean "with match covers"?

ED: With book covers, the book. And I was in bed. I'll have to ask Edie. [MD has moved away from the microphone]

TC: You mean, you folded it up?

ED: Edie?

MD: Yeah.

ED: On Laurel Street when I did this one, what was wrong with me?

MD: Yeah, that was when you were. . . . You just came out of Beth-Israel with the hepatitis.

ED: That's when I got it. That's the hepatitis. They said, "Don't do any. . . . Go home and go to bed. Stay in bed and don't do anything." So I said, "Okay." So I stayed in bed, and we found those on the street. These are posters or something—written things on the back about something.

TC: The paper is a poster?

ED: They were in a bag and someone threw them up in a barrel. And I went by one day when I went downtown. . . . I had to go down because I wanted to go down and get some air, and she said, "No." And I picked those up, and I brought them home, and I said, "Gee, look, I can paint on the back of these." Not paint but do those.

That's when I started those. And that became a whole. . . . When I did that that big, I was in bed, but when she went out to work I'd head out there and put it on an anvil and do those things. I'll show you what I mean. That's how easy it is. People say, "Where's the brushes?" I said, "No brushes."

[End of session]
JUNE 1, 1993
Tape 3, Side A

ED: . . . people say, "Where's the brushes?" I said, "No brushes."

TC: Okay, now you have a paper matchbook . . .

ED: Matchbook, right. And I would take this part here, every matchstick. . . . [demonstrating, apparently how he made his paint-application tools (brush substitutes)]

TC: Yes.

ED: I'd take it out and put it in ink, put a little piece of rubber on my finger, but it got all over me, got all over everywhere. And I'd just stand there like that, like this.

TC: And dip it in . . .

ED: I would sit there. I'd have to sit there, and I'd put this on a chair. . . .

TC: India ink, is this?

ED: Yeah, good India ink. You know, a bottle _____ _____ _____. I'd just do that, and this would be on the chair with a couple of [books] [there nails]. I was really shaky then, but I was _____ _____ and I figured I've. . . . I just wouldn't even bother looking at you; I'd just start doing these things with these little things like this, sort of like that on a pot, a little. . . .
[Interruption in taping; tape is blank briefly]

TC: At the end. . . .

ED: Then when the matches went, I'd take this here and I'd just take it off. . . . I'd go like this.

TC: The cardboard. . . .

ED: The cardboard, see, and I'd figure, "Well, this is as good as anything else," and I'd just do this. Roll it up tight like that and stick it in the ink and then just use that, like, as a shape. That's why somebody said, "Where do you get all these different brushes?" I said, "There's no brushes in there." [laughs] And then I'd get right down to the end. . . . Or I'd do this, a very thick one like that. See, like that even. Take this right off of here. Or a long one. And they got pretty wet and soggy, so that made a nice. . . . Then they'd dry slightly, and I'd throw them in the side over there and when I got down to here. . . . This is the last ones, the lightest ones, so I have to. . . . You can see right down the middle is a lot of. . . . And I'd use this one like this. Like that. And the ink would be all over the place. And at the end I'd take this and wipe it off and then take it down and go to the bottom and do these little tiny, very light, just delicate strokes at the bottom. And then take another piece and just write my name on the bottom like that with a piece of the matchstick.

TC: How many of those drawings did you do?

ED: Well, not too many of those, because I think we left Laurel Street, and there's one over there. . . And it's thicker brush. That's a thicker one. This is using even rags. I did a lot more, though, down at that . . . on. . . . What's that street where I went? I did a lot of those there.

MD: Water Street, you mean? Is that what you mean?

ED: No, no. Down there in Hartford. Where the lady had a [studio]. . . .

MD: Oh, Sheldon Street.

ED: Sheldon Street.

MD: Sheldon Street. He had a studio there. It was like a two-story house, wasn't it or something?

ED: Yeah, next door was a whorehouse, and this big fat lady. . . . She was terrific. What was. . . . [Ma.]

MD: Katie was the about this big, and she'd say, "I have plenty of girls and you want some models?" I'd say,

“Well, maybe so, someday I’ll have a model.” They’d come in and they’d look and “Gee, that’s beautiful. You want a model?” I said, “Not right now.” I was too busy doing it and I didn’t dare do that but. . . . And, anyhow, so I did a lot of things there then at the time, and I think I gave her a couple small things, of some sketches like that, or one of the girl’s heads, and kept out of that.

TC: How was your show at Stable received? Did you get reviews?

ED: I got a lot of reviews, which was very good for me because I had no idea. . . . And I got reviews. One woman. . . . What was her name? What was the one that was very. . . .

MD: Well, the review with Stewart Preston was very laudatory.

ED: Stewart Preston.

MD: I believe that was the first show. But it was sort of clipped, and Herman Cherry wrote him a letter . . .

ED: Oh, yeah.

MD: . . . saying that this artist should have more. . . .

ED: He’s not a young man, anyhow. He’s old. He’s older than you think he is.

MD: . . . should have more written about him and. . . .

TC: That’s the review that was edited by the . . .

MD: New York Times.

TC: . . . layout people.

MD: Yes, right. [all three talking at once, so which male voice is saying what is unclear—Trans.]

TC: They just left out the crucial paragraph.

ED: They just left out. . . The crucial paragraph was left out.

MD: And then the next Sunday was the correction, which was pretty wonderful.

ED: So I got a next Sunday paper. “Elinor [Ward], I says, “How’d you do that?” I said. . . .

MD: I mean, we’d never see that today. [laughs]

ED: I said, “Elinor, Jesus, you have two reviews, one saying that. . . . Nobody ever gets that.” I said, “Well, you know, Elinor. . . .” But kidding. She says. . . . I don’t know, maybe she had something to do with it. I don’t know. I doubt it.

MD: No, she had nothing to do with it. It was Cherry’s letter had to do with it.

ED: But Cherry got so mad. He said. . . . When he saw that he wrote a letter to Preston—and I got the copy of it somewhere—and he said, “You don’t know anything about painting yourself. I mean, this guy is a painter. He just had his first show, and you come along and give him that stuff and make remarks like that.” But that had been cut out, see? And then he said, “I apologize, but the printers—whatevers—left that bottom pieces off there, when they didn’t [run it].

TC: Were there sales from the first show?

ED: Yeah. Oh, yeah. But not. . . . They bought a lot of the small things like that on paper that she framed. She paid for all of that, too, you know, as far as that went. I sold a lot of the ones that I did with the brush with creosote. Not creosote . . .

TC: Asphaltum?

ED: . . . asphaltum. And she sold some of those. I still have a couple of them around here. She framed them and put them on the front wall when you come in the door. It was a stable. It was this big . . . it was a stable. I said, “Gee, stable!? It’s the best things I ever saw in my life.” She said, “We have to make some more racks.” And I said, “Oh, yeah.” She said, “You want to work for me?” I said, “Sure.” So that was it. So I did some work, when she’d pay me for it. You know, to do some work she’d pay me a few dollars. “Where you staying?” and everything like that. You stay with her. I said, “O-o-oh, okay.” [expressing reluctance] But you know. . . .

TC: That's a little. . . .

ED: She was a real hot number all right.

MD: Crazy.

ED: So then I finally said, "I better get out of here. I'm getting too cl[ose]. I've got to find other places." And she said, "You can live upstairs." So I used to live upstairs for quite a while. Then she'd be in in the morning and she'd stay overnight, and so we got pretty. . . . After a while I got pretty. . . . You know, I became like a runner. "[Boy], would you mind getting me another drink? Go and get a bottle over there?" And this stuff, back and forth. So I figured, "I'm just another what-do-you-call-it?" What-do-you-call-it—boy, to get stuff. . . .

MD: Lackey.

TC: Go-fer.

ED: Lackey, a chauffeur. So. . . . But she was all right. She had a whole life of her own. But then at that time things started to pick up, and I thought of Ernie.

MD: That's when you sent for Ernie, yeah.

ED: Then I sat there and I wrote a letter to Ernie saying, "You should come here, Ernie." I said, "I'll tell you, this is a new gallery. It's getting a lot of PR—and a lot of bad PR because it's not on 57th Street, and it's not going to work because it's off 57th Street, down towards the park in a stable." And that's what they. . . . A lot of critics said, that it wouldn't work, "Everybody goes to the Avenue," and I said, "It's only a couple of blocks from where they're talking about, so what's the difference?" And so he said, "Okay, I'll come." And I said, "We can get a place and stay together, and find a place." So that's what he did. He came in, and right away she sees Arnie—Ernie; she called him Arnie—she says, "Hi, Arnie." And she fell in love with Ernie, pretty much. Anyhow, so where we lived. . . . Well, we stayed up top for a while, and then we decided. . . . Like, I said, "Look, we're always working here." She said, "I'll tell you what, boys. You see that ramp?" And it was a ramp for the horses, you know. When you walked in there you'd get this [makes a loud sniff]. Jesus, I mean, it was beautiful, smelling of horse shit and piss, but after a while we'd sleep up there, and I'd say, "Jesus!" You came out of there and you felt like you'd just rode a horse and you'd walked through some horse manure." So Ernie and I said, "Elinor. . . ." You see, both Ernie and I were carpenters. We know carpentry, in that we built things and everything like that out there. I helped him in other things. I did things in New York and Hartford. I always worked on buildings and I could do it with him. And he said, "What do you say we build. . . . We'll get her to. . . . We'll put a stairway up on an angle?" I said, "Jesus, you know what we have to do there? Those are pieces of pie like this, and there's nothing is straight. We'll have to buy it by ear." So we did his whole. . . . As you walked up there. . . . Coming down is like you would slide and just, you know, it's worn. So he said, "Well, we'll build that for you, Elinor, if you'll pay us for it." She says, "Oh, I love that. We'd love to have it. That would be nice. Now we could use the upstairs for a gallery, too." In other words, that way you can walk up there. The other way, they couldn't walk up a ramp and [they'd keep, they used] it for storage. Then we started storing things other places and then she said, "Will you build some racks?" We said, "Sure." We used to build all the racks for certain areas of paintings, and downstairs there was a place where you could put some, but that's in the cellar, you see. I mean, downstairs. Then upstairs, in back and [then] upstairs, [we had, with, we did] the whole top floor.

So that's what Ernie and I did. We first stayed there for quite a while and had another place downtown, we'd get there later. And so we just got the wood, ordered the wood, and said, "Elinor, you pay for that and pay us and it'll be great." She paid us for it, too, but she said, "Oh my, that's beautiful." Because she couldn't get anybody to do that. It would cost a mint. I mean, nothing was straight. I mean, [the ones, _____ was] that went around was all cock-eyed, and you had to have it straight and make it. . . . How high the steps, you know, in the corners. . . . You know, you stay too near that railing and you'd fall down. You'd practically break your neck. You had to keep it to the outside. So we made it so there was just an extra spot there so your heel didn't catch—just all the way up like that, just about that high. [gestures] We figured the heights. And wide. _____ you get a heel, at least you got another step.

So everybody come in and said, "Wow, who did that?" And they said, "Well, the architects over here, Dugmore and Briggs." [laughs] So then it got around pretty good though, so then we got jobs easy. We'd get a job. "We just did the gallery steps. . . ." "You can do all that?" "Sure." So we'd get a job, any old place. We'd just get one and work at it and hammer away and hammer away. [laughs] Then he said, "I think I'm [going] to quit." I said, "You want to quit?" I said, "Okay." We moved in. . . .

TC: Did you stay with Elinor until she closed?

ED: Ah. . . .

MD: No.

ED: No. See, I left the gallery and lived. . . . What time did I _____. . . .

MD: You left the gallery in 1956, after your ‘56 show.

ED: Yeah.

TC: That’s the third show you had there?

MD: That’s right.

ED: Yeah, third show.

TC: Why did you leave?

ED: I’d had it with that gallery. There was just. . . . It was all. . . . Too many. . . . She got in. . . . Instead of getting ten people, she had sixteen, twenty. She’d just keep [bringing] shows, you know, and it would just be overcrowded. Nothing would happen sometimes, and different people she’d get and. . . . I don’t know, I just got out of it—decided the hell with it, I’m not going to stay there. So I went down to Ernie, and I said to Ernie. . . . Ernie was staying with, I think, for a while then. I’m not sure. See, _____ Jane. . . .

MD: You’re talking about when you . . .

ED: On Water Street.

MD: . . . left the gallery, but you moved to Water Street in. . . . Late ‘53 and ‘54 you were in Water Street, you and Ernie.

ED: Yeah.

MD: They got a whole building on Water Street for fifty dollars a month.

ED: I told Ernie, he says, “Where’s the best place to go?” Because I started downtown, down in the Village, and looking on the wharfside—on the riverside—and then down on the east, and I said, “Ernie, any of these places are okay. It’s close but, “I said, “there’s places, if I know, and they’re down by the docks, when you go right down. . . .”

TC: What was the address there?

ED: Down there it was three twenty four? Three twenty three?

MD: Three fifty four? I don’t know. I have the letters right there, and they have the address.

ED: I’ve got even catalogs from the restaurant. Anyhow, so we went down there, looked around, and we’re. . . . Let’s see if I can get this straight now. I think it’s very important. First of all, we took a room in a hotel so we’d have a place to go out of. We asked somebody and they said, “Oh Geez, go down to the docks. There’s a lot of old buildings down there and they’re not doing anything. Why don’t you go down there and check that out?” And so Ernie says, “Geez, this is nice.” It was right down there. It’s all gone now. There’s [a few] people who I just took us down to see where it was and I said, “It’s not there.” He says, “I know.” But it was a marvelous place. And sailors there, coming on the boats, and everything. Right on Water Street. This building was standing right up there so he. . . . One guy says. . . . The name—the guy’s name—was. . . .

MD: Who, Joey Fox? [MD has moved away from the microphone—Ed.]

ED: Yeah, Joey Fox. With a name like Joey Fox, Ernie and I looked at each other and said, “Why Joey Fox is not a name. Joey Fox is foxy.” So Ernie said, “So what do you think?” I said, “Geez, I don’t know, but let’s talk some more with this guy.” And he lived right over there—like we’re here in the building and this goes down to the river, and this is Water Street, and there’s a big bar down there. And all the guys [saying]. . . . These are. . . . What do you call them?

MD: Seamen.

ED: Seaman [coming] in and out, but also . . .

TC: Longshoremen?

MD: Longshoremen.

ED: . . . longshoremen. The longshoremen, they went in, so we’d go down and stayed there awhile. We just took

a hotel down there, just took a room another place, and said, “Let’s see just what it’s is like here.” And we didn’t go to that building yet. And we were always looking around, we were still coming up by the wharfs. Said, “Well, there’s a nice place.” And the guy said, “No,” and “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” something like that. And “We wish to be down on the corner.” And the corner’s still there. I think that place is still there. The last one on the corner, is it still there, that bar?

MD: No. Oh, yes, yes, _____ _____.

ED: This is on Water Street.

MD: 254 Water Street.

ED: 254. That’s gone. There’s nothing there now at all, as a matter of fact.

TC: Were there other artists down there at that time?

ED: No, not there. No, no, see we were the first ones down there. But what happened. . . . Yeah, I’ll tell you about that later. Who was the guy moved out of there? Moved down in there. Right on the other side of town from us?

MD: Fred Mitchell was downtown.

ED: Fred Mitchell was all right, because I knew Fred Mitchell. Fred Mitchell lived over there and we lived here. And he said, “Man! this is. . . .” He’s a great guy. He said, “This is a great spot! This is a beautiful spot!” And I said, “You, great. . . . You guys have a whole building; we have a whole building. “You do?” I said, “Yeah.” “What do you pay?” “Well, we pay fifty bucks, twenty-five bucks apiece.” “Fifty bucks a month?!” And he has these “M-m-m-mama [imitating stuttering] and me Daddy”—he’s from the South—he says, “My Mama and my Daddy,” he said, “Fifty . . . how much?” [laughs] He’s still around. And I said he “has to see it. And it’s this whole building; you could have the whole place.” So Ernie and I took a floor, like, you know?

TC: This is in ‘54?

MD: Yes.

ED: Yeah, ‘54. And, so, across the street there was this. . . . Down below us was a bar. I wrote poetry on it; I’ve got all the things about the bar. It’s called The Driftwood Bar. Now if that isn’t a gimmick to writing a poem, I’ll tell you! So the Driftwood Bar was covered with women and ship guys and guys with hats on, so Ernie and I said, “I guess we’d better camouflage ourselves. So we bought sailors’ hats—old blue caps—and we’d wear a pair of jeans sometimes, and hang around, roll a joint, and stand around and talk and say something about, when any guy was going by, “When are you going out?” [laughs] and he’d be going out home, uptown. “Wow, I don’t know.” “You guys?” “No, we’re just inshore for a while.” “Yeah, okay.” And then the downstairs with this. . . . I got the records, I got it in my mind, I even think I’ve got sounds [tape recordings?—Ed.] in there somewhere. And this girl would sing, this big blonde. And the jukebox, the guy who had it was a Swede. His name was Lundstrom . . . Lindstrom.

MD: Lindstrom.

ED: And it was right on the corner. And right across the street was two old guys, like homeless guys at the time, and we watched them from the window. We had all the floors, top to the bottom, and we’d watch them from there, upstairs, downstairs, watch them. Two old guys—they’re left without anybody, so they’re just together. And all this time we’d _____ and these two old guys, one is taking care of the other, and the other one’s taking care of him. And it was so poignant. I mean, you almost cried to watch them, you know? We said, “Geez, let’s bring them down and give them some sandwiches. Let’s buy some, give them something to eat.” And we said, “Geez, if we do that, they know we’re here then they’ll be around here every minute.” “Yeah, well, we got to do something.” And the guy would argue with him, “No,” about something, and they would. . . . You know, it was so poignant to watch these two old guys like our age. . . .

MD: They cooked fish on the fire and they. . . .

ED: And then they was going to get the fish that they threw out of the barrels, and we followed them inside, and they’re getting all these throwaways like this. And they’d say, “Get out of here!” and throw a good one at them. “Get out of here!” [laughs] And these guys would, “_____ _____, and they’d spit, you know, and “I got another one.” We’d follow them back and I’d say. . . . So one day—this was early on, too—I said, “Where the hell, [you, they] got a barrel and they have a fire in it.” I said, “That’s to keep warm. Everybody had to buy barrels. Everybody, they all had a barrel there and they stood around and the cops wouldn’t bother you. They didn’t bother us for a while, because they didn’t know who the hell we were yet. And so we’d watch them, and then the guy would start arguing with him. He says, “No, that’s not right.” And so and he says, “Well, okay, then I’ll hang

another piece of wire on it, but that fish is no good," he says. "Well, I'm going to cook it anyhow." So they'd cook this fish and they'd eat a little bit and then they'd [makes spitting sound]. I'd say to Ernie, "Geez, they just ate the tail and what the hell's the matter with them?" So we did start to give them a few cents, although we had very little money ourselves from putting that rent out. And we became friends. But then we had to make sure that they didn't get too close, you know. So we'd go down there and buy a few fish that the guys are getting rid of, but they're not throwing in the gutter, and say, "Let's have a bunch for these. . . ." They'd say, "You're not taking care of those bums, are you?" I said, "No, but, you know, we kind of like them. We're artists." "Oh, you're artists, huh? Can you draw me?" I said, "Yeah." "You want to draw me?" I said, "No. It costs money." "What do you mean, it costs money?" I said, "Well, after all I _____ _____." "Are you the guys up there in that building? What are you, crazy or something? This is crazy. Where you from?" And like that, and then he'd get to know you, we'd come down and eat in their place then. And they want to know about us so we. . . . [pauses, distracted]

MD: I think they're probably putting the intercom in. It's all right.

ED: Oh. So they would say. . . . There was one guy . . . Joey Fox. Now Joey Fox was a guy had a Buick Straight Eight sitting by the wharf.

TC: He had what?

ED: . . . a Buick Straight Eight. It's one of those. . . . At that time, that was worth a billion. All hyped up, you know. He comes out with his two kids and walks around. Comes walking over one day and he says, "How you guys doing?" "Okay." By the way, we didn't cut our hair much. He probably thought we were two homosexuals, I don't know. _____ we never had any _____. But he said, "What are you. . . ." Said, "I take care of this block down here, you know." I said, "Oh, really?" He said, "Yeah, well, you want to. . . . "How much. . . ." No, that was the guy that rented from him. We said, "The rent is fifty bucks a month." We said, "Twenty-five apiece." "That's not bad," he said. "That's good!" he said. "You got a whole building. What do you do?" "Paint." He says, "Paint? Paint what?" We said, "Paint pictures." "Oh, I want to see them sometime." I'm just jumping back. And then we never saw him for a while so we just gave him the rent. We'd get our twenty-five bucks apiece that we'd made somewhere and paid the rent. And he came over one day, "Could you do a portrait of me?" And I said, "Well, geez, I. . . ." Huh?

MD: Didn't he want he painting of his car?

ED: Yeah, he wanted. . . . [laughing] Well, I forgot that. I mean, that slipped my mind totally. He said, "Could you paint the car?" I said, "The car?! No." "Why, you could do that." I said, "No, that's illustration. I can't. . . ." He said, "Would you give me a quick wash or brush stroke, or something like that?" I said, "No, I can't do that." So I never did it but he said, "Well, could you paint me?" I said, "Well, I guess so, I don't know." And he said, "Well, it saves you rent." In other words, he was trying to tell us. . . . And we kept away from that pretty much because anyhow. . . . And then one day when the guy. . . . That woman was singing down there all the time and they had a band going, and this band would be right under where we slept. There's a fireplace there, by the way, and so to get our wood we'd go out in the street and get a couple of ropes and tie it around us like woodchoppers and drag these telephone poles that are half down and pieces of wood where they park cars, we'd take those out of there, bring them down and saw them up and put them in the fireplace. But we'd put them in the fireplace. . . . If it was this long, we'd put the whole . . . stick it in like that and we'd each get out. . . . We had two big _____ with hooks on them. We'd stay in bed and pull them up into the fire because it was so cold. It was winter. Freezing. The snow was out there. And we'd sit like that, and then we'd smoke joints. We had a lot of. . . . We always smoked joints. Not always; we had to get money to get it. The guys got to know us and they figured, "Geez, I wonder who they are. What do they really do?" So, anyhow, one day there's a big slamming on the door, bang, bang, bang. And we wore longjohns. We bought longjohns. So I get up and I go down and I open the door and this cop says, "What are you doing here in your underwear!?" [laughs] I said, "What are you doing here, for Christ's sake?" Ernie said, "What's going on?" I said, "They got the cops down here." So Ernie comes down and he's in his longjohns. "What are you guys, a couple of fruits?" [laughs] We said, "Get out of here." And the guy says, "What are you talking about?" I said, "Look, I mean, we're living here." "You can't live in here," he said. "Who'd live in this place?" This Irish cop. And I said, "Well, come on and up see then, see what we do." He says, "Okay." So he comes up and he says, "Hey, George!" Another cop comes around the corner ready for trouble. He says, "Come on and see what these guys are doing." I said, "Jesus,." Ernie and I said, "This is going to be. . . . Maybe we're in bad luck or good luck, one of the other." So the other guy comes up. The old guy gets up, and they come in and they walk in, and I've got paintings all over. We both had a wall. He's got a wall and I've got paintings all along. He's _____ in there. The guy comes in and he says, "What in the hell is that?" "It's paintings." "Paintings?!" "Christ, any kid could do those!" And the other guy says. . . . And they sit there and they say, "Paintings? You kidding?" "No, these are paintings." "Yeah? You sell them?" "No." "You don't sell them? What do you do them for?" "Well, [maybe, to make] later." He said, "But you mean you do all those and you don't want any money for them?" I said, "Yeah, but. . . ." "Couldn't get anybody to buy them?" I said, "Not yet." And this guy was going nuts. So finally the cop says, "Well, how did you get in here?" I said, "We talked to Joey Fox. You

could talk him yourself." "Oh, you know Joey?" I said, "Yeah, he's the guy that rented the building." "Oh yeah, Joey. Ah. . . ." You know, like that. He says, "You staying here all the time?" "Yeah." "You get the wood like that, all that wood you're piling?" There's two places to work, and one side is just piles, all kinds of wood. We'd drag it up from the wharfs. "So you get your wood out there," he says. "What are you up to?" "Well, nothing." He said, "Yeah. . . ." You know, like, "Oh well, we'll see." _____ _____ that, and we said, "_____ _____." And then Joey Fox said, "No, they're all right."

And then one day. . . . Oh, yeah, this is the best part of it. One night we came out the door—one afternoon late—and I heard this screaming going on out there, and we went out and looked and a guy was laying in the gutter all bleeding, his throat here, and he's bleeding all over. It's raining like hell out there, raining. And Ernie and I said, "Jesus, the poor guy. He's alive." We pick him up and look at him, and he already. . . . He said, "Jesus, where's a hospital?" There's a hospital. It must be up there." So we asked the guy there and he says, "Right up there." So we dragged him up there so far, and we went up there and we left him there. Went up and said, "There's a guy; we got him out of the water." He was in the water running down the drain. And he's in it and we got him out of there and put his head on the sidewalk, and went up and told the guy, the cops, to come down and get him, or send an ambulance. So they come down, picked him up, threw him in a stretcher and took him up there, I guess.

So the next day, we woke up in the morning and we went downstairs to get a drink. The Swede would always give us a drink in the morning. We'd pay a little for it or we'd pay him later, and have a good shot, you know, and then we'd sit there. . . . And as we came in the door he went [gestures (for silence?)] like that, you know, and we said, "What?" And he said that, and I looked around, and there's this guy. He's got a gray fedora, a gray suit, a gray tie, and a shirt. He's sitting down at the end, right here, so we sat right opposite the bartender. And we look up there and the guy he looks at us and he says, "You're the two guys upstairs, huh?" I said, "_____ _____." "Come here." So we said, "What?" "I'm paying for them. Don't worry about it, I'll pay. It's on the house. On the house," like that. So we come up and sit down. He said, "You sit here and you sit here. Now, lookit," he said. I mean, he got really down to business. He said, "You know. . . .

TC: Say that again, please.

ED: Getting down to the business, he says, "You know, this is not your territory. For another thing," he said, "you're not very smart for one thing. You're stupid." Like that, you know. He talks in this real accent. I figured out later where he was from, and I told Ernie—the Brooklyn Mafia, see. They owned this building [in Brooklyn, we were working], and Joey Fox was only taking care of it, see. But the Brooklyn guy came over and he was going to. . . . You know, his eyes were like, I mean, scare the hell out of you. I mean, really. And so then I said, "Ernie, we'd better stick straight with this one." So he said, "Well, what do you do up there? You got a whorehouse or something?" "Nope." "Are you in business at all?" "Well, we paint a lot, but. . . ." "You're selling?" "No." "What are you doing up here for, then?" You know, give you a hard time. He says, "You come down here all the time?" "Sure." "You get any money?" "Well, we make a little money working around different places like where we worked at the gallery or something." He said, "Well. . . ."

MD: Didn't he say something about the person in the gutter?

ED: Yeah, well, that's what I'm driving at. And he says, "But the big thing is," he said, "Why are you so stupid?" he said. "You know what you just did? You know that guy you took up, you sent to the hospital—to get to the hospital and pick him up there?" "Yeah." He said, "If that was your mother and she's bleeding like that, you'd leave her right there, wouldn't you?" And I said, "I don't know." He said, "If that was my mother I'd leave her there, too." He said, "You just walked right in the way of everything here. We got cops down here now wondering who the hell did it. Because somebody threw him out of that bar and threw him in the gutter." We didn't even know that he was thrown out there. We heard this sound one night. Klonk.

MD: And, you know, that was a terrible thing. He was a real Mafia boss.

ED: Well, yeah, I know. And I said, "You can't leave a guy." So the guy says, "Nobody's was allowed in the [business], _____ _____," and that's when he's sitting there—he's there, we're sitting there—and Lindstrom's down there going like he's. . . . I think he was praying. [laughs] He'd give us that look once in a while: "Jesus, you dumb buggers, making it tough for us."

And he said, "Anyhow, you don't make any money on this stuff?" This is upstairs now. We went upstairs, and he's saying it. "You mean, you're for real? You guys are really for real? You're not a couple of creeps and you don't. . . . I mean, you like women?" "Oh, yeah." He said, "Well, what do you do? You don't even sell them. You're just [painting, staying] all this." "Well, it's a nice to paint. It's fifty dollars, twenty-five dollars a month, from Joey Fox, " and I said, "So what's wrong with that?" He said, "Well, if you're not going to do anything, boy, if you don't get paid for it, what do you do it for?" I said, "Well, in painting. . . ." We tried to tell him. He said, "Look, yeah, I don't understand it. I don't understand it."

So anyhow, I think it was right then and there. He was standing down there. . . . When we came downstairs and were standing down there, and he says, "Look, here's what I'll do. Look, are you guys for real? This was for true?" I said, "Yep." He said, "Okay, look." He takes a roll out of his pants. "See, there's three thousand dollars." He rips it open like that. "It's for you guys." [laughs] Standing there like that. If we take it, we're in. In other

words, you're in with him, you're in his territory. It's trouble, because he'll have you doing. . . . You know, being a nice guy but. . . .
[Interruption in taping to deal with message being left on answering machine; MD continues talking for some time]

TC: Okay, go ahead. The three thousand.

ED: And Ernie and I are standing there. I mean, I could show you. This guy is. . . . This is the next day, and he's got this coat on and this helmet. I mean. . . . I always have to act these things out. He's standing [there and he says—Ed.], "This ought to help you. It'll get you through, won't it? I like you guys. You'll make me a painting, make my portrait of _____?" "We could try, but it's not easy. We're painting abstract like those." He said, "I don't understand it. I don't know what you're doing it for," but he said, "Well, anyhow, _____ _____. You should never touch anybody like that. This is our territory." He give you that. . . . You know, those eyes. It was like _____, and it was scary. And he said, "Look here's. . . . It's all I got right now but he said, "Look, you guys are straight, you're real." He says, "I'm willing to put money in, like, to help you." We said, "Gee, we can't take that." He says, "You've got to take it." "I mean, _____ _____." "You don't have any money to pay the rent." "We can work to pay the rent." "Yeah, but this is easier. The three thousand will take you a long way. You can. . . ." And we said, "You can't do it." He said, "You can't do it?" And his face was just, you know, right up close. Ernie said, "Gee, I mean, it's pretty hard to do this." And he said, "You mean you don't want it?" He [Ernie—Ed.] said, "No, we just can't do it." So he says, "Oh, you're okay? Well, I mean, you should have it, you know." And that was that. He said, "You mean you don't want it?" I mean, he was serious. We said, "We're not going to be around here long [now]. We're going to move uptown. We got another little. . . ." Just to say, you know, and he said, "I don't understand it. Here's three thousand dollars. You know what that'd take you?" I said, "Yeah, I know, but if we do that then we'd have to stay here," and telling him nicely, "You know, we move around a lot, that's all. We've got another job. We're working for this gallery uptown, way up in the north, and [if] we have to come all the way down here to live it wouldn't be worth it." He said, "Oh. . . ." he says. No, he just said, "Oh, bullshit. You refuse?" "Yep." "I'm asking again. You guys must be nuts. You must be crazy. Well, you can hang around awhile. Don't worry about it. But I don't understand you guys at all and I don't like that stuff." [laughs] He says, "Here, take it." We said, "No, we can't do it." He was the guy that said, "If you saw your mother in a. . . ." And he says, "You don't touch _____ _____. That's under the bridge, and he said, "Those two cops that were over here, they liked you. One guy liked you very much." He said, "We fired him. He was interested in painting." [chuckles] Briggs and I said, "The poor bastard comes up here and he gets kicked off. These guys were rough. We asked Joey Fox, and Joey Fox said, "Jesus," he said, "who the hell was it?" I said, "_____ _____." He says, "I have an idea. It was just the Brooklyn division; they own this building. Why didn't you tell us in the first place who he was." He says, "I didn't know he was coming over. Everything seemed to be fine."
So we didn't stay long. We got out of there and went uptown so[meplace]. I forget. We moved over by the Village. Oh. . . . We got another place over there for awhile and then moved out of their again. But it was like, "Never again," when I thought of that. Jesus, that guy—that look on his face. One thing I forgot, though. No. He's sitting down at the end and we're down here and he went like that. [gestures] That's right. That's when I [goofed], because he was saying, "You _____ _____."

TC: Hooking his finger at you.

ED: He went like that, see, and he comes up and he says, this guy says, "You sit there and you sit there, okay? Okay?" What the hell was the guy's name that ran the bar? The Swede?

TC: Lindstrom.

ED: Lindstrom. "Lindstrom, call Jimmy—or Charlie. Call that guy in the back room." So he comes in, and this guy comes in, gives him [an answer] like that, and he says, "What's up?" He said, "I just wanted to let these guys take a look at you." They had an icepick and they took him right across here with an icepick, cut his eye out and the whole side of his face. They had it stitched up and that was one of the. . . . He said, "You see that guy? Isn't that right, Jamie." "Yeah." [spoken in imitation of someone with brain damage] This guy was [right] out of his mind. "Is that right, Jimmy You got that? You didn't do right, right?" "Yeah." And Ernie and I are looking, and this guy says, "See what I mean? You got to go with it, and if you live around here. . . ." You know, in a [forced]. . . . I said, "We've got it." We went outside and almost threw up.

TC: How long were you on Water Street?

ED: Oh, we stayed there just. . . .

MD: Quite a few months, maybe a year.

ED: Oh, a year. Over a year.

MD: Yeah, yeah.

ED: And then pretty soon. . . .

MD: And then we went to Maine that summer.

ED: I did do a drawing of this guy though. I did the Buick. And I threw a wash and a blue. And I said, “I can’t draw that well, anyhow.” He said, “Gee, that’s a beautiful thing!” I said, “You can have it.” But he was one of these. . . . And he kept going out and polishing it and looking at the doors. He said, “I just got a new Buick, there.” Whatever the big. . . .

MD: Did you tell him about you and Ernie doing the fish boxes for rent one month? When you couldn’t pay the rent . . .

ED: Oh, yeah.

MD: . . . you did fish boxes.

ED: Oh, yeah. Then we told Joey that we were running out of money. He said, “You should have taken that money from him.” I said, “No way. It’s the Mafia.” H said, “I understand, I understand.” Because he was under it, too. He was living under them, see? He lived with his kids over there. He had three kids and his wife. He said, “Well. . . .” What was it?

MD: You didn’t have money for the rent, so he said do the fish boxes for him, _____ _____ _____.

ED: He says, “I’ll pay you then, because I’m getting enough money.” “What? What do we have to do?” He says, “All you have to do is, you know, where the fish is over there, fish boxes.” We sorted them . . .

MD: You made the boxes.

ED: . . . and made the boxes. “Can you make. . . . You do work, and you said you did the. . . .” We had to. . . . The walls were made out of sheetrock. Not sheetrock, but the other stuff, the wallboard. Cheap stuff. Just so [it] had a break that we could have a place to paint so that we wouldn’t bump at each other. And Jane came to live with us for a long time. Jane. Jane was a girl we knew. So she moved in with us, and I slept on that side of the fireplace, he’s over here, and Jane would sleep there, _____ sleep here. And Ernie would say. . . . Jane would say, “Gee whiz, I gotta go.” And she’d go off, and Ernie would say, “I don’t know, Dugmore, how long we can keep this up. I’m getting tired of this.” I says, “So am I.” And we’d be like _____ like that. And then he said. . . . When we were doing the boxes, we had to get the wood, make the damn boxes out of it, chop away upstairs, until we said, “This is it.” We did a lot of them and he paid us for them, but, you know. . . . He said, “Now what are you going to do?” “We’re moving uptown where it’s different, a little different. This is getting a little. . . .” We told him, “It’s a nice place but, you know.” “That’s okay.” And then old Joey Fox, he’d say _____ anything, because he knew where he stood. But it was one of those things where once you got out of there you felt, “Wow!” you know. Then I had an old Ford I drove once down there once and parked it, and somebody moved it and put it across the street, and the guy called me down. [I said, He says], “Where’s my car?” He said, “Somebody put it over there.” I said, “Who did that? These are new Connecticut plates. Nobody stole it?” He said, “No, I wouldn’t let them. I told him you guys live here.” I said, “Oh, thanks but. . . .” That would have been stolen, the whole car and all, this one time.

MD: How did they do it? Well, _____ _____.

ED: They’ just do it. They’d do it to tease you. And they know. . . . They watched people who lived in those buildings at that time you know. Jesus, I mean, that was like everybody down there knew everybody. There’s no. . . . As a matter of fact, here’s what happened one summer. We used to go uptown, up to the Village, _____, or up to the gallery even. And then we’d bum rides back or take a subway or something. We were coming. . . . Let’s see, I was going to say. . . . Now I’ve forgotten what I was going to say. Coming downtown. . . . [pauses] Something very important about how it was to. . . .
[Interruption in taping?]

TC: I wanted to ask you about your making your own pigments.

ED: Oh, yeah.

TC: When did you do that?

ED: Oh. . . .

MD: Mexico.

ED: Well, in Mexico I did it. Well, that’s ‘51, though.

TC: You began while you were in Mexico?

ED: Well, I knew about grinding pigments, though—grinding paint—because I. . . .

TC: You learned that at Hartford?

ED: No, not at Hartford Art School. We never ground. . . . I don't ground. . . . No. Not at Hartford Art School.

MD: You tell it, dear. You tell it then _____ _____.

ED: Did I do it at Hartford Art School? I don't remember doing that.

MD: No, you did the gesso and the egg tempera.

ED: Yeah, the tempera, and I'd do all the paintings of _____ _____.

MD: But I thought it was when you were in Mexico and you couldn't buy paint . . .

ED: Yeah, I know.

MD: . . . and so you bought the pigment. And that's when you really used the dry pigment.

ED: But I knew you could grind it—dry pigment—so I. . . . That's right. That's exactly right. So that's right, when I did it there. But I had to, because I couldn't buy any paint. The paint was like five dollars a tube for something—you know, in American. But, I mean, in the Mexican. . . . I said. . . . You would say, "That comes to five dollars, you know, like our money. And the guy says, "It's all I got." I says, "You mean in this whole place, this paint shop, you got all those things there, you only have that?" And he said, "Yeah." I said, "Well, what can we do?" He said. . . . Lots of time they talk American or quick or _____. He say, "I got pigmento." I said, "That's good. What d'ya got?" He said, "I got anything you want." So he's running around, and I said, "Give me a pound of that, two pounds of this, and that." I says, "Well, Briggs. . . ." I mean, Briggs; he wasn't even there. I said, "Well, I'm in business." And the guy said, "Well, listen, that lasts a long time." It lasted.

MD: You've still got some.

ED: I've still got some in the bags over there. And all the cans I bought here when I came back. So once I got doing it. . . . It was like you have to put this in that and then let it soak, do that, and then you grind it up on a table, marble and all that. So I'd just grind it up in a tin can. I'd do everything possible—[even] the edges—and I'd do everything possible and try it out. I'd put it on walls, on pieces of paper. Well, I mean, I'd watch it, leave it, do that with it. [demonstrating] So I do _____ _____. When it just stayed, I said, "That's it; I've got it made." So I've been doing it up through . . . just up till the when the shoulders. . . .

MD: Well, recently, when you became "disabled." [chuckles] Not disabled but tired.

ED: Jesus, my shoulders and. . . .

TC: A couple of years ago, you mean?

MD: Yeah.

ED: Picking these paintings up. . . . I'd pick them up with my fingers. You know, I didn't pick them up like that. I'd just. . . . I'd make them wide enough so that I could do that and just lift them and move them over to somewhere. And I got so I could do it. Now. . . .

TC: By spreading your arms, you could lift them with your fingers.

MD: Yeah.

ED: Just by pressure, yeah. And then, like those big ones, I'd even do. . . . Some of those were big enough to just about reach it, and. . . . So that pulled my muscles out at one, two or three places there, where that whole thing would just lift, and, oh! I'd get so I couldn't even stand the pain. So then I did all kind of exercise and said, "Well, I'm not going to do that anymore. I'll just grind the paint and never mind about picking those paintings up like that." But then once I got into the tubes. . . . I said, "Well, I'll buy tubes." And I brought everything I had back from Mexico in bags. Some of it's still there. And these are colors. . . . You see, I was mixing my own colors, which meant I don't have to buy the green and yellow. I make mine. I make the color I want by mixing it out of a tube, which is much easier with the tube. But there's something about grinding. It became. . . . When it ended, I'd always have a cigarette in my mouth—either a rolled cigarette, maybe a joint once in a while. I didn't smoke that much. I never was a guy that could go too far, you know what I mean?

TC: With tobacco?

ED: With grass. Grass was normal for most everybody I hung around wit. Briggs and I, we'd have a couple of joints and then sit back and just enjoy our lives and have a good drink of something and then enjoy. No big deal. But you didn't go out walking around the streets with a joint, you know? And the other thing I was going to tell you. Once, when we first realized that we were coming down. . . . We'd walk everyplace if we could, because it cost money to ride—the money was low—and we'd be walking down and all of sudden I'd say to Briggs, "Do you realize that cop that went there just went down there and went across there, now he's in front of us?" He said, "Yeah, I noticed that, too." I said, "What do you think he's doing?" He said, "I don't know." So we walked on the next block and the next block and the guy _____ _____ on the next block and then we get to our place and the cop goes right on again. And he said, "What d'ya mean?" I said, "I think he's taking us home." He said, "What? Well, Jesus, Dugmore, what would he do that for?" "He goes over there, down, right, back again, come the next block." [I, He] said, "He's watching us so that we might get picked up, or beaten up, or you know." [I, He] said, "He's watching us. And the cop's telling these other guys hanging around there, 'We're watching these two guys. They're in our territory.'" And it was the thing that happened. We asked the cop later. He said, "Yeah, well, you know," he said, "it's dangerous around here. You guy, you go around smoking grass like that, you get killed here if they catch you." And we said. . . .
They were good. I mean, times were different then.

MD: I was just remembering. . . .

ED: It was not a bad thing, you know, see what I mean? It was simply _____ _____. And they even said, "What are you, a couple of queers?" We said, "What are you, kidding?" He said, "All right, all right, we agree. You're not? Okay. What are you doing?" And then we'd say, "Okay." They'd come up and look at the paintings and, Jesus, only that one cop said, "I can see it." The other cop said, "You must be crazy. Those . . . they're nuts. They're not even paintings." [laughs]

MD: I remember that. . . .

ED: But the good cop was under the bridge. He got shot, too, right away when it was _____ _____. One the other cops come and told us. He said, "My buddy. . . . You know the guy who liked your paintings?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well, he just got shot, got mugged over there under the bridge, and got ripped and took his money and everything that he had, and his gun and everything."

TC: He's the one that the Mafia man said they got rid of?

MD: No, no.

ED: No.

TC: That's someone else.

ED: The Mafia was a different guy.

MD: That policeman you're talking about is the one who said you guys were brave. He said, "Oh, you're brave."

ED: That's what he said. That was the cop that said, "You're brave."

MD: And that was the cop, "He was the brave one."

ED: And he was the guy that got shot.

MD: But I was remembering you got pigment from Nettie [when you were] in New York.

ED: Nettie was a guy who. He's still alive. I saw him not too long ago, and he still had. . . . He had hand-ground paint—pigment. You'd buy it by the bag. That's where I got that stuff.

TC: When was that, with Nettie and the pigment?

MD: I think that must have been in the fifties when you were down on the wharf, '52.

ED: It had to be '50.

TC: Was Nettie the same person you were in contact with in the forties, who was an agent?

MD: No.

ED: No.

TC: No? That's a different Nettie?

MD: Nettie King [was the man in the forties—Ed.], and this man's name is Nettie, Nettie. . . . I can't think of his last name.

ED: We just saw him not too long ago.

MD: He came to your show, his last show. I can't think of his last name.

ED: He came to a show over there—and his wife. She's little and he's big. But I've still got some of the bags and. . . . See, what I missed. . . . I'd still be doing it, I guess. I'm a hard-ass when it comes to buying tubes, and they charge, you know. . . . Jesus, I mean. . . .

TC: It's terrible, especially for the _____.

MD: Yeah, that's right, _____ _____.

ED: I mean, I could squeeze that off and sell them _____ like that. He says, "Well, that's what they all do." I said, "Yeah, well, I don't do it that way." I'll grind my own." And the guys would. . . . I _____ some of it _____. And the one downtown in the Village. . . .

MD: Baylin's.

ED: Baylin's. I used to go in there and buy some. He says, "What do you do it for?" I said, "Look, it's exercise and I like it. It feels like that I'm making not only the painting, I'm making the paint. See, I'm doing the whole thing all by hand. I mean, the whole thing is one piece. I did it all." "Yeah, but," he says, "it's a lot of work." I said, "I kind of like it." I said, "As a matter of fact, I'm lost without it." I said, "I'd roll just cigarettes. . . ." I [only, always] rolled cigarettes, just [put the, for] tobacco in—you know, like zap, and I'd light it and it'd go out, but it'll always be stuck there, you know. It was always this nice feeling. I was smelling the cigarette that is there. Because I was working, and I didn't want to drop it.

MD: And the paint.

ED: Yeah. What?

MD: I said, smelling the cigarette and the paint. Two things I could [carry, care] easy.

ED: When I decided. . . . I don't know if I told you this, about when I quit smoking and things like that. I don't think I told you that.

TC: No, you didn't.

ED: Oh, well, this is a story that's why I'm still alive. This I know for sure. That some lights popped over here [in his brain?—Ed.], once, and said, "It's about time." She was very worried and other people were saying, "Jesus, you get smashed too much; you're drinking too heavy." And we all were. [Kline, Klein] [Franz Kline? Yves Klein? —Ed.]—all of us drank heavy, you know, and it's amazing. Well, a lot of them died, too, you know. Kline died two weeks before he was supposed to … He was going to do something, and he just dropped dead, too. He drank. Everybody did. Cedar Bar, Horseshoe Bar. . . . I mean, Horse. . . . The White Horse. We lived there. And when Dylan Thomas came, it became more famous, and then it became too crowded, see? But I used to hang around there, but the idea of. . . . What was I talking about?

TC: About how you stopped smoking.

ED: Yeah, and we'd been to a long party down. . . . [Apparently MD is handing ED a beverage] Thank you. What is that? Vodka? No. Oh, well. It isn't five o'clock yet, is it? But I'm doing well, but for a while there. . . . Anyhow. . . .

Tape 3, Side B

ED: . . . but I'm doing well, but for a while there. . . . Anyhow so Edie [is, was] sleeping and I had. . . . We had been to a party with Ray Parker, one of those parties where there's two people that had the place—this loft downtown—the young guy, the little guy, little Harry or somebody, a little short guy. . . . He always smoked grass all the time, see.

MD: A lawyer. It doesn't matter.

ED: A lawyer. He was a little lawyer, a nice guy, and we knew the girl he went with. We used to know her very well. Who was that? I can't remember.

TC: It doesn't matter.

MD: Doug, the names don't matter in this story.

ED: No, but to me it does. Okay.

MD: The names don't matter.

ED: Okay, so he was running around and _____ _____ stairway up here, down, and we danced and danced, and then I looked at Philip Guston and I said to myself, Guston is not even moving. He was smoked and he never smoked much, you know, and he was just standing there like. . . . You could go up like that and he would go. . . . [gesturing] I said, "Boy, we've go to get him out of here, or something. He's in bad shape." So I had to take him out in the back, in a room, and get him in the back yard or something, and there was this stairway. It was a very sharp stairway, and every time you come down there was a step that sort of was there and you didn't expect it to be there. [It'd, You expected it to] be the floor, and it was a stair, so you put your heel down and go right over landing on your head, you know, built wrong. And so I. . . .
[End of original tape side?]

TC: And were you actually getting Guston down into the garden?

ED: Well, we took him. . . . We got him outside in some fresh air. There was a little garden with little seats to sit in, and got him out there, drinking out there and. . . . And, I don't know, had a little a fire going, I guess. And I said, "I'm leaving. I've got to get out of here." That was it. So when I left—we left. . . . You got me out of there.

MD: You, Pat, her daughter, and I went . . .

ED: Yeah, Pat Dandinyack, yeah, because I know. . . .

MD: . . . and you and Pat insisted on going to the White Horse . . .

ED: [laughs] Yeah, I had to go to the White Horse.

MD: . . . because they hadn't had enough drinking and smoking and talking . . .

ED: Well, she wanted another drink.

MD: . . . and so we went there. Okay.

TC: Pat is. . . .

MD: Pat is a very dear friend. Pat Dandinyack . . .

ED: Pat Dandinyack.

MD: . . . who worked for _____ in _____ _____.

ED: Her husband is . . .

MD: Sal [Scarpeta's] wife.

ED: . . . Sal Scarpeta. He's a sculptor.

TC: Oh, yes.

ED: Scarpeta was. And she worked with Pat in the magazine and Pat always liked to drink.

TC: The magazine was Craft Horizon.

ED: Craft Horizon.

MD: Well, it's American Craft now.

ED: American Craft now. And, well, we went to the bar . . .

MD: Yes.

TC: The White Horse?

MD: Yes.

ED: The White Horse. And that did it. I mean. . . .

MD: And smoked a package of Camels, I swear, between them.

ED: Everybody was smoking. And the time was there. . . . Dylan Thomas wasn't around at that time, see?

MD: No, no, no, [naturally, actually].

ED: Because they knew every. . . . Everybody knew you. They knew to just put a drink there and you'd pay them later. "Okay, don't worry." They'd keep track of it so you just. . . . "Another round for us, Judy." And that's all you did. You never. . . They knew us and so we got out of there and I come home. I don't know what happened to Pat. She went home or what. I have no. . . .

MD: Yes, yes, Pat and her daughter went home.

ED: All I remember was I woke up in the morning, and my head was. . . . It was like it was not mine. I mean, a real head that was. . . . That, "You're going to make your mind up now to quit. One of two things, either quit drinking or quit smoking. Now take your choice. You can't quit both at once because nobody cold turkeys, see? But you can do one. And what will you do?" And I sat there for a long time, thinking. _____ _____ [bought, brought me] a drink and I'd say, "Don't touch it. I mean it." He says, I'm drawing you now, but what'll I do?" And I said, "What'll I do? Drinking, smoking will kill you. That's poison. Drinking is poison." "Well, you can throw it up very fast, you know, and it won't kill me because unless if I keep it up, and if I don't drink as much then I'd be better off, so it's smoking. Quit it. Cold turkey." And I said, "You can't do it." I said, "I have to do it." I'm right out here doing this whole thing like that. And so I put the drink out there and I put the thing [ashtray? cigarette?—Ed.] over there, and I said, "_____ _____ _____." [untranscribable sound, suggesting he was playing "Eenie, meenie. . . ."—Trans.] So I took the drink away and I took both away and I said, "Quit drinking. You're safer." Because if you smoke. . . . [I'm unsure in this entire passage where to put the quotation marks; the conversation appears to have been only with himself, even though he says "he"—Trans.]

MD: Quit smoking.

ED: I mean, quit smoking. If you smoke. . . . And we inhaled like mad; you'd go through cigarettes like mad, and I was also smoking grass at different times. Everybody was doing it at that time. And I said, "Just quit that and drink and see if you can. . . . Don't cold turkey that, but cold turkey [the cigarettes—Ed.]." And I did. And so I told her that, and she said, "I don't believe it." I said, "As it is I have. . . ." And I took all the _____ I had around here and said, "That's it." I mean, "Bring them out, put them out on the step, and don't even keep them here."

TC: And it worked?

ED: And it worked. I cold turkeyed it. I may have had a sip once in a while, and I said, "No, cut it out, and I. . . ."

MD: We're talking about cigarettes, honey. You didn't have the _____ _____.

ED: I know, but a drink was also. . . . Without a cigarette now. . . .

MD Yeah, you slowed down on drink, yeah.

ED: Now, I'm trying to tell you. A cigarette and a drink go together. If you. . . . Like a cigar. Some guy's always got a cigar, and he's got a drink in his hand or something else, and a cigar is there. But a cigarette to me was. . . . After rolling them by hand, I'd do it one-handed. Anybody'd want a cigarette I'd say, "Okay," like that, "here." "How do you do it?" I said, "One finger." Light that cigarette and just shove it [my] mouth. And he says, "Oh, that's easy." I said, "Yeah." That's regular tobacco that I'd grind it down myself. Regular tobacco, just like that. So I always had that on my mouth when I was painting. But I said, "Don't do it." And it was an awful thing to try to not put a cigarette in my mouth when I'm thinking and sitting down and looking at a painting. And so I drank less and I _____ around, but my doctors told me when I did the lung. . . . When I couldn't breathe for a while and I had pains that would drive me right down to the floor. . . . I couldn't even get off the floor.

TC: When was that?

ED: That's. . . .

MD: 1990, he had the lung operation—half a lung out.

ED: So the guy says, “Where was it?” [meaning where was the pain?—Ed.] Before I even got up, before they told me, and I said, “It was right here, right about there.” And he says, “Bring him in right away. Bring him in wherever it is.” And they brought me there to this guy and to that guy. They took x-rays, gave me a brontoscope. . . .

MD: Bronchoscopy.

ED: . . . bronchoscopy, you know, right there and down, and I used to choke all the time and _____ _____, and he said, “If you choke. . . . Don’t sneeze, don’t do anything.” He went all the way down, and he had this feeler and he had a sign up there and he. . . . I’m wide awake. They don’t give you anything at all, just one needle, and that’s to stop you from feeling all that. And I could feel the needle and he says, “Now I’m here,” and he’s talking to the TV, to his box, and a woman’s over there repeating it every time, and I’m laying there thinking, “What’s that?” All I felt was a little tickle as it was going down. And he’d felt it so he says, “I am now at the left bottom lung.” He said, “It’s bleeding, so I can’t do anything. It’s very bad. It’s bleeding. It shouldn’t be bleeding.” So he hauls it all out again, and he says, “Relax.” And he starts all over again, and says, “Well. . . .” He tried to do something about getting the bleeding away and did that first. And then he said, “Now we have to do the same thing again. I think I can work; I can see now.” Because it was bleeding all that. . . . I was bleeding lung. And he goes down again and he gets all through and gets out again, and he says, “Well, I think you’re lucky,” he says. “I don’t know,” he says, “I took all I could from the bottom half of that lung.” He said, “I took that out.”

MD: [sighs in exasperation]

ED: What?

MD: Not with the bronchoscopy, Dug. You had the lung operation afterwards with _____.

ED: I know that. But I mean he. . . .

MD: Dr. James Smith did the bronchoscopy and. . . .

ED: I know. I know who did it. But I’m trying to say he said that. . . . Wherever he went, he said. . . .

MD: Okay, because it will be misunderstood the way you’re saying it, is what I’m saying.

ED: Okay. Oh, I’m sorry then. So he said, “You have to get him to the hospital and they’ll know what to do right away because he can’t breathe that way. It’s dangerous. He can die anytime.” So they took me to New York hospital and the guy was. . . . His name was. . . .

TC: It doesn’t matter.

ED: Okay. [Altorkey], his name was . . . his first name was . . .

MD: Nassar Altorkey.

ED: Nassar! Nassar Altorkey. I said, “That guy must be a Greek and an Egyptian.” And when I saw him, his face was the color of an Egyptian. He’s a little guy. He’s so beautiful, and I looked at his hands and they were just like baby’s hands. You know, no knuckles. Just thin. And I thought, “That guy, he’s going to go in there, with his little hands. . . .” And he did it. He did the whole thing, and when he came up to me later he says, “Hey, tough guy, how you doing?” And I’m all taped up and I say, “What’s the matter?” He said, “Jesus,” he said. “Boy, you’re one tough guy.” And he was telling me why. And he said, “Boy, that’s dangerous. If you waited. . . . If you hadn’t quit smoking,” he said, “you’d be dead. You wouldn’t be able to do any more, because you can’t take the whole I got the half the lung gone.” But he says, “One thing. . . .” And then Edie talked to the nurse. She said, “Tell him there’s one thing that’s going to happen. He’s got a pain there all the time and never. . . . Right there.” And Edie asked the woman why, and she said, “He had to scrape the cancer off the off the inside of the ribs.” She said, “He’s going to have that pain forever.” So I still have the same pain. Every once in a while I just go, “O-o-oh.” I get it now, but he said, “That’s better than not having it at all.” But he was a great guy. I mean. . . . He sent me a letter. I [give, gave] him a catalog, _____ he sent that letter to him, the catalog, and he wrote back. “I always wondered what kind of paintings you did. Now I know. I don’t understand them, “ he says, “but I’ll cherish this note.”

MD: Yeah, he said something to the effect that it was a wonderful thing that you were doing with your life and he wished he could do the same. Which I thought was strange since he was doing a wonderful thing as a surgeon, you know.

ED: Yeah, he said, “We’re just doctors. We’re just doctors.” And when I talked to him there, I said, “Look.” I said, “I’m alive.” I pointed to him see. He said, “I know.” I said, “Well, I wouldn’t be around. There might be somebody else, or maybe I wouldn’t have been there in time.” But it’s that kind of a thing, you know, that is amazing to

me.

MD: Let's see, darling, you. . . .
[Interruption in taping]

TC: Tell me about your decision. . . . Oh. When you mixed your own pigments, what did you mix them in?

ED: Well, actually, you're supposed to. . . . I mixed them in cans.

TC: No, but the medium.

ED: Oh, well, it depends on the thickness you want it and whether you want. . . . It depends on the pigment. Each pigment has its different. . . . Each piece of pigment has to have oil completely around it. And you can't even see [it—Ed.] it's so minute. But that's the idea. So I would put linseed oil, in a certain amount, [DeMar] varnish, a certain amount of that, and then turps. But not much. You had to do that but you'd bank it up on a. . . . I used to do it on a platter, too. Tried that, too, on one of these big wide platters like a waiter's platter. Start, and it would run all over the place and I'd have to keep scraping it up. You make a pile of it and then you keep adding to it. _____ I put it right in the can, and you have to leave it overnight and things like that to make sure that everything was . . . it wasn't going to be powder. In other words, when you'd get through and you'd be painting, and all of a sudden you'd go like that and you'd see this powder come out, which people used to do when they didn't know how to grind it. Students used to ask me. I'd tell them, "But make sure you grind it enough." It doesn't make any difference. They have a machine to grind these. You put all the stuff in and put it together and . . . I did it by hand, but to me it was a habit and it was part of making a painting. And when it stopped, when I had to stop it, it knocked me out, because I liked to do it. I was strong then, you know. But anyhow, to me it was one of the great things to do because there's a lot of things that you can do with it when you make it that way—that you make it the right consistency and there's nothing like it. And you can tell by painting. . . . With knives it was nothing to it. I could just take some from there and put it in another can and mix one of those and one of those and put it there, and I didn't have to take two tubes. I'd just put that in and get this beautiful color. With a black and a green or something, or [add] a little touch of yellow and you'd get this. . . . Tubes don't even have it. You'd have to open two or three tubes to get these colors. A lot of people said that the colors in there. . . . I said, "Well, I grind my own oils." "You does?" Then Briggs got into it and he did up until he. . . . We [bought, brought] a few at the end [that] we did, but when he. . . . When he got ill, he had to stop grinding but he. . . . Anyhow.

TC: How do you prepare your canvas?

ED: Well, actually, I stretch it and then I give it a coat of. . . . A ground. I mean, a coat of . . . what do you call that?

MD: Rabbit-skin glue?

ED: Rabbit-skin glue. But you have to get that down to. . . . See, I never bought canvas much. I'd always make it. It was cheaper to make it, and taught Ernie how to do it. It was easier, because you're saving money but it's the idea. . . .
[Interruption in taping to answer telephone]

TC: Okay, rabbit-skin glue.

ED: Yeah and. . . . Oh, what was I going to say?

TC: What do you put over the rabbit-skin glue?

ED: Well, the ground. The rabbit-skin glue has to be thin. I mean, you don't make it too thick. Otherwise it would crack. It has to be very careful to get it down thin enough that it doesn't go through the canvas and, at the same time that it stays even. And it takes a while to do it. You have to always go moving around with the big brushes so I'd really get it on. I'd try sponges sometimes and then sponge it all down. Well, it doesn't go through, that's the main thing. And every once in a while it would because [of—Ed.] the different kinds of canvasses I'd buy. See, Ernie and I would buy so many yards and then we'd split it when we wanted it ourselves, so it's cheaper. And we'd do it all together like that. And then ground was on a. . . . We'd put a white. . . . Or tinted. I could do anything I wanted. I could put a black ground if I wanted to, but I'd generally have an white—off-white—and leave it at that, would let that dry and then that was it. That wouldn't crack at all.

TC: And then you'd paint on that?

ED: You'd paint right over that, yeah.

TC: Tell me about going to Mexico. How did you decide to do that?

ED: Let's see. Well, again, I always wanted to go to Mexico.

MD: Hub Kriem was there and R_____.

ED: Yeah, Hub Kriem. . . .

TC: In Guadalajara?

MD: Yes.

ED: Yeah, he went down there. We knew he did. He was from [L.A./San Francisco OR: San Francisco (with the L.A. being a mistake)?], and he went down with his wife. . . . And there was a couple of other guys that he said he knew from California that were down there, so he said, "Why don't you come down? It' cheap. I mean, it's so cheap you won't even. . . . On your G.I. Bill you could live there for four years or something like. . . ." Kidding, you know. And so that's what we did. And I said, "Well, shall we go?" And we all decided—Linda and Edie and I—let's go.
[looking at hand?] Gee, I got a. . . . Is that red there, taking the skin off?

MD: Yeah.

TC: When did you go down?

MD: He went down in July of '51. He came out from New York to California, where I was working at my mother's restaurant. Linda and I had left New York in April. And he sublet Clyfford Still's studio and then he came. . . .

ED: Here, here.

MD: Here in New York.

ED: I had the studio over there.

MD: Then he came to California in July and stayed a couple of weeks and then went to Mexico. And in November Linda and I flew down there. And then we were all there, and he stayed until the following August, I think, when he came back to New York and Linda and I came back in September.

ED: They stayed down in. . . . My G.I. Bill ran out but. . . .

MD: But it was the G.I. Bill. That's why. . . .

ED: But the money was running out. It was still. . . . I didn't want to leave but I still had to get back and get some money. I had to go back and do something to get some money. So I had jobs when I went back. But that seemed like. . . . As a matter of fact, I think at that time if we'd have been able to make money somehow, you know. . . . When you're down there, you don't make any money. The Mexicans, you give them more money because they're making eight pesos for nothing. I mean, they do everything for eight pesos, and you think, "How can they do it?" So you'd pay them a little extra on the side, so they'd know you're trying to help them a little better. But there was no way of doing anything there at all. We saw all the people we wanted to see, the different artists.

TC: Such as whom?

ED: Geez, I can't. . . .

TC: Gunter Gersom?

ED: No.

MD: There was a Hans Burkhardt. Is that who you mean?

ED: Hans Burkhardt. Hans Burkhardt. He was a strange guy. I liked him but he. . . . Yeah. And who else was there? You didn't have to take them, you know, because you were in Mexico; they would just be there. It wasn't like a question. . . . You're just hanging around with them. And there was. . . . Who was the other guy? The other painter. An American painter. What's his name? He lived down below there. I used to go down and see him.

MD: I'm afraid I don't know.

TC: What did you get out of your Mexican trip? Do you think it affected your color?

ED: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah! It's brighter. The paintings got bright because the sun was devastating, you know.

When it rained. . . . You know, when it rains it comes down in a bucket and it dries within three seconds sometimes. You get wet and then you're dry. It was like. . . . We didn't dress like Mexicans either. We dressed with G.I. pants on—tan pants. And I'd wear a G.I. . . . I mean, a jacket, a Mexican thing. [I need, Ernie'd hang around with a couple of pockets in it. But we never dressed up like a Mexican. We got a sombrero, but not the kind that would make you think that you're a Mexican. But I did grow a mustache _____—and a beard.

MD: In other words, you weren't trying to put them down.

ED: No! No, they understood all that anyhow. And I grew a beard, and then. . . . Of course, when I was there, see, Sue Goya. . . . Sue was down there first and I stayed with her, and then Edie came down and we stayed together and we got our own place. Little Stephanito [_____—Ed.], now, is a tall guy in San Francisco. We see him, you know, I said, "Hi, Stephanito." [chuckles] He goes. . . .

MD: It was a very, very exciting time.

ED: It was so terrific, I mean! And the mariachis. . . . When she came in, we hired the mariachis, so Sue and I and the little kid was out there and he was waiting, and Edie come in and the mariachis are standing around there playing, waiting, so I said, "That's for you!" And they go, "O-o-oh!" And the little kid [presumably Stephanito?—Ed.] he's clapping, and he says, "Hello, Edie."

MD: Ah, it was beautiful. It was a very, very beautiful time.

ED: It was a time. . . . It was beautiful. All these guys were. . . .

MD: Beautiful people.

ED: I'm trying to think of that other painter that was down there. He's a short. . . . Siqueiros . . .

TC: Did you visit Siqueiros?

ED: . . . and those different guys down below, and then there was another one . . .

TC: But they were in Mexico City.

ED: Mexico City, yeah.

TC: Did you go down there?

ED: Yeah.

MD: Yes, we did go.

ED: We wanted to see the murals, anyhow. I wanted to see those, and we wanted to see other things because it was. . . . Well, you could get a lot of things down there at that time. We wanted to go to the [Millcumbraes].

TC: To where?

ED: We wanted to take a bus, take the ride on a bus to the million. . . .

MD: The Millecumbraes, the mountains.

ED: The Million Mountains.

MD: The mountains between. . . .

ED: And, as I say, you take that ride, you're on a roller coaster. You don't have to. You're on a roller coaster all the way, and these Mexican drivers, they sit there talking and talking like that [looking over their shoulders—Ed.], and they're driving these curves, and you look down and it's straight down and you think, "We'll never make it alive." And every once in a while, they do go off a cliff. And I thought, "Well. . . ." Linda was with us. We stayed in town and bought a few things and went into all the different stores and saw . . . in Cuernavaca. . . . There's a lot of places I wanted to see before [returning—Ed.], but it was pretty hard to push, because I knew we were going to leave. But we did have to make that trip.

TC: Tell me about the surface of your pictures. Did Clyfford Still have any effect on this—your scraping and. . . .

ED: Not the knife, like that. No, because I always worked with it. I worked with a knife when I was grinding it. That's before I went anywhere.

TC: How about. . . . Were you doing that. . . . You worked with a knife in Hartford, you said.

ED: Um-hmm.

TC: The scraping away, leaving that kind of abraded surface, you did that before you went to California, too?

ED: Yeah, at Irving's studio when I first did one there, and I'd put it on thick and take it off, put it on again, and then scratch off what I . . . want to leave some on there, and canvas to see through there. And he was doing watercolors and oils, but he would do them thin and he'd say, "Gee, how did you do that?" And I'd tell him how I did it, and this other guy would say, "Gee. . . ." "I mean," I said, "I'm just doing the way I do it, that's all." I said, "It's like his, but [when] I take that off and leave that paint on there just loose, and then when I want to break it I take paint. . . . As you notice, maybe, some of those paintings, there's thick and then thin. Another one will be like that, and I'd take and [stop, start with] the knife right there, and then I'd just go like that with it. And do that. With the knife, the ridge of the paint follows where I'm going. Even that little ridge is part of. . . . Without just putting it on like. . . . I follow. . . . The knife follows just like a brush, if you're doing [it], or just doing drawings, you know. I figured the thumb is what you could do it with. The thumb is there.

TC: You said you sublet Still's New York studio for a while.

ED: That was for a short time. I had another place across the street on . . .

MD: Cooper Square.

ED: . . . Cooper Square. And he was leaving. He wanted to go back home, he said.

MD: [Right.] He went to San Francisco.

ED: I thought he was going north but I guess he went to San Fran[cisco]. I thought he was going back up to where he come from in northern California.

MD: No.

ED: But, anyhow, so he said, "Take care _____; you can do what you want." So I said, "Okay." So I. . . . He said, "Don't touch any of those paintings in there." I said, "No." He said, "I got some rolled, some that are against the wall. Are you going to look at them or not?" I said, "Well, if you say no, I won't." He said, "Okay." Well, I didn't. I only looked at one. I _____ just to look at one. And he was a real hard . . . a religious bigot guy at times. I mean, he was. . . . I mean, the sincereness of somebody. If anything happened he would [makes chopping sound], like that. So we were close friends. I never made a remark. Ernie and I are very close to him. But he would lay it on you sometimes. And you didn't know whether he was talking to you or not. He'd talk about somebody else and you'd think, "Geez, maybe he means us." You know? Certain things he'd say, Ernie and I'd say, "Jeez, do you think he was. . . ?" He never drank. He was a teetotaler. But he respected us in a way, _____ the way we were: we painted.

TC: Did you get anything from him of value?

ED: If anything, the fact that he . . . he accepted us, for one thing, which everybody said, "How did. . . . [We're] playing games or something."

TC: [chuckles]

ED: And I said, "No," I said, "as a matter of fact, I lived in his studio." "Oh, you're copying him?" "No," I said, "I don't even. . . ." I said, "Nobody can tell that I'm _____. I never painted like him." Besides when I watched him paint, I. . . . [It, He] was very funny. When he painted, [when, and] I was there, said, "I'll be back in six weeks" or something, "and then I've got to take it back." And I said, "Okay. Would you watch _____ _____?" _____ [happen] over there too. I didn't bother with it. I think Hobbin was over there and took my place. And he said, "Okay." "But," I said, "Geez, I got the whole space now." There was nobody there but this Jewish refugee place underneath, on the next street, on the next block over. And they'd come in and I'd sit in the window and watch them. They're so beautiful, they'd go through all the routines with the things. And I learned more about the Jews there. They'd look up to the window and they'd go like that [gestures] and I'd go like that _____. [gestures; laughs]. Little hairs. And I used to go down and visit them and talking like that a little bit, and then they'd say they were very busy, but it's okay. I was just interested; _____ I'm up here. ["]See, I know there's another guy up there. He always looked out the window and spits.["] [everybody laughs] And I said, "I know who that is." And that was Clyfford Still. [laughing] Oh God, that was funny. So I said, "Well, I'm renting, subletting." And then somebody else sublet there at the same time. I forgot who that was now. Ray Parker.

MD: Ray Parker, next door, wasn't it?

ED: Next door. See, I was at forty-eight and he got the next building. Ray Parker was a nice guy. I liked him. He drank too much, anyhow. He did those chunks like [three consecutive chopping sounds].

TC: Right.

ED: And he saw mine. He said, “Geez, how do you do it?” I said, “I’m just working on them. How do you do what you’re doing; I’m doing what I’m doing.” And somebody else moved in the block, too. I forget who it was. And then a few more painters moved in. Cherry was in the front.

MD: Cherry lived there, yeah.

TC: Where was this exactly?

ED: 48 Cooper Square. It’s all gone now. They built _____ _____.

MD: It’s where. . . .

ED: Right across. . . .

MD: It’s near Cooper Union. It’s in that area.

ED: Yeah, well, Cooper Union is right here [drawing] and then the street’s this way, and we’re right across from Cooper Union here. We’re right about here.

MD: The birdseed place was there, wasn’t it?

ED: The birdseed place. Well, the woman we met waiting for a bus, she said, “Oh, you were there at 48?” She said, “My parents knew that pretty well.” She said, “I lived right over there where they sold cooking ware stuff.”

MD: Restaurant equipment.

ED: “Restaurant equipment.” I said, “You’re one of the ones?” She says, “Yeah.” I said, “Them are friends. I lived across the street and looked down at you all the time. We used to go in there.”

MD: This was only yesterday. [chuckles]

ED: Huh? I think we met her at the bus stop.

MD: [laughing] This was only yesterday, you saw her on the bus.

ED: [laughs] It’s so funny, you meet people and they say, “Jesus, I mean, you know, _____ _____ painting a lot. But it was the kind of a place where, getting the mail and things like that, you had to run all the stairs, four flights. Five flights I think. And then, the other guy [who] moved in was Bob John.

MD: Yeah, he was there before you.

ED: Hm?

MD: He was there.

ED: He had the front. Bob John was a guy who was painting, but he made . . .

MD: Leather.

ED: . . . leather. . . . These chairs, for instance. He doesn’t make those, but he made the covers, the leather _____. He had a leather business, and he was right on Canal Street. At that time I think he had a business on Canal Street, but they lived right over here, with his wife and the kid. And I used to go and see him a lot and we used to hang out with him all the time. We still see him now but his wife died; everybody died around him. He’s the only guy left, I guess, down there.

TC: Let me ask about your painting that used the human figure. You said you did that—or I have read that you did that—from 1969 to ‘73?

MD: That’s about it, yes.

ED: Yeah?

TC: How did that begin?

ED: You mean stop. . . .

MD: The figurative. . . .

ED: I'm going back to the figure in '70.

MD: Yeah, 1969 through '73, when you had the shows at the Green Mountain Gallery.

ED: Okay. That one came up. . . . The Green Mountain—that's this fellow here had the gallery, [Lucian] Day.

TC: [Lucian Day].

ED: He came from. . . . He's an old friend of ours from Vermont. We knew him from years back and he'd say, "I'm opening a gallery. Do you want to show there?" I said, "Well, I don't know." I said, "It's mostly figurative [probably meant to say "abstact"—Ed.]" Because he painted landscapes, and I said, "But I've got abstract paintings that I'm doing." He said, "That's all right. Can you do any figurative?" I said, "Well, I have some around, but I still want to paint my own pictures." But in the meanwhile I had started, just at that time. . . . I always wanted to do figures. I liked figures. Small ones. I've got them all over the place, even the sculpture. But when I saw those canvasses, and I said, "I'm going to make a figure." And this is how I did it. I just got all the paint together on a canvas, white, and some pink, and some reds and blacks, and I had them right out there. Pots, like that. And I said, "This is what I'm going to do: use those and that's it." And I would take a brush, first, with a long handle on it—I've got some in there—and close it down so it wouldn't be too thick and I'd just go up, and I'd reach up and take a line of whatever I had in my hand, I'd just go [makes sound signifying quick motion], like that, right there, and stop and go right across there, and take another one and start down here and do that thing. Then I'd do another one. And I'd back off every so often and look at them and think, "Well, this is parts of figures. [You know, Real] parts. You ever see those? I got some over there.

TC: Um-hmm.

ED: And these were like. . . . They . . . just right up tight. Just one, two, three, and I'd finish them like that and I'd. . . . Whatever I did, it was linear, and it was thick line and a thin line, then I'd take a brush with a red and I'd put it next to it like that, stop it and put it under there like that. And I'd turn the painting upside down and either way or other, it's one or the other, it's a figure and it's vertical. . . .

MD: You also did collages.

ED: And then. . . . I like collages. See, I did hundreds. I got collages all over the place, with paper and glue, and I'd paint them. So these figures got to me—because I wanted to make large figures. I mean, I didn't. . . . I've got drawers full of figures. I just wanted to see if I could do that. That's why I broke away. I said, "That's only just an incidental thing," I said. If anybody asked me I told them, I said, "Look, even [Kline, Klein] [Franz Kline? Yves Klein?—Ed.] said, "What the hell," he says, "I do figures too. What are you worrying about?} I said, "I'm not, it's just that I'm breaking from that. This is _____. This is just figures, this is just linear. And I don't mold them to make them around. I mean, it's just the parts will go around by themselves." And he said, "I know, I know." He saw them, and he said, "Jesus," you know. And so I sold a lot of those. Right off the bat, people liked them, you know. _____ _____ like it, you know. So I sold a number of those things and Lucian Day got one up there. We were [up at] this guy that's down there in Florida—in Georgia. We went down to see him, and he shows me one on the wall I did. I said, "Gee, I forgot." He said, "That's the first thing I bought from you." I said, "Oh, yeah." And he was the guy buying them for a whole lot of money then. He was a guy that. . . .

TC: Who was this?

ED: This is a guy who. . . . I wish. . . . We were down there not too long ago, and he's down in. . . . He lives in Georgia.

TC: What town?

ED: Geez, I wish I could think of it. I can't think of the things sometimes. Hold on a minute, I'll. . . . His wife is very rich, and she's very nice, and they have a whole place there, they have two children. And he showed me one of the paintings. I said, "Oh, I forgot—you bought that." He said, "Yep." And he bought a figure one, and that's upstairs in another room. And. . . .

TC: Maybe his name will come to you later.

ED: It'll come through in a minute, because. . . .

TC: So they actually began, then, with Lucien Day's suggestion that you show at Green Mountain?

ED: Yeah, but I didn't have. . . . I don't know if I showed the figures the first time there. I'm not sure. He said, "Well. . . ." Because when I was. . . . The other ones I was painting were not figures. When I did a couple of those, he was stunned. He said, "Gee, I'll buy one. I'll take one of those, Dugmore. I didn't know you did those." I said, "Well, I just started. I'm not really getting into it yet, I just wanted to try it, and I've got a lot of this stuff in the drawer there." All the small things I would do. They are powerful, though. They're. . . . What was. . . . [calls to Edie, who appears to have moved away from the microphone—Ed.] Edie!
[Interruption in taping]

ED: . . . in Georgia?

MD: Harry Hurst?

ED: Harry Hurst and his wife Ophelia.

MD: Ophelia. She just called.

ED: And he's got a couple important other small one. He has small ones all over the place. When he come in, and then Manny [Manny Silverman Gallery—Ed.] picked me up, and so he backed off. He had to back off. But he came out to the opening to see the show that Manny had of my fifties paintings.

TC: What do you mean, Harry backed off? Do you mean when. . . .

ED: Well, he was going to be my agent. He wanted to be, and I said. . . .

TC: Harry was?

ED: Yeah. He said, "I'll be your agent. My wife has friends all over and I can sell some of these for you." And we'd figure out prices and I'd say, "Well, Geez, there's got to be prices on them. I can't just throw them out." He said, "I know, I know." And then about that time Manny just walked in and said he wants me in the gallery, through the guy down in Washington, so I said, "Well. . . ."

TC: Say that again, please.

ED: He walked in and talked to Edie. He talked to me [beforehand—Ed.] and he said, "I'll talk to her, she's business. I've heard you talk a lot, too, but she can listen to business." So he said he wanted to be my dealer.

MD: But that came about because Jim Demetrion at the . . .

ED: That's what I wanted to say.

MD: . . . at the Hirshhorn [Gallery] sent us a note saying that Manny Silverman was "interested in Abstract Expressionists, if you'd like to drop him a note," and I did.

ED: For the reason being that I worked in Iowa for Demetrion. He was the one that ran the museum. He said to me out there, he said. . . . That's when I had figures. That whole show was figures . . .

MD: That's right.

ED: . . . and he said, "You've got the other ones, too, haven't you?" I said, "Yeah." "Well," he said, "these are good. You know, people might buy them." And I sold two or three. And so he was the one. . . . When Manny called Demetrion, he said. . . . _____ called. . . .

MD: Manny saw your painting down at the Hirshhorn.

ED: Hirshhorn.

MD: Demetrion bought one.

ED: And Demetrion said, "Dugmore's a great painter. You ought to take him right now," he says. So he did. And we have to go to Washington, anyhow, one time. [I want to, I'll] say hello to him. Because that was a good thing to do. That started that whole thing off, you know. Manny is. . . .

TC: And that's been successful?

ED: Oh, yeah.

MD: Yes, very.

ED: He's selling some of the sixties. He's sold a lot of fifties. My fifties paintings, see, were very hot. You know, there's a whole thing in the art market—they're hot or they're not hot. Now there's fifties, there's sixties, there's forties, and now the seventies and. . . .

TC: The market is amazingly decade-driven.

ED: Isn't it!? Jesus, I mean. . . . [laughs]

MD: It is! Isn't that weird, when you think about it? The decades!

ED: Isn't that something! And the artists sit back and you say. . . . And I said something to Manny, and Manny says, "Oh, bullshit, Dugmore, cool it." I said, "Look. . . ." He said, "Look, you're making the money aren't you?" I said, "Yeah, I know but there's something wrong with the art game," and he says, "Well, you want to get out?" I said, "No," because we're making money." After all, he was selling these things for. . . . I'd never make that in my life. If he didn't come along I don't know what would happen. I really mean it. I don't know, you know, because I never. . . . I'd [get arguing with] galleries. Even with Eleanor I'd argue. I said, "Eleanor, you mean, a hundred and fifty dollars for that thing?" I said, "You're crazy. That's about a thousand. . . ." "You must be crazy," she said. "[Kline's, Klein's] only getting four—four hundred or four hundred fifty for one of his." I said, "Well, that's different. _____ I've got mine; that's different." "You don't know anything about the art world," she said. "No, I don't." And that's back then. I mean, she was blowing minds, and then she'd buy one, and I'd say, "Okay." And then she'd steal a couple [laughs], send them to relatives somewhere.

TC: Have you had a problem with disappearing art works in dealers' hands?

ED: Very seldom that I know. No. Eleanor was the only one who would . . . that she told me—somebody told me. She said, "I did. But I'm sorry," and that's all right. She sent two black and whites to her relatives down in Scottsdale, Arizona. She had some friends down there.

TC: And you were not paid for them?

MD: Not paid for them, no.

ED: But I said, "Okay, Eleanor, you'll have to buy me more bottles than you got in your drawer." [chuckles] She'd always have a bottle of Scotch in the drawer there. She was a pretty heavy drinker.

MD: Howard Wise was very good dealer, very fair, very fair.

ED: Howard Wise was the guy. . . . He was a good dealer. He was the guy that did a lot selling.

MD: Everything was written down, typed down.

ED: He said, "I'll pay you. . . ." What was it? Four hundred a month?

MD: Three hundred a month. When he first opened up . . .

ED: Three hundred a month . . .

MD: . . . all of his artists got three hundred dollars a month.

TC: When was that?

MD: 1960.

ED: 1960. And he was a fair guy, and his wife, and the whole thing, and he took this whole place. He asked Ernie and I at the time and Ernie said, sure, he'd get in. He said, "Would you find a place for me? You know, like a place where I can open up, a gallery."

MD: Because Howard was from Cleveland.

ED: He was from Cleveland. Oh, I had a show in Cleveland, too, see? When he first saw my work—and that was [was] down here on . . .

MD: Fourteenth Street, where we lived.

ED: . . . Fourteenth Street. He came up to look at those. He said, "I think I'll. . . ."

TC: Came up to look [at] what?

ED: My paintings on Fourteenth Street . . .

MD: Where we lived.

ED: . . . when I was at the whole loft, the top floor.

MD: Yes.

ED: He said, “I want to give you a show in the next . . .

MD: Cleveland.

ED: . . . Cleveland.” I said, “You’ve got a gallery?” He said, “I have a gallery there and everything.” He said, “I’m well-known there.” So I had the show in Cleveland. He paid for tickets for us to go out to see them, to go to Buffalo and over to his place. And he had drinks and everything. God, he had special bottles of booze that were dug up from ages when the bootleggers were around. He says, “There’s the best bottle you’ll ever drink in your life.” I said, “Man, don’t give me that.” And I took the cork out and it broke, so I dug it all out and I looked at it, poured it in the glass, and I went like that [sniffs], and I said, “Jesus! That was like it would kill you.” So I said, “Thanks a lot. I’ll drink what you’ve got in your bottle over there.” But he wanted to see if. . . . He was being nice about it. He said, “I saved that one. You read the labels.”

MD: Yes. He was not a drinker.

ED: No. He wasn’t a drinker. But, anyhow, that first show was very successful, too. He sold some small ones, not big ones, because he said, “They don’t buy around here.” He said, “They won’t buy much. “But,” he says, “they’ll buy some. I’ll make sure of that.” But then he said, “You and Ernie, would you look at the places?” So we went around all over the city trying to find where he wanted to be.

TC: For a gallery in New York?

ED: For a gallery in New York. And we talked to somebody, and they said, “Who is he? What’s his name? Howard Wise? He coming up here? Oh, yeah, he won’t make it up here.” Some of the other galleries had heard about us looking around for galleries. But we found a place. We saw a building right near there but not that one. They wanted a lot of money so that one seemed to be the one. So he went and got that one, and that was it. He said, “I guarantee you three hundred . . .”

MD: Three hundred a month, and when he sold something he _____ _____.

ED: Three hundred a month, and when he sold something he would. . . . So he sold, too. Yeah, he sold quite a few of those. Other guys would say, “Hey, he’s not giving you much money for God’s sakes.” I said, “He’s selling them.” You know, in other words, I’m not going to worry about what he’s going to pay for them. But we were getting paid something for it. Most people wouldn’t do that, you know? He was smart.

TC: How about your other dealers? [Goldofsky]?

ED: Oh, he’s great. They were good, yeah.

MD: _____ _____ _____. [seems to be adding her assent—Ed.]]

ED: We saw them not too long ago. We have an old friend out there, a Greek . . . Russian Jew . . .

MD: Herman [Sperdis] . . .

ED: Herman Sperdis, you must have heard of him

MD: . . . was a collector and a wonderful man.

ED: He’s got a lot of mine out there. He must have bought one every time he saw one. He had [a pile] _____ _____. God, he’s got a load of them out there.

TC: Is this in Chicago?

MD: Yes.

ED: Herman [Sperdis]. He’s one of the great collectors. He came into town—in there, in Howard Wise’s, wasn’t it, when he came?

MD: Yeah, that’s when you first . . .

ED: . . . first met him.

MD: . . . he first started buying them.

ED: Yeah, and he said, “I’m going to buy that one. I want that one.” Just like that. And he paid. . . . Whatever it was, it was higher than most people would pay—I mean, for my work—I mean, at the point I was at. And he said, “Come out.” And [Carla, Carl] [Bedowsky, Godowski] found out, I mean, . . . says, “We’re opening a gallery and want you to inaugurate the show. Would you do it?” I said, “Well sure.” So we sent all the paintings out there, went out, and we had. . . .

MD: That was 1959. That was before Howard Wise.

ED: Yeah, and Warren [Brandt] knew somebody, one of the guys out there. I think Warren Brandt was out there teaching at Illinois—Southern Illinois University. I gave a talk there once, too. So when I got up there, they said, “We’ll have a closing instead of an opening. A closing is better; they have more to drink.” Like that, see. [chuckles] I said, “That’s all right with me.” So I went in for the closing, and wow, they. . . . What’s his name?

MD: Bud?

ED: Bud was a real girl-crazy nut. . . .

TC: Bud?

MD: Bud [Holland].

ED: Bud, that’s the little guy.

TC: Bud Holland?

ED: Bud Holland.

MD: Bud Holland, yeah.

ED: And Bedowsky was the. . . . He was guy who knew painters. He said, “Dugmore, _____ _____ _____.” So he wrote me a note, and I said I’d do it and he said, “Okay, fine, come on out.” [I] ship all the paintings out and that was a _____ _____. And they said the guy [would, will] have photographs in the back room. You’ve got a copy of that somewheres. She’s got all the photographs. They took pictures of everything. They were great! They’re still there, but they’re moved, and he’s doing mostly furniture now. They sort of gave in to that. But Goldofsky said, “This is a good deal you got here, because. . . .” I said, “I know it.” And then having a show at the gallery and all the Playgirls came there. They had Playboys. They had all the Playgirls in there. They had them all lined up for me, and I said [laughs], “Hey, I’m too . . . I’m not . . . I can take four, maybe.” And this girl says, “Oh, you’re kidding me.” And they said, “Oh, those are beautiful things. They’re so sexy,” you know, and then they’d give me the _____ _____. I said, “Jesus, I’ll never get out alive.” So he says, “You can take any one you want. They [sort of] picture you.” He says, “They want you out of here, by God. You’ve got to [give] the gallery. And I said, “You’re turning me on?” He says, “No, but they’re going turn you on.”

MD: Then Hefner bought one of those. . . .

ED: And Hefner bought one.

TC: Hugh Hefner.

ED: Hugh Hefner. But it was so funny because I’d never been there like that, and when I walked in it was. . . . And they would clap and they’d hug me, and I’d think, “Jesus, what’s going on.” And he said, “Well, I thought I’d give you a little bit of Chicago—a good old Chicago. . . .” What do you call it? “A Chicago introduction.” He said, “These are all my Playgirls.” Because he had the magazine and all that stuff, you know. And then somebody saw another thing in the magazine one day. They said, “I saw your painting in a Playboy magazine.” I said, “You did?” He said, “Yeah, it’s right over his sofa.” I said, “Oh, that big blue one.” I said, “Yeah, I sold it to him. He bought that one.” But he was good and he was fair. And I forgot what he paid for them, but Edie may remember. But “That’s Chicago,” he said, “this is the way we do it out here.” He said, “Now we go out to lunch and all that stuff.” And then the girls would tease you and all that, and you could go down and see them on the stage. And I said, “Well, I don’t really have to. But I’d like to see you here just like you are. That’s close enough.” You know, it’s a hard thing to go through with this.

TC: Do you see any connection between your interest in music and your painting?

ED: Um-hmm. Yep. As a matter of fact, painting and music is the same. Exactly the same thing. The same forms

that I put on that canvas are the same forms that I'm going to do when I listen to music. In other words, Jazz is one thing. People paint Jazz paintings. I look at them, I say, "Well, that's not so hot." Like George [Arbin, Arban] could paint. He was a musician. When he painted to Jazz, he'd just look at them and he'd say, "You feel that one?" And I said, "I sure do." You could feel it. He'd put browns and blues and [he'd, you'd] actually listen to certain guys in the early days.

MD: Well, a lot of your paintings are named after . . .

ED: Yeah. I name them . . .

MD: . . . Beethoven's opuses, aren't they?

ED: Oh, almost half the paintings I do now are quartets. I like quartets. I mean, a quartet to me is the closest you can get to nowhere and somewhere, because a quartet isn't easy, if you listen to them, and I have and. . . . But the Beethoven, when I first heard his, I just broke up. I remember crying, sobbing, when I first heard. . . .

TC: The quartets?

ED: Yeah, 131. The last quartet, and then 132, and 130. And I thought. . . . His music—I've got all of his records. I don't play many of those but I have the quartets. And I don't play them too often because all it has to do is just play them—131, 132, 130. I name them. In the back I put. . . .

MD: Opus 131.

ED: Opus. I put "O" sometime, then I'll tell them it's an Opus—Opus 131. Somebody catches it and they say, "Oh. . . ." And I say, "Yeah, that's Opus. . . . The way I feel about it." And I know people tell me, but it's so sad, you know, and I say, "Well, it is sad but it's still a painting." I said, "That's a quartet of Beethoven." He said, "I know, but it. . . ." They feel it. I tell people when they come to look at something, I tell them, "You can't feel it; you can't see it." I tell them that right away and they say, "What do you mean?" I say, "Well, I feel a painting, that's all. I don't paint it. I feel a painting, and that's music to me. It's like the same thing, except I'm putting it on with a palette knife, and I'm doing what he's doing in my way. If he saw it, maybe he would like mine. I don't know. He would never see that. But I know what he's doing and I know what I feel. If I feel that, that's what I put on the canvas. Now if it's very joyful, I put that on there, too." So sometimes. . . . And I've got black paintings. Some people say, "Boy, that's really a lift," instead of coming down. I say, "That's Opus so-and-so-and-so." And it's not the way I do those. Some of these paintings, I do them in black. But they're not just black. I make layers of layers of thin washes and break them all up till you get a . . . you're almost enveloped in a. . . . You get sucked into it, so you're just pulled right in like that and then it pulls you out and you read. . . . I've got notes, like up here and there, of color. But I don't say that to anybody. They'd say, "Oh, you're painting color notes," and they' just go like. . . . [dismissive?—Ed.] But that feeling has to go with the rest of that painting. I mean, they're composed only because he composed them, see, but my instrument is nothing. I have paint and a brush and a mind—and a sense of music, that's all.

TC: Do you listen to music while you paint?

ED: Lots of times. Oh sure. But then I. . . . If I stick too close to the sad ones then I sort of back off, because I get too upset.

TC: What other composers have you named paintings after?

ED: Mozart. I liked his things.

TC: Mozart. Which . . . what Mozart?

ED: Well, let's see, the. . . .

MD: I don't think you've ever named a painting after Mozart's work, although he listens [to it].

ED: No, no. They're small. . . . They're little short things. When he was young, he was. . . . What was it, when he was young? I even forgot. I don't even have the records anymore.

TC: The Sonatas, perhaps.

ED: Sonatas. They've got to be short. I never liked anything long. I mean, you know, to work.

TC: Some of his symphonies are rather short.

ED: His symphonies are short. [There's another one who had short symphonies. OR?: There's another one

[reason—Ed.]; he had short symphonies.] But I liked him because he was sort of a nut, if you know what I mean. Reading about him, I thought, “Jesus, this guy, he’ll get executed if he keeps up doing what he’s doing.” When I saw the picture of him, you know, and I said, “Jesus!” The movie was enough to knock me out. [TC and MD laugh] I said, “if that’s true. . . .

Tape 4, Side A

ED: . . . you know, to work. . . .

TC: Because some of his symphonies are rather short.

ED: His symphonies are short. There’s another one [reason—Ed.]—he had short symphonies. But I liked him because he was sort of a nut, if you know what I mean. Reading about him, I thought, “Jesus, this guy, he’ll get executed if he keeps up doing what he’s doing.” When I saw the picture of him, you know, and I said, “Jesus!” The movie was enough to knock me out. [TC and MD laugh] I said, “if that’s true. . . . You know, and I read the books about him. I read all of them—or a lot of them, [however]. I said, “Geez, this guy could have been executed for acting like he was.” He’d laugh and he’d dance, and I thought, “That’s another way.” I mean, I like it, the person to be. . . . Like Beethoven was this really heavy guy, you know? I mean he was [speaks in a bass voice] right down in there. But he was also, when you play enough of him, I play enough of him, then I’d just get lifted like . . . like it just takes you to a crescendo right then. He goes boom! Then when he comes down and you go, “Jesus!” I mean, I would stop like that and I’d say, “I wish he wouldn’t do that”—to myself. I mean. . . . But that’s him, and when I. . . . I played him from years back with records, when I can get them, and jazz at the same time.
Briggs was always trying to paint jazz. He’d say, “This is jazz,” or something. And I didn’t one once called “Jazz,” and I thought. . . . I sold it, and I said I didn’t even want to make a jazz painting but somebody said they liked it because the title said “jazz.” But I never could. What note means what, you see? I mean, everybody would want to. . . . I don’t know, it’s a matter of . . . I think it’s feeling.

TC: What writers have meant much to you for your painting? Are there any?

ED: Oh, right off the bat. . . . Geez, I read so many. Who do I kept reading. . . .

MD: He reads constantly. [I’ll] try to think of. . . .

ED: Boy. I don’t read many of the books on . . . by musicians, but I have books that have to do with. . . .

MD: Well, William Carlos Williams. . . .

END OF INTERVIEW

Last updated... December 2, 2004