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NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
AS TO ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

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Signed

G. Philip Bauer

Date

Nov. 22, 1974

Accepted:

Signed

James B. Rhoads
Archivist of the United States

Date

Dec. 9, 1974

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with G. PHILIP BAUER
Former Assistant Archivist for Civil Archives
Washington, DC - April 24, 1973

Major Biographical Information:

Born, St. Louis, Mo.	1898
A.B. Washington University, St. Louis	1922
A.M. Washington University, St. Louis	1923
A.M. Harvard University	1929
Ph.D. Harvard University	1935
Editorial Staff, Encyclopedia Britannica	1935-1936
Research Assistant, Survey of Federal Archives, WPA	1936-1937
Assistant National Director, Survey of Federal Archives, WPA	1937
Assistant, Division of Research, National Archives	1937
Assistant Archivist, Division of Independent Agencies Archives	1937-1939
Assistant Archivist, Division of Labor Department Archives	1939-1942
Associate Archivist, Division of Labor Department Archives	1942-1946
Editorial Assistant, World War II Records Project	1946-1947
Associate Archivist, Industrial Records Branch	1947-1948
Editor, Records Control Branch	1948-1951

Assistant and Acting Director of Archival Management	1951-1962
Assistant Archivist for Military Affairs	1962-1963
Assistant Archivist for Civil Affairs	1963-1965
Retired	1965

Interviewer - Philip C. Brooks

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

INTERVIEW WITH

G. PHILIP BAUER

April 24, 1973

BROOKS: How did you get into the SFA-Archives business in the first place?

BAUER: It's very simple. I got my degree at Harvard in June of '35 and I didn't find a teaching job. I got a temporary job with the Encyclopedia Britannica in New York and that ran out in April, I think it was April, of '36. I needed a job and several people suggested to me that I might apply at the Archives. I did. I was interviewed for a job by Nelson Vance Russell and we didn't get along from the start.

BROOKS: Did you ever?

BAUER: It was a very unpleasant interview, and he didn't give me a job, obviously. Philip Hamer had talked to Arthur Schlesinger, the Elder, when recruiting for the SFA (Survey of Federal Archives), and Schlesinger had suggested my name to him. Hamer was looking for somebody I think from Massachusetts and Schlesinger recommended me for it.

BROOKS: To work up there.

BAUER: But when Hamer heard that Nelson Russell was interviewing me, he thought that I had that, and so he dropped that idea. And when the Nelson Russell thing fell through, which was immediately, I got in touch with Schlesinger again, he got in touch with Hamer, and Hamer then offered me a job as an Editor on the National staff of the SFA. On that job, I worked with the Judiciary records mainly. We edited the copy that was sent in from the field before they printed it up in final book form. Erik Achorn was on it, Betty Hamer (then Betty Edwards) was on it, Lewie Darter and Beers, Henry Beers, and Schellenberg was at that time the Assistant Director.

BROOKS: Did he spend all his time on that assignment then?

BAUER: He did, yes. He had been taken out of the Deputy Examiners pool and was given that job under Hamer.

BROOKS: Where was your office then? I've forgotten.

BAUER: We moved all over the building.

BROOKS: In this building?

BAUER: In this building, we were in this building. We were in one of the blind rooms, and we were up on the 18th tier, I don't remember the order. Wherever they had space.

BROOKS: I'd forgotten whether you were in this building or someplace else.

BAUER: No, we were always in this building. I think that our last office was up on the 18th tier, but I'm not sure of that. Schellenberg (Ted) was taken out to become head of the Agriculture Archives, and Hamer made me Assistant to the Director, I think that's what they called it.

BROOKS: Assistant National Director is what the personnel record shows.

BAUER: I think I got \$300 more. It was essentially the same job. I continued to be an Editor on the Judiciary records but I had a little bit of review on the other Editors. Not much. For the most part we just worked as a club. Then I wanted to get into the regular National Archives staff and they were opening up the record divisions. Hamer suggested to Flippin, who I think was a good friend of his, that he might use me, and Flippin very obligingly took me on. But I continued to work mainly for Hamer, still editing the Judiciary inventories. For most of the time I was with Flippin, I've forgotten exactly how long it was, but I think it was about a year or year and a half, I was occupied with that. Eventually I got into the business of Independent Agencies Archives. They had nothing but the NRA, I believe.

BROOKS: I think I came in there about the time you left.

BAUER: That's right.

BROOKS: The personnel record chart says you were in the Division of Research for a while, '37.

BAUER: Yes. Flippin's first job was Head of the Division of Research.

BROOKS: Oh yeah.

BAUER: Before they set up the Independent Agencies Division.

BROOKS: Right. He was working on that documentary history.

BAUER: He was working on the documentary history and I forget what I did on that, but I probably . . .

BROOKS: Compiled documents.

BAUER: I simply have no idea what I did, maybe I worked on the index, but I don't think so.

BROOKS: You never did actually work with Nelson Russell.

BAUER: No.

BROOKS: I didn't realize, maybe I did then, that Flippin had been a friend of Hamer's.

BAUER: Well, I may be mistaken about that, but at any rate they were Southerners. Well, who wasn't.

BROOKS: Yeah, at that time that's right, everybody came from North Carolina or someplace.

BAUER: Flippin was a friendly fellow who was miscast in the Archives, I think.

BROOKS: He got terribly tense and worried.

BAUER: He did, yeah.

BROOKS: This conveyed itself to the people who worked for him.

BAUER: And, well, you knew him as well as I did.

BROOKS: I was in that Division for two years or two and a half years.

BAUER: Well, that was longer than I was and I was very thankful to get out of it. Partly because they didn't have enough work to keep the professional staff busy.

BROOKS: That's right, and I think one reason I had a hard time with Flippin was that Buck had me on special assignments at various times, and Flippin was jealous of that.

BAUER: Yes, and he was annoyed by the fact that--he arranged to have me continue working for Hamer, but he resented it because we sat in the same office together and I had work to do and he didn't.

BROOKS: The SFA must have been an interesting place to work in a way. There was a pace that never existed in the Archives itself.

BAUER: Well the stuff came in fast and there was a lot of it, and there was a lot of work to be done on it.

BROOKS: Hamer must have worked like a beaver. He did a lot of travel . . .

BAUER: Yes.

BROOKS: His Second and Third Annual Reports are really quite interesting.

BAUER: Yeah. I had to make two or three field trips, as I remember, for him. But they were not important.

BROOKS: Reading those Reports is nostalgic in a way. A lot of the names of the people out in the field are familiar because they came into the Archives.

BAUER: They came into the Archives or into the Records Management business.

BROOKS: A lot of them were early members of the Society of American Archivists, and I greatly appreciated the assistance of Hamer and Luther Evans, because they encouraged their people in the SFA and the Historical Records Survey to join the Society and to come to meetings. They gave a tremendous boost to the Society in its early struggling days.

BAUER: In the end I didn't get along well with Flippin, although we were polite and superficially on good terms, always were, down to the time I last saw him on Pennsylvania Avenue. But on the job we didn't do well together.

BROOKS: He was a difficult person, I think.

BAUER: I finally asked, I think I asked Price to get me out of there, and I think at the same time Flippin must have asked to get me out of there, too. I shopped around for a spot in the Archives. I tried Oliver Holmes and I don't remember whether he had a slot, or whether he had a slot and had promised it. At any rate, he didn't take me on. I went to Lewinson and he had a slot and he took me on and we became good friends.

BROOKS: Did you know Lewinson well before that?

BAUER: No, I may have had lunch with him occasionally.

BROOKS: I'm going to do an interview with him sometime next month. What group of records or what was your special interest in Lewinson's division?

BAUER: In Lewinson's division what we had at first, if I remember rightly, was the N. R. A.

BROOKS: More than likely.

BAUER: Yes. I've forgotten--oh, the Food Administration is what Flippin had, and boy did we manicure the Food Administration. But the NRA field records came in first and then the headquarters later. That was the main job for quite a while in Lewinson's. I did what everybody else did, went through the boxes of stuff, put them in the tins, labeled them and listed them. The procedure of description was not yet crystallized. You remember perhaps the seminars that Buck held to try to systematize that work. Hyde had issued instructions before for the identification of series, and so forth. I don't think that anybody liked that system, although now I can't remember what was wrong with it if anything. It seemed clumsy. The picture that was in the minds of most of the Division Chiefs was different from that, and under Buck's leadership they developed the inventory system that I think still prevails, or did down to the time that I left, and it was a reasonably acceptable system for getting down what we had in the building. I never thought it was a very good system of finding aid.

BROOKS: I think the basic principles of that were drawn up by the Committee on Finding Mediums of 1940 of which Price was the Chairman. But I went through the files up here and a good many of the memos were written by Buck, and they also led to the decentralization of the staff of the functions to the records divisions.

BAUER: Yes, there's some truth in that too. For a while the Reference Division had a great deal of control over reference service. It was decentralized but I've forgotten exactly when.

BROOKS: I gather that that was one of the first aspects of the--what to me seemed the long-running controversy between the records divisions and the front offices--was between the records divisions and the Division of Reference. Nelson Russell was pretty insistent on his authority.

BAUER: Yeah. On the matter of accessions and disposal, when the deputy examiners were made chiefs of records divisions, that just automatically went along.

BROOKS: Same thing with the Special Examiners on the disposal function. Well, I don't want to bait you with questions about detail, but . . .

BAUER: It's better to do that because I've just forgotten so much.

BROOKS: You were in a number of different positions in Labor Department Archives from '39-'46, and Industrial Records Branch, the same thing, pretty much from '47-'48. What was your main activity there--in finding aids in reference or on the accessions side?

BAUER: Early on, of course, reference was mainly what we did. And Asa Thornton had the number two slot in the Division, that was Labor, and he did the accessions and disposal work for the most part. I may have participated in that, but I've forgotten. I think I had something to do with the--well I did have a good deal to do with the headquarters of the NRA. But then Asa went into the Army in '42 I think, early on anyhow, and at that time I graduated into most of those functions that he had had. But Lewinson, I think I remember rightly, tended to distribute all types of functions to all members of the staff, so that I couldn't say that I specialized in anything. I had reference work, descriptive work, arrangement, disposal, accessions.

But especially after Asa went into the Army. I guess I was there steadily until '46. At that time Hamer was given the job of preparing the World War II records volumes.

BROOKS: Right. You were in the World War II project from September '46 to July '47.

BAUER: Yeah, that didn't last long because it wasn't funded. And I think that I had all the civilian allotment and the military volume was Claussen's. We each had a staff of pretty good people.

BROOKS: Yeah. Guy Lee was on that project, wasn't he?

BAUER: No, Guy Lee at that time went into the Reference. You see Hamer had Reference on the side, and I think that Guy Lee pretty much took over the Reference function. But I'm not sure of that, Guy can straighten you out on that.

BROOKS: Crittenden then came up to work on the . . .

BAUER: Crittenden was head of the thing under Hamer, coordinator.

BROOKS: I don't think Crittenden liked working for the Government.

BAUER: No, he sure didn't, but he was a nice guy.

BROOKS: Oh yes, he was a person I had come to know well in the Society of American Archivists.

BAUER: But as I recall the show was pretty much Hamer's and Crittenden didn't throw much into the kitty.

BROOKS: Then, as you said, that wasn't funded very well and you went back to Lewinson.

BAUER: Well you remember, the Republicans became dominant in Congress I remember, and it seems there was a group in the Archives who were very much opposed to Buck. And they went down and worked on the Congressional committees to try and get him fired. But in any case, to get the new men out. You remember Dan Lacy came in. A number of people went out of the Archives who were in the records business in other agencies. Angel, Bahmer, Grover, and Sherrod East, they all went out.

BROOKS: A large number.

BAUER: A large number of them. And Schellenberg went over to the OPA, and when it came time for him to come back--he didn't get along well with Buck at any time, and Buck didn't get along with him. I've forgotten just exactly what the situation was, but at any rate, either Buck was not going to put him back in his old position or was not going to give him a promotion at a time when other branches were getting them. I've just forgotten. It may have been the consolidation of the branches. At any rate he thought he was being discriminated against, and so he had a grievance to take up to the Hill along with Irvine and Hufford and Charlie Stewart. New men had come in to take the places of those out on temporary assignments, and that is the crux of the thing I think. Dan Lacy, who was Buck's chief assistant . . .

BROOKS: Director of Operations.

BAUER: And Portner and Rifkind--we used to refer lovingly to that crowd as the "Goon" squad, because they were going out into the agencies to do a "quick, fine job" of settling up the War records. And the tactic of the conspirators was to try and get all of the "Goon" squad out. In order to do that they drew up a bill of attainder.

BROOKS: I remember Lacy was very angry about that.

BAUER: It was finally enacted, not in exactly the form that they wanted to begin with. But they managed by that device to get Guy Lee out on the grounds that . . . I don't know whether he was ever on the WPA or not. Well that was the main basis, that these people had come from the WPA after a certain time.

BROOKS: Guy was not with the WPA, and I think he still wonders whether anybody actually wanted to get him out or whether he was just caught in it.

BAUER: Well, I know that Schellenberg definitely wanted to get him out, because he told me so.

BROOKS: Because he represented the front office?

BAUER: No, he had worked for Schellenberg in Agriculture. Ted conceived an enmity for him, a very violent one. So he, in drawing up the bill of attainder, used a number of gimmicks to get the particular

people that he wanted. Rifkind and Portner of course were covered by the WPA part. So was Lacy for that matter.

BROOKS: I think the way that the legal provision read, finally, as it was worded, was a rider to an appropriation bill that eased out all the people who were on War Service appointments.

BAUER: Was that the ground?

BROOKS: Yes. Guy Lee never worked for WPA.

BAUER: No, I know he didn't.

BROOKS: But he had a War Service appointment.

BAUER: That covered most of them. It would have covered Gondos, but Gondos was able to go up and save his skin on the ground of his officers' training, I think. He was a reserve officer.

BROOKS: I saw a copy of Archiviews, that staff newspaper, issued in '47 that said the original provision would have applied to seven people, but it was finally reduced to four who were Lacy, Portner, Rifkind, and Guy Lee. Well, I don't suppose I need to ask why Schellenberg didn't get along with Buck.

BAUER: Schellenberg was a very willful man and so was Buck.

BROOKS: Do you think that all that finally had something to do with Buck's resignation and transfer?

BAUER: Oh yes, yes. In fact, I don't remember the exact timing, but well, he was not covered by the bill of attainder, but they made things so hot for him up there that he had to resign. He wasn't fired as I remember.

BROOKS: He resigned in, actually effective in May of 1948. All this other business took place in '47.

BAUER: He was the last man out and Grover was brought in.

BROOKS: Confirmed in less than a week.

BAUER: He had no enemies so far as I know at that time.

BROOKS: No I don't think he did, he was top-notch.

BAUER: He was confronted in '53 with a number of the same conspiracy group.

BROOKS: There was also a change of administration then.

BAUER: They tried to get him out when Eisenhower came in.

BROOKS: Some of the same people on the staff?

BAUER: I think mainly the same people. But mainly I think Irvine was most active at that time, and that accomplished nothing.

BROOKS: Which would you say of these successive appointments-- incidentally, I should remark someplace--I told Bert Rhoads that in this project I would concentrate on the period before 1953 because I went to California then, and I know less about what went on after that, even though I was in here three or four times a year. And also to keep the thing within manageable proportions. He asked me, however, if I was talking to anyone, who like you, served a considerable period after '53, if you felt there were things to say about the period after '53, to ask you to go ahead. I've had some very useful interesting comments already from people of that kind of service. But, you were in Independent Agencies Archives, Labor Department Archives, the Industrial Records Branch, then the Records Control Branch from August of '48 to July '51.

BAUER: What were the dates of that?

BROOKS: From August of '48 to July '51, Records Control Branch. I always objected to that word Control.

BAUER: I have no idea what the Records Control Branch was. Oh I believe I do, I think that Hamer's . . .

BROOKS: Hamer was in charge of it.

BAUER: Yes. He had had Reference and they added the editorial functions.

BROOKS: The finding aids.

BAUER: The finding aid program. First when the World War II records folded I went back to Lewinson, I think at a grade down. But Hamer and Buck, I think they were responsible, got me back into Hamer's, especially after Guy Lee left because that left a void of a sort. In fact I believe that it was the job he vacated that I moved into, I'm not sure of that. Of course it may have been changed in name, but my main function at that time was with the editorial group, with Flossie Nichols--reviewing of finding aids and editing them.

BROOKS: The editing of other kinds of publications I think was in Betty Hamer's Publications Branch.

BAUER: Under Page.

BROOKS: Right.

BAUER: We continued the work on the World War II volumes which had not been completed. Claussen undertook to do his volume I think while he was working over in the War Department, I'm not sure. At any rate, he took it on as a side dish. He had the military volume to complete. And I think that I continued to work on the civilian volume. All the rest of the staff had been wiped out in '47 and Crittenden had gone, and I think that that was my side dish in the Editorial group. I wouldn't swear to it. Anyhow, it was very slow getting that along--and along about 1950 I think it was, Grover became impatient with Hamer for not making faster progress in getting the volumes out. He thought that he was dawdling on it, but he wasn't. That was Grover's impression. So there was considerable reorganization--they took all of Hamer's functions away and gave them to Ted Schellenberg, and I think Ted Schellenberg was then the--the title I don't remember-- Director of the National Archives or something of the sort.

BROOKS: "Director of Archival Management" was the title..

BAUER: Yeah, that's right. Then I worked immediately for Schellenberg.

BROOKS: In July of '51 according to the personnel record.

BAUER: So he became my boss and I continued to work for him down to '62, I think.

BROOKS: Had you been close to Schellenberg before?

BAUER: He was in the SFA, he was the number two man at the beginning. I used to go over and play deck tennis with him, Bahmer, and Hamer. Oh, there was a tension between him and Hamer. It wasn't a total tension--Hamer and Betty, Bahmer, Lewie Darter, and I would go over to Ted's place for recreation after work. To Ted's house. He had a back yard. We became pretty good friends and our friendship continued right down to approximately '62, then we had quite a blow-up. But that's another story.

BROOKS: I think Schellenberg and Irvine were the most determined in what seems to me the controversy between the records divisions and the front offices. They were inclined to buck anyone in the front offices. Of course, Irvine was down here once. But Schellenberg and I didn't get along, ever, and I think partly because I was close to Buck for a good deal of time. I think that rubbed off to some extent. I really didn't observe myself so much of what went on after '48. I went over to the NSRB. I was back for three years, from 1950 to January of '53. When I came back, Grover asked me, "Can you get along with Schellenberg?", and I said, "Well, if it's part of the job I'll do it." And I think I got along better with him than any of the other records divisions chiefs at that time. But it was part of the job.

Would you say--this is a digression in a topical sense--that there was any particular change through the years in the kind or the quality of reference service?

BAUER: I would say that the change related basically to the fact that the records that we first had were not the kind that scholars were much interested in. They were more interesting to the genealogists. But gradually as we got more diplomatic records and records of the Indian Office, and to some extent those of the Agriculture and the War Department, other than the service records, the number of scholars who came increased. I think from the very beginning everybody was eager to have a few scholars visiting the Archives. They were never cheated.

BROOKS: Each individual scholar got some attention in the Annual Reports.

BAUER: There weren't a great many of them at first. They increased and became a considerable part of our public. I think that on the whole, at least down to the time that I retired, they were reasonably content with the service that they got.

BROOKS: This question has to do in part with the competence of the staff. As to whether the staff who worked on reference service were as well-qualified and as good say in the 1960's as they were in the 1940's.

BAUER: Oh, I should think fully. They knew the records better, they knew they were around, they had better control of the finding media. That was just the accumulation of time. Some of them developed a good deal of specialized knowledge in various fields. Jane Smith became a very valuable reference gal. And Mabel Deutrich was exceptionally good. And most of them, of that generation, had had to work at the business, whereas the generation before more or less was playing at it. As a consequence, I don't think that Irvine ever gave any significant help to other scholars. I think that it was Buford Rowland rather than Harold Hufford that became fairly expert in his area. People down the line in the State records became efficient. One of the most efficient was the one down at the very bottom, I've forgotten her name.

BROOKS: Pat Dowling.

BAUER: Dowling, yes. She was loved by all the scholars who came, because they could get what they wanted. In the War records the colored gal, whose name I've forgotten too.

BROOKS: Sarah Jackson.

BAUER: That's right, Sarah Jackson.

BROOKS: She's one of the best reference people in the Archives.

BAUER: The scholars appreciated it, they recognized it.

BROOKS: When I had War records in 1950-51, Reference Service was under the direction of Elizabeth Drewry.

BAUER: Yes, she was extremely good from the beginning. But early on when Nellie Russell was in charge of General Reference, I didn't think that his number two man was particularly good.

BROOKS: Setser. Well that again was back in the period where we didn't have so much of interest for the scholar.

BAUER: At that time our best reference gal was a gal who died . . .

BROOKS: Edna Vosper.

BAUER: Edna Vosper. You've been reviewing.

BROOKS: Well, I knew Edna because she was a Michigan gal, and we had a Michigan club that got together every once in a while.

BAUER: On the whole I think we had good reference people from the time that we began to have records that were of a scholarly interest.

BROOKS: Of course after the war the scholars themselves were more numerous. Do you think that all that has a relation to the effectiveness of the training program in the Archives?

BAUER: No.

BROOKS: Do you think the Archives ever--we've always had a certain amount of education, background education, but the training course, as such, has I think always been a problem. Do you think it's been effectively solved or not?

BAUER: No, I don't think it ever will be. It's a phrase.

BROOKS: Any special reason for that?

BAUER: People don't learn by being taught, they teach themselves. There's no other way.

BROOKS: There's a certain amount of sense in that.

BAUER: What they teach in the training course is either so obvious or so funny that it's discounted by the victims, and nothing comes out of it except a waste of time.

BROOKS: I think from my occasional observations, because I was out of town most of the time, that while you were with Schellenberg, when he was Director of Archival Management, a great deal of his attention was given to the training course, right?

BAUER: Oh yes, he wrote a book. He was away for I think a year or part of a year.

BROOKS: Was that when he went to Australia?

BAUER: He went to Australia.

BROOKS: And you were Acting Director of Archival Management.

BAUER: While he was away we did set up a training course in which each of the Branch Chiefs took a turn, as I remember it, and it was as ineffective as any other training course.

BROOKS: We had different kinds of things going clear back to '37 or '38. We had seminars in the divisions.

BAUER: When Schellenberg came back--in being sent over there one of his commissions was to develop a training course. He came back and settled down to write his book on archival management. He didn't like the system that we had adopted during his absence of having the Branch Chiefs preside over the training, and he set up a course that he presided over himself.

I overlooked one question back here. That is, who prepared the instructions for the SFA. As I recall most of that work was done by Schellenberg. Hamer approved them, of course, but I think that Schellenberg did most of the work on that.

BROOKS: You had a large number of relief employees who were inexperienced in that kind of work. And I think about the time you came on they had 3,000 people. The instructions were obviously of great importance, and I remember being at the time impressed by the effectiveness of the instructions in both SFA and the Historical Records Survey.

BAUER: I'm pretty sure that--well, I know that Schellenberg worked very hard on those and I think that he did most of the work on it.

BROOKS: And I think they were better developed and more effective than the forms we used here in the Archives.

BAUER: Oh, yes. There was a carry-over from those into the National Archives when Buck had his seminars. Buck had a finger in that too, in the SFA I think, for a little while.

BROOKS: The Advisory Committee or something.

BAUER: I think something of that sort.

BROOKS: Would you agree that Buck was pretty effective so far as the knowledge of what should be done around here.

BAUER: Oh yes.

BROOKS: His main problem was in getting along with people, right?

BAUER: It was a god-send when he came in and took over, and I think that even people who didn't like him felt that that was true.

BROOKS: That would imply that Dr. Connor wasn't as effective an Archivist.

BAUER: He was very relaxed.

BROOKS: Well, he was that.

BAUER: I don't think that he really was much interested in the whole thing.

BROOKS: But he was very good on relations with the Hill. He had a good deal of experience and consciousness of the importance of that relation. He was close to Roosevelt and there were a good many ways where I think Dr. Connor was very good. But he was very relaxed, that's for sure. He was a southern gentleman, a delightful guy.

BAUER: It would have been better if they had put Leland in that job to begin with.

BROOKS: Oh?

BAUER: I think so.

BROOKS: He wouldn't have taken it, at least he said he wouldn't have at the time.

BAUER: Didn't Roosevelt say he wouldn't appoint him?

BROOKS: He may have, I'm not conscious of that.

BAUER: Because he was a Republican?

BROOKS: Well, Roosevelt did say that he would prefer to get a qualified Democrat, that's true. But Leland did say very definitely--Jameson was eager to have him appointed--Leland was one of his primary candidates--and Leland did say that he wouldn't take it or wouldn't want to aspire to it.

To get back to this question of training and promotion, would you agree that one of the problems around here always has been somehow linking up professional competence as a result of academic training, native ability or something, with the Civil Service requirements?

BAUER: There was always that problem.

BROOKS: In fact, Bahmer spoke about a very effective job that you did in the early, sometime in the 50's I guess, of drawing up new standards--Civil Service standards--for Archivists.

BAUER: Yes I had to do that. I didn't know that they were any good.

BROOKS: Oh, he praised them highly. He said that you used a partial beginning of that job that Lewinson and I had done as a committee in 1950-51. But we didn't ever bring it to any conclusion.

BAUER: But I didn't think that I'd brought it to any conclusion. It quieted the Civil Service for the time being.

BROOKS: I wasn't here, I'm quoting Bob (Bahmer). On the same sort of topical basis, would you say anything about the development of the relations of the National Archives with other agencies through the years? It started as a small agency, its function unknown to most other agencies in a very exciting time full of New Deal emergency agencies, which the Archives was not. Sometimes when I went into other agencies as an examiner I found a good deal of a lack of understanding or appreciation, to put it politely, as to what the Archives was doing. Is there any statement you'd make on the development of our relations with other agencies?

BAUER: Well, I suspect that the improvement of our relations with the other agencies grew most rapidly during the war, when the agencies accumulated more stuff than they knew what to do with and they began to unload it on us.

BROOKS: They needed us.

BAUER: They needed us. They took from our staff a number of people in their records outfits--the War Department, the OPA, the Navy.

BROOKS: This reminds me that at that time I think the biggest advances were made in what we used to call Records Administration (it was later blessed by what I call sort of a fetish of being called Records Management--I don't think there's any substantial difference) --the biggest accomplishments were made in the Army and the Navy, and I've had some account of their activities from Angel and Bahmer in this project. We had a Records Administration Office at the time in the Archives which--although we had ten people I think once, during the first year I had charge of it--obviously didn't have the wherewithal or the substance to deal with it. Compared to the Army and Navy, it was a pretty small thing. But, it was in that position as head of the Records Administration program at the beginning of 1942--obviously Buck was very much in back of it--in that position that I became most involved in controversy with the Records Divisions. And I think that some of that was because this was the front office, a Buck program that they were opposing--some of it because some people, I'm sure Lewinson for example, felt that this business of being concerned with what the agency did with the records before they got to the Archives simply wasn't the proper job for the National Archives. I think that was a very conscientious opinion. Do you have any observation on that?

BAUER: My memory isn't too clear on that. You were in that business before the Portner-Rifkind group came in?

BROOKS: That is correct.

BAUER: I remember that there was a good deal of mocking at the function of the National Archives putting its fingers into the records-keeping processes of the agencies. But I don't think that that lasted long, partly because people from the National Archives went over and actually got right into it.

BROOKS: Including some of the people that I had employed up in this Records Administration office.

BAUER: My recollection is that they took it seriously and in most cases did a good job. I think that Schellenberg, give the devil his due, did a very good job on the OPA, I think.

BROOKS: I think so.

BAUER: We know, of course, that the military groups did exceptionally well.

BROOKS: Lewinson did a very good job with the War Relocation Authority. I remember that was one that got fixed in my mind then as one of the best retirement projects for an emergency agency's records at the end of the war. And Art Young did very well on the Office of Censorship. He was working in my office then. I guess I was Records Appraisal Officer by then.

What haven't we touched on? Well the thought occurred to me in view of your varied experience in the Records Divisions and the front offices that there was a good deal of talk, especially during the war, about the National Archives adopting a staff and line organization. Do you think we ever really did? The concept really I think was that the staff offices were not supposed to do operating functions, they were supposed to be concerned in advisory or review capacity.

BAUER: Well it is the function of the staff to tell the boss what to tell the line people, I know we talked a great deal about it but I don't think that we ever functioned on that basis.

BROOKS: We didn't.

BAUER: I believe that Hamer's records control, or whatever the hell it was called, was intended originally to be staff, but it became very definitely line. And there was, I believe, a good deal of push and haul.

BROOKS: Yeah. Guy Lee told me that he was conscious of a certain amount of feeling on the part of the records divisions when he, from Hamer's office, went into the records divisions to check on the finding mediums. The records divisions thought this was their job. And Ned Campbell told me one time, I guess when I was Records Appraisal

Officer and he was in charge of the War Records Office, and I gave final approval to the disposal and accessions jobs, that he wasn't going to review them in detail if I was going to review them in detail after him.

BAUER: There was a lot of that.

BROOKS: But also that function brought me into a very considerable argument with Dr. Buck, who could be irritating at times.

BAUER: That's the understatement of the year.

BROOKS: What were your principal activities in the position of Assistant Director of Archival Management? It all seemed to me that while Schellenberg was so heavily engaged with the training work, you had a great deal of the actual management of the National Archives to do.

BAUER: I sometimes just went as his emissary to the branches. Simply because he was busy with his training manual. Increasingly, an antagonism developed between Grover and Bahmer on one side, and Schellenberg on the other.

BROOKS: That I was conscious of.

BAUER: They found it convenient to talk to me, and did so. In some measure that was true with some of the branches. They found it hard to talk to Ted. It was pretty much like a secretary's job. But I shouldn't say that I ran the house. One of the first projects that Ted had before he started on his text was to prepare a handbook of procedures. He worked out one and turned it in to Bob and Wayne, and for some reason or other they didn't like the way he had put it together. The essential instructions were okay. I remember that they threw it back to me to recast in the form that they liked. Ted was willing, because he simply would not submit to doing anything in the form that they wanted. That was the first handbook of procedures that we had, I think.

BROOKS: It was useful outside the Archives proper even, in the Records Centers and the Presidential Libraries. Some of the elements of it were pretty basic.

BAUER: It was a useful compilation of things that had come out in separate memos and that had to be keyed and put together. I continued to be considerably involved in the editorial function, because I believe that I had attached to me as a side dish Flossie's outfit, and the winding up of the World War II volumes. We did get those out. And then Ted had me edit his text. I made no significant contribution to it, I simply edited it. As a matter of fact, I never thought it was a very good text. It was fairly conventional and doctrinaire.

BROOKS: It again brought together a lot of stuff. It was heavy reading.

BAUER: It was heavy reading. I always thought that much of it was debatable.

BROOKS: I came back here from the National Security Resources Board in 1950, in charge of War Records. Wayne said he thought it would be a good idea to have somebody that did not have any experience with military records take that thing over and look at it with a jaundiced eye. And I had a hell of a good time up there. I had a remarkably good staff. During about a year and a half I was there we reorganized the Office---that's when Old Military and Modern Military were set up. Incidentally, then I went on vacation in the next summer, of 1951. I remember the night I got home you called me on the phone at home, because you thought before I went to work the next day I'd better know that I had a different job. I was transferred from Chief Archivist of the War Records Office to Chief Archivist of whatever at that time the General Records or Diplomatic, Judicial, and Fiscal Branch was called. And Wayne said that he thought I really belonged there because my main interest was in the Diplomatic records, which was true. So I stayed there until I went to California. Well, what I started to say was, my memory of the period that I was Chief Archivist in those two offices, was that the records offices really had more of a free hand then than they did in the 40's.

BAUER: Oh, yes.

BROOKS: There was probably less interference from the front offices. That's probably one reason I got along very well. And I don't know whether that situation has continued since then or not. Perhaps it has.

BAUER: I don't know either. Well, there was a general reorganization in '62.

BROOKS: That's when you went over to the military records.

BAUER: When they split the Archives down the middle.

BROOKS: Right.

BAUER: And they took Ted out of it and put him into appraisal and . . .

BROOKS: That's right, they set up the Appraisal Office.

BAUER: Yeah, whatever they called it. And they put me first in military and Herman Kahn in the Civil Archives. And that whole situation resulted from the fact that Herman wanted to get out of Hyde Park.

BROOKS: That was partly on account of his wife's health wasn't it?

BAUER: Oh it could have been, it could have been that he just had enough of it, I don't know. I never asked him and I was never told by anyone.

BROOKS: By the time you're in one job for 13 years you begin to feel that way. I did at Independence after 14 years--that it's time to get out and let somebody else take charge for a while.

BAUER: Well, leaving that last half out, you feel it's time to get out.

BROOKS: Right.

BAUER: Then when Herman moved over into the presidential library coordination, I shifted over to the civilian, and Sherrod East came in and took the military business.

BROOKS: And you were Assistant Archivist for the Civil Archives until you retired, which was before but in the same year as Wayne, right?

BAUER: Yeah, just a little bit before, in '65.

BROOKS: Well, now, before I went to Independence Grover was quite candid about telling me you were one of the possibilities for an appointment to head the Truman Library, and you did a report on plans for the Truman Library which we read with a fine-tooth comb. It was very useful in many ways.

BAUER: I'd forgotten that.

BROOKS: Oh, that was a big job, you can't have forgotten that.

BAUER: I'd forgotten it completely.

BROOKS: It was a report on the organization of the place and on books that ought to be acquired by the Library. It was really something, and I found it very useful indeed. What I wanted to ask you was, if you had any special interest in or any comment on the Presidential Libraries and the development of this system.

BAUER: No, I was in favor of the development of the system. I had had nothing to do with it, except for that report, which I completely forget.

BROOKS: It was a big job.

BAUER: All I wanted was a promotion, and Bob I think rather liked to keep me here. I think Wayne was willing to have me go out to Kansas City.

BROOKS: Did you ever go out there on a trip to look it over?

BAUER: I don't think I did. I don't think I went out there until after you were there, I visited.

BROOKS: I think you were there at the time of the Society of American Archivists meeting in '61. Well, I'm sure that it was a great gamble to send me out there. For a job like that you just don't find anybody with exactly the qualifications.

BAUER: I think I remember that they felt--it was not my business--but I felt, too, that you would be a natural for it. And I didn't feel that I would be a natural for it, but as I say, I wanted a promotion and Bob came up with the suggestion that they'd give me a promotion here, which I think they did.

BROOKS: Well, Bahmer one time in a talk, at the time the portrait of Wayne was unveiled, emphasized the fact that Grover made the choice for a system of Presidential Libraries. And I wondered if you remembered anything particularly about the discussions or the differences of possibilities that went on at that time.

BAUER: No, I don't think I was involved in it--oh, maybe table talk but nothing serious.

BROOKS: The one thing I had thought about before that I might ask you about--and I should have asked you earlier to put this into any kind of chronology, --which we have violated a good deal already-- was the absorption into GSA. This was while you were in the Records Control Office, I believe.

BAUER: Yes, and it came just about the time that Ted took over, Hamer moved into the NHPC. That whole reorganization came I think about that same time.

BROOKS: Yeah, Ted's appointment here was a little after we went into GSA.

BAUER: What is the question that you were asking--whether I liked going into the GSA?

BROOKS: Partly that.

BAUER: I don't think I did, and I don't know of anybody in the National Archives who really did, including Grover and Bahmer. But I think that that was pretty much the work of Ed Leahy, I think that he pretty much pushed that through.

BROOKS: Yeah, the Hoover Task Force was heavily involved. Leahy in fact would have had a Records Management Bureau over the National Archives.

BAUER: And Grover didn't have much choice. He may have welcomed it at the time. I think that after it became an accomplished fact he found that there were advantages. I always thought that there were advantages after we were absorbed.

BROOKS: The National Archives got more support, more finances.

BAUER: It was a cushion between us and the Hill.

BROOKS: Probably the maintenance of the professional character of the institution was more difficult after we went into GSA.

BAUER: I think that was what we were afraid would be the case. But I think that the actual effect was the contrary. The first two Administrators didn't bother us much.

BROOKS: Larson and Mansure.

BAUER: We had to jump through the administrative hoops and justify our budget in a somewhat different way. But when Floete came in he made us a favorite child. We were the showplace. We got more money I think than we could have hoped to get on our own.

BROOKS: We had that experience in Independence. NARS was the showpiece of GSA and all the GSA people from the region used to love to bring their brass visitors just to see our Library. I think the same thing was true of the Archives. And Floete evidently developed a great respect for Grover.

BAUER: Yes.

BROOKS: So it's a mixed kettle of fish all the way around.

BAUER: I don't think we really lost anything by coming into the GSA. Does that cover it?

BROOKS: Unless you want to say anything else about your place as Assistant Director of Archival Management.

BAUER: Well, Schellenberg and I were reasonably good friends to '62, at which time we had a real blow-up. That was when the reorganization was taking place. And the boys in the front office pulled me into the reorganization, and didn't even tell Ted that it was afoot. Of course his spies told him. I was pretty busy working with them on the details of the reorganization, and he knew it and confronted me with it. I simply told him that I knew nothing about it, which was a lie. Of course, I was not supposed to tell him then. He knew it was a lie, and that was pretty much the parting of the ways.

BROOKS: That was that, yeah.

BAUER: We nodded to each other after that, but I think that's about as much as we accomplished.

BROOKS: Well, thank you very much indeed.