

Record Series #: 1121-108

Name: W. W. Law Periodical Collection

Dates: 1831-1866, 1905-2009, no date*

Extent/Size: 170 records cartons, 1 oversized box, 2 oversized folders (170.5 cubic feet)*

Language: English

**Additional accruals are expected as processing of this series continues. The overall dates and extent will be updated accordingly.*

Name of Creator(s):

Westley Wallace Law (W. W. Law)

Biographical History:

W. W. Law (1923-2002) was a prominent Civil Rights leader, local historian, historic preservationist and community leader in Savannah, Georgia.

Westley Wallace Law was born on January 1, 1923 in Savannah, Georgia, the oldest of three children of Geneva Wallace and Westley Law. He was greatly influenced by his mother, Geneva W. Law, grandmother, Lillie Belle Wallace, mentor, Reverend Ralph Mark Gilbert, and scoutmaster, John S. Delaware. Both Reverend Gilbert and John Delaware were officials in the Savannah chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Law joined the NAACP Youth Council in high school and later served as its president. He attended Georgia State Industrial College (now Savannah State University) before being drafted into the U. S. Army during World War II. After he completed his military service, he finished his bachelor's degree in biology. Law was a long-time boy scoutmaster for Troop 49 which was made up of boys from First Bryan Baptist Church, of which he was a member and Sunday school teacher. He was a mail carrier for the United States Postal Service for over forty years.

From 1950-1976 Law served as President of the Savannah chapter of the NAACP. During the 1960s, he led weekly mass meetings at Bolton Street Baptist Church and St. Philip A.M.E. Church during which he urged "passive resistance to segregation" and nonviolent protests. He was involved in efforts to desegregate Grayson Municipal Stadium, department store lunch counters on Broughton Street, and the beaches at Tybee Island. He led an eighteen-month boycott of Broughton Street merchants. Law is largely credited for helping to keep Savannah's Civil Rights movement more peaceful than those in other southern cities. In 1961, he was fired from his postal job because of his Civil Rights activities but reinstated after national NAACP leaders and President John F. Kennedy came to his defense.

After finishing his run as NAACP president, he focused his efforts on preserving Savannah African American History. He established the Savannah-Yamacraw Branch of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASALH), the King-Tisdell Cottage Museum, Beach Institute African American Cultural Center, the Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum, and the Negro Heritage Trail Tour. He also helped

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bring attention to and preserve Laurel Grove South Cemetery, the City's historically African American municipal cemetery.

Law received honorary doctorates from the Savannah College of Art & Design and Savannah State University. He was honored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation for his preservation efforts in the community. W. W. Law died on July 28, 2002 at his home in Savannah. He willed his home and belongings to Remer K. Pendergraph who formed the W. W. Law Foundation to celebrate and continue the work of W. W. Law. The Foundation in turn donated his collections, documenting Savannah's civil rights movement, historic preservation, and African American history, to the City of Savannah for preservation and access to the public.

For more information on W. W. Law see:

Elmore, Charles J. "W. W. Law (1923-2002)." New Georgia Encyclopedia, last updated 24 August 2020 (available on the web at <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/w-w-law-1923-2002>).

Scope & Content:

Record Series 1121-108, W. W. Law Periodical Collection (1831-1866, 1905-2009, no date) includes several issues of serial publications, Nineteenth Century newspapers, magazines, newsletters, and journals. The content of the periodicals includes a wide variety of topics, history, civil rights, abolitionism, government news, national, local and international news, organizational updates, celebrity news, African American culture, and religions. Items of note include the several issues of William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator*, 1831-1865 a popular abolitionist newspaper that promoted not only abolishing slavery but women's rights as well. Other items of note include over 1,400 local periodicals featuring Savannah schools, organizations, governments, and religious institutions, including, Boy Scouts of America Coastal Empire Council's, *Coastal Empire Scouter* published March 1947.

System of Arrangement & Ordering:

Record Series 1121-108, W. W. Law Periodical Collection (1831-1866, 1905-2009, no date) is arranged into two separate sub-series. See each sub-series scope and content note for more information.

Sub-series 1121-108.1, Newspapers

Sub-series 1121-108.2, Magazines, Newsletters and Journals

Conditions Governing Access:

Collection is partially stored offsite, and researchers must request desired records at least one (1) full business day before research appointment for access.

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Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use:

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This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve a violation of copyright law.

Accruals:

Additional accruals are expected. The finding aid and inventory will be updated as processing continues.

Digital Access:

A digitized copy of the first issue of *The Liberator* from this collection can be found online at <http://www.savannahga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9974>.

Additional issues of *The Liberator* are available online through "Online archive @ Fair Use Repository" at <http://fair-use.org/the-liberator/>.

Access Points:

Abolitionists--Newspapers.
Association for the Study of African-American Life and History
Book-of-the-Month Club
Boy Scouts of America
Boy Scouts of America--Georgia--Savannah
Columbia LP Record Club
Down Beat
First African Baptist Church (Savannah, Ga.)
Frank Leslie's illustrated newspaper
Garrison, William Lloyd, 1805-1879
Georgia Historical Society
Georgia. Department of Natural Resources
Harper and Brothers
Harper's Weekly

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High-fidelity sound systems--Periodicals
The Liberator
Metropolitan Opera Guild
Music--Catalogues
Music--Periodicals
New Records (Periodical)
Newspapers--Illustrations
Newsweek, Inc.
Periodicals (Savannah, Ga.)
Saturday evening post
Saturday review
Savannah State University (Ga.)
Schwann (Periodical)
Smithsonian Institution
Southern Regional Council
Sports illustrated
Stereo Review (Periodical)
Time
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865
United States Commission on Civil Rights. Civil Rights Digest
University of Georgia. Press

Sponsors/Funding:

Chatham County, Georgia, Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funding.

Preferred Citation:

Record Series 1121-108, W. W. Law Periodical Collection. City of Savannah Municipal Archives, Savannah, Georgia.

Processed by:

M. Kerkhoff, A. Nordin, C. Leite, March 2017; revised L. Spracher, August 2017;
revised M. Kerkhoff, January 2018; additional processing, E. Rountree, 2019; revised M.
Kerkhoff, September 2020.

Record Series 1121-108, W. W. Law Periodical Collection (1831-1866, 1905-2009, no date)

Sub-Series #: 1121-108.1
Name: W. W. Law Periodical Collection – Newspapers
Dates: 1831-1866, no date*
Extent/Size: 1 oversized box, 2 oversized folders (0.5 cubic feet)
Language: English

**Additional accruals are expected as processing of this series continues. The overall dates and extent will be updated accordingly.*

Scope & Content:

Sub-series 1121-108.1, W. W. Law Periodical Collection – Newspapers (1831-1866, no date) includes several issues of *The Liberator* newspaper, edited by William Lloyd Garrison. *The Liberator* was founded in 1831 by Garrison and Isaac Knapp. The abolitionist newspaper was published weekly from Boston, Massachusetts. Also included in this sub-series are several issues of *Harper's Weekly* and a partial issue of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. Of note in this sub-series are illustrations from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* of images depicting Savannah, Georgia.

System of Arrangement and Ordering:

Sub-series 1121-108.1, W. W. Law Periodical Collection – Newspapers (1831-1866, no date) is arranged by publication title, chronologically by date, and size.

Inventory:

Garrison, William Lloyd. *The Liberator*. Boston, Massachusetts.

Box	Folder	Issue	Date	Additional Notes
1121-108-01	1a	Vol. 01, No. 01	January 1, 1831	
1121-108-01	1b	Vol. 01, No. 01	January 1, 1831	Paper backing removed from the previous issue
1121-108-01	2	Vol. 01, No. 02	January 8, 1831	
Oversized 1121-108-02		Vol. 08, No. 27	July 6, 1838	Inscriptions on the top of the first page
Oversized 1121-108-02		Vol. 26, No. 38	September 12, 1856	
Oversized 1121-108-02		Vol. 29, No. 12	March 25, 1859	
Oversized 1121-108-02		Vol. 30, No. 41	October 12, 1860	
Oversized 1121-108-02		Vol. 30, No. 47	November 23, 1860	
Oversized 1121-108-02		Vol. 30, No. 12	March 22, 1861	One original, two reproduced copies of cover page
Oversized 1121-108-174		Vol. 32, No. 16	April 18, 1862	
Oversized 1121-108-174		Vol. 33, No. 20	May 15, 1863	C. A. Hack's signature on the first page
Oversized 1121-108-174		Vol. 33, No. 44	October 30, 1863	
Oversized 1121-108-174		Vol. 34, No. 17	April 22, 1864	
Oversized 1121-108-174		Vol. 35, No. 13	March 31, 1865	

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Harper and Brothers. *Harper's Weekly: A Journal of Civilization*. New York City, New York.

<i>Box</i>	<i>Folder</i>	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Additional Notes</i>
1121-108-01	6	Vol. 05, No. 243	August 24, 1861	Partial
1121-108-01	6	n/a	November 30, 1861	Partial
1121-108-01	6	Vol. 06, No. 265	January 25, 1862	Partial
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 07, No. 335	May 30, 1863	Partial
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 07, No. 337	June 13, 1863	
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 08, No. 389	June 11, 1864	Partial
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 08, No. 391	June 25, 1864	Partial
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 08, No. 398	August 13, 1864	
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 09, No. 430	March 25, 1865	
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 09, No. 432	April 8, 1865	
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 09, No. 432	April 8, 1865	
1121-108-01	3	Vol. 09, No. 462	November 4, 1865	
1121-108-01	4	Vol. 09, No. 463	November 11, 1865	
1121-108-01	4	Vol. 09, No. 463	November 11, 1865	
1121-108-01	4	Vol. 10, No. 506	September 8, 1866	
1121-108-01	4	Vol. 10, No. 507	September 15, 1866	
1121-108-01	4	Vol. 10, No. 508	September 22, 1866	
1121-108-01	4	Vol. 10, No. 508	September 22, 1866	
1121-108-01	6	n/a	No date	Partial; article, "Famous Leaders and Battles in the Civil War"

Leslie, Frank. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, New York City, New York.

<i>Box</i>	<i>Folder</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Additional Notes</i>
1121-108-01	5	December 21, 1861	Available pages: 71-74; 79-80; illustrations of Savannah on pages 72-73

Record Series 1121-108, W. W. Law Periodical Collection (1831-1866, 1905-2009, no date)

Sub-Series #: 1121-108.2
Name: W. W. Law Periodical Collection – Magazines, Newsletters and Journals
Dates: 1905-2009, no date
Extent/Size: 170 records cartons (170.0 cubic feet)
Language: English

Scope & Content:

Sub-series 1121-108.2, W. W. Law Periodical Collection – Magazines, Newsletters and Journals (1905-2009, no date) includes over 14,000 serial publications from national and local organizations, businesses, churches, universities, and government institutions. Topics of the periodicals include music, literature, national news, celebrity news, education, museums, civil rights, religion, business, and historic preservation. National periodicals include, but are not limited to, *Time*, *Life*, *Newsweek*, *Ebony*, *Jet*, and the *Black Enterprise*. Local periodicals include, but are not limited to, *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, *Entablature*, *The First African Baptist Informer*, *Riders' Reader*, and *Savannah Magazine*. Items of note include Cuyler School's (Savannah, Georgia) publication, *The Cuyler Workman*, 1925-1928, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's publication featuring W. W. Law on the cover, *Historic Preservation*, January-February 1995.

System of Arrangement and Ordering:

Sub-series 1121-108.2, W. W. Law Periodical Collection – Magazines, Newsletters and Journals (1905-2009, no date) is physically arranged by title, size, and date.

See attached Inventories:

[Inventory by Publication Title](#)

[Inventory by Publication Date](#)