

that Joe and I had to go to Sunday school with Mother. And they'd have a session. All his lawyer friends and some of the judges would come up to the office and spend two or three hours chewing the fat over what was happening in the town and all that. And I think Dad had a lot of fun out of that. You know, this thing that they have now- it's gotten so large- in some restaurant.

M: Oh, yeah. At Freddy's Cafe.

L: Yeah. Well, this was a kind of a...

M: Kind of that. It's on Sunday...

L: ...miniature thing on a Sunday morning amongst friends...

M: Uh huh.

L: ...you know. (chuckles)

M: That's right. I always thought it'd be fun to go one of Freddy's [meetings], but I'm always at church (chuckles) so I never go.

L: Then they used to have....Then Sunday morning was always- (coughs) I don't know what's the matter with my voice this

morning. Sunday morning was when the....You know, in the old days all the dirty jokes that were all over the country were passed on in the early hours before dawn by the telegraphers at Western Union. And they'd trade these stories and then the stories would get out and all kinds of stuff that these guys first had to hear all the stories. (laughs) They'd come in [and ask], "Did you hear the one about" so and so and so and so? They had a lot of fun before they got down to business on the politics and stuff like that.

Some of the guys were very witty. We'd better turn this off. (chuckles) I want to tell you all...(taping stopped and started again)

M: To some of the other...

L: Well, I want to provided everything that you need.

M: You're giving me more than enough, so don't worry about that at all. But on page one [hundred] twenty-nine, we were talking about the King Ranch and how you were so badly hurt when Frank Dobie came out with that criticism about the King Ranch. Did you talk to him after reading that review in the *New York Times* or did you just kind of voluntarily remove yourself from seeing him?

L: Well, you see, he was out here for the....They gave a big

dinner out at El Paso Country Club and all of the Klebergs came out. And Dad was, of course, gone. And so Dobie came out and was a guest at this big dinner and made a little talk. And all this time, you know, flattered Klebergs and did his stuff. You know, he was a great actor, too. And it was bad business to me because all this time that he was out here- he left the morning before the big bullfight. And he left on a Sunday morning. And Ned Bradford, the editor-in-chief of Little, Brown, and Company, said, "Look what I just got from the *New York Times*." And it was this- I read (chuckles) this thing before I went to the bullfight. And I was pretty...

M: Kind of...

L: ...upset.

M: Ruined your day for you, didn't it?

L: Well, it didn't ruin my day because there were so many other good things happening. It just made me godamn mad that Frank Dobie...

M: Because he'd been here knowing that he had written...

L: And knowing all about it and that it had been printed!

M: No one else knew about it?

L: And it had been printed. And then he acted the, you know....So it burned me. So I let Ned Bradford know how I felt. And, of course, Ned then felt kind of responsible because he was Frank's editor, too. And there was a dropping off of our friendship for about three years after.

M: But you didn't talk to him, then, after you read the review? You just...

L: No.

M: You told...

L: I just...

M: ...Ned Bradford...

L: Yeah.

M: ...how you felt and...

L: And I never said anything. And my silence was, I think, was just the correct thing. It got old Frank a little bit.
(chuckles)

M: Did he...

L: Lon Tinkle, [co-editor of *The Cowboy* (New York, 1959)], said that it did. Lon was out here, too. And, of course, he went back to Dallas, but he traveled down to Austin and Frank traveled up to Dallas and they had discussed it. And, you know, Lon says that in that original biography of Dobie that he thinks it's the only time that he ever displayed jealousy to anyone. I think Frank really wanted to write [The King Ranch]. He could take a crack at rich people that invited senators to their ranch instead of professors. (chuckles)

M: But Frank didn't try to get a hold of you, either. You were just kind...

L: Oh, no.

M: ...of quiet.

L: Well, then, he wrote a letter. I don't want to talk about any of that because we buried it.

M: You buried it. But one thing, if we could just cover a little bit. You did come back together shortly before he died.

L: Sarah went on some kind of a Junior League or welfare business

or something or Hope Foundation or something. She was in Austin and she said, "I'm going by and see Frank. I think it's terrible that you all are so far apart." And she went. And, oh, Frank was, you know, very, very happy. And so was Bertha. And so they parted as dear friends the way they had been with the invitation that whenever I could get to Austin, why, they would like very much if I would come by. So when I took that "Ranger Escort West of the Pecos" painting down to John Connally, who had an office there in the Capitol, why, the afternoon after the presentation, I went by the Dobie house. And I think I told about how Frank lighted up his pipe and Bertha came in and said, "You're not supposed to smoke!" and all of this stuff.

M: You didn't say it on tape. You told me, but you didn't say it on the tape.

L: Well, anyway, we parted. He gave me an *abrazo* and we was very happy that we let bygones be bygones. It wasn't more than three or four months later that he died. And, of course, Bertha made me one of the pallbearers. I didn't feel hypocritical at all. Frank had done so much for me and we had patched it up. I think Frank was genuinely sorry that he had written that review. Bertha said he suffered over it. And I was glad he had suffered. (laughter) That's one of the very few things in that as I look back upon my life that, I think,

there was something kind of wrong about it. And I don't like to think about it anymore. I could never figure how a friend would do that. You know, I didn't know Walter Prescott Webb nearly as well, but he countered it with a grand review, you know. And out of friendship, you know. I never knew whether he'd talked to Frank about it, but he certainly did say that I had done a good piece of historical writing and so on and that he liked it and so on. I think it was in the *Herald Tribune*. Frank's was in the *New York Times*. Anyway...

M: Okay. During *The King Ranch*, too, you talked about you and Sarah kind of taking a break in doing the mural in the library...

L: Well...

M: ...and I wanted to clarify a little bit about collaboration about you and Stan Stoefen. You talked about José Cisneros doing the designs for the end of the...

L: of the bookcases.

M: ...bookcases, but there was some confusion about the tables and the designs, remember? So I thought we'd get that on tape...

L: Sure.

M: ...so we can clarify that.

L: Well, Stan, who was a remarkable craftsman in wood....And we thought that he could do a beautiful piece that would extract the quality of the mural. He saw it and said, "Let me do it." And he designed this table that had a beautifully finished, sort of a pre-formed top, and wrought iron legs and chairs that fit the general feeling of this table. And that was the thing that went into what they call the Southwest Room where my mural was at that time. It seemed to me that it fit in beautifully and that Stan had done a wonderful job. The other table- he made two tables and chairs. The other table was for the collection of books in Spanish that Mrs. Sullivan had very carefully nurtured. And Stan found a picture of an old Spanish monastery table. And it was out of the refractory of this old Spanish monastery. And it was a very handsome kind of Renaissance kind of thing. And Stan found some good seasoned pecan wood and he did a table and, I believe, there were six chairs. Very handsome. But those were never put in the Southwest Room.

M: Southwest Room.

L: And I don't know [where they are] now. Mary Sarber says

they don't quite work because they're not the right height for people to sit and read and take notes from. And I don't know what's happened to the free form and the...

M: Yeah. I'd like to find it. One other thing that I'd wanted to clarify was on page one [hundred] forty-six was when you were writing *The Hands of Cantú* and you and Sarah visited Al Fleming in Malta.

L: Yeah. Al and Mack.

M: Al and Mack Fleming. So I thought you'd tell me a little bit about what Al was doing there because that kind of flowed in with your trip on the *Saratoga*.

L: Sure.

M: This trip...

L: This was...

M: ...to Malta was how many years later after that?

L: Oh, not many. Maybe four...

M: Four years. Not too long.

M: You hadn't seen them since you'd been on the *Saratoga* with them?

L: No. Or had I? I don't think so, but we were in contact then. Sarah and Mack...Her name was MacGregor. And Sarah and Mack were in kind of cahoots and lots of things and they...

END OF TAPE 16, SIDE A

BEGINNING OF TAPE 16, SIDE B

M: So Sarah and Mack had been in touch.

L: Yeah. And, I think, maybe we had seen them in Washington, too. I'm not sure. I know we spent some time up there in Washington and that's what was probably after the Malta trip. Anyway, we were going to Europe. And I had been down to South America to Argentina with Bob Kleberg and talked to a great collector of ancient Spanish treatises. And one of his main interests [was] within the early type of horsemanship, which was just what I was looking for. I got from him- I can't remember his name. He was called Juan- oh, it was a real common name, like Mendoza or something like that. I got exactly the kind of information I wanted about riding in those

days- *a la jinete* and *a la breña*. I think I went into that.

M: Uh-huh. You mentioned that.

L: So when we were arranging our trip, why, I said, "Well"- I believe this is the first time Sarah had been to Europe. I said, "We've got to go and re-visit all the places in Italy that I love so much?" And that's when we decided to go on the *Cristobol Colon*, the Italian line ship. It was a very good ship. And we cruised down to Naples. And then the Flemings cooked it up to have a Navy guy meet us in Naples and take us on down to Malta. And they had a beautiful house there. Al, [and] I don't recall his exact title, but he was the Admiral in charge of the American ships in the Mediterranean and the headquarters there. The main guy was a British admiral. He ranked- Al was the rear admiral and this fellow was, I think, a full admiral. And Al had this beautiful villa, a driver, and all the perks that a admiral could get when he's on shore. And we had a wonderful couple of weeks there with them. And amongst the things....One of the reasons I was so anxious to- not only the fun and the friendship with the Flemings the old fortress of the Knights of Malta had a wonderful museum with horse furniture and it had all the stuff in there that was used in the latter part of the 1500s. And there I got quite a bit of the stuff for *The Hands of Cantú*.

Then when we left the Flemings we went up to Rome. And

it was strange. The Executive Officer on the USS *Shenck*- that was my first wild ride up in the North Atlantic- he was the naval attache for the ambassador in Rome. And we had a big time there. And he put us onto this place called Museo Stibbert up in Florence. That was an English brewer's villa that he converted into a museum for his great collection of arms and armor. And they had a great bunch of horse furniture. It was wonderful to be in there and see, actually, the original leathers and the original textiles of the saddle covers and all of that kind of....And that was the main thing about gathering the material for the horsemanship in *The Hands of Cantú*. And then- I can't remember exactly how it came to me. I think it came through Dick Kleberg- a treatise about riding *a la jinete y la breña* that had been published in Mexico City by the Charro Club. And somehow or other, Dick got hold of a copy and he helped with some of the antique Spanish terms in the thing. And that kind of completed the research I did for *The Hands of Cantú*. I had a lot of fun with it. That was the most fun of any book that I ever wrote.

M: You know, there was a little bit of confusion in here. Will you just very briefly describe the story line of *Hands of Cantú*?

L: Well, it opens with a letter from the great lord of Nueva Viscaya. It's a northern province of Mexico. It was Nueva

España then. And the letter is addressed to don Vito Cantú, who was the great horseman and breeder of horses that had been so prominent in the early days of the viceroy Mendoza. And when this boy....The letter was carried by a young man who was probably the illegitimate son of the son of the nephew of the great lord, Diego de Ibarra- I'm getting all mixed up. Anyway, the story was the journey of this young man up to the early Durango hacienda of Don Vito Cantú and of their subsequent journey up to where there had never been any Spanish exploration. They crossed the Rio Grande and into the Pecos and seen the first buffalo and so on. And then the letter ends with the young man carrying the letter back from Don Vito Cantú to Don Diego Ibarra. And the development of the story is in between those two letters.

M: How did the illustrations in that book differ from prior illustrations...

L: Well...

M: ...that you had done?

L: Ned Bradford- I never showed him a manuscript until it was all finished. And I went up there and showed him the manuscript and he was charmed by it. He said as far as he had ever seen [anything], it was a unique kind of thing. You know, I tried

to make [the narrative read as if you read English and think you were reading it in Spanish. And he said, "Now, you're going to illustrate it. How do you plan the illustration?" I said, "Well, if it's so unique, can Little, Brown, [and] Company afford to have the things done in that small-screen lithography?" And I said, "If you could, I would like to make all the illustrations and the portraits with my stick of Chinese ink." This tickled Ned Bradford and he sold it to the powers that be in Little, Brown, [and Company].

So I did these illustrations. My previous illustrations had been done as straight line drawings under the pen and ink. And this was a new departure using half tones, which were beautifully reproduced by this small screen lithography they called it. It was done by the Meridien Gravure Company. The manager there was a friend of mine named Harold Hugo. And the production chief there at Meridien was another friend named Bill Glick. And they saw this thing through in grand shape. And I think the illustrations are kind of unique as (chuckles) the text is.

M: Did you ever use so many portraits...

L: No, no.

M: ...of people in...

L: This seemed to be a way to tell something about New Spain that you couldn't tell except by an extended history. You could see these faces [of] the old soldiers and the first vaqueros and of the noblemen that came over. You might understand exactly how New Spain was. So the portraits....I did the portraits first and hung them over my work table- right over there. And I'd see them every morning and they'd speak and I would go back to the story.

M: You've always been interested in portraits.

L: Yeah. I think I started, really, thinking of portraits....

M: Way back in the Chacmool society?

L: Yeah. (laughter)

M: Well, you know, I'd like to get into that Sam Rayburn portrait if you don't [mind]. Do you mind talking about that today or...

L: Oh, no. That's fine. How are we doing?

M: We've got about twenty-five, thirty more minutes.

L: Sure, that's fine!

M: Is it still good enough to keep going?

L: Sure.

M: But we can wait.

L: No. Let's...

M: Would you rather wait and do it...

L: Let's go with it.

M: But you told me off tape, you know, last time about the Sam Rayburn and the whole history behind that- how you came to do it and about your trip to the White House.

L: I'm trying to think of that judge's name that was, really, responsible for it and I don't have any record of it. He was a representative [in] the House of Representatives and a congressman from the same district that Sam Rayburn had been in for so many years. It wasn't the same district. It was the next. And this fellow was a sort of a disciple of Sam Rayburn. And when Sam died, why, of course, there were a lot of ways that he could be memorialized. And they finally decided they would name the new congressional office building for Sam Rayburn and, of course, they wanted a portrait of him.

They hired a sculptor to do the sculpture. And it's lifesize and it looks like Sam's a dwarf there by a fountain.

And, so, this- oh, I can't remember [his name]. He liked my war work and he was a great friend of Ewing Thomason's. They went into Congress together. And, I think, it was Truman [who] had nominated this congressman- and his name I can't remember- as a justice in the courts for patents in Washington. It was kind of a juicy, patronage job, I guess. And, I think, Sam Rayburn had had something to do with it. And, so, this guy who like my work that I had done in the War and had read my books said, "Well, why don't we get Tom Lea to do it?" And that was the way it got started.

There wasn't any money for it, so this fellow- oh, I wish I could [remember his name]- he was a nice guy. Anyway, he took up a collection from the congressman that had known old Sam. (chuckles) That's how they paid me. And he came to me and said that they had some money and they'd like to have a portrait to hang at the entranceway- the main office entrance where the statue was over in a kind of ornamental thing, as I recall.

So instead of doing the thing lifesize, I thought, "Well, Sam should be immortalized a little larger." I did the thing as I had been doing those heads in the War- almost twice the size. And I studied, oh, fifty photographs. One of the most satisfactory photographs came from the guy who's now the Secretary of the Treasury- what's his name- [a] Texas senator.

M: Oh, Lloyd Bentsen.

L: Lloyd Bentsen. And he was very strong about saying, "Now, this is the only picture that, I think, is worth a damn that I have of my friend Sam Rayburn and you sure better get it back to me safely." Which I did and which was very useful. And I worked on the portrait quite a long time and got one finished and destroyed it. I didn't think it was right. It was poorly painted. So I made re-studies and, particularly, of the hands holding the gravel- I mean the gavel (chuckles)- and the posture of Rayburn, who was a very short man. And, you know, he looks big...

M: He does look big.

L: ...but he was a sort of a small fellow and- everything but his performance (chuckles). And I made this second one- which the portrait pleased me even better- and sent photographs of it to Judge ?. And they were all enthusiastic. [They said], "Bring it up and we're going to have a nice occasion here at the dedication of the portrait." So as it turned out, why, this judge got Ewing Thomason and Abby and, of course, L.B.J. and we had quite a- oh, and Sam Rayburn's folks came. It was quite a dedication thing in the building in one of the committee rooms. And, I don't know, some guy made a political speech (chuckles) and everything and then they pulled the

curtain. And there was old Sam. And everybody liked it, which relieved Sarah and me very, very much. And one of the guys that came down from Washington from his office in New York was C.R. Smith. And C.R. had known about this portrait. I think he was one of the contributors. And we've got to look up this judge's name.

M: We'll find it.

L: Find it. Anyway, C.R. said, "Well, when you get ready to get the portrait up there, why, you let me know and I'll have some of my fellows ship it. [They'll] bring it up on the plane by hand." So I let them- I'm sorry (coughs). So I let him know and the regional office boy of American Airlines came- I told you about that.

M: Right, but it's not on tape so I want get that.

L: He came by to pick up the thing and take it out to [where] they were going to send it on a regular airlines. It wasn't going freight. And it was a windy day. And that guy had a little peewee, I don't know, a...

M: Volkswagen Beetle? (chuckles)

L: ...Volkswagen or something and he said, "Sure, I can take it.

I can get it alright." And he had some rope and he roped the thing on the top of this, you know, [vehicle], and I saw him disappear [around] (chuckles) the corner with this great big portrait on to his . . . like, it was bigger than the top of the...

M: Did he wrap it in something first?

L: No, no.

M: Just put the rope on top of the...

L: It didn't have any wrapping. He just put it on....Of course, the thing I had had Stan mount some very good linen canvas on masonite, so it wasn't anything that could punch through. And it was a very sturdy frame and it would have been a real problem to get in an airline's door. But, (chuckles) anyway, the guy got it out to the airport and the next time I saw it, it was in fine shape there in Washington, ready to be dedicated. (laughter)

So the night after the dedication, why, they had a dinner for [the Ewing Thomasons]. The Johnsons wanted to honor the Thomasons and kind of left-handedly honor Sarah and me for the occasion. And they asked Sarah and me who else we'd like to have at the dinner there at the White House. And we said, "Oh, we'd like to see our friends C.R. Smith and we'd

like to see Joey and Jimmy Polk." He was stationed down at-
what's the name of the big fort- Myers.

M: Myers.

L: So we had a very nice evening at the White House up in the
living quarters. And everyone was so cordial and everything.
And I noticed that C.R. Smith and the President went over in
the corner and were discussing something. And not long after
that, the President appointed a new cabinet member- C.R. Smith
as Secretary of Commerce. And I think it was the first time
he'd ever met L.B.J.

M: Oh, is that right?

L: It was a very casual kind of meeting and so, you know, big
building. Anyway, we helped pretty good. We'd been
instrumental in giving C.R. Smith an opportunity to take a
shot at something else, you know. (chuckles)

M: Right.

L: He was a great guy. But...

M: So he served, for what....How many years did he serve as
Secretary of Commerce?

L: Not very long. L.B.J. had, you know, he'd taken over when Kennedy was assassinated. That was for two years, I believe. And then he was elected for four years. And this was not too long before his term was over, you know. Then he said he wouldn't run again. But the Vietnam stuff was going on. So I don't think that old C.R. was Secretary of Commerce much more than a year, year and a half, something like that. Of course, at that time, why, John Connally was also in the cabinet as Secretary of the Treasury. [There were] three Texans there. They all liked old Sam Rayburn. I never saw Sam Rayburn alive. Does that do it?

M: Yeah, that's great. That's great. I think that'll about do. You about ready to stop for today?

L: Alright.

M: Okay.

L: I don't know what's the matter with me. I...

END OF TAPE 16, SIDE B

BEGINNING OF TAPE 17, SIDE A

L: Seven seven.

M: That's right, seven seven, yeah.

L: I got the cutest note from Becky Craver. (taping stopped and started again)

M: This is a continuation of an interview of Tom Lea by Adair Margo on July 7, 1994. Tom, I thought today we'd talk just a little bit about your painting. And in going over some of your recollections of painting during the War, you talked about how you would make notations of what you saw and then use those notations when you came back home to paint a finished picture, but how with time you wanted to train yourself so that you didn't even have to make notations. You could....

L: Well, that's, I think, partly true. I never did quite get over the necessity for making some kind of a sketch- a notation is a better word- of position of form and color. And then, later, I learned....At first I would, you know, try to note how to mix each color and the gradations of tone and so on. But in the final training that the wartime experience gave me, I learned to see and to record pretty well so that it wasn't necessary wasn't for me to make so much of a notation. And I could remember more vividly my plan for the painting

rather than the actual visual appearance of what was before me.

M: And then it was somewhat the same way when you began to write. You talked about going down to Mexico the first time and not even taking a pad so that you could hear.

L: Well, I didn't take a sketch pad, but I took a little notebook and a fountain pen. And that way, I was able to sort of shift gears into a different world of perception- that of hearing instead of seeing. OF course, they're all mixed up always, finally, together, but one predominates, I think, when you're trying to write good prose and the other when you're trying to make a good drawing.

M: Was it just pure self-discipline, you think, that it took to train yourself to see things so well so that you would recall it? A matter of discipline, or...

L: I don't....I think it's a matter of desire to do better, a matter of....I don't think it's so much a consciousness of discipline. I think it's wanting to do a thing. As I think that the main part of what's known as talent is a strong desire, rather than some kind of nebulous gift that you were born with. I think talent might be some kind of starting point, but for it to ever come to fruition there has to a

very, very strong desire to do a good piece of prose or a good painting.

M: And that's a desire you've always had.

L: Well, I don't think I have gotten off of that track too often. I've had lots of failure- lots of stuff has gone to garbage can- because of standards that you create within yourself. And if it doesn't come up to that standard, why, you don't carry it on. But I have tried, always, to stay on a path that would lead to something better in the performance of my craft. And after all, I think, so much of what I've tried to do has been craft. I've had the greatest respect for people who are able to, oh, create a cabinet, or a table, or to build a house, or to set a window into a wall -things of that kind- a plumber, I think, a man who can or an automobile mechanic. They're wonderful. They're craftsmen. And as a painter, I have tried to have that respect for the tools of my trade and that knowledge that will allow me to use them well. I think an awful lot of what I've tried to do is craft rather than any thought of high art and its significance or its aesthetics and all of that. I tried to do things that would make me an honest practitioner. I don't even know if painting is a profession or if writing is a profession. I think it's something like....I guess preachers call themselves professionals and, in a sense, maybe painters and writers are

a type of preacher preaching about the structure and beauty or ugliness of the world.

M: Well, our last visit we talked about your last piece of fiction, which was *The Hands of Cantú* and then how you were pulled more toward painting. Can you talk just a little bit more about what you've enjoyed painting the most these past decades and what you kind of see as your best pictures? Is that possible?

L: Well, I really....In looking at my pictures they all seem like some kind of stepping stones to me and sometimes my step falters and when it advances I like it. I don't know about naming any figure of paintings. All of my paintings that I saved are something that I thought were worthwhile and that I liked, but I can look at some paintings that sort of carried me forward- at least, in my opinion, forward. Right now, I can think of the painting I did for Maury Kemp down in Sinaloa in Mexico, the- oh, knocked down and sorrowful-looking adobe with this beautiful bougainvillea growing by its side. And, I think that, technically, paintings like that- paintings like there was in the shadow of John Constable after that visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. I did a painting which I call "Socios," which means partners. It's a man and his horse. And it's very, very loosely painted, but, I think, very, very sound in its structure. And that was a step

forward. I think that the paintings that I've done recently have been much concerned with the sky and the sky is the great....The maker of landscape is the light from the sky and it's always something that, I think, any good observer of landscape is most concerned with. The wonderful, ever changing light on the structure of the world.

I can't answer your question about favorite paintings. Some paintings have been more fun than others and that's the kind of a way that, I think, a painter has to look at his work. When he suffers and scrounges with it, why, he naturally feels something like he's brought a sick child back to life, but he's not ever happy with the memory of how he produced it. So, it's very difficult to say he values this painting that he's suffered with. Maybe just as much as the one he enjoyed. And it makes whatever he says out of his labor, I hope, a kind of unity. It brings the unity...just the progression of the man as he goes through the years with this intense desire to do better. I don't know whether I'm making myself...

M: No. You are.

L: ...clear or not.

M: You make yourself very clear. Well, one time you'd talked about tourist pictures versus pictures of what you know. Are

the paintings...

L: That's something that I feel....The only time I felt that I was a tourist and, also, understanding what I was seeing was the summer I spent in Monticello, Illinois at Sarah's home. And the Sangamon river bottoms and those rolling prairies and the trees, the closeness of the green and the growth of the crops and all of that fertility kind of got into me and I felt very much at home that summer. When you go to a place like, oh, Martinique or Guilin, China, or Samoa, or Newfoundland, or Greenland, or outback in Australia, you're there with your eyes wide open and with a desire to remember and retain. And you see things that as an artist you want to record. Maybe they're not the kind of thing that a person who has lived there and had in his heart and soul....They're not the kind of thing that that person would create. This is an onlooker, a spectator's view. For instance, I did a painting which I liked very much of the River Li, near Guilin. And, I think, that's it's a tourist picture that was influenced very much by that tourists' love of the old Sung masters. That kind of landscape in classic Chinese painting. So it all comes together, keeping your eyes wide open. Having the desire to record it. That's what makes a painter different from anything else is that desire to record, I believe.

M: Well, one other short question because we talked about you're

being- kind of handling your own work. And I wanted to ask you ...has handling your own work been a satisfaction to you, where you kind of keep control of your own life and your own production and...

L: Well, it was....I just didn't.....After seeing how agents worked in Hollywood and sort of drew sustenance from non-work, I thought it would be very good for me to steer clear of those until I met a person that had a gallery in my hometown and who seemed to be just right to just take over the function of displaying and understanding and selling my work. After all the years I do have a representative now- the person who is taking these notes, Adair Margo, whom I esteem very highly.

M: But that happened pretty late in life. (laughter)

L: It did. It did, indeed.

M: At age eighty-six.

L: That's right.

M: So up until that time, you really were responsible for...

L: Well, I...

M: everything- the painting and the selling and the- everything.

L: I was fortunate, though, to have friends that came around and didn't ask me to paint a certain thing. They didn't commission me and, of course, I never took portrait commissions. But they would come around to the studio and see and say, "Oh, let me have that." So it, really, wasn't much of a selling job for me. It was a matter of trying to produce something that spoke to people. I never tried to show off as a person that is interested in aesthetics, as such, or any study unrelated to this craft that I believed in. That goes for writing and painting.

M: So you just have a list of people you'd call when you...

L: Well, I wouldn't call them. I'd see them at a party or something like that and they'd say...

M: But didn't people just ask to be put on a list because...

L: Yeah, they did.

M: ...they wanted a piece and you didn't...

M: I had a list and Sarah was always saying so and so and so wanted a painting. And I said, "Well, I'll put it on the

list." And I kept the list. It's still there in the desk drawer. And, usually, I didn't act on that, but if somebody came along to the studio and said, "Oh, I like that piece." So I very, very seldom- unless people kept after me- ever turn loose of anything, except if somebody came to the studio. And most of them were good friends, you know.

M: Isn't that a satisfaction?

L: Oh, that's a great satisfaction. And it seems, to me, one of the things that I treasure most is the fact that my paintings are mostly in the homes of friends whom I know and not somewhere where they're in the public view. This is a kind of a talk between me and my friends- these paintings. It's like sitting in that little library room that we have in our home. When I sit there I feel surrounded by friends- the books and all have spoken to me.

M: My last question was just how....Do you think about how you'd like to be remembered? Or does that...

L: Well...

M: How would you like to be remembered?

L: I'd like to say this kind of to end this pleasant recording

experience. In a long life, I've been blessed with great good fortune. In mind and heart, I've had high adventure. In work, I have found quietly abiding happiness as well as never-ending challenge. Throughout the years, I have never relinquished the hope that I may learn to make tomorrow's work better than today's.

M: Well, I think that is it.

END OF INTERVIEW