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Oral history interview with Viola Patterson,
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Transcript

Preface

The following oral history transcript is the result of a tape-recorded interview with Viola Patterson on October 22 & 29, 1982. The interview took place in Seattle, WA, and was conducted by Martha Kingsbury for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Interview

[Tape 1; side 1]

VIOLA PATTERSON: Now, my hearing isn't very good so you may have to speak up a little more loudly as you go along.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, fine. I'll try to do that. I think the hearing of this machine is not too wonderful either, so for the machine we may both have to speak decently anyway.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Fine.

[Break in taping to adjust tape recorder]

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I would like very much to hear about your growing up. Did you grow up in the Seattle area?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, I was born in Seattle and grew up here, went to school here, Lincoln High School, and the university [of Washington--Ed.], in the days when the university was relatively small and intimate, and when you [knew--Ed.] professors [in] other categories than the one they were studying in. At times, it was informal to that extent. I was trained as a librarian and I've never lost my interest in librarians and libraries. I think one thing I appreciated awfully much in my husband was the fact he-- an Australian-- when he came to America was, truly, impressed most of anything he saw in America by the free American library system. And he remained a really dedicated person as far as watching the facilities of libraries and supplying material for ____ .

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was he an avid reader?

VIOLA PATTERSON: In Australia the libraries were, in his days, very primitive compared to anything-- no open shelves, I believe. So young people growing up didn't have the access to reading material that people here had.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I began going to libraries almost as soon as I could walk (chuckles), and bringing home stacks of books, so that's always been an important thing for me.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Before you went to the university, had you any interest in painting or drawing?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, yes I really had. I had drawn from early days. Those were the days where pretty girls with a head full of curls were in the magazines, papers, and so on. I would fill pages with these saccharine looking little creatures. But in high school, I had one very excellent teacher. I wish I could give you her name. She was really very well known as an excellent art teacher.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: This was at Lincoln High School?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. And I remembered it for years, but now it's gone. She was the type of teacher who encouraged her students to do what seemed to interest them and what came naturally. She didn't impose her ideas, but she gave you every facility to branch out or to develop yourself. And I think I did this design for our yearbook, probably in my junior or senior year. I can't remember which now. But at any rate, it indicates that I had a certain interest before coming to the university. But at the university my experience was that I was just bowled over from the very day by the fact that here were all these marvelous courses that were available, how to choose and so on, and a university then had...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: In all fields, you mean? Not just in art?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, oh no. I took no art courses until either my senior year or my first year as a graduate student.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh!

VIOLA PATTERSON: None at all. And really wasn't at all concerned. But all these other wonderful courses just seemed so marvelous. I did have an English teacher-- probably not the first term, but about the second term I think-- who brought out the very best in students always also, very well known also, and again his name escapes me though I do know it very well. He later went to Reed [College--Ed.], and had his entire later teaching career at Reed. But he was marvelous. He was noted for his ability to get wonderful work out of students.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: He taught people writing as well as literature?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, it was a writing class, at least it was composition, very low level-- or very beginning level, not low. And I took a philosophy course early. As a matter of fact, I think I was signed up for it mistakenly in my first quarter at the university. It was at the time they had the big sister system. I had a marvelous big sister who helped me through that course, but the fact was I wasn't ready for it. The professor told me that I should never have been allowed in the class in the first place; I was just too immature for it. And I wouldn't give up, but I flunked that course-- the only course I ever flunked.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see; it really was too rough.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I had to retake it later when I was a little more mature and able to really grasp what was being said. I was so fascinated by it and so absolutely determined that I was going to understand what was going on, but it really was beyond me. But that was an early experience and I think a good one in that I did learn that sometimes you have to realize that it's better to say quits than to just persevere entirely. However, I don't believe you enter librarianship work until your third year, I think it is, and when I did the library school was still very small. They were housed in one of the old fair buildings [from the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition--Ed.], which is still on campus, I think.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, one that still exists? Like the old architecture building does?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Classes were not large and the head librarian was a Mr. Henry who was librarian for many years, very highly respected. We knew him completely well, as we knew most of our professors. Well, not intimately at all, but nevertheless they weren't the august figures you sometimes think of a professor as being.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Had your parents been deeply interested in reading and books, and encouraged you in this direction?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, my mother was especially. And my mother was interested in art, though she only did craft type of things. What she did was exquisitely done always, but I really think she had an ability that, had she had [scope, school] for it, would have been [done it], you see.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did she do things for her own friends and family, or did she sell things, also?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, just the family. My mother was Swedish; my father was Danish. And my mother, more than one person took her for Irish because she really the good old blarney. (chuckles)

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really!

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. She had a wonderful wit.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: That doesn't seem like a Swedish ____.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It didn't come out very often, but when it did, it was really marvelous. People in those days weren't as free in conversation as we are now. But every once in a while she'd surprise not only her family but everyone else. I remember when she was quite old, that she was in the hospital, and her doctor was an Irishman, and he says, "Well, we're two fellow countrymen." They got along like a house afire.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Still being taken for Irish!

VIOLA PATTERSON: But at any rate, back to the university, and...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Could you tell me also what kind of crafts she did?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, one that she did was one that was well known at that time-- burning in wood with a tool that was heated. They were, you know, sort of awful things in a way, but she did rather interesting things with them, if I can remember at all. And then she did, oh, the most beautiful embroidery, just absolutely elegant. I still have a few pieces of her lovely luncheon sets and so on. And she had taste in everything she did. She had taste in clothing. We were all-- I had one sister-- we were always dressed very simply but very nicely.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did your mother design and make your clothes?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, some she did. Not all by any means. But I still remember one pale blue linen dress, trimmed with a white piping that was a great favorite of mine. I can remember two dresses. The other was another great favorite. I wish that I put those away, because they were so really choice.

Well at any rate, I loved the university; I absolutely adored it. And made friends. The young woman who had been my big sister in my freshman year remained my friend as long as she was in college. She was, I think, a junior or so. I think it was only for two following years that she was at the university, but she was kind and, you know, they helped beginning students over some of the humps, some of the embarrassments that can occur when you don't know the ropes and so on. But it was really a pleasure. I enjoyed just practically every course I had, it seems to me now. Any that I didn't enjoy I've forgotten about. But I went to summer school, after I took my B.A., and I think it was in that summer school class that I took my first drawing class.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It was at the time when the art department was housed in one of two portables behind Denny Hall, and the other portable was the bookstore. And it was summer and the windows were open all the time; it was marvelous. We did most of our drawing in the studio, drawing from casts, and the usual routine work. And the professor I had was Ambrose Patterson, who became my husband. And I only saw him as a professor for that term and I think the subsequent term when I took a painting course. When I came back in the fall to take some advanced work in librarianship, I took a painting course. And I also had a design course with Miss [Annette--Ed.] Edens. I had a pottery course with, oh, the pottery teacher so well known. Her name's in the Isaacs book [Spencer Moseley and Gervais Reed, Walter F. Isaacs, An Artist in America, 1886-1964, University of Washington Press, 1982--Ed.]. I've already forgotten again. [Eugenie Worman--Ed.] They were all excellent people. Miss Edens became a close personal friend. She already was a personal friend of my husband's. They'd been teaching side by side for a couple of years by then, maybe three years by then-- I'm not sure. And he had visited the Edens family in Bellingham frequently. It was a wonderful family, all very gifted people. Miss Edens left after a few more years at the university to go to the University of Cincinnati, where she remained the rest of her life. She was a truly remarkable teacher in design, and had a great appreciation for art.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Where had she been trained? Had any of these people come from Columbia Teacher's College or any place ____?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I think so. Now, I can't be certain. Her sister, Olive Edens, taught at what is now Western Washington University.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: In Bellingham?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Bellingham Normal School at that time, and one of the buildings on the campus is named after Miss Edens; it's called Edens Hall. The family was one of the old Bellingham families and they had a beautiful farm right on the waterfront. Well, not a farm, but orchards and berry patches, and that sort of thing.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: When you took your first drawing course and the painting course from Ambrose Patterson that you just mentioned, was that quite a different kind of work and study than what you had done in high school?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, yes. Altogether different.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was it much more disciplined, or...?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I hadn't drawn in this manner of trying to develop the form and dark and light, as it was presented in a drawing class. Casts were used because they were there in situ and didn't move about and escape you. And for criticism purposes, you could refer back to the casts. It's a little deadly, but it has its uses.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: But it was very different from what you'd had at Lincoln?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, yes, very. And then the first painting class, I think, was an outdoor sketch class, so that was just sheer pleasure, of course.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was it oil or watercolor? Do you remember?

VIOLA PATTERSON: It was oil. I'm certain of that. I didn't take watercolor for some time. In fact I can't remember ever having had a... I think I must have had a class in watercolor sometime, but can't actually remember who it was with or when.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Can you remember much of how Ambrose Patterson approached painting with his students, then?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Let's see if I can remember. The first class may have been a still life class. A usual still life would be set up with a drapery and objects of some sort. I can remember one which, just five or six eggs were laid out with a white cloth. Now that was for the drawing class, however; that wasn't for the painting class.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Careful study in values.

VIOLA PATTERSON: That's a pretty well known exercise, I know. And the usual still life. I can't even think what the usual still life was all about now. (chuckles) Sometimes an apple or an orange or two, and a jar or a pot of some sort, a grouping that gave some height, some low forms, some different relationships. Then you chose your position to work from, set up your easel, and did a drawing, not too minutely, usually fairly meager drawing, just an indication of the forms. You didn't pin it down to very exact dimensions and so on. And then you began, usually, stating some of the major dark-lights and the color range you were going to use, and working fairly well all over the canvas, rather than developing a part form to form. In fact, I think that was one of the things my husband would emphasize was to get the whole canvas going-- move from this to that and at least try to judge relationships as you wanted to indicate them. What was this against that? Which was the light or which was the dark? Or which was more intense, which was less intense? And so on. No one stood over us. We were free to work. And a professor, whether it was my husband or-- I did have a class, one class only, with Ray Hill some time later. I never did have a class with Mr. Isaacs, oddly enough.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Never once. They would circulate, but they never hovered. You never felt they were looking over your shoulder. You were perfectly free. And then when you wanted to ask a question, all you had to do was to indicate that you had something you wanted to find and ask it. Finally, after a certain length of time, maybe couple of days, maybe three, sometimes shorter, sometimes longer, we'd line up our paintings against the wall, or in a place where the light was good. We'd all group and the professor would move from one to the other and he'd comment on what the student had done. And the students themselves would interject comments from time to time. It was nothing at all stiff or formal about it, very informal. Classes were not large. I would say a class of twenty would be a fairly good size, and maybe smaller. Sometimes larger I suppose. And the studios were fairly good size. I'm thinking-- I've moved away from these temporary quarters to the time when the art department was situated in Education Hall on the top floor.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes. I've often heard of that.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And they were fairly well lit, not marvelously, but fairly well lit. And there was a lecture room. From time to time we'd be taken into the lecture room and slides shown and discussion of works of painters of the past. And we came to know which painters our particular professor was especially interested in, or who he was speaking about at the time, because it might have some relation to what we were doing at the time.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Sure.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It was all very informal.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Can you remember why most of your fellow students were taking an art course? Did any of them intend to become artists?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, yes! I think so. I remember Jean Johansen, for one. I don't know if she's still doing pottery but for a long time she was doing pottery. But the students in almost any of the other areas took the full drawing and painting courses.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: The students in what areas?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, pottery, sculpture, the crafts, such as metalwork and jewelry, and so on, the design students. All had some courses in drawing and painting.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So even when you began your art studies, the students were specializing in particular areas?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, not always-- often they decided on their special interests as time went on. I didn't expect to ever be a painter. I really thought librarianship was still my field.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I thought perhaps many of the students were in your position, taking the course as a supplement.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. I really think so. They were interested, they wanted to know more about it. They wanted to have enough experience to then find their own particular area of special interests. Ruth Penington went through the whole courses. She was a good painting student and one of the very talented drawing students. She

drew magnificently.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was she in school when you were?

VIOLA PATTERSON: She was later. Either she was first in school by the time I was probably a senior, or even later, because I saw a lot of the art department after I was married and no longer in school.

But all those early classes were wonderfully helpful. I think it was all very good. There was nothing that fixed you in any one direction. Even in a field of painting, some of the students went toward doing rather exact representational type of work; others were much freer in their approach.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And about this [time--Ed.] I had become very interested in my husband's paintings. I'd seen his things in exhibitions, and I loved that light-hearted color range that he used at that time, and also pretty much later, and the spontaneity of his work, which remains a facet of his painting always. So I became an ardent museum spectator and gallery goer, and ultimately my husband, apparently thinking that I seemed to show a particular interest, would invite me to go with him to an opening or something of that sort, so this was how our relationship started.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: You're speaking of the years before you were married.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Most of the instructors would in one way or another invite their students to their studio, probably once a quarter or certainly once a year, and this was just general for-- not all. Now Ray Hill didn't have a big enough studio to; his studio was in this little apartment usually, and so he didn't have the facilities for it. But Mr. Isaacs did this for years, and many of the others did it in their own way. At least my husband did this; he'd been accustomed to this with his own professors in Paris. They had done this, or at least some of them had done it, not I think for the whole class, but with selected few that they thought showed promise. So I had visited the studio at 917 Seneca Street, and that just fascinated me. Here was an interior that I hadn't realized existed, you know; one that was part a living quarters and part a working studio. And it was awfully interesting. It was a dear little place to begin with.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was it a house?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. I have a little snapshot, only one unfortunately, of the exterior of the studio. It was on the corner of Seneca and Terry, just a few blocks up from the Olympic Hotel, right in the center of things. It was not very prepossessing looking. It was just a little frame structure, with a large window on Seneca Street. And then the studio proper was the adjoining room, which faced Terry, and that had both a skylight and a large north window. So it had good lighting. And then, down a few stairs, it was a little kitchen; this had been used as both living quarters and studio by a whole series of both photographers and painters. Imogen Cunningham's husband, Roi Partridge, had had his studio there. And Imogen had her studio in another little structure on the same property, back in the woods. This was just next to the old Virginia Mason Hospital-- the first wing had been built at that time-- on a quarter-acre parcel of land, which was (except for the part occupied by the Virginia Mason Hospital) really almost a forest still of great old maples. Mostly maples, enormous old trees. And near our studio there were some fruit trees: pears and cherries and apples. And there was a garden out behind. My husband always made a garden wherever he lived.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Hard to imagine nowadays, from my knowledge of those streets.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh it was fascinating, just a darling place-- very primitive.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Had these buildings been built as studios?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, I think it had. I don't know its history entirely. The property was owned by the Gilber family, and it had been rented out over quite a number of years to, as I say, a series of painters. The Japanese painter, [Ya Sushi--Ed.] Tanaka, had lived there earlier before going to Paris to live. And Roi Partridge had been there, as I said. They're the only names that come to mind now.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: It's a slight digression, but could you tell me anything more about the Japanese painter, Tanaka?

[Tape 1; side 2]

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I was just asking you about the Japanese painter Tanaka.

VIOLA PATTERSON: He was an excellent painter, in the old school, the old master, these types of painting.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Western, you mean? European?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Not Japanese style at all, and rather heavy and dark in range of values and so on.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Had he grown up here in Seattle? And been trained [also, elsewhere]?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, that I don't know. I think he'd been here a number of years, because, if I remember correctly, he spoke English excellently. He married the wife of a university faculty member. She divorced her husband in order to marry Tanaka, if I'm not mistaken. And there was a great deal of criticism. Seattle was very straight-laced in those days.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: That was a very unusual thing, in a day like that.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, it was. It was a local scandal. Oh, I don't think scandal was the word, but it was talked about a great deal, unfairly. She was a brilliant woman. I believe she was a professor in her own right! Was it political science? I think I'm wrong about her being a faculty wife. But at any rate, she was divorced from whoever she'd been married to, and did marry Mr. Tanaka, and subsequently they left the United States and [went] to Paris to live.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And when we were in Europe and 1929 and '30, we called on Tanaka. He had a studio in the artists' quarter, where, Whistler's studio was, near the Dome.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: In Monparnasse?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, Montparnasse. And he had changed his type of painting entirely. He was doing paintings of nude models, very pink and white and, oh, not voluptuous-- that isn't the word-- but very pleasing, I would say, and probably because they were selling. And I think his wife was teaching in Paris at the time. As I say, she was a brilliant woman.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So they established themselves there quite successfully.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, very well. And the one thing I remember especially about it is that Tanaka was very devoted to cats; I think he had a perfectly beautiful, big, enormous, black cat and a big white cat as well. I can't be certain about these, but there were two cats, I know. These more or less ruled the household. But he was established in Paris and I think had a perfectly pleasant life there.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: No social ostracism whatsoever in Paris, of course.

Well, he was one of the artists who had formerly used the studio.

But I came up to Seattle after, when we married. The agreement was that I would finish out my year in my library job in Salem, Oregon. I had a solemn promise that (chuckles) I could finish out the year, because I felt strongly that, just having been given the position-- which I enjoyed, and I enjoyed the little town of Salem-- that I was obligated to complete the year.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: You mean you had a promise from Ambrose that he would encourage that?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. It finally became obvious... My husband was coming down from Seattle every weekend on a long trip by train, and coming back, in order to see each other for something like a few hours, you know, was not a feasible sort of situation. So I talked to my superior, and they agreed that they could find a replacement for me-- in fact, they did perfectly, I think, without much difficulty. I don't think I was all that hot. (chuckles) And so I came up, and it happened to be a bitter winter-- 1922. Came up just about Christmastime. And the first painting I remember my husband doing after I had arrived was the morning of the big snow, which was, I think, in February-- I'm not quite certain about that-- but we woke up one morning to see the place white, completely white. It had just really begun to snow, but it was already white.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: All the woods and things...

VIOLA PATTERSON: They _____ the place, and my husband immediately we'd had breakfast got his painting materials together, his little folding easel, a little camp stool, and all of this equipment and wrapped up in a big overcoat and a muffler and went and perched on the hill above-- what is the old Episcopal Church down there?

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I don't know the name of the old one.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, dear. Well, the beautiful old stone Episcopal Church-- I think it was Trinity. And he was gone most of the day! He sat there and painted, and it continued to snow, and a fairly good-sized canvas, which I had no intention of selling at any time. It was just a wonderful impressionistic painting of this scene: very delicate, almost cloudlike in its range of pale, pale colors. But it was in the show at Foster-White's [gallery--Ed.] and I hadn't put a reserve on it, and Seattle First National [bank--Ed.] bought it. So it's gone into their collection, which is probably just as well.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Out of the Foster-White show five years ago?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, yes. I had held onto it all that time.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I remember the painting.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Many people had wanted to buy it, and I had somehow not. But at any rate, my husband would respond to such a situation almost instantly. [If] it was a beautiful day, and something was in bloom in the garden, out he'd be painting it almost immediately. He had that ability to just snatch any opportunity. He painted practically, oh, I can't say every day, because when you're teaching, it's a fairly heavy schedule often.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes, yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: But he'd often come back from teaching two and maybe three classes, but usually two, and after tea in the afternoon go down to the studio, which at that time was-- now, I've jumped a big portion of time-- down in the basement of this house, and work until it was dark or until he was weary. And it would be one thing one and another thing another day. He was very eclectic in what he would do.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Would he maintain several canvases in progress?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, often he would do that. Put one aside, if it for any reason [had] grown cold and then pick it up again at times and at times, of course, abandon it.

But-- now I'm [back in] Seneca studio days-- it was so strategically placed that people were aware of it. And it looked like a studio, not as much like a studio as some do, but nevertheless it did. And the first summer that I was there, one of our first visitors-- not one of our first visitors, but one of his first visits to a studio-- was Tobey's. He first arrived in Seattle, I think, the summer of '23. Now, I may be mistaken; it could be the following year.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I don't remember the exact date either.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Miss Cornish had engaged him to come to teach painting, and I think he took, not a real studio, but what he used as a studio, just down a block and over a block from where we were.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: So it was more or less inevitable that he find this studio, and he did immediately. He came and rapped on the door, and from that day on, we saw Tobey two, three times a week, almost invariably. He'd stop in the late afternoon with whoever else was about. We'd go over the hill to the Oriental quarter, the Japanese and Chinese quarter, for dinner at, usually, the Japanese restaurant, [Mainichi], which was up on the hill at the time. And often to a wonderful little Italian restaurant of that period called the [Fiora] d'Italia.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: It was in the same area?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. It was just opposite the King Street Station, two or three doors up on Jackson, and down in the basement. Most wonderful, simple Italian food, just beautifully cooked.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And what people might come with you at various times?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, all sorts of people. Actually, a lot would be brought by others who knew us... One person my husband came to know fairly early in his university days was Glenn Hughes, who was in the English Department at first...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, before he was head of the drama.

VIOLA PATTERSON: ...and then later in the drama department. He was originally a writer and a poet, and only became interested in drama sometime later.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, I didn't realize that.

VIOLA PATTERSON: But he was an extremely active person, interested in other people in the literary field...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I have gathered that!

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. We were close enough friends so that we saw each other frequently, and whenever anyone interesting came to town, he'd almost invariably bring them to the studio. So we had perfectly fascinating visitors, most of whom I can't recall, but I can recall Vachel Lindsey. He would come each time he came to Seattle to lecture and perform, and he was sheer joy. Oh, he was a darling person. It was he who taught us the game of signature drawings and two or three other drawing games as well. But signature drawings became quite a wonderful pastime. (chuckles) And I think it was only probably three times in all that he did come to lecture, but each time he did come. Another person was AE, the Irish poet. What was AE's real name? [George William Russell--Ed.] Sometimes I can remember, sometimes I can't. I can't remember it now. And he was the darlinest person imaginable, a little, quiet Irishman. He just talked one stream in this little Irish lilt of his, and he was a firm believer in the "little people," the fairies. And he entranced us to the point where I still think there probably are little people. (laugh)

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really! He was that convincing!

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, he was just. He was such a dear person. (chuckles)

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did Glenn Hughes have close friends and associates whom he brought round who were writers living in Seattle? As well as visitors?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, yes, also those living in Seattle, I'm certain.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: But he didn't bring them to your studio?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, yes, I think so. Of course my husband knew so many people on the faculty and many people throughout Seattle by that time.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: When Theodore Roethke was here, did you people know him?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I can't remember what writers there... There were a number that we knew. My interest was apparently not so much in the writing field because I can't remember them as nearly... After Glenn Hughes spent his year as a Guggenheim, in Europe, whenever any one of the people he'd known in Europe-- and he visited all the-- what was the name of that poetry direction now? This is where my memory comes and goes. I know it so well. Imagism. Glenn Hughes wrote a book on it, the imagist poetry. And he just met everyone! I remember Bebe Hughes'-- Glenn Hughes' wife-- story about [G. K.--Ed.] Chesterton. I don't think that Glenn Hughes met Chesterton, but Bab did in her way. She was in a railway station in London. For some reason she was alone; she was not with her husband. And she saw this portly gentleman and recognized Chesterton. So she marched up to him. She said, "Pardon me, but are you Mr. Chesterton?" or "are you G. K. Chesterton?" And apparently he drew himself up and he said-- and of course now I can't be sure what his exact reply was-- either "That is my name," or "That is the name I am known by." Or something of the sort. And dismissed her there and then. (chuckles) But she approached the great man without any trepidation whatsoever.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Interesting.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Glenn was not as brash as that, but he did have access to all these interesting people, for instance Ezra Pound. He was able to interview Ezra Pound in Ravello, and they came to know Richard Arlington intimately. And through Glenn Hughes... They were there, in Europe, in 1928-29. We were there in 1929-30-- and he gave us letters or directed us to some of the people he'd known.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And although we didn't meet Arlington, who was living down the south of France at the time we were in Paris, we did meet Arabella York, who had been for a long period his mistress in London, who was for a long time referred to as Mrs. Arlington. And by this time, separated. But she knew D. H. Lawrence intimately, and all imagist people and the writers. It was she who took us to a silent writing party at Ford Maddox Ford or, you know, [Puffer's, Huffer's] studio in Paris. And through him we met a lot of other people in that year. So Glenn Hughes was sort of a catalyst, not only for us but for a lot of people he was interested in. Those were the days when he was really a very remarkable person. I think he became so much a dramatist later-- almost just wholly theater person-- that our orbits, or at least interests, became almost totally separated.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see, yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: At that time, they were very alive. Another person I can remember coming to the studio-- because he was such a vivid person-- was [____--Ed.] [Emondson, Amundsen], and he came at least once. And

who brought him? I don't believe it was Glenn Hughes who brought him, but it could have been. I don't know who it would have been. He either came once or twice and absolutely entranced everyone! Of course usually we would call up other people and say, "So and so is going to come and spend an evening with us, so come along." We had lots of friends on the faculty by this time, friends who later became, some of them became our neighbors-- or we became a neighbor of theirs on Belmont Place, because the Stevenson-Smiths, were among. The [Edmond--Ed.] Guthries [Dean and Professor of Psychology--Ed.] lived right across the street; they were largely responsible for our coming here in the first place, because...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: What were their interests? I don't know them.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Dr. Guthrie was in psychology. And so was Stevenson-Smith, so was Bill Wilson, up the street. (chuckles) In fact, this little hill was once called Psychology Knoll or other sort of terminologies for it. But we actually knew the members of faculty in many of the departments. My husband was gregarious; he enjoyed people, and people were often interested in painters. Painters were slightly odd creatures, you know. For instance, Dr. Guthrie really never quite understood what a painter was all about; (chuckles) his specialty was so completely in his own field.

But many of these people we knew in the studio days, from my husband's contact with them on the faculty, and they remained our friends through all the remaining time.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Do you remember that you had more friends among the faculty, or more friends among artists?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, among the artists.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, undoubtedly. Because the faculty friends were not that numerous, but we knew practically all the artists at that time.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Who among them were your closest friends and acquaintances?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, let me see. Of course, Tobey was one of the early ones that I can remember, because, I think, I'm almost certain it was the first [time--Ed.] I was at the studio that Tobey arrived. Kenneth Callahan came on a little later. Guy Anderson was painting in Seattle at that time, and we saw Guy fairly often. We were always interested in what he was doing. Kenneth we saw very often, and after he married Margaret Callahan, they were a center. In fact, they were the center.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And were they in the same part of town as your Seneca Street studio?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, no. They lived more on Capitol Hill. They had two locations on Capitol Hill that I can remember especially. Margaret was marvelous-- and Kenneth was too. They both attracted other people and made a meeting place for painters. Both Morris Graves and Tobey were part of the circle as were-- oh, Earl Fields is a name of those days that you now know of.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I do know his name, yeah.

VIOLA PATTERSON: He was a dear person.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was he in their circle?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yeah.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did he come and see you?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh yes. He was a shy young man, and I thought he was a wonderful painter-- I still do. I think the things he did had a quality that was really wonderful.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did he move away from Seattle?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Not that I know of. I don't know what's become of Earl. He sort of faded into the background. I think he was shy. He had a job at the art museum. Had to do with the slide collection; it was a sort of curatorial job, I think. And he seemed not to want to draw attention to himself or to his paintings. So, really, he was lost. Kenneth, I think, kept in touch with him longer than almost anyone else because they were both at the museum at the same time. And he stayed at the museum for many years, but always in this fairly background position.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: What was Guy Anderson like when you first knew knew him?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, always terribly interesting: serious, and already very, very knowledgeable about Eastern religion. And not in any way frightening; it was just perfectly fascinating talking with him. But always in a realm that I was never able to have any real understanding of. But it was a very real thing with Guy.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So very early he was reading about those things?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did he like to talk?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Once he became involved in a conversation, yes, he was. Very quietly, but also very forthcoming, but on a level that was anything but mundane. (laughs) It wasn't that it was esoteric-- if I understand what the meaning of that word, and I'm not sure I do. It was very real to him. And he was a student, a real student. Of course, he had such sensitivity. For me, I was able to appreciate his sensitivity in the realm of the gardens he created.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh really! I didn't know he was a gardener.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Because, they weren't gardens such as a city garden, in any sense of the word. They were often just a little garden laid out on a bit of pavement, or a small little terrace or something. But he'd gather bits of driftwood or stones and a plant here and something else there. It wasn't bonsai, and yet it had all the wonderful quality of Eastern composition of these natural forms.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see. And were these temporary arrangements, that came and went.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Sometimes it would last through a summer. Sometimes less long than that. For a while he built beautiful little containers for plants. For a long time I had one of those, built out of, I think, driftwood he picked up on the beach.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: He did these things when he was in Seattle, before he moved?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, even when he lived in Seattle, but more after he went up to LaConner. Of course there he had access to so much. But even in Seattle he had... And of course Morris was like this also. They were both collectors of objects that most people overlooked. We all became collectors in that way, but never with the sensitivity that both Guy and Morris exhibited.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did they collect only things that are what you might say from nature, like driftwood and shells, or did they collect the debris of the city and...

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, only the things from nature-- that I'm conscious of. I really don't remember their going into the scrap iron.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Right. That was later.

VIOLA PATTERSON: (chuckles) I just recently saw an exhibit of horses built out of all these various materials at the art museum. (chuckles) They didn't do that, no. They both had a marvelous idea for a single flower, a single leaf, or a small plant, or whatever it might be, or a stone. Of course, Morris, always, in his studio... The first studio I remember was not one which he had any place to exhibit this; it was that old studio down in the red light district. But subsequently, he'd always have a huge table-- the table that's now Betty Willis's was his for many years, but...

[Tape 2; side 1]

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, who were some of the other people we would see at that time? Well, you have a note about the Japanese artists. That of course was in these really early days at the studio.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did Morris and Guy Anderson know the Japanese painters well and get many of their ideas, that you were just talking about, about arrangements and gardens from them?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, the Japanese artists I don't think probably even knew Guy or... I think Guy and Morris are at a little later date.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I believe. But in those early days, there were three whose names I can remember: [Takuichi-Ed.] Fujii, [Kenjiro--Ed.] Nomura, and... Who was the third one? I can't think of it now.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: [Kamekichi--Ed.] Tokita, did you say?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, Tokita. Some of them showed with the Group of Twelve [see Group of Twelve (Seattle: Dogwood Press, 1937--Ed.).

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I remember that.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And their names are in those. They were dear people. All of them with jobs that sustained them or their families, and strictly Sunday painters.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see. Where had they been trained? Were they self-taught, or did they study with Ernest Norling?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I suspect that they were self-taught. They painted in the Western manner, fairly dark palette, most of them, fairly somber palette. No brilliant colors.

[Tape 2; side 1 continued]

[This tape was recorded over. After about ten minutes, MARTHA KINGSBURY realized it, stopped the tape, and continued the interview on side 4. The intervening portion is placed after the completion of this side, since chronologically it belongs there.--Ed.]

[The following was inserted later by MARTHA KINGSBURY:]

MARTHA KINGSBURY: About Margaret and Peter Camfferman-- did you know them and their work?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh yes. But they lived up at Whidbey Island so we didn't see them so much. Well Peter's painting was [end insertion--Ed.] strong and bold. Margaret's was very feminine in its delightful color. And yet she was as modern as almost anyone you could mention today. I often think some of Mr. Isaac's early work was very, very like what Margaret was doing in those days. They used color in loosely placed areas in a not dissimilar manner. She was truly a most delightful painter. And I think he was a very excellent teacher.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Where did he teach? Did he teach at Cornish?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Up at Langley. They both taught. I think it was Peter who was considered sort of the teacher, but Margaret also taught. They had classes up there, especially in summer. People would go up from Seattle for a week or so at a time and be able to live in the vicinity. I think there were places where they could rent rooms.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So it had become a summer workshop?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, it was.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So he did not teach at Cornish or the university but up at Whidbey?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Um hmm. It was a delightful group-- because it remained faithful-- and quite a large group that went to these summer classes year after year!

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh!

VIOLA PATTERSON: They really had a most delightful life, for as long as... I think it was Peter who died the earliest. I'm not sure about that however.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: They lived in this area until they died?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I think they lived up at Langley, until... Oh, their studio was just a dream!

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Were they older than yourself? Were they more Ambrose's age?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, they were younger.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Younger than he? In fact I'm almost certain they were. Well, I am awfully bad about ages; I can't gauge age very well. But my impression was that they were both younger. And we loved going up there. It was always marvelous.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did they ever invite other painters or artists to come and teach with them, to expand the summer workshop?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I don't think so. I don't think the group was that large that it would-- and of course the university would have its own summer classes and maybe visiting professors who'd come for that. Whenever

anyone interesting came to Seattle, the Camffermans would have them visit them in Langley if it was possible at all. Their lives were painting. They were both painters to the core.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Do you know where they sold their works?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Mostly locally, I think. Here, in Tacoma, and maybe Portland, and mostly within the state. But they were both in circulating shows sent out by the art museum, maybe by the Henry Gallery as well. They were very much a part of the whole art scene of that time. Really there were no exclusions, it seems to me. The artists-- anyone who painted or sculpted or was a fine printmaker or so on-- showed in almost the same places and under the same circumstances. This is one little regret-- in fact I do regret it-- in the present situation: There are no longer any juried shows here, that I'm aware of. Such as the old Northwest Annual of the Seattle Art Museum. There will be criticisms of those shows. But there was an opportunity [for] artists, or younger people coming on the scene, to show their work. This is how Morris first got his big first push was showing at the art museum in a Northwest Annual and getting the Katherine Baker prize, which was monetarily very small, but had a certain importance because it was considered the top award. And it played a big part in establishing a number of young painters, encouraging them and so on. Not that Morris wouldn't have gone places no matter how it went.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: But one has to start somewhere; there has to be a place.

VIOLA PATTERSON: He was destined. (laughs) But nevertheless it accelerated or at least facilitated it. I happened to be on that jury and it was a divided jury.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: You were on that very jury?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Two or three people were on that jury. There were juries of five or six in those days, Dr. Fuller [Richard, director of Seattle Art Museum--Ed.] always being ex officio. There was a man from California, well-known, a museum man I think from Oakland but I'm not sure, whose name now I've totally forgotten, who was the visiting juror. And then there were two or three other jurors, not necessarily Seattle, but from the vicinity. And I think we were split almost in half, but we two, the California man and I, were the loudest talkers (chuckles) and the more insistent, and we won out. And that was the [Moor Swan]. It was so obviously the most fascinating, exciting painting in the show that there wasn't any question that it had to be the first award, but some of these slightly more conservative people were a little afraid it was too modern or something.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really?

VIOLA PATTERSON: There wasn't any knock-down fight about it, but nevertheless it...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: It was a divided opinion.

VIOLA PATTERSON: ...a certain amount of discussion about it. But I do regret those shows, and at one time I think the Henry Gallery had something in the way of a juried show.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I don't remember that.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Or at least they'd have invitational shows to a greater extent than is at present true.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Much more than now. And they had their annual shows for the crafts people, which they no longer have.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. I think the art scene was infinitely more alive, partly as a result of that. I don't know if it's entirely so, but I think we got an awful lot of pretty dead things coming from elsewhere nowadays, things that are experimental, but...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Things brought in from outside?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Worth seeing, certainly, but not necessarily in a month-long show at one of the two or three biggest museums and galleries. But that dates one, when one comes to that conclusion I think. I'm definitely dated now. (chuckles)

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Well, in the days that we've been talking about, when you lived in the Seneca Street studio and so forth, did you feel any yearning to see more things from Paris?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Did we feel any what?

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did Ambrose, for example, wish he could see more things from Paris, where he had been for ten years? Did he feel it difficult?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, yes. I think he always wished that. No matter where or when, you wish you had access to some of the big museums with some of your great favorites that you could go back to again and again. My husband was a great admirer of Velasquez, for instance, and there were no Velasquez here. And, in his Impressionist days-- I mean, he turned toward Impressionism very early in his Paris days. He would [have] loved to have been able to see a Monet or two before there were any here available. A Renoir and so on. And so, I think everyone felt the need of exhibitions of established art, as well as some of what we called more controversial art at that time. The art museum brought wonderful exhibits in those days. It seems to me the caliber was exceptionally high. Well, it was an alive scene. Artists were very aware of themselves, as a part of the community. And I think the community was fairly aware of the artists. Almost in a totally different way than now. We were made aware of opportunity for budding artists as a very important thing-- which it is. I think I best leave any comparisons of that sort alone because I don't really know enough about it.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did young artists then feel that the support of the community? That it was a good thing to be an artist?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, it was a struggle always. But I think they found their place with other artists very easily in those days.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: More easily than now. Because it was a more closely knit scene. It was smaller and you just gravitated toward the other people of similar interests.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did the artists feel that they were a group apart from the rest of Seattle? That they had little use to most people?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, to a certain extent, I think so. But I don't think there was any feeling of barrier at all.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: There was an awful lot of general interest in the big jury shows.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: There was.

VIOLA PATTERSON: The crowds that would come to those shows were just terrific! And they would continue-- it seems to me-- throughout the duration of the shows.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh. And they didn't come to laugh or to be scandalized...?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, yes, exactly! And sometimes would disagree loudly, but I think that's very healthy. In fact anything that is too blandly accepted is usually not worth very much inspection.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yeah.

VIOLA PATTERSON: So, no, that was good. And the few controversies that would boil over into the paper were probably all to the good as well. I'm certain that's part of the way of promoting (chuckles), in fact. A good fight is worth a great deal. Oh, we didn't have very much of that, but there would be considerable disagreements nevertheless. Now somewhere along the line, in the thirties I suspect it was, the... What was the name of the society?

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was it the Northwest Printmakers?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I guess it was. Yes. My husband, of course, was interested in that from the beginning, because he'd long been interested in printmaking. He'd done his first color wood blocks in Paris in about 1906, or something like that.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: A friend, a Polish printmaker, or painter and printmaker, had taught him the technique of the color woodblock. And I still have, I think it's five of those early ones. One I missed reserving [from sale--Ed.] and the very last one went. But they are really, I think, perfectly beautiful.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: These are the woodblock prints of the Hawaiian subjects, that were in the Foster-White show?

VIOLA PATTERSON: The Hawaiian, the black and white ones you mean? The ones that appeared in a chapbook [series published by University of Washington, edited by Glenn Hughes--Ed.]?

MARTHA KINGSBURY: No, no. I'm remembering the color woodblocks. Of the volcano? Those are later?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. That's a late one that he did after his coming to the islands in 1915, I guess it was.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did he do color woodblocks before those?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, in about 1906.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And you have some of those too?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, I have those still. They're just remarkable.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Were they in the Foster-White show?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, they were.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I don't remember them.

VIOLA PATTERSON: They were in that front room. I'll show them to you. Probably the next time you come we could look at those.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Okay.

VIOLA PATTERSON: They're very [available]. They're varied in subject matter. One of them is of a baby, which is my husband's first child, with his first marriage, when he and his wife were living in Brittany. And it's the baby being bathed, and it's just a perfectly beautiful print. Just remarkable.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I don't remember that! I wonder if I missed that?

VIOLA PATTERSON: And one of them is a steeplechase, which is (chuckles) awfully entertaining and just darling. Another is a bullfight. He did this after his trip to Spain. And another is a scene in the [Cafe Coincerre; Capricorn's hair], which is, in a way, the most staggering one of them all. And then there were no color woodblocks until-- I think he probably did some in the interim, but if so they're lost-- until the Hawaiian one, which is a perfectly beautiful one. And then there are two or three, one of Mount Rainier, which I no longer even have one example.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: It was a beautiful one too.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I keep hoping one will come on the market. There's possibly one source that I could bring a little pressure on, probably buy one back-- I'm hoping so. But at any rate...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So he learned this from a Polish teacher in Paris?

VIOLA PATTERSON: From a Polish printmaker and painter. He had Russian painter friends, Polish, Dutch, Swedish, well, just name it and he, as I say, he was very gregarious and made friends easily. Though for a certain period he was almost entirely involved with either English painters or fellow Australian painters. I think probably we ought to concentrate on my husband's experiences more separately, because that's an entirely...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I think that's a good idea. You were starting to say something about the 1930s and the Northwest Printmakers.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. And of course he remained a very active part of the Seattle scene throughout his life. Just because he was, well, a born painter and interested in whatever was being done in the painting line locally and elsewhere, and active in showing as well as teaching. And he was in a happy position of fairly much enjoying teaching and being free from having to sell in order to earn enough to live on.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And it was the first time in his life this was so. He'd always lived almost, you know, from day to day. There was a short period in his Paris life when he was subsidized, but it was not of very ____ duration, and life was very difficult. Sometimes it was touch and go. And he couldn't count on his family to support him, although they did help whenever it was absolutely crucial. But that was difficult; no one likes to have to do that.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Sure.

VIOLA PATTERSON: But here he was in this happy position of, although the salaries at the university were so low that you can't really quite fathom it, when you realize it today. (chuckles) It was like a half week's salary for most ordinary workers. But at any rate it was quite adequate because living was on the same scale, you see. Rental of

our little studio was I think maybe \$30 a month. (chuckles)

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did you ever work here as a librarian, in Seattle?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I still had part-time jobs at the library.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I also began teaching a children's class fairly early. At times it was in conjunction with the Seattle Art Museum, but mostly it was with the extension service of the university.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, it was!

VIOLA PATTERSON: They had extension classes in the White-Henry-Stuart Building downtown. Quite a number of years, I taught fall, winter and spring children's classes.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Do you remember what year you began teaching?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, I should be able to think back to it. I didn't, I think, teach at all, until after our...

[As a change of tape was required and VIOLA PATTERSON was tired and reluctant to continue, taping was continued on another day--MARTHA KINGSBURY]

[Tape 2; side 2]

MARTHA KINGSBURY: We've just been talking about changing, a little bit, from the subject of Seattle and the Seattle art scene that we talked about last time, and talking about Viola Patterson's husband, Ambrose Patterson, for a while. Now one of the things that I've been curious about and don't find easily available in the archival information is what kind of family Ambrose came from and what his early introduction to art was in Australia.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Well, it has always seemed to me interesting to know someone in Seattle who originated in Australia and came to Seattle via various adventures in Europe and then returned to Australia before arriving in the state. My husband was born in 1877. His mother was Irish, his father English from the, a border town called [Annick, Innick], which is in Northumberland, on the border of England and Scotland. Both had emigrated to Australia in the early days. The family numbered twelve children.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Ambrose had eleven brothers and sisters?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Twelve or thirteen, twelve I think. (laughs) And my husband was the third from the last child. He had two younger brothers, one of whom died in infancy. So I had for many years the impression it was thirteen children, excuse me-- that he was the twelfth child; actually he was eleventh child. By the time his younger brothers were born his mother had decided she had enough of married life and his mother and father were divorced.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: After all those children? That's very rare.

VIOLA PATTERSON: After thirteen children. And my husband rarely saw his father.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was his father a businessman or a rancher, or do you know what he did to support all these kids?

VIOLA PATTERSON: He was in land auctioneering in Australia, ultimately. But he began as a small businessman in the mining town [of] Daylesford, where my husband was born, where most of the family were born. They lived in a house with, not a farm, but a fairly large acreage around it, which was called West End House, and which my husband had very strong feelings about. He had drawn of a house from time to time, recalling where certain rooms were. Also a plan of the property around it, where he had a game hen, little paddock. He was extremely interested in game fowl as a boy.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: You mean, raising them?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, raising them.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So he grew up in that house after the father left?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. After the divorce, the family lived other places both, around Daylesford. But he went to school in that town. The school to which he went was entirely of children of European parentage, but nearby was

an aboriginal village, the Cooingees. And their little town was named Cooingeebora. And the two schools each had what we call football team-- I guess they were rugby teams-- and would play in competition. And when the aboriginal team lost they'd stone the Australian boys out of town. (laughs) They didn't take defeat lightly.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: (laughs)

VIOLA PATTERSON: But he has many, many stories of the those early days, of the Chinese who worked in the mines and the treatment they received at that. And the Australian children, who were unintentionally very cruel, well, maybe not even unintentionally, but were very cruel. They'd roll stones down on the Chinese hovels where they lived and so on. It was a harsh life, in other words. So they grew up with this background.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: But he was largely raised by an older sister. The family was composed of two daughters and the rest were sons. His oldest sister, Louisa, whom they all called Sis, was really almost more of a mother to them than their mother was. She pretty much lost interest in having a family on her hands. But she was also interested enough in my husband as a young boy to see that he had painting materials and painting instructions. She had first engaged a music, a singing teacher. And the singing teacher was interested in drawing and painting herself, and she first took my husband on sketching trips. This was as quite a young boy.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was this unusual, or did his brothers do this too?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No. He was the only one. In fact, at the time of his father's death-- This portrait on the wall was painted in 1915, and my husband's father didn't die until 1917.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Ah hah. So his father was still alive when he back to Australia after his European training.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, yes! But his mother was not by then. But in the death notice it mentions toward the end the children of the family who had made careers. There were several who'd made what would be called national careers in Australia. And then the final note that one son, Ambrose MacCarthy Patterson, was a painter, painted pictures.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Painted pictures?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Sort of equivocal mention.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, his father never could understand how it happened that he had a son who was interested in painting. This was not in the usual pattern at all. There were a number of young men in his school, in the National Gallery in Melbourne, who were studying to become painters, and who did become painters. One of them, tremendously famous, although he died at very early age-- he was such a terrifically talented portraitist that, oh, well, his works are in tremendous demand in Australia, I suppose almost mainly; I don't think he's known elsewhere. But they are truly remarkable paintings. My husband posed for this particular painter, whose name was Hugh Ramsey, for three portraits, because he was rather a picturesque-looking person: tall, and lanky, and with a distinctive head-- what was called the Patterson nose and a strongly sculpted type of face. But at any rate, there was a large class of painting students, not only men, but women as well. So it wasn't an oddity in Australia, but it was an oddity in the Patterson family apparently.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: But his mother was supportive?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, she was. And his older sister also. And she married a very fine person named William Braithwaite, who became one of the most valued members of the family: he looked after all the younger members of the family.

Well, now let me just look at my notes a moment and see if there's anything here I should bring out. He remembered his early instructors. I think without exception he remembers them all.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: In Australia?

VIOLA PATTERSON: In Australia.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Does this mean he went away from home to study art in Melbourne?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, the family did move to Melbourne, and it was in Melbourne he was studying. But he did have quarters of his own ultimately as a student. Most of the students had their own little place to stay, or studio if they were flush enough to have a studio. And he had several jobs. He had a job for a time with what we would

call an interior designer, someone who sold fabrics and that sort of thing. He had a number of small positions, and he did sell a painting or two, as a very young person, even before studying in Melbourne. He had painted the display of a taxidermist.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really.

VIOLA PATTERSON: A window with the various objects inside. And the taxidermist bought it. (chuckles) So that was his first sale and his first real painting. I don't think there's any notes of his showing in Australia before leaving for Europe.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did he go to Europe then on his own savings, or did his family send him?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, no, this is the next thing I should mention. He and the other two brothers near his age, the three youngest living brothers, each inherited I think it was 156pounds, from an older brother who died. And on this he was able to go to Europe, passage to Europe on a slow-- well, they were all slow boats at that time-- and going steerage, plus enough to keep him for a year in Paris. He had estimated he could make that. And so he started out. His next oldest brother Charles, who was his closest friend and the brother to whom he was closest, was at this time in England, a lieutenant in the British Army. He'd been in the Australian forces during the early wars: the war in Africa, the Boer War. He'd been with the Australian forces there, and then he'd been stationed for quite some time, oh, not a long time probably, but long enough to establish himself in India. He was a marvelous person-- he had ingratiated himself with the boys in the particular encampment where his regiment were stationed, and that continued through all his subsequent years. He was in touch with these Indian boys; they were not English. After, he was invited to become a member of a British regiment. That came about because he was sent with a selected group of men from the state of Victoria in Australia, to London for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And he made friends there, as he made friends everywhere. And was invited to become a member of the Lancashire Fusiliers and subsequently lived in barracks with this regiment in Fermoy in Ireland, mostly, where in his times in Europe, my husband often [saw him--Ed.].

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see. So this was a considerable aid to Ambrose, establishing contacts in England.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, it was a tremendous aid, because when he got to London-- well, I started out on Charles to say that Charles had said, "Now, you can go steerage, which will cost very little, but give the head steward, five pounds or a guinea-- or whatever it was-- when you first embark, and you'll eat like the first class. You'll have first class treatment." Which is what he did and what happened. (laughs) Not only he, but there were a number of Italians whom he already knew. There was a big Italian colony in Melbourne at the time, and they had marvelous restaurants, and my husband knew a number of them. These families had made their little fortunes in Australia and were returning to Italy to buy a farm and settle down in their home territory. So all of them (chuckles) had a better life made as a result of this gesture.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: All of them paid the steward and ate well!

VIOLA PATTERSON: And they had apparently a marvelous time on the trip over. And landed in Liverpool and my husband went up to London where he was entertained by some family members but also by friends that Charlie had made, among them some fairly well-placed people.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Then he went to Paris, and his first day in Paris he enrolled at the Beaux Arts, paid for six months at the Beaux Arts. Got himself a room in a hotel in Montmartre, and then was told that there were both British and American painters, who gathered at the American Club in Paris, and told him where it was, and he made for the American Club and immediately fell in with a group of very interesting, mostly Americans, among whom was the painter, [Frederick Carl--Ed.] Frieseke, who is quite a well-known painter.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes, that's right.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And the group were rehearsing for a minstrel show they were putting on, in something like a week's time. And he was invited to join the group and rehearse with them in Frieseke's studio, which he did. And he became part of the minstrel show! (laughs)

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Always one more welcome.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And he learned to strut! (laughs) And did learn a dance step that he remembered the rest of his life, which was really just a knockout of a dance step.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really! So that was his first contact with the United States, indirectly?

VIOLA PATTERSON: That was that first evening in Paris. He had a few French words before leaving Australia, but very few, and so he began to learn French. And he had a technique that seemed to pay off very well. He'd stop the first person he saw on the street-- and this happened his very first day in Paris-- and he'd take off his hat and say, "Pardon, monsieur, ou est la rue de Rivoli?"

MARTHA KINGSBURY: (laughs) Same question, huh?

VIOLA PATTERSON: And the man would then begin to explain where the rue de Rivoli was, because he was on the Left Bank at this time, and the rue de Rivoli was on the Right Bank, and it entailed a fair amount of explanation. And he'd listen to everything, and then say, "Merci beaucoup, monsieur," and go on. When that man was out of sight, he would do the same thing over and over, and in a few days he was beginning to speak French. He became very, very fluent in French, always with, as he said, an Australian accent. And I'm sure he did have an accent, but it was pretty darn good French nevertheless. Because he came to know French people as readily as he came to know British and Americans.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did he have friends among French art students and among American and English art students?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Rather few friends in that first year, because he only had one year, and then his money ran out and he had to do something different. He knew the students, many of them... And he soon got fed up with the Beaux Arts.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Uh huh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It was very old hat... Well, he had some very good teachers there, and he made note of their various criticisms: one that seems to me still very useful today was "Continuez, continuez, c'est bien, continuez."

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see. (laughter)

VIOLA PATTERSON: Or, "Attention, attention, a la main gauche," or quelque chose comme sa.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Very little in the way of-- But he had teachers which I can...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Not just a whole lot of theory.

VIOLA PATTERSON: ...once I come on the right page [of her notes--Ed.]. Benjamin Constant was one. And some of them took a personal interest in him. Lucien Simon invited him to come freely for criticism without any charge, which was a little unusual.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Now that's of interest, to know which ones took an interest in him, and didn't just come around and do little ____.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, I think it is also. However, at the end of the year, he really was with almost no funds left. And his family wasn't going to be forthcoming with help all the time. They could help out in some instances but not at this time. So he had enough to buy passage on a ship to Canada where he had relatives and where he thought he could get a job. So he made for Montreal and his relatives took him in, and his very first day in Montreal he got a job as a cartoonist on Le Press. He worked on two Montreal newspapers. What the other one was I've forgotten now; I have it somewhere in my notes. And he was earning well, feeling on top of the world once more, and immediately things went well. They went fairly well always, before they went to pot; they usually went to pot in a big way also. But he loved Montreal. It was winter: bitter, bitter cold, of course, the river frozen over. He learned to skate on the river. He bought himself a fur-lined coat, which figures in various accounts. However, the job on Le Press didn't last too long. He got another with-- well, I've forgotten the name of it, but I could give it to you another time. But these were not easy times in Canada. He arrived in Paris in 1898; it must have been 1899 when he went to Canada. He was there just about a year, when-- he had a job on the railroad. I guess it was an uncle or an aunt whom he visited in Canada, his relatives on his mother's side. The uncle was connected with the railroad, and so he got a job on the railroad for a time, but finally that ended also. And he decided to go to America on [the little old], tiny bit of money he still had. He still had his fur-lined coat, and hoboed it all the way to New Haven, Connecticut, in the middle of winter in blizzard weather, and riding the outside of trains at times!

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really!

VIOLA PATTERSON: In freight cars. He thought this was a totally unique experience that no one else had ever encountered, and wrote an account of it, which he hoped to illustrate and which he hoped to have published. But he was advised when he arrived in New Haven, Connecticut-- he first of all stopped in a town short of his final destination, where he went to a home for wayfarers, because he had no money. And he was given a bath and food and clean clothing and a nice place to sleep. And the next morning he had to chop wood to somewhat compensate for his stay. He was given good food and sent on his way, still I think hoboing it, but I'm not sure about that last little part of the trip. And there, in New Haven, he met-- he had been in touch with a friend whom he'd known in Paris-- a well-known name. He was a dramatist. Charleton Andrews. And he stayed with Charleton Andrews for, I think, about a month, sort of recuperating from his experience. Because it was a bitterly difficult (chuckles) experience to have lived through. And then his brother Charles sent him a draft of a small amount of money to get him to New York. In New York, he got a job on the New York Herald right away, first day.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Wonderful.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, the newspapers apparently almost had a policy of helping out stranded people who'd ever done any newspaper work.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And since he'd been a cartoonist in Le Press, they took him on. Didn't last long, but while it did it tided him over. He had an operation in New York in a charity hospital on his nose. He had a distinctive nose. It was referred to in the family as the Patterson nose-- My nose is not too unlike it. High boned, and it had a little turn in it, and was very narrow. Well, the surgeon who operated-- it was in an amphitheater with medical students all about.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh yes, yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And he was brought in and put in a chair and the surgeon said, "Young man, how do you feel?" And my husband said, "Well, I feel fine," which you always say to a doctor whether you feel fine or not. And the surgeon turned to the audience and he said, "Now this young man thinks he's feeling fine, but he has an obstruction in the bone structure of his nose, which is preventing his breathing properly." And he proceeded to operate then and there, with I think local anaesthetic, probably a little ether, I'm not sure which. I'm not even sure about the anaesthetic. But at any rate, it was a successful operation. And subsequently there was a little repercussion of this because one of my husband's family-- one of his brothers-- had married the sister of Madame Melba. Madame Melba's maiden name was Helen Mitchell.

Tape 2; side 1 continued]

[This portion was taped over the top of tape 2, side 1, and belongs chronologically after tape 2, side 2--Ed.]

VIOLA PATTERSON: The young Patterson boys knew all the Mitchells very well. There were five daughters and two sons, or four daughters and two sons, something like that. And they used to visit the Mitchell ranches and so on.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see, in Australia.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And so he [Ambrose--Ed.] was familiar with the family. Well, Madame Melba was in New York, and he thought he could write and ask to see her and she might be of help to him. So he did write. Oh! Before this, he'd got in touch with one of Melba's sisters. Some members of the family always traveled with her. She traveled with an entourage of sisters, nieces, nephews, etcetera. And one of the sisters my husband was fond of-- or who was fond of him probably is a better way to put it-- met, and she said, "Write Madame Melba and maybe something will come of it." So he did. But he wrote on the typewriter. He thought he'd do the nicest thing possible and write her a typewriter letter. Well, he didn't get any reply. And subsequently...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: She expected a handwritten letter.

VIOLA PATTERSON: ...the sister, Dora Mitchell, got in touch with him and she said, "Melba was furious that you wrote her a typewritten letter. No gentleman ever writes a typewritten letter." So through her offices, it was patched up and he was invited to visit Melba. And so she decided to take him on as a protege, send him back to Paris with enough money to live well and study. And he still had friends on the Herald or the Tribune or whichever paper it was in New York. And he told them the story naively, not thinking that they'd ever do anything. He told one of his friends the story, and out it came in the paper! Madame Melba befriends an Australian or something of this sort. And he was terrified. He thought she would be furious! He was just quaking in his boots that the whole thing had fallen through. But not at all.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: She was pleased at the publicity. (laughter) She could always use a little publicity!

VIOLA PATTERSON: She was pleased as punch. Well, anyway, he then got passage to France immediately, and then his long stay of, you know, all together, ten or more years.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And did Madame Melba support him through many years?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Or did his paintings make enough?

VIOLA PATTERSON: It was a very generous support. She said, "Now go back to Paris and study and learn to live like a gentleman."

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see! (chuckles) Did she admire his work, or was a ____ friendship for a fellow Australian?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, she really didn't know very much about his work, I think, but from what he'd told her, he seemed to have promise.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: So she undertook him. (coughs) Subsequently, quite some time later, he did marry-- not against her wishes, because she didn't know about it beforehand, but when she found out about it she was furious.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: To think that he'd saddle himself with a wife, when he was still not really an established painter.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Then she withdrew her support?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Then she withdrew her support entirely, just cut it off like that. And just when, of course, he really needed. But...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: But had he married a fellow art student, or French woman, or...

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, he didn't. Let me go back to something that happened somewhat earlier. My husband had [met] this fellow painter, Hugh Ramsey, from Australia, [who] was studying in Paris at the time, and he was really in desperate straits. He had practically no money. He was living on practically nothing, and very nearly starving himself. He had such real talent; he was so...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: This was the portraitist you mentioned, who died young.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And he had by this time painted three different portraits of my husband, one a very large one, and the one that's in the National Gallery in Melbourne, and then a small one that my husband lost trace of entirely; he doesn't know where that is. But he introduced him to Madame Melba and Melba did recognize that Hugh Ramsey was unusually talented and took him on as a protege, even before stopping the support for my husband. But subsequently, someone had told Melba that my husband wasn't really serious, that he was having a gay time, gave her a rather poor picture, which was totally unwarranted. That he was living it up, in other words. So anyway, ultimately, after his marriage, the allowance was stopped entirely. And he and Daisy-- Marguerite-- his wife's name was Marguerite Davies-- she was English. And she had lived for a time in Russia, before coming to Paris. She had gone to Russia as a governess for a titled Russian family, which was a fairly usual thing for girls that were [of a] certain educational class to do. And she left Russia to come and make her way in Paris. She was a pianist-- and a fairly gifted pianist, I believe. Well, after their marriage, they went to live in Brittany, in a little town called [St. Jean du Droit?]. Previously to going there to live, my husband had taught two summers, with a fellow artist, an Englishman...

[Tape 3; side 1]

VIOLA PATTERSON: Marguerite decided to stay the full year through in Brittany, and a Brittany winter is rather a bleak affair, because it rains and rains and rains. St. Jean du Droit was a charming village, a fishing village, and they lived the life of the community. And their photographs of my husband and Marguerite in the little studio which they rented, in their photographs of the village, it is absolutely charming.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And did he teach there? Or paint?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, he painted, oh, constantly.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: But he didn't teach there?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Not during the winter. During the summer, he did teach, and I still have the little brochure they sent out showing the class with my husband wearing a cape (laughs), very professional looking.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, yeah. Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: In the distance. I must show you that some day. But at any rate, after the year was out, they went back to Paris. It was pretty bleak. My husband became just part of the village life. He knew the fishermen, would go out on their boats with them, and they really lived the life of the village. They had a number of French friends who came down from time to time, even I think during the bad weather, but were there always. It was a thriving little community during the summer season. [Maxime--Ed.] Maufra was a painter who was there, and he and my husband became very close friends. At this time of course, my husband was wholly interested in Impressionism. But I have to backtrack now, because earlier his closest friend of all time was an English painter, an English student at the time, in the early 1900s, with whom he shared a studio. I think I showed you that early photograph in which my husband and Allan Beaton are sitting in their studio with a friend. Well, Allan Beaton was convinced that my husband's talent rested in his painting in the school of the Dutch painters, the school which emphasized working in values and using color in a very [discrete, discreet] manner indeed.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh really.

VIOLA PATTERSON: In other words, Vermeer and [Terborch?] were Allan Beaton's idols, and throughout their lifelong friendship, or correspondence, he continues to urge my husband to return to this type of painting.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And Ambrose didn't see it that way at all, I gather?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, he couldn't. He simply was unable to. And, although I think he did some very, very fine paintings at that time, some of these things that were in the big Belgian show of that period, and he could have without having encountered Impressionism. But having once seen their use of light and color, he was simply lost to it. But at any rate, in returning to Paris from St. Jean du Droit-- I guess they returned only for a short time to Paris-- but they had friends who were friends of his brother Charlie's, some of them were fellow officers. On one of his trips to visit his brother in Fermoy, he had undertaken to paint a group painting of the mess-- a mess is the officer's dinner, and they're all in evening dress, not coat and tails, but whatever.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Dress uniform, probably.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. He made a real start, and there are photographs of the start, but this was the type of thing he could never really get involved in, anything in which there was some pressure behind it. Because whenever he'd meet anyone of his brother's fellow officers, they'd say, "How's the mess painting, how's the mess picture coming?"

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes? (chuckles)

VIOLA PATTERSON: And he'd have to say, "Well, it's coming." And finally he abandoned it and destroyed it. It's [so petty, a pity] he destroyed it, actually, because it's not all that-- well, it's unfinished, but it's not all that bad a painting, and it certainly is documental, I guess is the word I want.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Uh huh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, he did return to St. Jean du Droit, because it [was] from St. Jean du Droit that he took all of his paintings to Belgium, to Brussels, for a large show, which I think his brother Charles was largely responsible for arranging.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Charles was a very useful brother through the years; it's wonderful.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, he was a marvelous brother. He knew people wherever he went. He had hosts of friends everywhere. And he knew the British Consul in Brussels-- it only can be arranged by some such means. It was in Cercle Artistique et Litteraire, and he had 101 paintings, practically all of which sold! Many, many of them to a few big collectors. And it's that list that this _____ woman from London now has.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And many of those paintings were done in an Impressionist manner, or post-Impressionist manner?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, yes. The largest number were in the Impressionist manner. There were some in the earlier manner also. But there were paintings done in Madrid-- he had had a trip in 1905 to Madrid. He went down by train and had three months there, copying in the Prado, and he copied Velasquez. He was mad about Velasquez and remained a great [admirer] of Velasquez all his life. And actually, Charles Mackey-- I think I'm

right about the name-- a fellow painter, an American, had arrived in Madrid shortly after after my husband did, and was unable to get an appointment to copy. You have to arrange to have space to set up your easel to copy, because only a very few at a time are allowed in. And Charles Mackey hadn't arranged beforehand, so he couldn't get a place to copy, and he asked my husband if he could copy his copies, which he did. (laughs) Which was sort of an amusing thing. Whatever happened to that I want to know.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Desperate!

VIOLA PATTERSON: I don't know what happened to my husband's copy. I think it's probably in Australia, because it probably was an excellent copy. He had great facility, but it was one of the few things he ever did copy. So there were things from Spain, there were many things from St. Jean du Droit, and there were some from other places where he and this English painter, Hoyce, had taught together. They had taught in a little town on the Seine, called St. Germain [en Lait].

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Near [Les Antilles]. And another summer they taught at Les Sur la Tour. So they had a little bit established themselves. They had some faithful who always came-- the [Matineaus], also-- and this was one way my husband was able to eke out a living for himself and his wife and a child [that] was born in St. Jean du Droit, the oldest daughter, and whom you saw the print of. I showed you the prints last time, didn't I?

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Of the baby.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, in Brussels, his first show was a great success and it, of course, established them for quite a little time in Brussels. But they remained in Brussels a year, and finally all that money ran out. And this was at a time when my husband had the second of his two depressions. He'd had one in Paris-- I don't know if this is anything one should include; it was sort of interesting though. The one in Paris I think is interesting because it was the result of his 26th birthday. He and two fellow Australians were celebrating his birthday in Paris, and they were doing it by going from cafe to cafe and having absinthe at each place they stopped. And they had come to one and all three of them had gone completely silent for a time, nobody had anything more to say, and finally one of the three said, "My God, Mack,"-- my husband was always called Mack by his family and everyone until he came to America-- "My God, Mack, you're getting on." And my husband had the shock of his life; it had never occurred to him that he wasn't immortal, apparently.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Um hmm, yeah.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And this thought that he wasn't put him into a depression which lasted six months.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Just like that?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Just like that. It hit him like a bolt out of the blue. And because usually, he was very ebullient, very able to bounce back the minute things looked up a little bit, he was his own self again. But in Brussels, he had a wife and a child to support, which was very difficult for a practicing artist in those days. And his brother-in-law came from Australia-- who was on a trip anyway, I believe-- came to Brussels and rescued him, took him to Venice, realized he just had to get away from...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: This was his brother-in-law? His wife's brother?

VIOLA PATTERSON: William Braithwaite, his older sister's husband.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, okay. That brother-in-law.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Took him to Venice and in Venice he fell desperately ill. And his brother-in-law took him to the only hospital there, which was on the [Giudeca], this little island off from Venice. And had to return to Australia, so he left sufficient funds for his continuous stay there, as long as it was necessary. Well, after a week or two, my husband got it into his head that the doctors were keeping him on a [lowering] diet just to continue his stay there.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yeah?

VIOLA PATTERSON: And they had taken his clothes away; he was really more or less a prisoner. But he bribed one of the nurses to secure a boat and get him his clothes and he escaped one night, by boat to Venice. Got on the train, got halfway back to Brussels when he fell desperately ill once more. (chuckles) And was taken off the train-- I think this is part of the same story-- apparently he'd had very little to eat, and he'd bought a bag of raisins and had eaten these raisins, and I think that was what made him ill. And he was taken to a convent, where the Catholic sisters got him back on his feet. I think he only stayed overnight at the convent. But they looked after him and got him on the train once more to Brussels. Well, then the family did step in and got the

whole family passage back to Australia. Wonderful trip: six weeks on the boat; they loved it, they dearly loved it. But once arrived back in Australia, a second child was born, Yvonne, who's the only living child.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And she became a dancer, is that right?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. And he'd started work immediately in Australia and began to show wherever it was possible to show, and became part of any painting groups that were available and so on. But painters were not very high on the priority list in Australia, in any case... His first big exhibit was in Adelaide-- I believe I'm right about this-- and the day of the opening was the day the First World War was declared. And the result was all the talk was about the war. He sold a few things, but very few-- much less than he'd hoped for, naturally. Well, he did have some supporters in Australia but not nearly enough to make a go of it.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Probably seemed very thin after Brussels, then.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, yes. A second child [three altogether; see later discussion--Ed.] was born before they left Australia, but I think it was in 1915 that they set sail for America. (It wasn't that his family were indifferent at all. Some of the members were well able to help out and did help out. They all did. He had a very supportive family really. They continued to be through all the years.) They had passage to Los Angeles, but they got as far Honolulu, and always the ship has a day stopover in Honolulu to refurbish and so on. And one of the people that met the boat was an old friend from Paris days, [Kebo] Wilder, and Jimmy Wilder. Jimmy Wilder is still a legend in Hawaii. He was half Hawaiian, half missionary stock, and of one of the well-known, big families of Australia. And Jimmy met them and took them in hand, and said, "You've got to stay here." And he got them a wonderful cottage, got them installed, got him students to work in a sketch class immediately and a painting class immediately, and they were off and running. And they were part of the Hawaiian scene in no time flat. They had a marvelous year there. It was really wonderful for him. He loved the islands in every way. Marguerite was crazy about him. That's where she lost her name. Everyone had always called her Daisy until this time, but in Honolulu she was told that only elephants were called Daisy, so she had to choose another name, and she became Peggy, from that time on. Well, she was a great, great success. She really was, I would say, a perfect painter's wife. She was talented in her own way, as I said. She was an excellent pianist. She was gay and full of fun, entertained beautifully. Everyone loved her on sight. She was really just quite wonderful. Did I say now that the family numbered three children?

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see, no.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Their son, Allan, was born before they left Australia.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh. So two children were born in Australia?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: The little boy and Yvonne.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yvonne was born almost immediately they arrived in Australia. And Allan was born shortly before they left. He was still quite young when they got to...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Um hmm.

VIOLA PATTERSON: At any rate, they had a wonderful time. They were part of everything that happened in Hawaii. They had a marvelous studio in Lana Kai, the very center of Honolulu, a block of land that of course now is built solid, but at that time was like a great courtyard with studios-- what they made into studios-- around the edge. Nana Alexander had one studio and he had another. And they partied every night, and of course, even though America wasn't yet in the war, I believe, the American navy was there, army, and Hawaii was an outpost, of course. And Peggy fell in love with a young American naval officer and that was the end of the marriage.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh!

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, my husband left Hawaii, came to California, where he had friends he'd made in Hawaii by now. (chuckles) And he had really a wonderful time in San Francisco and in Monterey and Carmel. Friends who owned places in Carmel and Monterey, especially Carmel, loaned him their home and their horse and trap! So he had all the facility to go anywhere he wanted to-- he'd always ridden because, I guess, all the Patterson boys learned to ride at an early age. Their brother-in-law, Colonel Braithwaite, was head of the Victorian mounted police, mounted rifles, I guess it was, mounted something or other. And it was with that group that Charles, his older brother, had gone to India and so on.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Uh huh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: But all the younger brothers rode the horses. They had apparently a very fine stable. And so

this was an awfully pleasant interlude for my husband. He was painting and selling occasionally.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: In California?

VIOLA PATTERSON: And making enough to send money back to the family in Hawaii on a small scale. And then finally, he did get a job; he had more than one job in San Francisco. Took a studio in Montgomery block and came to know practically all the artists down there at the time. And then he was offered a job in Seattle with Foster and Kleiser as a sign painting designer. Well, that wasn't his forte but he did do one that he was always very proud of, and it was of Elsie the Cow, I believe (laughs), for Carnation Milk, I think. But almost immediately, he began giving sketch classes and painting here. He took a studio at the Odd Fellow's Temple, just a floor above where Cornish School was located at the time.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Came to know Miss Cornish well and members of the school, because they came and went constantly. And Peggy Pettit, who was the star ballet student of Mary Ann Wells, was living with her mother in the same apartments on the same floor, in a separate apartment of the Odd Fellow's Temple. So they came to know each other very, very well. And he began to exhibit at any opportunity in Seattle. Had I think a series of exhibits, and sold, but I think made his real living by teaching, by having private classes, first of all.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And then he came to know some of the university faculty members, not the members of the art department, but a member of the philosophy department, Ralph du Casse-- was Ralph his first name [also Kurt du Casse--Ed.]? I guess so. Dr. du Casse, in any case-- who was French originally. And my husband, speaking French, would immediately make contact with anyone else who spoke French in the whole community.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Right.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And Dr. du Casse introduced him to Dr. Suzzallo, and Dr. Suzzallo engaged him to teach in the art department. That was in, I think 1918, but I'm not certain of the date.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: '18 or '19.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And from that time on, we'd already spoken of all the various friends we had in the 917 Seneca Street days.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Um hmm.

VIOLA PATTERSON: At this time, then, many of the faculty people, largely in philosophy and psychology, for some reason I don't know to this day the reason for, but other departments as well. Shortly he had many friends on the faculty, and the faculty was relatively small and informal and he thoroughly enjoyed his stay. I've already mentioned that the classes were held in these portables.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Right.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And he knew Mrs. Worman, who taught pottery. The design teacher was Miss [Helen--Ed.] Rhodes, who was a very big influence. She was a very excellent influence, in every way. And Annette Edens probably became our very closest friend. And there were others as well. It wasn't a totally feminine... There was a sculptor-- who was the sculptor in the early days? A well-known Seattle sculptor [Dudley Pratt--Ed.]. I think he taught at the university, and now I'm not quite certain about that. Well, at any rate, he knew, I think I can almost say positively, everyone working in the field of painting or sculpture, printmaking, or anything else in Seattle.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: When Ambrose began teaching at the university, were there more women than men teaching art?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, many more women than men. Was Hamilton Wolfe one of the teachers? I think he was, but again I couldn't be certain. This of course is all university history, so it could be gotten at.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes. Were most of his fellow art teachers Seattle people, or had they like himself come from other places, the East Coast, and...?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, I think they were mostly from this vicinity. Annette Edens' home was in Bellingham. She was a Washingtonian.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Where was Helen Rhodes from?

VIOLA PATTERSON: That's what I can't remember, where she came from. I rather think she was a Washingtonian,

but I can't be sure at all. She was really the biggest influence in the formation of the early department. She and Annette Edens between them. They were very different. Miss Rhodes was strictly design. And Annette Edens was design, but her field was broader; she was interested in painting as well.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did they devise the curriculum and the requirements for the students?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I think so. And the curriculum grew as the department grew. Then of course in 19-- Was it in 1921 Mr. Isaacs came? He was to come a year earlier, but he wished to have an extra year in Paris to continue his studies and Dr. Suzzallo granted that. But he finally arrived. I still remember seeing him for the first time. He was quite a small man. Did you ever know Mr. Isaacs?

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Only through photographs.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, he was not a tall or a large person physically at all. He was dressed all in black, which was quite unusual; practically no one dressed all in black in those days-- well, when I say all in black, a black suit and a black hat, I guess. In summer it was a straw boater.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Now Isaacs arrived to be head of the program?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. He was engaged to be head of the department, even before he went to Paris in the first place.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: That was a stipulation he made, that he be allowed to have a year of study in Paris before taking on the job.

Dr. Suzzallo had become very impressed with him while visiting the institution that Mr. Isaacs was teaching in at the time-- I think it was Gillespie [Greely--Ed.]. Or was it in Colorado? I can't remember. It's all in the book on Mr. Isaacs, in any case.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Right.

[Tape 3; side 2]

VIOLA PATTERSON: Mr. Isaacs did bring some really remarkably good people here. Not only those from Europe, but others from elsewhere in this country.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: You're speaking of the visitors who came?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Those who were visiting professors, but also some who became if not permanent, longer term professors.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see. Who are outstanding among those?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, of course Archipenko. First of all, I guess Ozenfant came earlier than Archipenko?

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, I think we have the dates of those. Archipenko came the summers of '36 and '37, and Ozenfant came after that in '38.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh! Yes. Well, Archipenko was the first really internationally known person, I believe. And he was remarkable.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And it was Isaacs who made these arrangements and knew good people?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, yes. And I don't recall the circumstances.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: How he came to decide on Archipenko or whether it was the result of inquiring from other colleagues [Dr. Richard Fuller--Ed.] who might be... But at any rate, Archipenko came, and proved to be remarkable as a teacher and wonderful in the work he showed here. He showed at the art museum, and the art museum subsequently bought one of his terra cotta figures. And he simply thrilled students, I must say; he was a marvelous influence. I studied with him both times he was here. The first time was the best, I thought. It was the best for me at any rate. The first thing I did was in clay-- we all worked in clay in the beginning as nearly as I can remember. It was something that I had just dreamt up, and it turned out the best thing in terra [cotta] that I did at any time. That little figure on the horse-- it's over in the window.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, I didn't realize that was yours.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It was supposed to be a circus rider.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And of course it is a circus rider of a sort. Archipenko admired it and when it was fired it happened to be placed in a pink kiln in a certain, or the firing went a certain way, so it was what Archipenko said was a very happy firing. It took on a certain coloration that wasn't just the rather dead terra cotta color. Archipenko thought that was a really good piece. Well, it was the only really good piece I ever did, because subsequently I fell under the Archipenko spell and began turning out...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Archipenkos!

VIOLA PATTERSON: ...imitation Archipenkos, of which that tall figure is one.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see. Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I like them. I still rather like them, but they certainly are, [aren't] in copies as many as I could... No, they weren't. I really didn't realize I was copying his work, but his influence was so strong. This was something so new to us all. I wasn't the only one to find this was happening, I think. Other students did as well, though some I think maintained their own personality better than I did. The second time, he taught a painting class as well as sculpture class. I didn't take that class, but I could see the result because they worked in the studio next to where I was working. I don't think he was as gifted as draftsman and a painter as he was as a sculptor. He got a little-- oh, dear-- stylistic or I don't...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Mannered?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Mannered would be a good term. But oh, he was such fun. He was just a riot. He loved a good drink and would get under the influence very quickly-- never unpleasantly, but so that he was definitely tipsy. At parties, this was. Never, never on the campus. But he delighted in parties, and he would often offer to cook the dinner. In fact he cooked almost the first dinner they were-- I should really remember when they first came because we had just moved into the house! It was brand, brand new! And we were going to have our first party, and we invited our architect [Jack Sproule--Ed.] and his wife, and we invited the Archipenkos, Angela-- Angelica, I guess it was-- and Archie. And Archie offered to cook the bouillabaisse.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I was given instructions as to what to buy. So and so much pike fish, so and so much... I got everything, and when they came Archie was already under the influence.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh boy.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And not quite up to the bouillabaisse. So Angelica took over, and it was she who made the bouillabaisse that day. (laughs)

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So that was a little change in plans there.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. And Isaacs had them for many parties, both their stays. They had parties everywhere.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: The visitors who came to the university, like Archipenko and Ozenfant, did they also meet people you knew at Cornish, or people like the Camffermans, people outside the university?

VIOLA PATTERSON: They all met the Camffermans, without exception, I think. The Camffermans were longing for contact with New York sources and international sources. Both of them had had that in their pasts, and so immediately any of these people came, they would get in touch or we all would get in touch with them. So they met both the Archipenkos and the Ozenfants, and I suspect everyone else who came. But how much Archipenko mingled with painters outside of the university (anyone who's as much of the art scene as the Camffermans were, because they were involved in everything that went on) I'm not sure. I suspect quite a little. The Archipenkos became very close friends of a family in Tacoma, the [Quaverly?] family. And one or two of the Quaverly girls followed Archie and Angelica to New York and study with him there, because he had a school there subsequently. And was absolutely devoted to him, and he was devoted to Quaverly family. It was a prominent Tacoma family who were interested in art and so on.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Who'd taken, as far as I can recall, no interest in any of the local Washington artists. But

either one of the Quaverly girls came to study, or at any rate, they came to know the Archipenkos and just adopted them totally, and vice versa. In the case of the Ozenfants, he met I think practically everyone here. He gave a number of public lectures, which I can't remember Archipenko having done, though he may have, and I suspect he did. I have a lot of Archipenko notes. Actually more of Archipenko notes than Ozenfant [ones]. Ozenfant was hard to take notes from because he ranged over a wide field and he was not a conventional type of lecturer by any means. He was not a conventional type of person.

[Break in taping]

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Let me ask you about you and your husband's trip to Europe in the late twenties.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh yes, yes.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: We didn't talk about that. We talked about the early days in Seattle. But that trip to Europe and the trip to Mexico both seemed to have been important to you.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. The 1929-30 trip to Europe we'd planned from almost the time we first were married.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: My husband wanted to be able to go back as soon as he could afford to.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was this a trip to live there and study, or to travel and see things?

VIOLA PATTERSON: To study, largely. And to paint and live and to travel a whole bit. Actually, it wasn't designed for anyone, but I wanted to study with someone abroad. It was a little presumptuous in a way, because I hadn't done too much painting by then. But anyway, I wanted to, and my husband thought it was a good idea. And he wanted to see the European scene again.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So did you live in Paris for much of that time?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, a major part of the time. We arrived in Liverpool, went on to London, visited friends of my husband's in London and near London, and then went to the continent-- crossed to Antwerp and had a little stay in Belgium and Holland and Germany and Switzerland. We stayed with an old student of my husband's and her husband who lived near Zurich on the Lake [Littigon?]. A lovely stay. We were there two weeks and traveled extensively with them around the Swiss countryside. Saw a lot-- (This student was already a well-known painter in Zurich.) And then went down through the [Ticino?] to Italy. And they accompanied us part of this trip. They had property in the Ticino as well. Felix [Musholin], the husband, was a newspaper and journal correspondent, who traveled throughout Europe a good deal-- awfully nice person-- Elsa Musholin was Swedish originally, and just high good fun. And they had a family-- three children. Oh, we were a part of the family for several weeks. We traveled down through Italy and had a stay in Venice and the environs of Venice. And then Florence and Rome and... Did we go to Naples that trip? I think we went to Naples another trip. And via the southern route through southern Italy and southern France, up through Dijon, Antibes, at least, Avignon, to Dijon to Paris. We arrived in Paris in the fall, late September I believe, and immediately found friends from Seattle in Paris! (chuckles) Which made it very nice for me, because although I'd had some college French, I'm no linguist and never will become adept in speaking French. I can read readily but not speak. At any rate, I always relied on my husband, because speaking as easily as he did, there was no real necessity for me to get down and begin to speak. These friends stayed quite a long time in Paris. The daughter was more or less my age. We had been friends in Seattle. Her name was Adelaide Kauffman; she was there with her mother and they were spending, oh, six to eight months in Europe just traveling as they wanted to, but our paths seemed to coincide. Whatever they did, we did-- or more often, whatever we did, they did. It was very pleasant for me, because I did things that I would not have done on my own. For instance Adelaide was very interested in the Paris designers, the couturiers, and she visited all the big houses and she would take me with her. And this was a world I'd never have entered under any usual turn of events. We were there for the autumn sales of the big houses. I got two designer dresses, one a Poiret evening gown.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really? Do you still have it?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I still have that. It's a collectors' item, almost.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, I hope you'll give it to the museum here.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It ought to go to a museum, or I think probably the place where I might give it is the university textile and costume collection. They have some very fine things. I just need to get in touch with them, because it needs to be taken care of properly. It's a black taffeta, embroidered in gold thread. One of the exotic ones.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So it's an evening gown.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Really a beauty. And it needs care.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: A Poiret evening gown.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Um hmm. The other was a Schiaparelli, which I wore until it went to shreds, and was the most beautiful dress any designer ever made. Oh, that was glorious.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So you really wore it out and you don't have it any more?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I really practically wore that out, um hmm. Oh, God it was wonderful. I still have the jacket, and the jacket's pretty well in shreds. It was a sleeveless dress with a jacket. Black satin lined in pale, pale, pale pink satin.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And did you and Ambrose take quarters where you could paint?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, we first went into a hotel on the Place de Latran[?]. It had been recommended to us. It was very centrally located; it was wonderful.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes!

VIOLA PATTERSON: But we stayed there only a month, because in our perambulations-- we were great walkers in those days, walked everywhere, miles and miles and miles-- we found the Ille St. Louis and the little Hotel de la Paix.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: You moved to that?

VIOLA PATTERSON: And nothing will do but we move to the Hotel de la Paix! Which we did, after we had paid for a month at the little hotel the Place de Latran. And we were there all the rest of our stay in Paris. We went away during the late winter or early spring; they just stored our big trunk and our big bags for us, and had our room ready for us when we returned.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, wonderful.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It's a place where practically every visiting painter turns up sooner or later. It's the most obvious, wonderful place in Paris.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Because you look right out on the Seine and the Quay d'Anjou and all those marvelous buildings on the island. And the island was like the [Rouxelle]; it was a little city in itself. Everything you could possibly, absolutely need, was on the island. There were wonderful delicatessen stores, there were little bookstores, little stores with...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I know it. (chuckles)

VIOLA PATTERSON: ...oh what they call libraries, librarie, where they have stationery and all the [makings]. There were wine shops. There were cafes. There was one good restaurant just about two or three doors from the hotel, Rendezvous de Marinier. And of course the fishing boats just below your window, those lovely little scull-shaped boats with the fishermen out, or the fishermen on the embankment. My husband did many, many paintings just from the window of the hotel, and on the island, generally. And at that time, I had already enrolled in [Andre--Ed.] L'Hote's painting class. And that I thoroughly enjoyed. He was a splendid teacher. He was a conscientious teacher who really criticized. One morning a week. He arrived on a Monday morning, nine o'clock sharp, in his carpet slippers, posed the models-- we always had a nude life model and always a costume model, who was in a separate part of the studio in a balcony arrangement, in a smaller area, because fewer people worked from the portrait model.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Um hmm.

VIOLA PATTERSON: The model would have arrived by nine o'clock and we'd all be waiting 'round, and he would pose the model, sometimes a sitting pose, sometimes a standing pose, sometimes a reclining pose, and so on. And after he'd posed the life model, those who were working from the life would start to work, and he'd then pose the costume model. Well, then he'd leave us immediately and we wouldn't see him for a whole week. We worked until Saturday morning, when he arrived again at nine o'clock-- great bustle and out he'd come. (laughs) He's a fairly small man, just full of vim and vigor. And he'd start his round and-- it was a large class, very large.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I was going to ask who the students were, and how many.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, compared to university classes it wasn't all that large, maybe 40 students, something like that, 30, 40. It would vary somewhat but not too much.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Were they all ages and all countries?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, all ages and all countries. There was one young Swedish girl whose work L'Hote really approved. She painted in her own way, very fresh.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, I think you mentioned this.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. And she and the young boy were the only ones he really singled out all the time I was in the class. The others he'd give a very thorough criticism, unless he felt that they were really just setting out to do little l'Hotes. Then he would just say, "Continuez, continuez," or something to that effect.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yeah.

VIOLA PATTERSON: He'd go on from them.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did Ambrose work there, or just you?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, no; he never did. While I was in class, he would be working really from anyplace he could work in Paris. If it was bad weather, he'd find a place where he could work looking down on a street scene, or looking out on a street scene. He'd ask for permission at a restaurant. It was always in the morning; the classes were from nine to twelve.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Uh huh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: We were free at twelve, you see. He'd come back to L'Hote's class to pick me up and we'd go off to lunch.

But his [L'Hote's--Ed.] criticisms were most penetrating. He'd see immediately what was promising. Or he'd see what was holding a painting back and make a comment. And I think I may have mentioned to you the fact that in one of my paintings-- I think it was one of mine; it could have been someone else's-- he looked at it and he thought it was interesting, but needed something. And he turned and he saw a paint rag that was checkered blue and white, and he tore off a corner of it, and he stuck it on the wet paint (I think it was someone else's because I don't remember ever having had a blue-and-white checkered paint cloth) and it just brought the whole thing to life.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And of course, there were always students behind, taking notes. Oh, we all tried to take notes, but some of them were more adept at it than others. Then we'd share notetaking later. Everyone, through all of L'Hote's classes did this, so there must be a library of L'Hote notes from way back. But it was really an experience.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And did you work with him for many months?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, about two-and-a-half months only.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Uh huh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: When the weather got so bad in Paris-- it was really sort of miserable flogging around-- we would leave the Hotel de la Paix about, not later than 7:30 in the morning, I think even earlier, walk to the end of the island, where the Palace [Lausanne] is, Place-- I've forgotten; it's named for that big statue at the end.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I think the Point.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And wait for the bus. There's that bus that took us up to Montparnasse. They took us up to the Gare Montparnasse; that was the end of the line, at the Gare. And there, there was a cafe or a little restaurant, and we'd have breakfast there. By now it'd be close to-- it was dark in the middle of winter!

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes. (chuckles)

VIOLA PATTERSON: Pitch dark! And not many people about, even. Often when we'd go into the cafe, we'd be the first arrivals. They'd still be wiping off the tables with their dirty rags and so on.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yeah!

VIOLA PATTERSON: Well, we always had fresh croissants. I always had chocolate, because I don't like cafe au lait and cafe without the lait in Paris is pretty grim (chuckles), unless you go to an awfully good restaurant. And then my husband would walk me to L'Hote's studio, which was past the Avenue du Main, which was old quarters of my husband's, from his early stays in Paris. He knew that whole area like the back of your hand. And deposit me at L'Hote's around nine and class would have already started to gather. The model would be posing and we'd start to work. I think, I can't remember, there was always a [monsieur], who called the rest periods. And whether they were every half hour or when, I can't remember, but depending on the pose, of course. Some poses didn't require so many. Oh, that one day, when the weather was really foul out, my husband came to the studio to pick me [up] an hour or so early. And L'Hote had on the wall some little pastiche of compositions which he later did large, only about so [gestures--Ed.], maybe five by seven, or something like that. It was on a raw piece of canvas, and not mounted or anything. So this one time, my husband said to the monsieur, "Would it be all right if I made a copy of one

of these little compositions?" And the monsieur said, "Sure, why not?" So Pat borrowed my colors and something to use as a palette and so on, and a piece of canvas-- I had a piece of quite heavy canvas-- and did this little sketch within an hour. And it's the one that's hanging in on the dining room wall...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh really.

VIOLA PATTERSON: ...which is as L'Hote as any L'Hote ever done, and is really a joy to have.

[Tape 4; side 1]

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, really?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Why we didn't buy one is beyond me. I don't know, except you don't have sense at times.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Or you feel embarrassed or timid or...?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I suppose, I suppose. But he was a warm-hearted host and his wife was the same. They always had a nice spread for us. I think we had wine and I can't remember. I don't think tea was ever served. I think it was wine and biscuits, that type of collation that the French people enjoy. But the atmosphere was so informal, so almost family-like, you know. It was a great joy. I think the students just invariably turned up, even those who'd been in class for a long, long time.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I should think so.

VIOLA PATTERSON: There was one Australian student in the class, of a family, whose family Pat either knew of or knew in Australia, a well-to-do family. She was a charming person; we got to know her fairly well. She studied with L'Hote year after year. L'Hote didn't like this at all. He really tried to get rid of students after a time. He did everything he could to discourage them. And one of them was a Seattle man.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: One of these people who stayed on too long?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, who went on and on. Finally L'Hote did get rid of him and he came back to Seattle. I don't think we hardly ever saw him once we got back, but I used to see him in class. He somehow knew who we were, though we hadn't known who he was because he was still at the student stage-- hadn't become a practicing painter. Later, he was associated...

[Break in taping]

VIOLA PATTERSON: The trip to Mexico was the summer of 1934. We left, I guess, the day after school was out in June and went down by train, which was a wonderful way to travel. I still think going places in Mexico by train is probably an interesting way to travel. We had a short stay in Mazatlan, which we enjoyed, and we took the train up to-- what is that interim small city?-- we had two or three days there and thoroughly enjoyed that. Oh dear, the name escapes me. And right in Mexico City the last-- You see, we broke the trip from the coast to Mexico City by staying-- Tepic-- a sleepy Mexican town close to very wild country and some fairly wild tribes. One Mexican tribe that was considered somewhat dangerous if you wandered into their territory. But at rate, we had a really charming stop there. And then it was an overnight train trip to Mexico and you go very high.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yeah.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I got a sore throat from that train trip that laid me low our first few days in Mexico. We thought we had a firm hotel reservation, which turned out to be anything but firm, and there was nothing to be had. It was 1934, before any of the new hotels had even begun, not a one. Finally, we wound up in an English

bookstore that someone had said sometimes had the names of private homes that took in people, and we were sent to a private home, which was where we stayed practically our entire time in Mexico City.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Wonderful.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It was with a family that had-- the husband had formerly been an ambassador in various parts of the world. They were internationally traveled themselves and they were the most delightful people. They were so good to us, it was marvelous. We had breakfast and dinner with them, then almost invariably, lunch somewhere on the way. Well, we did have one stay away from the family, because we thought we ought to have our own quarters to a greater extent, and we took an apartment with Frances Toor in her little modern house almost next door to Chapultepec Park. It was absolutely charming, built by the architect who's famous down there, and whose name again...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I don't know.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Very famous. A modern architect who did practically all the buildings in the [Hidalgo?]. And it was really just delightful. I still think it was almost a perfect design for a small dwelling in a crowded city, because the property was small. The surface was given over to parking area; you could park your cars and there was a storybook stairway, a nice wide stairway up to the first floor, which was Frances Toor's apartment. Wait a minute, was it Frances? No. I guess the first story was the one that was divided into two small apartments, but one large living room, which was big enough for sleeping plus a small table for dining with a little kitchenette and a bath, all brand new and awfully nice. And then the floor above was Frances Toor's apartment, and above that was the roof apartment which was her gallery.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Frances Toor published Mexican Folkways. Very well known, a magazine devoted almost entirely to folkways and art, painting, sculpture and design and so on, which was just going full blast in Mexico at that time.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: How had you and Ambrose met her? Or how had you come to stay with her?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I can't remember.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: But you knew her before?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, we did know her. I think probably through Pablo O'Higgins. Somehow, I think we must have had a letter. Wherever you go, someone says, "Well, when you get to Mexico, you must see so and so."

MARTHA KINGSBURY: And Pablo O'Higgins you had known in Seattle?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, no. He was a Californian, and we didn't know him till we got to Mexico.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: How we came to know him I can't remember. But as I say, it's just sort of a chain of circumstances.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Had you gone to Mexico with the intention of meeting the great mural painters?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Of certainly seeing their work, and hoping to meet them, yes. That was one of the objectives. Everyone was excited about Mexican art at that time. It was a very alive thing. So I think it was through Pablo that we met-- His name was really Paul O'Higgins in California, and he was really a pianist!

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, I didn't know that.

VIOLA PATTERSON: If I remember correctly. But he became interested in painting and switched over to painting entirely and became a really very excellent muralist.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And so we liked Frances Toor and she seemed to like us. She had another California painter in the other apartment for I think the first week we stayed with her. I think we stayed with her, well, I've forgotten; not long. Her name was Margaret Peterson. She was well known in California. She taught at the University of Cal, I think, and was really a very highly regarded teacher. In fact, Katherine Westphal, whose name you must know, who taught in our department for a time, had studied with Margaret Peterson.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Katherine was an extraordinarily gifted person. Whatever she thought about Margaret Peterson would undoubtedly be true, and she thought she was tops. But she was just about to leave when we came. So the other apartment I think was empty. But we finally couldn't take it any longer at Frances Toor's because she was a night person.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, and you were day people.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And she'd come home at something like three or four or five in the morning and start to play the piano and dance! And (chuckles) the floors weren't all that insulated, so we'd be awakened at ungodly hours, and there was no way of her changing her ways.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: No, no.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It was we who had to make the adjustment. So we went back to Senor de Ferrara's.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And were very happy there. Well, after time the altitude got us both. It really hits newcomers until you've adjusted to it over a period of time. We went to Taxco for a week. We stayed with the Kitigawas in Taxco, and that was a long-term friendship. And then we went to Oaxaca. Loved Oaxaca beyond words. Oh, God, I still think Oaxaca's probably about as choice a place to live in as any on this whole earth. And environs and visited the ruins of Monte Alban and so on. Had a wonderful day there.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Was this all within the span of a summer?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. Then we came back and spent the rest of the summer in Mexico City. And back home by train, still via the west coast. So, we had to stay in California on the way back. We went down to Carmel and Monterey and visited Pat's old friends in California, and arrived back in the fall for classes. Usually arrived back the night before school would start. This was the pattern.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Right. What luck had you had in Mexico meeting the muralists or seeing their work?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh! Well, of course, we met Diego Rivera.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: You did?

VIOLA PATTERSON: And we had a nice chat with him.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And were invited to his home. But he wasn't there when we were there. We were sorry about that. He was traveling or doing something else. But we saw his collection of pre-Columbian artifacts and pottery and so on, which is a fabulous collection. Beautiful home in Chapaltepec. Was it Chapaltepec? I think it is. And we met...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Do you mean Jose Clemente Orozco?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes! Orozco. But Orozco was very deaf, and it was all but impossible to carry on a conversation with him.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Really, oh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And he spoke no English, so we were not able to converse with Orozco.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: But we had the pleasure of his getting off the stool; they were all working up on a dais. The painting started at a height above the ground level.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, you went to see them where they were working?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. They, Diego was working at one end of the Palace of Fine Arts, which wasn't where the murals were going to be; these were both the sketches. They were working on their cartoons for the actual murals.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh. Yeah.

VIOLA PATTERSON: This was the big Palace of Fine Arts, where all the big musical, dance events and so on take place. From one end to the other is like half a mile, almost. (chuckles) Not really, but a long distance. And Rivera was at one end and Orozco was the other, each working.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did they have assistants, or work all alone?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Rivera had, but Orozco didn't have. He was alone as far as I remember, and he was working in color, whereas Rivera was working with the charcoal, drawing his cartoon forms. And he had charcoal on the end of a long wand, and he walked along this platform and draw a big line; what he didn't want I don't know what he did, whether he had some way of erasing it or not.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Called in the assistants. Did you watch him there at all?

VIOLA PATTERSON: We didn't [see-Ed.] either of them actually painting, but we did see some of the lesser artists, Pablo O'Higgins among them, working on their particular walls. See the [Convent?] was being converted into a big public market, the mercado.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yeah.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And they were utilizing every bit of the space, painting everywhere. These stone walls, plastering over the stone. And Pablo had been given a or stairway up. There were these curving walls.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Perfectly beautiful space. The ceiling and the walls. And he was doing a very handsome Mexican subject, something to do with corn, I believe.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did Ambrose and you go back many days to see them working?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, oh yes! Morning after morning. If you would get there early enough, you'd be there before the plasterer had finished working, because the plasterers were...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: They had to come in every morning and do the section that was going to be painted.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Uh huh. Yes, each morning. And they were craftsmen of the highest order themselves. What they could do in the final troweling of a wall was unbelievable; they left a surface that was so luscious you couldn't believe it. Well, after they'd finished then the wall had to sit for, depending on the atmosphere, on the humidity, an hour or two or three. If it was very dampish, it would be a fair length of time before-- The artist would have come along, and he'd be chatting. It was all so informal. They'd be looking at each other's work, and so on. But when the moment had arrived when it was ready to work on, they would attach their paper cartoons, which had already been pricked through, and with their pounts, this little bag with the powder color, usually sort of a deep sepia or umber or something, over the lines and so there was an indication of the drawing. Then they'd begin to work, to build their tones. They already knew the color scheme. And the colors are Italian colors, Firenze colors, and [brown, ground] pigments, all earth colors.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: By Italian, what do you mean? They come from Italy?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes. I think I'm correct about this. I still have in the basement a whole set of colors Pat brought back-- or ordered to arrive for our return. The whole gamut of the colors. And it's a beautiful range. There's a marvelous blue, just the most piercing blue. And the greens are somewhat earth greens, and all the other colors are colors!

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Um hmm.

VIOLA PATTERSON: They're very, very fine colors. And then using the soft-- I've forgotten-- camelhair brushes or what the hairs are. They're soft brushes, though; they're not...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Not like oil brushes at all.

VIOLA PATTERSON: No, not. And you can work over and over and it's a marvelous feeling to put a brush loaded with color to the surface, because it pulls the liquid away out of the brush immediately, leaving the color on the surface. Just vanishes like that. There's something (chuckles) very special about the feeling of the way it goes on the surface. And you can build from a faint tone up to a deep tone. Some of the very assured ones paint what they want very quickly, but there's often a building process of adding color, and you can work over a fairly good-sized surface. You don't have to do all your blue area at once, or all your green area at once, and so on.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: You can keep it going. And you can mix colors, you can gray your colors more if you want to. Mostly they used the colors as they come.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Now, would there be assistants to keep mixing the colors? Or did each artist do the whole [stand]?

VIOLA PATTERSON: There always were either assistants or sort of hangers-on; I'm not sure which they were. I think they were assistants, but...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did either you or Ambrose try your hand at it there?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh yes. Pablo let us work on his mural.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Oh, very little, but...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yeah, but that's where you got your first literal feeling.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Definitely yes. Oh, absolutely yes. He would have let us go on and do more, if we'd wanted to. Because by this building process of not stating the full depth of the value you want in the very first stroke, nothing is too final, you see.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Um hmm.

VIOLA PATTERSON: You can't take away, but you can add. The only way you take away is to let it dry, then chip the whole area out once more.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Start over.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And this is what happened at the end of each day unless you calculated very, very closely indeed. You would not have quite finished all the wall, and in plaster usually you plaster a little more than you calculated you would finish.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh, and then they take that off?

VIOLA PATTERSON: And then that portion would dry with the rest of the wall, and the following day it could be chipped back. The new plastering come up to the new join. Rivera was terribly clever about his joins.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: So that they didn't show?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Many of them where you often could hardly calculate where they were. But Orozco didn't care where they occurred. They'd occur right through the middle of a figure or arm or a hand or wherever; it didn't matter. In some of his murals, some of his frescoes, the plastering is very rough even. It isn't this finished, smooth.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: He was in some ways a more powerful, less decorative painter than Rivera, and there was a more brutal quality in his work, just generally, I think.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Um hmm.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I think he was really the greater painter of the two. And they were both so wonderful in their own ways. Well, all those painters were wonderful, and they all made a confraternity that was that was an absolute delight to see. There never seemed to be any jealousy among them. They seemed to be ready to help each other out. The way Paul O'Higgins lived was just the way all the others lived. None of them had much money. When they had any money they lent it to whoever needed some or shared it. It was a perfectly beautiful period in Mexico, and it was wonderful to be there and see it. I still think it was a great privilege.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did you by any chance meet Frida Kahlo?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No. She was in residence when we were there, but she was often ill, and we didn't meet her. She must have been a highly decorative person, very beautiful to see.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: That's what one reads, but I don't know anyone who's ever met her.

Do you think that the experience with the muralists affected how you or Ambrose approached your own

painting? Did it change Ambrose's sense of his color or his teaching or...?

VIOLA PATTERSON: I really don't know. He would loved to have gone on with fresco, but the opportunity was small. I think he hoped to teach a class in fresco.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Did he ever?

VIOLA PATTERSON: No. But I think any student who was interested and came to him to ask about it, he was only too willing to help them and help them with materials as well. He had hoped that it would lead to something of the sort. Now I don't know what, what the reason for not at least trying a class in fresco painting was, whether it was the decision that there would not be enough students to warrant it, or what it was. I think that must have been it, because of course there were very few calls for frescoes.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Sure.

VIOLA PATTERSON: But I imagine if the right person had undertaken a class, that the opportunity for using fresco would have developed along with the people who were using it.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Might have come afterwards.

VIOLA PATTERSON: But having a full schedule teaching the classes he did teach would have meant dropping one of those classes. Whether Mr. Isaacs was not entirely in agreement or not, I don't know. I've never even thought of whether he was or not. I don't think he was ever very interested in Mexican work, in the Mexican painters, as a movement. It just has not occurred to me to think about that. But now, for instance, I think at one time George Tsutakawa was interested.

MARTHAA KINGSBURY: Um hmm.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And possibly could have gone on to doing some work in fresco, and my husband would have been very glad to have helped him, tell him anything he knew. And he did know all the rudiments by now, because they aren't so great. The one thing we lacked here was ready access to an inexpensive plasterer.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh really. Someone with the skills.

VIOLA PATTERSON: An experienced but inexpensive plasterer. Plasterers were so costly.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Outside one's needs.

VIOLA PATTERSON: This plastering my husband did himself [referring to their house--Ed.]. Now it's rough, but it seems to be not unsuitable since it's out-of-doors.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yeah.

VIOLA PATTERSON: It somehow lends itself to the other. But to see a real plasterer work, which most commercial frescoes would necessitate, is to realize that they're really artists in themselves.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: I see.

VIOLA PATTERSON: They're such skilled craftsmen. Well, I guess the time apparently wasn't right for it up here. Of course, subsequently Paul [O'Higgins--Ed.] did come up and do a fresco for the ship scalers and longshoreman's union hall. That's [O'Higgins' mural--Ed.] now on campus.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Right, the one at Kane Hall [University of Washington--Ed.].

VIOLA PATTERSON: After having had to be restored.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: It had to be restored and even rediscovered! People didn't know where it was for a long time in between.

VIOLA PATTERSON: I know.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Not a very happy fate.

VIOLA PATTERSON: Paul had become an elder statesman by the time he came up here the last time...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Had he?

VIOLA PATTERSON: We saw him at the [Spencer-Ed.] Moseleys'. He was married. He married a very wonderful

person. She was a well-known lawyer in Mexico City. And he was now so established and so well off, really, I think, both financially and socially and every other way, that he was a different Paul than the Pablo we'd known in Mexico.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Oh really. Oh.

VIOLA PATTERSON: He'd become pretty much part of the establishment, I'd say.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes. I suppose.

VIOLA PATTERSON: And I think in Mexico things had changed in the meantime. The big effervescent movement of fresco painting, and art in general, had somewhat diminished and-- who is the painter who came on later? Oh, who does the melons and the very luscious paintings in color. I know his name perfectly, can't say it. Who became a New York success, was a little more of direction...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: You mean [Ruffino--Ed.] Tamayo?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes, Tamayo. Was a little more in the direction in later years.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Yes.

VIOLA PATTERSON: There were some still absolutely remarkable printmakers down there. They have a big tradition to call on. This imposition of Catholicism on...

MARTHA KINGSBURY: On the Indian culture, the native culture.

VIOLA PATTERSON: ...on the earlier civilization made for a tremendously fruitful sort of a background. They're marvelous people. I still think all the places in the world one can visit, Mexico and Guatemala are among the very top ones.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: But Walter Isaacs had much less interest in those things than in Europe or in the Eastern part of the United States?

VIOLA PATTERSON: Yes.

MARTHA KINGSBURY: Where did his interests lie?

VIOLA PATTERSON: In the French school, post-Impressionist originally.

END OF INTERVIEW

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