

History Snapshots

W.W. LAW (1923-2002)

Lesson Topic

Civil Rights Movement in Savannah, Georgia.

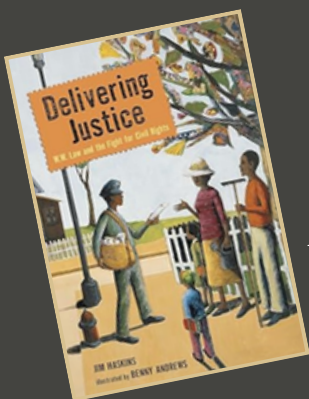
Georgia Standards

SS8H11 Evaluate the role of Georgia in the modern civil rights movement.

Lesson Picture Book

Delivering Justice: W.W. Law and the Fight for Civil Rights by Jim Haskins

Lesson derived from the GHS online course, "Unveiling the Past: Integrating Picture Books, Community Voices, and Archives in Teaching Challenging Histories."



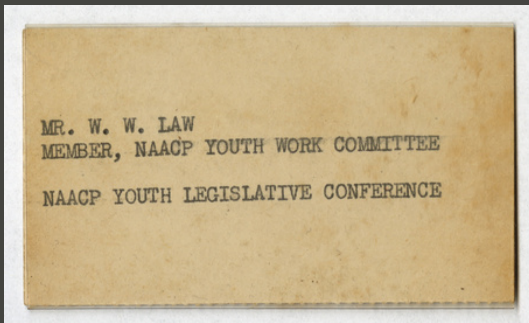
W.W. Law, Civil Rights Leader of Savannah, GA

Westley Wallace Law was born in Savannah. As the president of the Savannah Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1950 to 1976, Law led a courageous and unremitting campaign to desegregate the city. Law served in World War II before graduating from what is now Savannah State University. Inspired by Pastor Ralph Mark Gilbert, Law led the legal battle to desegregate public schools, held weekly mass meetings at Savannah churches, wade-ins at segregated Tybee Beach, and sit-ins at lunch counters and restaurants. The protests culminated in an 18-month boycott of Broughton Street merchants that forced White leaders to desegregate on October 1, 1963, eight months ahead of federal civil rights legislation requiring such action. This success prompted Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to declare that Savannah was “the most desegregated city south of the Mason-Dixon Line.”

Materials

- [Downtown Savannah Historic District Map](#)
- [Delivering Justice: W.W. Law and the Fight for Civil Rights by Jim Haskins Book](#)
- [Georgia Historical Society W.W. Law Primary Sources](#)
- [Photo of W.W. Law Tombstone](#)
- [Savannah Beach Wade-In Historical Marker](#)
- [Primary Source Credibility Form](#)

GHS Primary Sources



Lesson Introduction

Show the [headstone of W. W. Law from the Laurel Grove South Cemetery](#). Have students think about and discuss what kind of person he might have been from the words on his headstone. *"I was the result of a composite contribution. I tried not to have a big ending, but rather, to live my life doing the best that I could each day, because a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. A man is poor, not because he doesn't have money, but because he doesn't have enough vision in his head and heart."*

Direct Introduction

Read [Delivering Justice: W. W. Law and the Fight for Civil Rights](#) aloud to the class or have the students watch the read-aloud on the Promethean board. The teacher will place the story in the context of Savannah, GA during the Civil Rights Movement time frame.

Teacher will review the student strategies for investigating challenging histories with the class:

- Seek Multiple Sources.
- Evaluate Credibility
- Engage Critically

Guided Practice

Create small groups of 4-5 students, depending on class size. Provide each group with a copy of the book, [Delivering Justice: W. W. Law and the Fight for Civil Rights](#), and an envelope of the [W.W. Law Primary Sources set](#).

Have students look at the Downtown Savannah Historic District map. As students read through the book, have them mark the location of sites relevant to W.W. Law's life and decide which primary source(s) connects to which location(s). If a location cannot be found on the map, have students create a callout box along the bottom of the map to note the information.

Upon completion, groups will complete the credibility form, evaluating the author's and/or institution's credibility of the primary and secondary sources.

Independent Practice

Teacher will lead student into a whole group moderated discussion over the small group activity and journal prompt questions:

- Teacher will have a spokesperson for each group share their observations, reflections, and questions.
- Teacher will allow individual students to pull from their journal thoughts to discuss the complexities of the Civil Rights Movement, explicitly in Savannah, GA.

First Bryan Baptist Church

'The Nation's Temple'

559 W. Bryan Street

Savannah, Ga.

Phone 5911

NELSON BROWN
Chairman of Deacon Board

NATHAN ROBERTS
Chairman of Trustee Board

HENRY HUGER, Sec.

MORGAN P. BEDGOOD, Treas.

Nathaniel E. Holsey, B. Th., Minister
1019 W. 46th St., Phone 8541

DR. M. P. SESSOMS, M. D.
Chairman Finance Committee

MISS OZENA M. WHITFIELD
Secretary

GEORGE FULLER, Chr. Clerk

REV. WILLIE WILLIAMS
REV. WALTER BORDUS
Assistant Ministers

July 18, 1946

To Whom This May Concern:

This is to certify that Mr. Westley Law is a member
of The First Bryan Baptist Church in good and regular
standing. Baptismal record shows:

Joined The First Bryan Baptist Church
under the pastorage of the Rev. L. M.
Terrill, 1935.

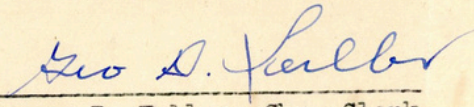
Age 12.

Address 2009 Florence Street.

Mother Mrs. Geneva Law.

For any further information, write office of church,
Yamacraw Villiage, Savannah, Georgia.

We Remain Yours For Kingdom Building,
First Bryan Baptist Church,


George D. Fuller, Chr. Clerk

GDF:MGE

The Fruit of George Lyles, Andrew Bryan, Sampson Bryan, Kate Hogg and Hager Simpson

Organized January 20, 1788



Honorable Discharge

This is to certify that

WESTLEY W LAW 34 743 583 STAFF SERGEANT
SQUADRON "C" 316TH ARMY AIR FORCES BASE UNIT

Army of the United States

*is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military
service of the United States of America.*

*This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest
and Faithful Service to this country.*

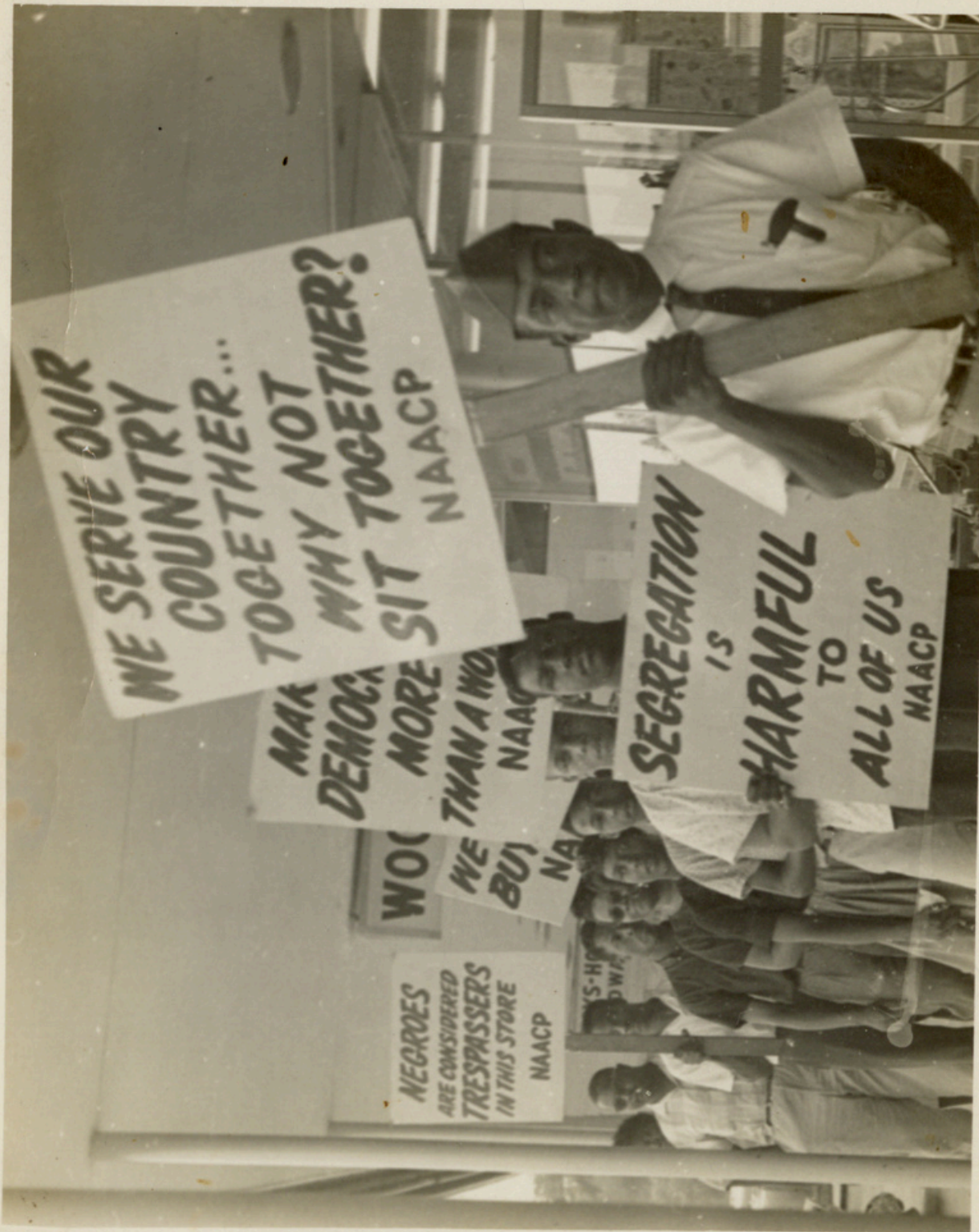
Given at

SEPARATION CENTER
CAMP SHELBY MISSISSIPPI

Date

13 FEBRUARY 1946

ARCHIE SORENSON
MAJOR AC



GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRIMARY SOURCE SET
GHS 2697 JOHN WILLIAMS COLLECTION OF W.W. (WESTLEY WALLACE) LAW PAPERS
SAVANNAH NAACP BOYCOTT PROTEST OF WOOLWORTH - JULY 1960S



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SAVANNAH NAACP 1960S



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GHS 2697 JOHN WILLIAMS COLLECTION OF W.W. (WESTLEY WALLACE) LAW PAPERS
SAVANNAH NAACP SPEECHES - FIRST AFRICAN BAPTIST CHURCH - FEBRUARY 10, 1963



GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRIMARY SOURCE SET
GHS 2697 JOHN WILLIAMS COLLECTION OF W.W. (WESTLEY WALLACE) LAW PAPERS
ST. PHILIP A.M.E. - W.W. LAW - MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRIMARY SOURCE SET
GHS 2697 JOHN WILLIAMS COLLECTION OF W.W. (WESTLEY WALLACE) LAW PAPERS
W. W. LAW'S 1955 NAACP MEMBER PINS

MR. W. W. LAW
MEMBER, NAACP YOUTH WORK COMMITTEE
NAACP YOUTH LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE