

The IU/Liberian Digital Archiving Project

From Vacant Liberian Mansion to the ICO: The William V.S. Tubman Photography Collection

**A Collaborative Project of the
Center for National Documents & Records Agency (CNDRA)
The IU Digital Library Program, Office of Archives & Records Management,
E. Lingle Craig Preservation Laboratory & The IU Liberian Collections**

Verlon Stone, Head, IU Liberian Collections
Megan MacDonald, Archivist, IU Liberian Collections
Sarah Keil, Student Archivist/Librarian, Wells Library African Studies Collection

Digital Library Brown Bag Series-Wednesday Noon Talks
20 March 2013

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Go to <http://breeze.iu.edu/diglib> to view and listen to the presentation

Liberia in West Africa



Liberia in West Africa



IU Liberian Collections

- **World's Largest Publically Accessible Collection of Liberian Materials**
 - **“Go to” Source of Rare Liberian Materials**
 - Academics & Development Consultants
 - International & Liberian Agencies
 - **Growing Digital Presence Well-Received**
 - **Larger Repositories Not Fully Accessible**
 - NARA only lightly processed, no digital content
 - National Presidential Archives awaits processing

Mission Statement

The ATM Liberian Collections Project will

- Collect
- Preserve
- Make Available

a comprehensive range of materials & information about Liberia for researchers, students, & teachers,

- *with special emphasis on reaching Liberians in Liberia & the Diaspora.*
- *When feasible, digitizing collections is the preferable strategy for promoting widespread public accessibility.*

Long-term Liberian & IU Relationship

- First IU faculty research in Liberia during 1930s
- Stones' involvement began in 1950s, 1970s
- IULC's work began with 2004 assessment trip
 - British Library's Endangered Archives Programme
 - Funded three IU/CNDRA projects from 2005-2011
 - Tubman Papers and Photographs
- Governance Commission asked for a land records rehabilitation and preservation plan in 2007
 - Rewrite of EAP proposal became the IU digitization proposal to the World Bank

IU Bestows Honorary Degree (2008)

- **Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**
 - First woman elected as an African President (2005)
 - Nobel Peace Laureate (2011)
- **IU Delegation Reciprocated with Monrovia Visit (2008)**
- **IU/UMass School of Medicine 4-year renewable initiative**
 - Center for Excellence in Health and Life Sciences (2011)



CNDRA Signs MOU with IU Libraries/IU Liberian Collections



20 September 2012

2012 IU/CNDRA MOU

2012-2016 AGREEMENT OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION
BETWEEN
INDIANA UNIVERSITY LIBERIAN COLLECTIONS / INDIANA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
AND
CENTER FOR NATIONAL DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS AGENCY, R. L.

In recognition of the long years of partnership and in order to enhance the holdings and professional status of both institutions, this Agreement of Friendship and Cooperation between the Liberian Center for National Documents and Records Agency (CNDRA) and the Trustees of Indiana University on behalf of the Indiana University Liberian Collections / Indiana University Libraries, under which our two institutions plan to cooperate in order to advance our mutual interests, the following activities are agreed upon during 2012-2016.

The CNDRA and Indiana University Liberian Collections / Indiana University Libraries will continue to collaborate in seeking external and internal funding and support to accomplish the following goals:

- Mutual exchange of all digitized copies of Liberian public documents held by IU's Liberian and African Studies Collections and by CNDRA for public access by each organization's users.
 - Make digitized copies of CNDRA's Liberian documents available on IU Libraries web site
 - Store backup copies of digitized Liberian documents and land records on IU's Scholarly Data Archive (SDA)
- Upgrade archival and management skills of CNDRA's professional staff. Key archive professionals require long-term education programs resulting in advanced diplomas or certificates. All staff can continue to benefit from workshops, professional exchanges and conferences
- Advise CNDRA regarding facilities design and utilization of archival and library facilities as CNDRA renovates and remodels the purpose-built facility in Sinkor
- Establish an archival document digital scanning center and public information access areas (Reading Rooms with networked workstations)
- Continue archival processing (organization, conservation, preservation and digitization) of materials in the Presidential Archives to make their contents available for public and scholarly access.
- Continue digitizing all Liberian land records, making them searchable and publicly available

Each host institution will provide study and research privileges equivalent to those available to resident faculty members and graduate students.

On behalf of CNDRA:


Name: Philomene Bloh Sayeh

Title: Director-General

Date: 9/20/12

Date: 9/20/12

Date: 9/20/12

On behalf of the Trustees of Indiana University:


Name: Verlon Stone

Title: Coordinator

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

Date: 9/20/2012

On behalf of the Trustees of Indiana University:


Name: Brenda Johnson

Title: Dean

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

Date: July 24, 2012

2004 Assessment Trip: Liberian Document Repositories



Liberian National Archives (1990-2011)



Joseph Jenkins Roberts House
First President of Liberia

Center for National Documents & Records Agency Vault



Presidential Papers Archive



Executive Mansion
Monrovia

Liberian Presidential Archives

Main Upstairs Workroom & Vault



Repositories Identified

- **Liberian National Archives**
 - Established by Legislative Act in 1977
- **Liberian Presidential Archives**
 - Executive Mansion Central File Room
- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs Land Registers**
- **Former Ministry of Foreign Affairs Building**
- **Bureau of Lands & Mines Cartography Building**

Personal Papers Identified

- **W.V.S. Tubman Papers & Photographs**
- **Bishop George Daniel Browne Papers**
- **Bai T Moore Papers**
- **E. Reginald Townsend
& Evelyn Diggs Townsend Papers**

“Rescuing Liberian History”

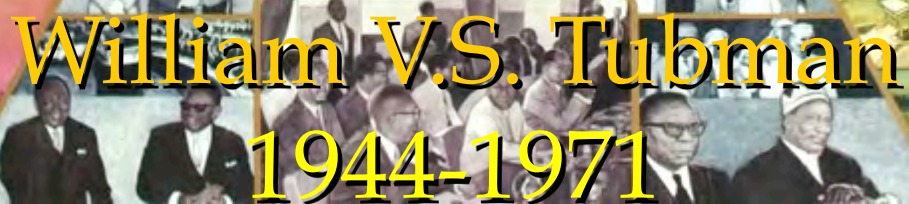
- **A Pilot Study to Preserve & Enable Access to
Liberia’s Presidential & National Archives**
- **Preserving the Personal Papers of W.V.S. Tubman,
Liberia’s Longest Serving President**
- **Preserving the Photographs of W.V. S. Tubman,
Liberia’s Longest Serving President**
- **Establishing a Microfilming Capability
at the Liberian National Archives**
- **Preserving & Making Liberian Land Records Accessible**

Project Funding

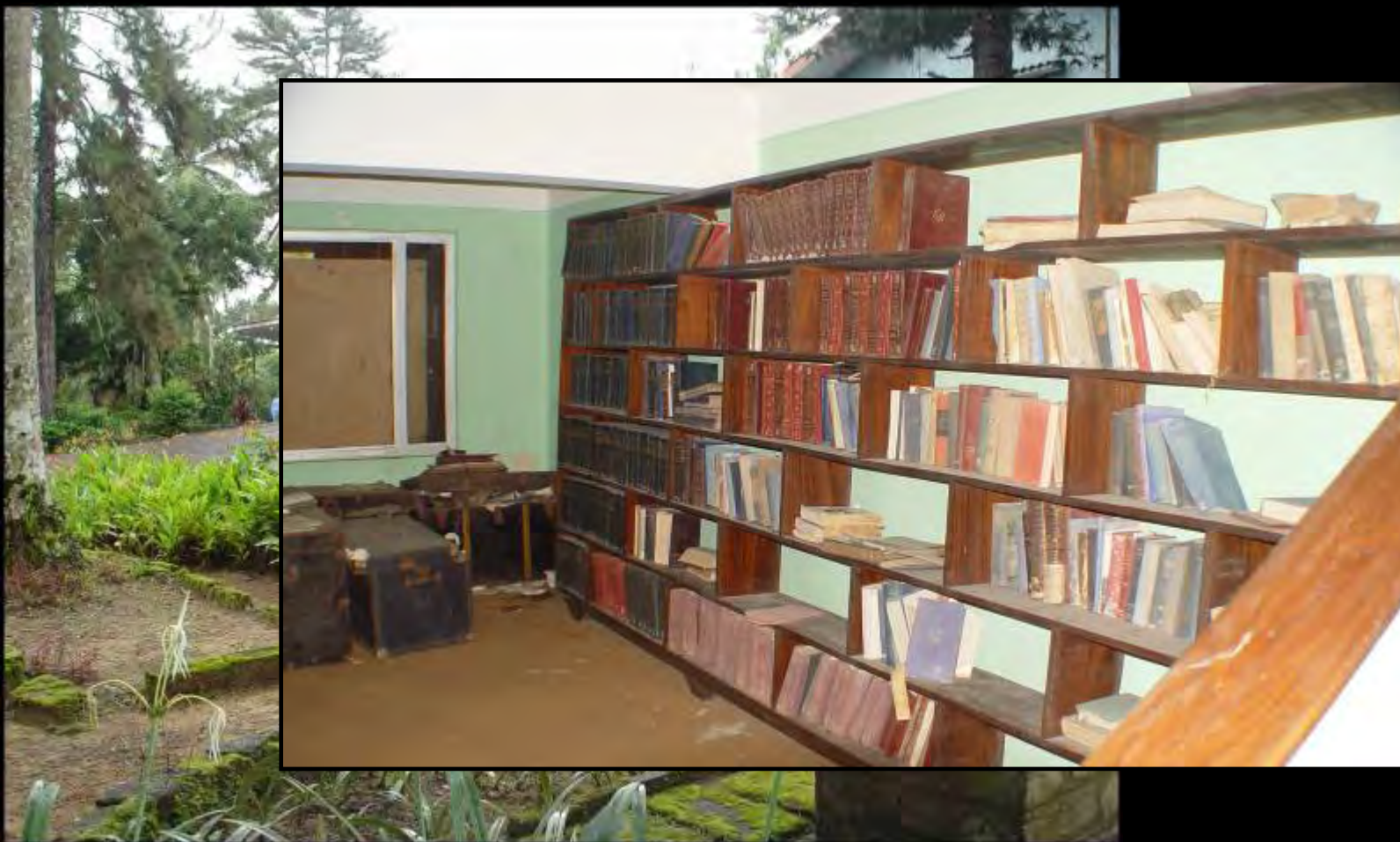
- **British Library Endangered Archives Program**
- **Title IV Librarians – Africana Librarians Council – CAMP**
- **World Bank/Liberian National Archives (CNDRA)**
 - **Total Project Grant Funding > \$400,000**
- **IU African Studies Program**
- **IU Work-study Program**
- **IU Libraries Units – In-Kind Collaboration**
 - **African Studies Collection**
 - **Digital Library Program**
 - **Office of Archives & Records Management**
 - **E. Lingle Craig Preservation Laboratory**
- **IU Archives of Traditional Music**

Rescuing Liberian History

- A Pilot Study to Preserve & Enable Access to Liberia's Presidential & National Archives
- Preserving the Personal Papers of W.V.S. Tubman, Liberia's Longest Serving President
- Preserving the Photographs of W.V. S. Tubman, Liberia's Longest Serving President
- Establishing a Microfilming Capability at the Liberian National Archives
- Preserving & Making Accessible Liberia Land Records



William V. S. Tubman Collections



Tubman Farm



Tubman Farm 2004





Project Stages

- I Recovering & Shipping Papers to IU
- II Deep-Freeze and Freeze-Dry Papers
- III Conservation & Restoration
- IV Description & Arrangement
- V Microfilming
- VI Return Tubman Papers to Liberia







Tubman Farm 2005





Recovered 22 Cu. Ft.

Originally Estimated 55 Cu. Ft. (30,000 documents)





Project Stages

- I Recovering & Shipping Papers to IU
- II Deep-Freeze and Freeze-Dry Papers
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- IV Description & Arrangement
- V Microfilming
- VI Return Tubman Papers to Liberia

E. Lingle Craig Preservation Laboratory





MACHINE OPERS

For men of London within the Jurisdiction
of the M. W. G. L. of Masonry of the R.

Compiled by Brothers

J. James, Esq.
W. J. James, Esq.

MASONIC ODDS

Compiled by Brothers
James Hall
and
George Hall

James B. Smith
J. W. Smith
J. W. Smith
J. W. Smith

order of

• *Red Wings*
 • *Golden Eagle*
 • *Amelia Earhart*
 • *H. Norman Smith*
 • *Washington, D.C.*



Camp Johnson Road,
Monrovia, Liberia,
November 25, 1944.

Your Excellency,

I have the honor to bring before you this afternoon, the maltreatment that I have received from Capt. Geo. B. H. Morris, Capt. of Police; I have issued four aliens' slips to four Mandingoes, because they can't write and they offered me four dollars (\$4.00) at one dollar (\$1.00) each; after which Capt. Morris went down waterside and have the aforesaid slips collected.

After the collection of the slips, he convened a Court Martial for me to be disciplined; in this Court Martial, I was suspended for two months effective as of the 15th instant, fined ten dollars (\$10.00), and one half of salary diminished.

On Saturday, the 19th instant, the aforesaid Capt. Morris called me in his office and plainly expressed the following words-- "Gurgt. Nimely, you are dismissed from the service and to be prosecuted for extortion; charge of you, take him and put him in the guard house, for he is a prisoner."

As a free citizen of this soil, I should like to know if a man can be imprisoned, who does not steal or commit murder without a precept being issued upon his body; another thing is the minute he dismissed me from the service, his jurisdiction ^{over} ~~was~~ ceased.

I therefore, appeal to you as the President and father of this country for your intervention in the above mentioned actions of Superintendent Geo. B. H. Morris.

I have the honor to be,
Mr. President,
Your obedient servant,

Deciding the Organization: Series & Sub-series



22 Sorting Passes Required to Organize



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• [Personal Correspondence](#)

William V.S. Tubman Papers, 1904-1992



Summary Information

Repository

Liberian Collections
Liberian Collections
Indiana University
504 North Fess Avenue
Bloomington, IN 47408
Phone: (812) 856-0782
Email: liberia@indiana.edu
<http://www.onliberia.org>

Creator

Tubman, William V.S.

Title

William V.S. Tubman Papers , 1904-1992

Collection No.

LCP2005/014 and Endangered Archives Programme EAP 027

Extent

21 cubic feet; 21 records cartons

Extent

Alternate Form Available: 48 microfilm reels (1 restricted)

Language

Materials are primarily in English

Abstract

William V. S. Tubman (1895-1971), Liberia's longest serving President, served from 1944-1971. Tubman's presidency was marked by great changes in the economy, politics and social environment of Liberia. The materials in the collection include papers from the years of Tubman's presidency, his personal correspondence and memorabilia from Tubman's family.

Tubman Town,
Cape Palmas.
January 2, 1946.

His Excellency Wm. V. S. Tubman,
President of the Republic of Liberia.
Monrovia.

His Excellency.

I am Sick with an abscess in my
body cause from the fall I had sometime ago
from the motor truck, and the beat at Webbo,
and the bruised matter formed into an abscess.
I have been down since November, my eyes and
neck also is affected, I was instructed by
Doctor Suckeime to get to monrovia as early
as possible for operation.

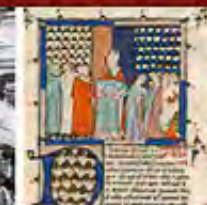
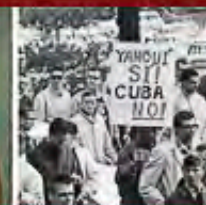
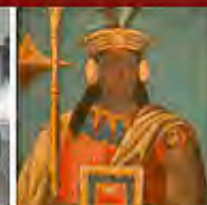
There is know way for me to get there as
I haven the money, and to get in Direstone
it is trouble I need a good Examination
and an early treatment,

I would be thankfull if you would be
so kind as to send me a permit to Direstone
to enter the hospital and to be treated, I have
tried many ways to entered but have failed
if I dont be treated something might likely



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William V.S. Tubman Papers, 1904-1992

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Liberian Government Papers

The Executive Branch Administrative Files

Bureau of Civil Service

Annual and Special Reports, 1944, 1946, undated


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Liberian Government Papers

The Executive Branch Administrative Files

Bureau of Civil Service

Central Office, 1947-1967, undated

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Liberian Government Papers

The Executive Branch Administrative Files

Bureau of Police

General Correspondence, 1968, undated

 [View item\(s\)](#)

Liberian Government Papers

The Executive Branch Administrative Files

Bureau of Public Health and Sanitation

Annual and Special Reports, 1945-1953, undated

 [View item\(s\)](#)

Liberian Government Papers

The Executive Branch Administrative Files

Bureau of Public Health and Sanitation

Budgets, 1950

I haven't received anything on my
scholarship as yet.

September 6, 1964

My Dear Pauling,

I was very much disappointed when
you didn't meet your appointment last evening
and more so, when you didn't send an excuse
as you always did to state your ^{reason for} disappointment.
I had looked forward for that meeting.

Mr Byado came and informed me yes-
terday that Thursday flight is all booked
out and the only two flight this week by
Pan Am. would be today and Sunday. I
should therefore say when I would like
to leave. Well, I told him to book for today
hoping I would see you last evening to
tell you of the change of flight. As it is
now, I don't know what to do because I have
booked for today and I can't go without
seeing you so tell me what to do please.

I hope that you are well after all your
engagements these two days. I am waiting
to hear from you soon.

your very Special
A

Rescuing Liberian History

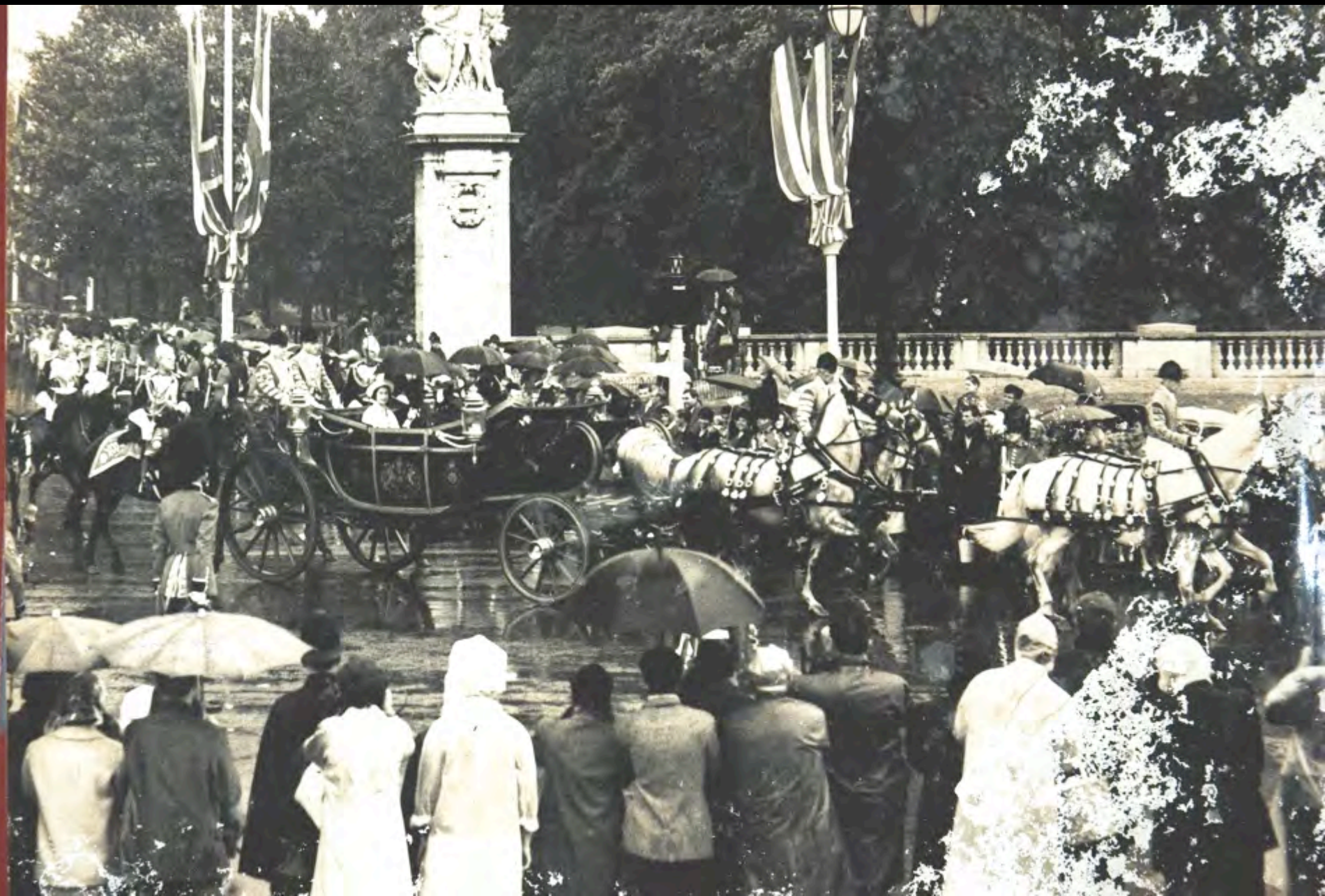
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Q. T. VINCENT
OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHER
EXECUTIVE MANSION
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

AGREEMENT

We, the undersigned family of the late Liberian President, W.V.S. Tubman, grant the Liberian Collections Project at Indiana University permission to pack the collected papers of President W.V.S. Tubman located at Tubman Estate in Bong County and to ship them to Bloomington, Indiana to be dried, restored, arranged and microfilmed for use by Liberian and international researchers and scholars.

Once these steps are concluded, the refurbished collection will be returned to Liberia and into the possession of the Tubman family. The collection will eventually be deposited in the Center for National Documents and Records/National Archives or similar facility when preservation, security and access conditions are met to the Tubman family's satisfaction.

At the same time microfilm copies of the Tubman papers will be deposited with the University of Liberia, Cuttington University College, Center for National Documents and Records/National Archives, and the Tubman family to give local access to Liberians for the Tubman papers' content. International access to the Tubman papers' content will be via microfilms deposited at the Liberian Collections Project-Indiana University, the British Library, and with the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), which is the central repository for the Africana Librarians Council.

Antoinette Tubman 2/2/05
Mrs. Antoinette Tubman Date

William V.S. Tubman, Jr. 2/2/4.0.2005
Mr. William V.S. Tubman, Jr. Date

Wilhelmina Tubman-Tucker 2/2/2005
Mrs. Wilhelmina Tubman-Tucker Date

John Hilary Tubman ✓
Mr. John Hilary Tubman Date

William Eli Tubman 2/2/05
Mr. William Eli Tubman Date

NB:

Notwithstanding anything contained in the documents relative to the " Preservation and archiving of the President William V.S. Tubman Papers", the undersigned heirs in no way or manner convey title or copyright privileges to the Preservation Project to any person or entity hereto. The heirs retain these rights and privileges to themselves.







Preparing for Scanning

- **Frozen at E. Lingle Craig Preservation Laboratory**
 - Garry Harrison & Preservation Lab Team
- **Photos removed from Albums**
 - Foldered by album and ordered as appeared in album
 - Captions retained if separate from photo
 - Retroactively reviewed albums for additional written and other information.
- **Photos impossible to yield information or repair digitally removed from scanning queue, especially if similar photos existed.**
 - Ongoing process as other photos removed through scanning process.
 - Relatively low bar: Criteria was for visual information

Scanning at DLP

- **Used National/International Standards**
 - **Provided by DLP**
 - Uncompressed TIFF files
 - 600 dpi resolution
 - 24-bit color
 - Adobe RGB (1998) Color Standard
- **Used DLP's VAA naming convention**
- **Scanned photos 'as is' for accurate representation of image**
- **Showed borders around photos**

Quality Control of Digitized Images

- DLP ran auto QC ensuring files were formatted correctly
- IULC ran manual QC making sure that images were
 - Correctly oriented
 - Weren't cropped,
 - Files colors accurately represented the photos colors

PhotoCat

- **Metadata Design**
 - Good & Bad Ideas
 - Training
 - Changing expectations & functionalities
 - Batch loading
 - Synonym search returns

Image Collections Online

All Images

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Liberian Collections > William V.S. Tubman Photograph Collection

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Title/Caption President and Mrs. Tubman pose for portrait with US President, Lyndon B. Johnson, his wife, "Lady Bird" Johnson, Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, and his wife Muriel Humphrey

Person Pictured Tubman, William V. S., President of Liberia; Tubman, Antoinette Louise Padmore, First Lady of Liberia; Johnson, Lyndon B., President of the United States; Johnson, Claudia Alta "Lady Bird" Taylor, First Lady of the United States; Humphrey, Hubert H., Vice President of the United States; Humphrey, Muriel Buck, Wife of US Vice President

Topic Group portraits, Guests, Government officials

Date Taken 1968

Continent North and Central America

Country United States of America

State/Province District of Columbia

City/Town /Village Washington, D.C.

Photographer NA

Agency Orphan Work

Film Type Black & White Print

PhotoCat2

- **Provided added functionalities**
 - Batch editing
 - Locating parallelisms or lack thereof
 - Import/Export

Successful Strategies

- Always used TGM I for Topics, but...
 - Too many unnecessary Topics used
 - Lack of consistency among coders
 - Terminology, spelling, punctuation
- Asked Sarah Keil to address the issue
 - Develop a limited Topics list
 - Train current and new coders in use
 - Adjudicate all Topics questions
- Now Sarah the Topics Czar will detail

Goals for Topical Headings

- Provide a description of what the photograph is of, not what it is about.
- Provide accuracy for users but not at the expense of users getting bogged down in detail

Process for Creating Topical Headings: Initial Steps

- Visually scan (peruse) photographs
 - Read about: Tubman's travels, timelines, and other miscellaneous documentation
 - Write down themes, objects, types of people, setting
 - With the goals:
 - Building knowledge
 - Compiling extensive list of possible topics
 - No more than 20 topic terms
- ***Key aspect: Disregard TGM at this point

Process for Creating Topical Headings: Building the List

- **Organize and pare down list of possible topics (originally ~50)**
 - Example: many photos of vehicles; initially labeled as cars and trucks → automobiles
 - Goal: to be concise without being confusing
- **Important steps:**
 - Consult TGM to find actual approved topics
 - Analyze other photo archives (at IU and elsewhere)
 - Anticipate searches



Process for Creating Topical Headings: Testing the List

- Test topics against various sections of the photos:
 - My results versus student coder results
- Resulted in more edits to the list
- Final outcome:
 - 28 topic terms, divided into 4 categories:
 - events, locations, objects, people

Guide to Topical Headings: Preparation

- **Guide to walk coders through the process**
- **Developed from experience plus DLP guidelines**

Guide to Topical Headings: Steps

- Describe the subject of the photograph
- Determine the index for what the photo is of: an event, location, object, or people, or some combination of those categories as a starting point for selecting topical headings.
- Focus on the core topic when selecting topical headings from the provided list.
 - Limit of 3 topics
 - Most specific
 - Process to add a topic



Training and Release of Coders

- Sample photographs
- Group coding
- Individual practice
- Release – email communication, semi-regular meetings

Challenges & Opportunities

- **Technology/PhotoCat2**
 - Autocorrect
 - Maintenance
 - Standardization (plurals, capitalization)
- **Coders:**
 - Cultural/historical knowledge
 - Constraint



Image Collections Online

All Images : Search

Liberian Collections > William V.S. Tubman Photograph Collection



President William V. S. Tubman stands in traditional dress on balcony with officials greeting crowd from the True Whig Party Presentation



Mary Jane McLeod Bethune, American educator and civil rights leader, converses with

Browse Tubman:

- ▶ Date
- ▶ Topic
- ▶ Event
- ▶ Person
- ▶ Country
- ▶ City
- ▶ Photographer
- ▶ Photographic Agency

About William V.S. Tubman Photograph Collection

William Vacanarat Shadrach Tubman (1895-1971) was Liberia's longest-serving president, in office from 1944 to 1971. During his presidency Tubman travelled extensively, visiting many African countries both pre- and post-independence, Haiti and Trinidad as well as other Caribbean countries, the United States and many European countries. In turn Liberia received frequent return visits by Heads of State and other high-ranking officials. The William V. S. Tubman Photography collection contains over 5,500 photographs, most documenting official functions such as trips, inspection tours, formal receptions and inaugurations. Tubman family member appear in many of the photographs in an official capacity, but the collection also includes family photographs. Most photographs were taken by official photographers for Liberia or the host governments.

For more information, visit the [Indiana University Liberian Collections](#).

[view all images](#)

All Images

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Liberian Collections > William V.S. Tubman Photograph Collection

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Title/Caption **Liberian President William V. S. Tubman shares a meal with Ghanain President Kwame Nkrumah and**

Person Pictured **Selassie, Haile, Emperor of Ethiopia; Nkrumah, Kwame, President of Ghana; Tubman, William V. S., President of Liberia**

Topic **Portraits, Guests, Receptions, Government officials**

Date Taken **circa 1959-1969**

Continent **Africa**

Country **Ghana**

Photographer **NA**

Agency **Ghana Information Services**

Film Type **Black & White Print**

Print Size **8 x 10**

[contact the curator](#)



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Liberian Collections > William V.S. Tubman Photograph Collection

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Title/Caption Portrait of Pope Pius XII and Tubman party

Person Pictured Tubman, Antoinette Louise Padmore, First Lady of Liberia; Tubman, Wilhelmina (Coocoo), Daughter of President Tubman; Pius XII, Pope; Tubman, William V. S., President of Liberia; King, Olubanke (Banke); Tolbert, Victoria A. D., Wife of Vice President Tolbert

Topic Spiritual leaders, Visits of state, Group portraits

Date Taken 1956-09-23

Continent Europe

Country Italy

Photographer NA

Agency Orphan Work

Film Type Color Print

Print Size 8 x 10

[contact the curator](#)

Lessons Learned

- Don't build boxes too big to save money
- Quality control, quality control, quality control
 - Start immediately
 - Check the checkers
 - Keep records
- Paucity of information on many pictures
 - Too many fields, unprioritized approach at first
 - Should have
 - treated each album as a series or sub-series
 - Retained page and placement info
- Train for consistency
 - Punctuation, capitalization, spelling, etc.

Google: Indiana Tubman Photo

<http://OnLiberia.org>

Facebook: Indiana-University-Liberian-Collections

Twitter handle: @iulc1

YouTube: liberiaiu

stonevl@indiana.edu

liberia@indiana.edu

To Find , Google:

- **Indiana Liberia Papers**
- **Indiana Liberia Photos**
- **Indiana Liberia Tubman**
- **Indiana Liberia Tubman Papers**
- **Indiana Liberia Tubman Photos**

Liberian Collections Project



Inauguration Weekend 2006, Broad Street,
Monrovia, Montserrado County, J. Weegi

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Quick Links

Read more about LSA and LCP Collections:

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- ✓ [Liberian Studies Journal](#)
- ✓ [LSA39](#)
- ✓ [Holsoe Collection](#)
- ✓ [d'Azevedo Collection](#)
- ✓ [Tubman Collection](#)

Today in Liberia

Liberian News Sources:

- ✓ [Liberian Observer](#)
- ✓ [The Analyst](#)
- ✓ [TLC Africa](#)

Total visitors

- Nigeria: 35
- Spain: 30
- Switzerland: 30
- Ghana: 29

**9163 visitors from
97 countries**

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Q & A



The IU/Liberian Digital Archiving Project

From Vacant Liberian Mansion to the ICO: The William V.S. Tubman Photography Collection

**A Collaborative Project of the
Center for National Documents & Records Agency (CNDRA)
The IU Digital Library Program, Office of Archives & Records Management,
E. Lingle Craig Preservation Laboratory & The IU Liberian Collections**

Verlon Stone, Head, IU Liberian Collections
Megan MacDonald, Archivist, IU Liberian Collections
Sarah Keil, Student Archivist/Librarian, Wells Library African Studies Collection

Digital Library Brown Bag Series-Wednesday Noon Talks
20 March 2013

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