



AGREEMENT WITH THE  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE  
AS TO ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

I, Vernon D. Tate, of Annapolis, Maryland, in accordance with the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended (44 U.S.C. 397) and regulations issued thereunder (41 CFR 101-110), hereby assign to the United States for administration by the National Archives and Records Service all my rights, title, and interest, including any literary property rights that I may have in them, in the tape recording and transcript of the interview with me conducted by Philip C. Brooks on behalf of the National Archives and Records Service at Alexandria, Virginia, on June 8, 1973.

It is agreed that the tape (or sample portion thereof), and transcript will be available under the regulations prescribed by the Archivist of the United States as soon as the final form of the transcript has been deposited in the National Archives. It is also agreed that only the National Archives and Records Service shall have the right to publish or authorize the publication of the interview in whole or in part, aside from quotation in the normal concept of "fair use," providing that I or my heirs, legal representatives or assigns retain the right to publish in other form the statements or facts set forth in the interviews.

Signed Vernon D. Tate

Date 26 Feb. 1974

Accepted:

Signed James B. Roads  
Archivist of the United States

Date March 13, 1974

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with  
VERNON D. TATE  
Former Director of Photography

Major Biographical Information:

Born, Mt. Carmel, Illinois	1909
B.A. University of California at Los Angeles	1929
M.A. University of California (Berkeley)	1930
Ph.D. University of California	1934
Regional Director Project A, Library of Congress (Mexico)	1931-1932
Chief, Division of Photographic Archives and Research (Title varied) National Archives	1935-1944
U.S. Navy Reserve	1944-1945
Acting Director, and Director of Photography	1945-1946
Librarian, Massachusetts Institute of Technology	1946-1956
Librarian, United States Naval Academy	1956-1967
Archivist USNA	1967-1969
Retired	1969
Executive Secretary, National Microfilm Association	1947-1974

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Interviewer - Philip C. Brooks

National Archives and Records Service

Oral History Project

Interview with Dr. Vernon D. Tate

June 8, 1973

Interviewer - Philip C. Brooks

BROOKS: Vernon, as I remember it and according to the record you were one of the first early employees of the Archives, about I think the sixth professional employee.

TATE: Seventh, maybe. Sixth or seventh.

BROOKS: Your first annual report discusses very largely the acquisition of a selection of equipment for the Photo Lab. Do you think that's why your job was filled early?

TATE: Maybe, I'll tell you what the background was; you probably remember it.

BROOKS: I might remember it, but let's get it on tape so other people would have it.

TATE: As you'll recall, the National Park Service was beginning an historical program and Ronnie Lee (Dr. Ronald F. Lee) was heading it up; you remember Ronnie Lee?

BROOKS: Very well.

TATE: I made application there for a job since we were looking for jobs.

BROOKS: Were you then still in Berkeley?

TATE: No. I was in Washington. So were you. We were living up on B Street.

BROOKS: 140 First Street, Southeast.

TATE: 240.

BROOKS: 240. O.K. That's not important.

TATE: The house is long gone now. Well at any rate I was finishing up a job for the University of California. Microfilming Russian-American Fur Company records and so on. It was a job primarily for Dr. Carl O. Sauer and the library at Berkeley. That was what brought me back to Washington.

BROOKS: You came in September of 1934.

TATE: That's right.

BROOKS: Had you finished your degree at Berkeley by that time?

TATE: Yes. I got the degree in the summer.

BROOKS: In history. So you were really better qualified to be a professional employee than some of the professional employees.

TATE: Possibly--but I had a very definite interest in archives and research, and I put in an application at the Archives, as well as at the National Park Service. When Ronnie Lee called me up and offered me the position of regional historian for the seven western states it was attractive; Katherine (Tate) was still in California. You remember she was there the first year that I was here--and the thought of returning to California was not unpleasant. So I told him fine, I would take it, and he started my papers through. Then I went by the Archives to withdraw my application and saw Mary Healy who was Collas Harris' secretary.

BROOKS: That was in the Spring of '35.

TATE: Yes. Whenever it was--and so the bells started to jingle and whatnot. Apparently my name had been selected to head up the administrative section which was to cover photographic reproduction, the photostat, the reproduction of documents and the like. Bradley I think was on board working on motion pictures; sound recordings came later. But this position was primarily in Collas Harris' area. He proceeded to offer me a job forthwith, together with a sales pitch. Since I was more interested in the Archives than the National Park Service for various reasons, I went back to see Ronnie Lee and told him of the offer. It was an embarrassing thing in a way, but he was a good scout and he said O.K., he would release me if I would get someone to replace me. I got our classmate Russ Ewing who was glad to take the job; he kept it for several years until he turned it over to Ab Neasham, also one of our classmates, and went on the faculty of the University of Arizona from which, I gather, he's recently retired.

BROOKS: I think he died last year, as did Ronnie Lee.

TATE: Oh, I didn't know he died. But that was why I was appointed when I was. I was not appointed to the professional side. I was working for Collas Harris.

BROOKS: Am I right? My memory, which is not always very accurate, is that there was painted on the door "Division of Reproduction" as the first title. And that had to be changed in three or four weeks because people had so much fun with it.

TATE: No. That wasn't right. What happened was that Herb Angel when he came on to the Archives a bit later put out a little pamphlet; one of the pictures featured a very attractive young lady, Kitty Hawkins I think it was, in the foreground. It was captioned "some equipment for reproduction." Herb hasn't quite lived that one down yet. But I remember the title business was hashed about. It was photographic records and research, photographic archives, still photography, and so on and so on. The title didn't matter too much to me.

BROOKS: At that time, though, Harris, et. al., were primarily interested in the reproduction of documents rather than in the archival job of taking care of still pictures, right?

TATE: That's correct. The archival job was visualized, but that was about it.

BROOKS: This was one thing I wanted to ask: how well did you think the function of that job was visualized by the originators of the Archives?

TATE: I think very poorly. I think as a matter of fact I injected that particular concept in parallel with motion pictures, and it was developed very well I must say. In general, concepts in those days as you may remember were often vague, and they were susceptible of sometimes enthusiastic but relatively uninformed application. An example, are the speeches of a fellow I never got tired listening to, Tom Owen. Tom was a wonderful guy, like an old-time Southern Revival preacher and to get him going on Archives was an experience.

BROOKS: Before we get too far away from your coming to the Archives staff, what caused you to submit an application in the first place? Do you remember what interested you about the Archives?

TATE: It's the fact that I had worked a couple of years in the Mexican Archives.

BROOKS: Oh, yes.

TATE: And I had worked for the Library of Congress. I was interested in records and in research and in the curious fact the Mexican Archives were wonderfully complete and organized and we in our country had nothing to compare with them. And of course to see that wonderful building coming out of the ground that was once the Old Center Market . . . This I can't say from personal knowledge, but I'm told that the rats on the site were phenomenal in size and one of the popular pastimes of the period was shooting rats with a .22. And, you remember Tiber Creek?

BROOKS: Yeah. It's right under there.

TATE: At one time, I think in '36 or '37, there was a bad flood and the moat (that's why the Archives was built with a moat around it which later became parking) entrance was shored up with sand bags and no water came in although the water stood at two or three feet over Seventh and Pennsylvania Avenue.

BROOKS: You remember there was a concrete dish down below, and there were pumps there, and I suppose still are, that kept the water pumped out.

TATE: Yes, in case any got through. I remember, and some of the other things about the building. Of course my office when I first came, was in the Department of Justice before the Archives building itself was occupied.

BROOKS: We all started there in '35 and moved in the first part of November of that year.

TATE: I guess that's about right. And of course the equipment. Finding a place to put the laboratory was a problem. G-12, if you'll remember, was picked up and then later some more was added in a semi-circular room vaguely under the exhibit hall or something like that. You remember that large half of the room. I had that room too.

BROOKS: Then you went to the 18th floor once didn't you?

TATE: Yes, up on the 18th in the North wing. Way up at the top.

BROOKS: Well back to this point of what interested you in the Archives. I used to be quite angered by some of the staff who would say we were all frustrated historians out of jobs and didn't have any real interest in the Archives. I knew there were a good many of us that that was not true of. We'd had some experience and some interest in historical materials and the handling of them before.

TATE: Well, you know your work at the Library of Congress on the Writings on American History? Well, I remember it, Katherine continued it when you left it. It brought you and to a certain degree me in contact with some pretty impressive people.

BROOKS: Right.

TATE: One of them was Waldo Leland, who I think was one of the wisest and kindest of men and whose influence in bringing the Archives into being is phenomenal. Then of course James Alexander Robertson who had vast archival experience, was an inspiring gentleman. He became as you know first Archivist of Maryland.

BROOKS: And Jameson . . .

TATE: Jameson (John Franklin Jameson).

BROOKS: Jameson signed the paychecks for the Writings of American History job out of a fund that he personally collected.

TATE: Yes, that's right.

BROOKS: I wish now that I'd saved one of the checks, but I couldn't afford it.

TATE: But you know, there's a statue on the Pennsylvania side of the Archives, the male statue. I think it says "Study the Past." And it's claimed that that is a picture of J. Franklin Jameson. The opposite statue you know is the one that has the quotation . . . "What is Past is Prologue." And if you look at that profile it's a female statue, you'd swear that she was pregnant. You remember when the Archives was being finished, the stone cutters used to climb up there and cut away with air tools shaping the figures on the pediment. I climbed up one day and saw them at work and I got quite dusty. There was a large clay model of that down below. I don't know whatever happened to it.

BROOKS: One of the shocks I had in coming back here in '71 was that my son and various other people don't refer to that statue as J. Franklin Jameson anymore, they say that's the statue of Oliver W. Holmes. I mean our Oliver Holmes. Tell me, in this business of selecting equipment, did you have a pretty free hand?

TATE: Yes.

BROOKS: Had the architect already got into the act or . . .

TATE: Well, the architect had no interest in the photo equipment. The constructor, the architect's representative, was a fellow named Walsh, and he had an assistant whose name I can't remember whose wife managed an apartment at 9th and E Streets, NE. When Katherine came back here, he got us an apartment since apartments were then very scarce in Washington. He did the nuts and bolts, and he was a draftsman. He died two or three years later. He had a small boat, cut his foot, and got infection in this sewery Potomac and died of it. The architects' principal interests were in metal archival containers. Quite a few were brought and installed. They were a failure.

BROOKS: They were very much of interest to Louis Simon, the Supervising Architect, and he'd already drawn up a plan for the stack equipment, the archival containers.

TATE: That's correct.

BROOKS: Which was subject to the approval of the Archivist and was modified somewhat. I think they shared the blame for those steel drawers; but I gather that's not true of the photographic equipment.

TATE: No, no. Not at all. Of course, there wasn't too much of it. We had photostat equipment in those days. Then we had a small process camera because we did the printing. That is, it wasn't permitted to be called printing, it was called duplicating in those days. And, we used the multilith press. We did quite a lot with that. The other photographic equipment gradually accumulated, but there was no friction or any dictation. As a matter of fact the ordering of equipment had nothing at all to do with the architects. All they did was to alter the building or make the changes--building a darkroom. And they did it the way we wanted it.

BROOKS: But you worked pretty closely with Harris on this?

TATE: Oh yes. And the purchasing officer Wilson--do you remember him?

BROOKS: Oh yes.

TATE: An ultra-conscientious guy, who was bonded and was I think afraid of his shadow. But he was the director of the Division of Purchase and Supply as it was called in those days. We used to call it the division of won't purchase and can't supply. I think he felt if he didn't buy anything there'd be less chance of making a mistake. I remember one time I stopped by late in the morning and stuck my head in his office. He said, "Whatever you want the answer is no." So I simply turned around and went off. He saw me in the afternoon and he said, "What did you want this morning?" I said, "Oh, I just stopped by to take you to lunch." We used to struggle and cuss a bit and so on, but eventually the stuff got there by hook or by crook. If it was a small supply item, I used to buy it myself, rather than go through the routine and the waiting. One time I got tired of it as I remember, and I wanted four ounces of fomo-sulphite, a proprietary chemical which cost, as I remember, \$1.50. So I said O.K., this time we'll buy it through channels--it took five weeks to get those four ounces, and as nearly as I could compute the cost, based on time of the people who were involved, and the red tape it cost the Government something like \$55 to buy it.

Johnnie Bornman worked for Wilson for a while. He was an assistant-- I think he quit and went South. He came from Arkansas I think originally, didn't he?

BROOKS: Somewhere down there.

TATE: Didn't he know Frank McAlister down there?

BROOKS: He may have, I don't know.

TATE: Yeah. I thought so, but at any rate it's immaterial. And then he had a very nice secretary, Ellen Goodman. She was wonderfully nice and helpful.

BROOKS: She worked most of the time in personnel, I think.

TATE: Well she was with Wilson originally. Allen Jones was in personnel in those days.

BROOKS: Allen Jones was there before you were. He was one of the few people that were. He came from the GAO I think to take charge of finance and personnel at first. Very good guy.

TATE: That's right. Is he still around?

BROOKS: I'm told that he is in Florida. I remember him from one particular incident. I've said that anecdotes are not particularly good on this project unless they illustrate characters of the important people or important points. But this one really stuck with me. I was eating lunch alone one day in a restaurant down across Pennsylvania Avenue somewhere when Allen Jones came along, and I was reading a book called A History of American Historians.

TATE: Kraus.

BROOKS: Right. And Jones came along and said "hello," and looked down at that book, and said, "A History of American Historians, that is what I call adding insult to injury."

TATE: Did you know Jones used to have a small launch on the Potomac, and he used to spend as much time as he could manage on the water down off Haynes Point. He used to keep it there, and he'd go down and do a little fishing. In those days I myself caught a two pound brown trout in the Washington channel. How in the world he ever got there I don't know. We used to catch--this was a couple of years later--because I remember Rod (Rodney Tate) was three or four years old when we went down there, and he was fishing for sun fish and all of a sudden "KAWOP" and up came this brown trout.

BROOKS: Since we mentioned personnel, you employed some people in your division. There is in the report for the fiscal year '36 I think, a list of the positions you filled. Did you have a pretty free hand in that?

TATE: Yes. By and large. It took some doing sometimes. For example, the first secretary that I had was a genuine lemon. An older woman named Hamas, who was recommended to me by Collas Harris. Incidentally, there's one anecdote that I'll have to tell you. Harris being a young man, was quite sensitive, and his secretary, Mary Healy was a lovely girl, still is as a matter of fact, a very attractive person. I came up to see him one day for something or other, and his second girl, his typist, was in the office, and I came in and said I'd like to see Mr. Harris. She said, "Well, I'm afraid you can't. He's got Miss Healy in there, and he's up to his ears." I simply dead-panned it; I said, "Well, in that case, I certainly wouldn't want to disturb him," and walked out, and the little gal blushed rather thoroughly. Two or three days later, a bunch of us were having lunch with Harris, and I related this anecdote. He said, "God damn it, don't ever repeat things like that, that's how things get started."

BROOKS: All this is relative to a question to what extent there was political patronage in the early appointments in the Archives.

TATE: There was some. For example, I remember when my appointment was put through, it was suggested that I get "Political Clearance."

BROOKS: That was a routine thing. We all had to do it.

TATE: And this was Senator McAdoo, if I remember from California. The amusing thing was that some months later, maybe a year, I got a telephone call from the Senator's secretary, who said the Senator was very much interested in placing a young lady. I asked what were her interests and capabilities? Apparently she had none but "was a born file clerk." The secretary said, "Well she's a very cute blonde and friendly." And I told her that I was thoroughly married and blonde-proof, but if I could be of any help in helping with her application, I would do so.

I know that one of the fellows that I employed was named Mabbit. He was a photographer. He was politically inspired. He did not work out and his backer when told of the fact said to "separate him."

BROOKS: Would you say generally that this is accurate? Of course, Thad Page was Senator Bailey's secretary and Frank McAlister worked for Senator Caraway and so forth, and they were very good people--but that by and large the professional employees, although we had to get this routine clearance which was pretty pro-forma and funny at times, the

professional employees were on the whole chosen more for some academic backing or qualification, than for political backing, whereas political influence largely showed up in the administrative and secretarial staff.

TATE: I think that's a fair statement. I think there's something else that ought to be put in the record on this. Political influence was used only to help get a job. If the man didn't perform on the job, he was not supported in it. And there was no trouble whatever in the case of Mabbit, because I think Allen Jones simply called up the backer and said the man wasn't working out, and the backer said get rid of him.

BROOKS: Well, that's an important point.

TATE: I think so because you were not pressured to keep an inefficient employee. Yes, you had pressure to get the job, but beyond that that was it.

BROOKS: Of course Harris came from FERA, and I think Connor hired him because he needed somebody that knew this side of Government administration. And politics was a very big part of it.

TATE: I think the people who came--who were there when I came--were Harris of course, the Archivist, Miss Terrell was there, Mary Healy was there, Allen Jones was there, Dorsey Hyde and his secretary, Bradley I think . . .

BROOKS: Bradley came in January whereas you came the first of May. Bradley had been Clerk of the House Library Committee and was very much mixed up in the handling of the Archives Act. And he was responsible for putting in it, I'm quite sure, the coverage of motion pictures . . .

TATE: That's correct.

BROOKS: . . . he was just determined to go that way, and he had strong support from Kent Keller, Chairman of House Library Committee.

TATE: But I think those were the people who were on board.

BROOKS: And probably that girl with the Italian name, Kathleen O'Neill.

TATE: Yes, who was a very nice person. She--I was trying to think of her name--there were two sisters and she lived in nearby Maryland as I remember, on a family place in Bladensburg.

BROOKS: Did Harry Baudu come on the staff while you were there?

TATE: Yes. I hired him. He was a former Navy Chief Photographer and a corking good man. We got on famously. He knew much more about some kinds of photography than I did. And I knew some things about other kinds better than he did. We got on well; incidentally, I can tell you that some of the success of the Archives was due to what you might call the Navy chief's pipeline. In the Navy, the Chiefs all know each other, and they all support each other; if we were stuck for a particular piece of equipment, we could always borrow it, and did borrow it! The first pictures that were made of the Archives Baudu made, in many cases (I think he made most of them) with borrowed equipment, and in some cases borrowed supplies. All of this was paid back. All of it was strictly against regulations, but it went on. It was a valuable kind of activity. We paid our freight, we played the game. And I don't see anything wrong with it myself.

BROOKS: Well, it worked. At one time, I'm not sure just when, the Archives acquired a 13 foot sink for developing pictures.

TATE: Yes, that was up on 18--the first large sink was soapstone in G-12.

BROOKS: My interest in it is that when the Truman Library was set up, while the building was being built, I found myself right off the bat ordering photographic equipment, which I knew very little about. But Wayne Grover said that there was a 13 foot sink in the Archives that was about to be declared surplus; so they shipped the 13 foot sink out to the Truman Library, and it's still there.

TATE: It was bought originally for a big 30 inch camera (it was very useful during the war as a matter of fact). It was a big camera and there was a whole room built in--the back end of the camera was a darkroom to load and unload it. Then it had the sink as a part of the processing equipment.

BROOKS: Well, I think it's aluminum or stainless steel . . .

TATE: Stainless steel 18--18-8 SMO stainless is the specification for it.

BROOKS: It must have served about 30 years already; it's still in use out there.

TATE: If those things are well valeted and maintained, they last indefinitely.

BROOKS: When I was thinking about things I might talk to you about, I wondered about the objectives of the Archives, in regard both to the general objectives and those of the photographic materials. I think you've pretty well answered that already in saying you thought that it was somewhat fuzzy although there was a stated objective in the law.

TATE: Yes. That's right.

BROOKS: And you said that the objective of the photographic division developed from strictly reproduction to a much broader archival phase. Was there a problem as to what constituted record photographs?

TATE: Oh yes. There certainly was. As I remember the language said "of permanent value of historical interest."

BROOKS: Exactly right.

TATE: The definition was subject to constant attention. I remember that our good friend Roscoe Hill at one stage orated profusely and on the lowest common denominator of an archive and coined the term "archemone" for it. We were having lunch one day and he pontificated on this concept. Some unkind person, I won't say who it was, commented in enthusiastic terms on his Chinese approach. In other words in using a tonal approach in the evaluation of archives. There could be an archemoan, an archiwail, an archisqueak, an archihowl, and an archibellow, each depending on how important the paper might be. Roscoe Hill was not amused, got almost purple in the face, and said "you men simply don't appreciate serious intellectual work."

BROOKS: One time I said to Roscoe, this word "archimon" has not been adopted--nobody's ever used it in print. He said, "Yes I have, I used it in an article."

TATE: Incidentally, there's one thing that I think might give you a sidelight on maybe Roscoe or on employment. You remember that Roscoe had jobs for a certain number of classifiers.

BROOKS: He had some good people.

TATE: Yes he did. Ned Meany was one. But Ned Meany's wife was working as a secretary in the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress when Ned applied. And Roscoe made Ned agree that his wife would quit that job, because Roscoe felt that two members of the family should not work for the Government.

BROOKS: For the Government even? There was a Civil Service rule about working in the same division, I think.

TATE: He said in times of job scarcity, two members of the family--that was Roscoe. As a matter of fact, she did quit. Ned Meany, as I remember went to--up to Pottstown.

BROOKS: . . . to the Hill school. Fairly early in the game.

TATE: Whatever happened to him. Where did he end up?

BROOKS: I lost track of him. Well, later, during the Lacy period I remember working at some length with Herman Friis on a circular defining which was the record copy of a map. And I vaguely remember working on a similar circular having to do with motion pictures.

BROOKS: But I don't think I ever knew of any effort particularly to solve that problem in still pictures. You'd probably already done it.

TATE: Well, as a matter of fact, it's almost self-evident because the negative is in a medium that is required in most cases to produce the print, and the print that is produced--the first print--is the record copy. So that we didn't have the same trouble as motion pictures and, to a degree, as maps. After all it's rather artificial, and today it's a very interesting problem in another connection. If you take a com recorder which displays material composed from a memory bank on a screen that is the only representation and unless you photograph it, or record it on microfilm, in a sense there is no enduring copy. The primary record is the screen display, which can or cannot be recreated. Theoretically, if you punch in the same program, you will get the same display, but practically it doesn't always happen. It's a nice problem.

BROOKS: You have a much simpler problem in connection with photographs in that extra prints can be made, and you can't identify the original.

TATE: That's right, unless you identify it as the record copy.

BROOKS: Right. When I frame and hang autographed photographs I usually have them photographed and hang a copy.

TATE: Sure.

BROOKS: Not the one that some guy has signed his name on.

TATE: Well, you know what I do is to photograph them and put the copy behind the other.

BROOKS: That's a good idea. Vernon, I recently found in the papers of Dorsey Hyde at the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress a memo that he had submitted to the Archivist on the first of December 1934, before Harris came on, outlining on the basis of a visit made to a number of different divisions in the Library of Congress, an organizational pattern for the Archives. It was practically adopted as it was. And it was entirely a library pattern with centralized functional divisions, classification, research, cataloging and so forth. There were mentioned in about five lines the Custodial divisions, and their function was not much more than that. Now, one of the great enterprises to me in the next five years was changing that over so the main archival functions were given to the records divisions and the divisions of classification, cataloging and so were abolished. Did this affect your division, particularly or did you have any . . .

TATE: Not at the outset because primarily my division was a service division and as we were performing services, and the custodial function was simply extended to this as it came through the organization as a whole. I think that with the employment of the deputy examiners and the so-called special deputies, . . .

BROOKS: Special examiners.

TATE: You remember we used to have fun with that, as a house joke.

BROOKS: Yeah. Right.

TATE: But these, I think, were responsible for eliminating the problem and forming the solution. And as they gradually evolved the process of records groups and the control of them why the centralized business pretty much disappeared. You know Hyde was a far better man than he appeared to be and was thought to be in his time. As to motion pictures, Bradley and I got on fine, and very early in the game we made the distinction that he wasn't interested in still pictures, and I wasn't interested in motion pictures, and we went along parallel noncompetitive lines.

BROOKS: They were quite separate.

TATE: Yeah, in friendly fashion. Price came, of course, as legal officer, and he was busy in various things. Thad Page was fine. As the records divisions emerged they were good. One rather curious and interesting little business with regard to the records divisions was the fact that most of them were staffed by academics. The fact that I had a perfectly good and valid Ph.D. Degree was not a drawback in my dealings with them. I wouldn't and didn't have to accept any academic degree nonsense, and that eased my position in that regard. This did cause some friction here and there.

BROOKS: With people who didn't have a professional academic background?

TATE: Yes, on the administrative side there was a little bit of this petty business.

BROOKS: We ought to have---if you're willing to give it---some characterization of the two archivists that I believe you worked for, and how you got along with them. What did you think of Dr. Connor and Dr. Buck as Archivists, and what kind of relationships did you have with them? They were very different kinds of people.

TATE: Very different people. I like and respected both of them. I think of the two I knew Buck rather better than Connor. Connor was extremely capable. As anyone who is starting something that is quite new, he had a great deal on his mind. But every one of his staff people would do anything they could to help him. Certainly I would. I saw relatively little of him. Because I never bothered him unless I needed to, and if he wanted me, he'd call me and I was there. I think that Marjorie Terrell who used to try to watch over him like a hen with one chick projected an image of him that was completely false. I think that one of his great assets was his ability to move quite high in Government circles, with members of Congress, heads of other agencies, and so forth. He was an excellent poker player literally and figuratively--a lot of business was conducted over the poker table in Washington in those days--still is, I guess. There is one anecdote you might like to record; you probably were present when the Archivist held a cocktail party at the Wardman Park, where he lived. A colored man who came up from North Carolina with him, was passing a tray of hors d'oeuvre including some anchovies, when someone who had known him in Carolina said, "Mose, what are these?" Mose looked at him and said, "I ain't exactly sure but I think them's archives."

BROOKS: I was there, and I do remember that. Nobody had said it in these interviews, and I'm glad you did. And I've now interviewed 16 or 17 people, and found almost universal admiration for Connor.

TATE: Yes.

BROOKS: And I hadn't realized at the time, in fact until now, several people have said they didn't see much of him; they didn't know him well; they thought he was a little remote. That was partly because of Miss Terrell. I didn't realize that because of the fact that the special examiners worked directly for Hyde we really had a special privilege, and we got to know Mr. Connor better than we would have otherwise. He was a delightful person. Then when he and Buck selected me, unexpectedly to me, to be the first secretary of the Society of American Archivists I got to know both of them better right away.

TATE: I can appreciate that and he was eminently the right man for that job; everyone was sorry when he decided to go back to Carolina. As I told you, his division chiefs of whom I was one gave him a farewell dinner. But I don't think I'll record that here.

BROOKS: One thing I found in the Connor papers, when I was looking at them in North Carolina a year and a half ago, was an identification inventory all formally filled out for the transfer of one tea service from the staff to him as a going away present. And I was the chairman of the committee; Elizabeth Drewry was on it, and three or four other people.

TATE: Another thing I think was important, and someone ought to write up sometime, and that's the relationships between Connor and Waldo Leland. They were very close, had much in common, and shared ideas. I think archival theory and practice in this country owes much to this cooperation.

BROOKS: Yes. And Connor was very close to Jameson. I think Jameson was primarily responsible more than any person for the Archives Act, and for getting Connor up there. Although Leland was very active, I say that both on the basis of the Connor correspondence and on the basis of Victor Gondos' dissertation, which he completed at American University two or three years ago. It's a good job and deals with the period up to the actual establishment of the Archives. But Jameson died soon after the Archives was set up, and as you said a while ago was a lovable and a very fine character.

TATE: Yes. I worked for Jameson. When I worked for the Library of Congress I worked for Jameson; he was an interesting type. Let's see, I think that really covers the relationships with the people.

BROOKS: How about Dr. Buck?

TATE: Well. I came to know him quite well in two or three different connections. Binkley (Robert C. Binkley) was much interested in microfilm. Materials for Research, of the ACLS and the SSRC. Now Buck was the first chairman and Binkley was the secretary. If I remember correctly.

BROOKS: I think something like that.

TATE: Incidentally, both Irvine and Schellenberg worked with the committee and Buck at one stage. Buck was interested then in a number of these projects, and contributed materially to them. The first report of the committee was published in a small edition; Buck gave me his copy of that report which I still have. The second report is known as "Binkley's Manual" which is the manual on reproducing research materials that laid out the pathway for a lot of technical work in which I am much interested. Buck was interested at one time in the Mereness calendar. . .

BROOKS: That was a calendar of documents relating to the Upper Mississippi Valley, I think.

TATE: Voyages and travels?

BROOKS: Possibly. I would have thought it was broader than that.

TATE: Well at any rate I know we figured out a way--it was at the University of Illinois, and I think we sent someone out to microfilm it, and that was one of the early uses of microfilm in the Archives.

BROOKS: I think Oliver Holmes has some connection with that too.

TATE: Well, it well could be. Somebody else at Minesota was interested . . .

BROOKS: Ted Blegen (Professor Theodore C. Blegen)?

TATE: Blegen. Blegen was interested in it, and I don't know, one or two others as I remember. But the technical end of it came along. Now I think that Buck's first job at the Archives was as Director of Publications.

BROOKS: That's right.

TATE: I used to have rather frequent talks with him about a great many things and as a matter of fact developed what later became the file microcopy program in talks with him. That was the real start of the file microcopy program in the Archives. I note that you have it beginning in 1940. There were memoranda about it prior to that time.

BROOKS: Undoubtedly so. I took that from the annual report which said that more or less formally as a program it began in 1940.

TATE: Yes.

BROOKS: And it's one of the most important things I think in the history of the Archives. The whole microfilm publication program has grown from it.

TATE: Well I think actually I originated that program.

BROOKS: Probably so.

TATE: I know that the way the plan came up originally was based on the fact that we were getting increasing numbers of requests for microfilms of the same volumes or selections of record material, and repeated filming was not too good. So the idea was to film a complete volume or complete unit, and retain that negative to supply future orders from the original negative and not have to refilm. The next thing that became important was the fact in order to offer this for sale you should list it. And so the term file microcopy and the description of what the material consisted of was coined and put into effect, and I think it was one of the good ideas at the Archives. Now it is keyed to other developments, other technological developments.

BROOKS: Before you get on to that, let me ask you something. The annual report for the first year or two says that the file microcopy work was primarily on items that were asked for in reference service.

TATE: Yes.

BROOKS: But you would--suppose somebody wanted ten documents out of a volume of diplomatic correspondence. In those early days would the whole volume be microfilmed?

TATE: Usually but not always. Not just the ten documents. That was the point. There are also some other aspects. During the early days of the war we trained many microfilm operators in the Archives.

BROOKS: Well the idea came along then too, as you've probably going to say, of microfilming for protection--security.

TATE: Not only security but for distribution. You know I have a particular interest in Maritime and naval things. So that certain naval records--captains' letters, squadron letters, and others I've forgotten the detail now, but several hundred volumes were used as training material and were later reproduced as file microcopies.

BROOKS: Were the ships logs included in this?

TATE: Some.

BROOKS: I once had a desk in the stacks surrounded by logs of all the important early ships.

TATE: Well at any rate, copies were made later and distributed. Many years later when I came to head the Library of the Naval Academy, there was a set of these microfilms that originated at that time. They were much used by mid-shipmen. To come back to the file microcopy idea, there were other similar developments. Among them was Watson Davis' auxiliary Publication plan. It was different in that a typescript was deposited, or filmed and deposited, and made available on demand. This was analogous, and arose about that same time.

BROOKS: Davis was with Science Service?

TATE: He established Science Service. Which was an outgrowth the Scripps Howard newspapers. At the same time as Science Service, Clarabel Barnett then the librarian of the Department of Agriculture, Atherton Seidell who was at the Surgeon General's library were involved. Seidell was a scientist. Seidell's solubility tables, etc., etc. Rupert Draeger participated in the organization of the Bibliofilm Service at the Department of Agriculture in 1935. He was a navy captain, dental corps. He built some of the pioneer microfilm cameras and he built also one of the first individual reading machines for library and individual use. All of this ties in because at the Archives we tested and originated or helped develop many of the pieces of equipment and techniques and also some of the ideas in early microfilm. For example, the technique of flash indexing, which is in use today, was developed at the Archives in connection with an index to the Veterans Administration records which we had in part, the index--I think it was called the "application for account number"--covered the whole file while we had half the documents but no index at all. The V.A. couldn't break the index apart. So we microfilmed the whole index, some 2 million 6 hundred thousand cards if I remember correctly.

BROOKS: That was a pretty early job, wasn't it?

TATE: Pretty early. It was a 16 millimeter pioneer job and I devised the flash indexing technique which would let you get at each entry quickly. It has since become pretty well standard. In much better adaptations.

BROOKS: Was "file microcopy"--the term invented then--unique to the Archives?

TATE: Yes, it was. And I think I have somewhere the original memoranda in which that was proposed. I know that there have been two or three theses, one of them concerned with some of this, and I can't remember now. I have a copy--a film copy or something. But I found this to be an extremely interesting method of procedure.

Now Buck himself was also interested in other kinds of activities. When Connor decided to leave, he wanted the job as Archivist I think, and felt two ways about it. He was qualified in one way, and in another way he was not. He took the job and I think that in many ways he broke his heart at it. He did some very good things. He did some very poor things. His forte was not dealing with people.

BROOKS: That's for sure.

TATE: I recall, for example, when he convened every one of the division chiefs and department heads. There were 36, I think, in the conference room above the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance. He lectured us for an hour and fifteen minutes on the enormity of the fact that some people had been sending out letters not folded--in full sheets in large manila envelopes. We were given the information that there were also medium-sized envelopes, etc., etc., that should be used. It went on and got down, so help me, to counting paper clips. We were not impressed, but this was a side of the man--a petty side--that marred much of what he did that was significant.

BROOKS: Everybody was affected by it. It comes out in every conversation that I've had that dealt with Buck. And it's my own impression because I worked closely with him for a long time. That was just the way he was built.

TATE: Yes it was the way he was built, and I told you about when Lacy (Dan Lacy) appeared. "Burgeon" Lacy he was called because of a silly memo he wrote--do you remember it?

BROOKS: Yes, sir.

TATE: "Burgeon" Lacy. And there were one two others who came with that group--ex WPA types.

BROOKS: Portner and Rifkind.

TATE: And then there was a young lady whose name I don't remember.

BROOKS: Adeline Barry?

TATE: No, no. She was never employed at the Archives.

BROOKS: Oh. She was in my office.

TATE: Was she?

BROOKS: Yes. Then Leahy's office took her over.

TATE: Adeline Barry.

BROOKS: She worked on records administration, but she had worked with Binkley in Cleveland.

TATE: She was Binkley's secretary and subsequently worked with Herb Kellar. I'd forgotten that she was on the Archives staff. Incidentally, I'm told that she now lives in Chicago. She married some records type and lives in Chicago. Herb Angel, I think, told me.

BROOKS: Probably. He knew her in the Navy. Well I remember her for several reasons. One of which is of no significance here, but she was good looking and liked to put on a little show, and she decided that she would experiment with colored fingernail polish. So she came to the office with different colored fingernail polish every day for two weeks. Red, green, blue, black, and so on.

TATE: Gads. Well this is in character.

BROOKS: But you said there was another girl that came along with Portner and Rifkind. That person I don't remember.

TATE: She was the one who started the reorganization of the central file. Well, you know here's the other aspect of Buck. It seemed that periodically the Archives would start on various new interpretations of function. Image it would be called now. At one time the Archives was to be the records keeping system--how should I say--the model for records keeping systems in the Government. In other words, we would show the whole Government how to keep records. The early one was the Archives as the keeper of the records of the history of the United States. Another was the destruction of useless papers. Dallas Irvine did a report on that subject. I think at a staff meeting I once asked him why we had 89 pages in instructions on how to dispose of useless records and not one page of instructions on how to determine how to identify and keep valuable records; this occasioned some discussion. It seemed to me that we would gallop off in all directions at various times on over-enthusiasms of the sort. When did Buck become Archivist?

BROOKS: September 18, 1941.

TATE: Yes. And the war business came in and complicated things quite a bit. Buck was inept with his dealings with some of the other agencies, as afterward appeared in various connection.

BROOKS: Especially the Congress and the White House.

TATE: That's right. And as a matter of fact he resented rather vigorously the presence of some of the OSS people in the Archives.

BROOKS: I'm sure that's true.

TATE: And this was cordially reciprocated because I happened to be in one OSS office at one time and saw a toilet seat mounted on the wall. I raised the seat and guess whose picture was mounted in the center of it.

BROOKS: The OSS people had a photographic laboratory . . . ?

TATE: Color photographic laboratory.

BROOKS: That was the main thing they had in the building . . . ?

TATE: That's right.

BROOKS: How did they happen to be there?

TATE: There happened to be space. That was Dudley Lee's operation, doing special color photography. And it was a very interesting operation. And some of the things he did were quite spectacular. They also did some work in my shop. You see mine was making and printing microfilm. And some other things as well. But incidentally, there were two or three rather curious things. We had by that time acquired a number of photographic archives collections of one sort and another from various places, and I happened to go through a set of records--it seems to me that these were the records of the Albatross expedition to study pelagic sealing. This was shortly after the Japs moved into Attu and Kiska. I happened to be lunching with someone who was commenting on the fact that we didn't have adequate coverage. The little bell jangled and I went back into the stacks and dug up as I recall 68 pictures, which were taken by either the photographer or the geologist, of Attu and Kiska and the rest of the islands with coordinates. I called a friend in the Navy department, and said, "What would you give for a set of 68 pictures of the Aleutians including Attu and Kiska, clear and precisely identified." There was a gasp, and he said, "Don't leave, don't move." And up came three people; those prints were copied that night, and were on their way by air the next day by special courier plane. I think it was Admiral King who remarked later that they saved a lot of flying time because of the usual foggy weather. All this came from a fishing expedition

in 1870. And there were many other similar things. OSS was combing the country for identified pictures of Europe. One of the things that happened to turn up--also in the Photographic archives--was a profile map of the Alps with all of the heights of the peaks noted in meters, which had been compiled in World War I and filed away, and was pulled out and used, particularly in the Italian campaigns. There was almost an unending series of things of this type that cropped up which certainly in my mind, and I think in the minds of some others, gave new meaning to the use of records and the fact that use is unpredictable.

BROOKS: They were often cited in the annual reports. Especially at that time, in the early days, the Archives was eager in its annual reports to emphasize examples of use of the Archives.

TATE: To justify itself. Speaking of Buck, I left Archives as you know after the war. I had come back from Navy, and as I now recall it, was caught up in a lot of the aftermath of the war, mainly research, because of the way micro-reproduction had grown. It was used enormously in the war, and I then thought that it would obviously now move ahead and realize its potential in records and archives. But lethargy at the Archives was formidable. One worked so hard to get permission to do a job, that by the time one got permission there was no energy or enthusiasm for the job.

BROOKS: Was this, would you say, a special characteristic of the Archives or Buck? Or was it just general in the Government, a post war let-down?

TATE: Some of it was post war let-down, some of it was Buck, who by this time had gotten to be extremely crotchety. The offer to head the libraries at MIT came out of the blue. I did not anticipate it in any sense, and finally decided to take it. Buck did not want me to leave, he said, he was very nice about it, but I thought I would go back to academics. The job included a full professorship with tenure, etc. Later I saw Buck from time to time, and had some correspondence with him. He retired as Archivist, went up to the Library of Congress and worked there a while and again retired. Later he became quite ill. By this time I had returned to Annapolis. I talked to him a couple of times, I planned several times to go and see him. But--and this is the thing that I'm sorry about--I didn't realize how ill he was, and I didn't go, and I've always been sorry for it.

BROOKS: He was quite ill.

TATE: He was then living on A Street I think.

BROOKS: Right. I went to see him in that house. I suppose it was while I was working in San Francisco, sometime in the '50s, and he would not even walk down to the corner. He was very lacking in confidence. That was too bad. Well, would you appraise his role as Archivist or wouldn't you want to do that?

TATE: I think that his intentions were always good. He was a scholar and teacher of real capacity; his achievements in Archives were marred by deficiencies primarily in handling people. He was inept in working in the Government milieu.

BROOKS: But so far as your own work was concerned he understood and appreciated . . .

TATE: He understood. He appreciated. He couldn't always help for reasons that perhaps were not his own fault. And I think that before he became Archivist his comments and criticisms were of more value than later, because I think quite frankly he was overwhelmed by the job. And I know that he desperately wanted to be liked, but he had a genius for antagonizing even his friends. I don't think he meant it. And I've always been sorry that I didn't go see him. To me that is a matter of lasting regret.

BROOKS: I think the consensus of people I've interviewed would be that professionally in his knowledge particularly in the field of historical research materials he was very good, and he was responsible for a good many of important developments in the Archives. But as you say, nearly everybody agrees that his handling of people was unfortunate.

Vernon, sometime, I don't remember exactly when, there was a memorandum issued, and there was quite a bit of discussion on textual microfilm and photographs and such. Do you remember that, and how come it was done, and how much of a problem it was?

TATE: I don't, really. I think the distinction really was intended to clarify the difference between textual or microfilm and motion picture type records. You see actually they were physically similar. Sixteen or 35 millimeters; width was their only similarity. I think that was what the memo was intended to do. Not that there was any need for people who knew, but there wouldn't be any point in making any distinction between textual microfilm and graphic microfilm. Graphic microfilm in those days was not too much used. That really is a post war development.

BROOKS: I think part of what I have in mind is the administrative matter of responsibility for textual microfilm as between your division and the records divisions.

TATE: That possibly is. I can't remember now what the--you mean custodial . . .

BROOKS: Yeah. Well that's what they called them then. That title always made me mad, and still does.

TATE: Well I was thinking of custodial responsibility for microfilm. In other words whether it was to be stored centrally or stored with the divisions.

BROOKS: That I think was the key problem.

TATE: And I think--I don't know whay my attitude was then but I believe that it was that it should be with the rest of the records in use copies but the master negative should be stored centrally.

BROOKS: I think that was your policy and the policy of Dr. Buck at the same time.

TATE: I think that's right. Because I know for example that the indexes to the application for account numbers were stored with the Veterans Administration records. I know those were there.

BROOKS: Did you work with Holmes (Oliver Holmes) closely at all?

TATE: Quite closely, from time to time.

BROOKS: I think he had a good deal to do with the development of the file microcopy and microfilm publication.

TATE: Yes. That was largely after I left.

BROOKS: He was chief of the National Resources Records Division after '48. Before that he was Program Adviser and before that Director of Research and Records Description. I think that's where he got into the file microcopy program.

TATE: Yes. Because you see I would have been gone by '46. And my successor was Irvine (Dallas Irvine) who in turn was succeeded by Price.

BROOKS: Yeah. And much later at one time Herman Friis was responsible for a short time.

TATE: I know. Incidentally, one of the things I think keeps cropping up in the early days is Joerg joining the Archives. And I see his name crop up quite frequently in '35, and so on and so on.

BROOKS: He was a grand person, and very much of a scholar.

TATE: Very much, and a very nice guy. Of course Herman Friis after the war, came back. You've probably interviewed Herman.

BROOKS: No. But I will. He came in in the Spring of '38 and worked very closely of course a good many years with Mr. Joerg. Vernon, was there much use of the photographic archives by people outside? By scholars particularly? Say before the war.

TATE: Some. And rather more than you might think. As a matter of fact we had some stolen. Some gal came down who was working on a Civil War thing. We got the Bradys down here, you know. And so she asked to be shown material and was shown. And after she left why the things were counted and one picture was missing.

BROOKS: A Brady picture?

TATE: Yes. And so I called up her husband. Maybe I wrote. I can't remember, I think maybe I called him up in New York, and I told him that there was an examination of the thing we had and one of the pictures was found to be missing, and I wondered whether this had inadvertently been included with her working materials--his wife's working materials. Because I would have to report this to the FBI as Government property. And he said, "No, it wasn't inadvertently, the young woman gave it to her." And I said, "Let's don't have any of that," and I said, "I'll expect the picture back special delivery." And I got it back special delivery, and that was that. Yes there was some use of it. And more use developed as we got more people to work. Now Josephine Cobb, for example, that after the disintegration of the Catalog Division she moved over and then there were one or two others that we got staff wise. One was Hermine Baumhofer.

BROOKS: Baumhofer, yeah. The last time I knew she was at Dayton at the Air Force Museum.

TATE: That's right. She was one. And two or three other clerk types were in there, and they got busy on this kind of thing.

BROOKS: Well the use by scholars is something that has interested me as a phase of development of the Archives all along. I think the case is that before the war the Archives had comparatively little material for scholars (although a good deal), and the users were primarily inherited, like the people that had used diplomatic records of the State Department before 1938, when those records moved to the Archives. During the war the Archives had to give its primary emphasis to service to the Government. The scholars were mostly tied up with the war themselves.

TATE: That's right.

BROOKS: So that the heavy scholarly use the Archives really developed after the war. Would you say it was the same thing with photographic archives?

TATE: I would say so. Of course technologically the ease of creating and using graphics was enormously advanced by the war, and by the technologies that were developed during the war.

BROOKS: In 1944 you were commissioned in the Navy. Did that involve major difference in your kind of activity?

TATE: Yes, in one sense. Because it introduced a whole series of different problems. Principally problem solving involving micro-technology. It involved training and special work.

BROOKS: Where were you located then, physically?

TATE: Physically most of the time still in my own place in the laboratory. But I did travel from time to time. It was a very interesting assignment.

BROOKS: And you were brought back, according to the Annual Report, as Acting Director of Photography, with the combined photographic archives and motion pictures, in November 1945.

TATE: Yes.

BROOKS: Then you became Director in March of '46.

TATE: Yeah. And I don't really remember why.

BROOKS: Bradley had left.

TATE: Yeah, and I don't know why he left.

BROOKS: I'm not sure, I think that it was partly the result of the fact that he wasn't as close to Buck as he had been to Connor, and Bradley wasn't receiving the recognition that he thought he ought to have. This is evident from some of the correspondence.

TATE: I don't remember why, but I know that the divisions were combined. Actually I didn't do very much about the motion picture end of it. There didn't seem much that needed to be done, and Jim Cummings was in many cases sitting on top of that limited operation. And sitting is a good term, I think. How is Jim anyway? Is he still around?

BROOKS: He's not living, no. He died maybe two years ago. So you weren't close to the motion picture business.

TATE: I wasn't particularly interested.

BROOKS: You were plenty busy with photographic records?

TATE: That's right. Motion pictures were nominally in my charge. Reece I think was in there, too, at the time as a technician. And there was relatively little activity. By that time Carl Louis Gregory I think had gone, had he not. He retired, and he died soon after in Arizona as I remember; with Carl Louis went most of the brains of the early history of motion pictures, and a lot of the technology.

BROOKS: I suppose that's true. He had a lot of experience in Hollywood before he came to the Archives, didn't he?

TATE: He was Burton Holmes' cameraman. And traveled around the world any number of times with him. Was a pioneer in the Society of Motion Pictures, and later Television, Engineers, and so on.

BROOKS: You were back a little over a year then from November of '45 until sometime in '46, when you went to MIT, right?

TATE: That's right.

BROOKS: Then you went to be librarian of the Naval Academy in . . .

TATE: '56.

BROOKS: Then you retired from the Naval Academy . . . ?

TATE: In '69. I retired early, by the way, from the Academy. I could have--I would have been eligible for ten more years. I retired at 60.

BROOKS: At various times in the conversation we have mentioned FDR. And you said you had some memory of record of the visit that he made to the Archives in '37. This I think would be quite interesting.

TATE: Well I had notice that he would come to the Archives on Wednesday, June the 16th, 1937. And the previous day, Tuesday, Colonel Starling of the Secret Service was in with a couple of men and went over the entire place. Apparently the theory was, and still is, that the President doesn't go any place where the Secret Service has not been previously.

BROOKS: I think that's still true.

TATE: At any rate we cleaned the place up and on the morning of Wednesday, the Archivist called in the six division chiefs and told us the President was planning to visit at 4:30. As a matter of fact, I went over and got a haircut across the way. Then the personnel left at the usual time.

BROOKS: Oh, we got kicked out early.

TATE: 4:00 I think, and the President didn't show until 5:30, he spent about 15 minutes in the laboratory, and looked at all of the equipment. He was accompanied by his son, James. My recollection says that James pushed him--he was in a wheelchair.

BROOKS: That's what Fred Shipman said.

TATE: He was in a wheelchair, and had three Secret Service men with him. And it was the first time I'd ever met him personally although I had had some notes from him, and some things relayed by Missy Lehand who was his secretary--you remember her. He was very quick, friendly and he got to the point of what the equipment was intended to do and how it did it quickly and well. I noted that he arrived at Archives in the Packard #101--touring car, which was his favorite. At the time the photographic place he visited

was G-12. Which was on the ground deck--Pennsylvania--the first to the right--first one down the corridor to the right. That was where the original laboratory was. I remember that's G-12. Later we did quite a lot of photo and documentary work for him from time to time. As a matter of fact when Hyde Park was building Harry Baudu and Tom Bailey and Charley Perry and I went up in a truck and made a whole set of pictures of Hyde Park before it was open. We went up the Merritt Parkway and turned off to go up to Poughkeepsie and a motorcycle policeman came up and said, "Trucks aren't allowed on this highway." And I think Harry said to him, "This is not a truck, this is a photographer's wagon." He said, "What's the difference?" He said, "We're going up to take pictures at the President's library in Poughkeepsie, see all the gear?" He said, "Go ahead, I don't want to have anything to do with that man." We copied documents for him from time to time. He owned one of the Gunner Myers diaries and I think we made the color copies, negative, for the Library. The diary was printed by Grabhorn. I have some notes which he wrote me which I treasure highly.

BROOKS: He wrote a letter one time that was widely quoted in which he recommended duplicating things by microfilm for security.

TATE: That's correct.

BROOKS: Was that after his visit to the laboratory do you remember.

TATE: Before. It's been paralleled with a letter of Jefferson's. Yes, this was before, as I remember.

BROOKS: Well, I think that covers the main topics I want to talk about. I'm sure that it will be valuable to those who read the transcript in the future.