Guide to the John L. LeFlore Papers

Descriptive Summary:

Creator: John LeFlore

Title: John L. LeFlore Papers

Dates: 1926-1976

Quantity: 11.6 linear feet

Abstract: Correspondence, minutes, editorials, business records.

Accession: 85-07-93, 08-09-491 ; 093-1985

Biographical Note:

1903 - Born in Mobile on May 17 to Dock and Clara LeFlore.

1920 - Graduates from Owen Academy, Mobile.

1922 - Marries Teah Beck; employed as postal worker.

1926 - Becomes executive secretary of new Mobile branch of NAACP.

1936 - Serves as chair of the Regional Conference of Southern Branches-NAACP until 1945.

1942 - Works as staff correspondent for the *Chicago Defender* until 1952.

1944 - Challenges Alabama's white primary law after Supreme Court rules in *Smith v. Allwright*.

1945 - Serves as vice-president of the Conference of Alabama Branches-NAACP until 1951; then on board of directors, 1952-53.

1954 - Becomes associate editor of the *Mobile Beacon*.

1956 - NAACP outlawed in Alabama until 1964.

1959 - Becomes director of casework for the Non-Partisan Voters League.

1965 - Serves on the Alabama State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights until 1973.

1965 - Resigns from the U.S. Postal Service.

1966 - Appointed to the Mobile Housing Board; serves until 1970.

1967 - LeFlore's home on Chatague Avenue fire-bombed.

1969 - Appointed to the Alabama Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning; serves until 1974.

1971 - Becomes director of the Mobile Committee for the Support of Public Education.

1972 - Campaigns for U.S. Senate.

1975 - Elected to Alabama House of Representatives.

1976 - Dies of heart attack on January 30.

Scope and Contents:

Consists of correspondence, minutes, and other materials relating to LeFlore's participation in the NAACP (1939-1956), the Mobile Housing Board (1966-1970), the Alabama State Legislature (1975-1976), and other boards and committees. Also includes editorials he wrote for various newspapers, personal correspondence, and records of a business venture.

Arrangement:

Arranged in nine series: 1. NAACP; 2. Mobile Housing Board; 3. Miscellaneous Committees; 4. Editorials; 5. Personal Correspondence and Records; 6. Azalea Home Builders; 7. Alabama State Legislature; 8. Printed Materials; 9. Photographs.

Access Restrictions:

This material is open to research.

Preferred Citation:

John L. Leflore Papers, The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL.

Series Description:

Series 1: NAACP (Boxes 1-4)

The Mobile branch records cover the period from 1930 to 1956. They include correspondence, affidavits, financial and membership records, minutes, miscellaneous notes, and promotional materials. The files of the Alabama Conference of the NAACP contain correspondence, minutes, and membership records from 1945 to 1953. Materials relating to the Regional Conference of Southern Branches include correspondence, press releases, and miscellaneous reports from 1936 to 1945. Publications and campaign materials from the National office of the NAACP comprise the remainder of this series.

Early regional and branch correspondence show that LeFlore and the NAACP were primarily concerned with employment opportunities and public accomodations. However, the focus shifted to political rights after the Supreme Court ruled in 1944 that white primaries were unconstitutional. For example, there are affidavits of twelve registered black voters who were denied the right to vote in the 1944 Alabama Democratic primary. Other affidavits filed in 1946 indicate that registrars were using a variety of tactics to stall black voter registration.

Series 2: Mobile Housing Board (Boxes 5-6)

Appointed by Mayor Joseph N. Langan to the Board of Commissioners of the Mobile Housing Authority in 1966 to fill an unexpired term, LeFlore remained on the board until 1970. This was a period of considerable activity in low-income housing projects and urban renewal in Mobile, both areas of concern to LeFlore. The series contains correspondence, minutes, newspaper articles, complaints, financial records, U.S. Housing and Urban Development publications, personnel records, and reports.

Series 3: Other Committees and Organizations (Box 7)

LeFlore participated in many organizations and served on various state committees. In addition to civil rights, these groups represent public work in areas such as prison reform, health and family planning, veterans' rights, labor unions, public education, and general charity. In addition, he was on the editorial staff of the *Mobile Beacon* and was a radio commentator for a public service program, *Today's World*, for many years.

The series includes extensive correspondence, minutes, grant applications, and financial records for the Committee for the Support of Public Education, a group organized by LeFlore and Fr. Foley of Spring Hill College in 1973. This committee received federal funds to mount

an intensive ad campaign against racial disturbances in the public schools. Between 1956 and 1959 LeFlore was briefly associated with several civic organizations through which he attempted to carry on his civil rights activities after the NAACP was outlawed in Alabama. Researchers will also find related material on organizations etc., in LeFlore's personal correspondence (Series 5). From 1959 to 1975 he served as director of case work for the Non-Partisan Voters League. The records of this organization form a separate collection, which is housed here at The MCall Library.

Series 4: Editorials and Articles (Box 7A)
LeFlore was a news correspondent for the *Chicago Defender*, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, and the Associated Negro Press and covered many of the civil rights violations that occurred in the South. The*Defender* awarded LeFlore a citation for covering the lynching of four black people in Monroe, Georgia, in 1946. The editorials and articles in this series are dated from 1940 to 1952.

LeFlore later became associate editor of the *Mobile Beacon* and wrote many editorials and features for this weekly newspaper. These may be found in the Non-Partisan Voters League records.

Series 5: Personal Correspondence and Records (Box 8-8A)
LeFlore sent and received a great deal of correspondence over the years. Many of these letters (1940-1976) relate to civil rights issues, but are personal rather than official correspondence. There are also numerous letters of appreciation from LeFlore to those who expressed concern over the fire-bombing of his home in 1967.

This series includes a thesis concerning institutional racial discrimination in Mobile written in 1975 by Joe Ramon Whatley Jr., a student at Harvard and dedicated to John LeFlore. The series also contains financial records (not microfilmed), legal documents, LeFlore's postal employee records, correspondence relating to his employment as a sales representative during the 1930s, and materials relating to his unsuccessful run for the United States Senate in 1972. The biographical file should prove helpful for the researcher interested in the chronology of LeFlore's activities and accomplishments.

Series 6: Azalea Home Builders, Ltd. (Box 9)

A partner in the Azalea Home Builders, Ltd. from 1973 to 1975, LeFlore retained papers from this business venture. The group acquired properties outside urban renewal areas to rehabilitate, sell, or lease. The series includes correspondence, minutes of the partners' meetings, and financial reports. Appraisals, floor plans, contracts, and bills for building supplies have not been microfilmed.

Series 7: Alabama State Legislature (Box 10)
LeFlore was elected to the Alabama House of Representatives in 1974, a year before his death. The records include new clippings, campaign materials, correspondence (1974-1975), and bills.

Series 8: Published and Legal Materials (Box 10A)
This series contains publications from various organizations concerned with civil rights, black veterans, politicians, congressional records, health, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Southern Negro Youth Congress, and the United Seaman's Service. Only the title page of some of these publications has been microfilmed. There are also miscellaneous newsclippings and articles.

John LeFlore is not named in any of the legal materials in the series, and there is no correspondence to indicate the nature of his connection with them. They include a guardianship case, a contested will, a university faculty contract, by-laws for a health service, and postal employee records. None of these materials have been microfilmed.

Series 9: Photographs (Box 10A)
The photographs in this series include victims of lynchings at Monroe, Georgia, examples of police brutality, and union strikes. There are also photographs of black firemen, policemen, and other groups, and of John LeFlore himself.

Transcription
Dr. Melton McLaurin's interviews with John LeFlore, made in 1970 and 1972, supplement the NAACP materials in this collection. Topics of discussion include efforts to increase employment opportunities for blacks in the railroad and shipyards; the right of African Americans to serve on ships and receive equal treatment in port; efforts to open vocational training for blacks in the 1940s; LeFlore's investigations of lynching attempts; voter registration, Alabama's white primaries, and the Boswell amendment; civil service jobs at

the federal, state, and local levels. The interviewer asks LeFlore to comment on specific documents which are in the Leflore papers. The full text of the McLaurin interviews is available on this website.

Content List:

Box 1

NAACP Files, Mobile Branch, Correspondence

(Begin Microfilm Reel 1)

1. 1930-1931
2. Jan-March 1932
3. April 1932
4. May-Dec 1932
5. Jan-May 1934
6. June 1934
7. July-Aug 1934
8. Sept-Oct 1934
9. Nov-Dec 1934
10-11. January 1935
12. February 1935
13. March 1935
14. April 1935
15. May-June 1935
16. July 1935
17. September 1935
18. August 1935
19. October 1935
20. November 1935
21. December 1935
22-23. January 1936
24. February 1936
25-26. March 1936
27-28. April 1936
29-30. May 1936
31. June 1936
32. July 1936
33-34. August 1936
35. September 1936
36. October 1936
37. November 1936
38. December 1936
39. January 1937
40. February 1937
41. March 1937
42. April 1937

43. May 1937
44. June 1937

(Begin Microfilm Reel 2)

45. July 1937
46. August 1937
47-48. September 1937
49. October 1937
50. November 1937
51. December 1937
52. January 1938
53-54. February 1938
55. March 1938
56. April 1938
57. May 1938
58. June 1938
59-60. July 1938
61-62. August 1938
63. October 1938
64. Nov-Dec 1938
65. 1939
66. Jan-April 1940
67. May-June 1940
68. July-Aug 1940
69. Sept-Oct 1940
70. November 1940
71. December 1940

Box 2

NAACP Files, Mobile Branch, Correspondence

(Continue Microfilm Reel 2)

1. Jan-March 1941
2. April-June 1941
3. July-Dec 1941
4. 1942
5. Jan-June 1943
6. Oct 1943-March 1944
7. April 1944-January 1945
8. Feb-July 1945
9. Sept-Dec 1945
10. January 1946
11. Feb-April 1946
12. May 1946
13. June-Nov 1946
14. 1948
14A. 1949
15. June 1950-May 1951
16. June-Sept 1951
17. Oct-Dec 1951

18. Jan-Feb 1952
19. March-May 1952
20. June-Sept 1952
21. Oct-Nov 1952
22. December 1952-January 1953
23. Feb-May 1953
24. June-July 1953
25. Aug-Oct 1953
26. Nov-Dec 1953
27. Jan-Feb 1954
28. March-April 1954
29. May-Sept 1954
30-31. Oct-Dec 1954

(Begin Microfilm Reel 3)

32. Jan-Feb 1955
33. March 1955
34. April-May 1955
35. June-July 1955
36. Aug-Sept 1955
37. October 1955
38. Jan-April 1956
39. May-June 1956
40. October 1956-1958
41-42. not dated

Box 3

NAACP Files, Mobile Branch

(Continue Microfilm Reel 3)

1. Affidavits, 1941, 1944
2. Affidavits, 1946
3. Affidavits, 1948-1951
4-5. Affidavits, 1953-1956
6. Brookley Field Cases (McCants & Coleman)
7A. Bank Statements (not microfilmed)
7B. Bills (not microfilmed)
8. Charter, 1926
9-11. City of Mobile v Napoleon Rivers
12-13. Complaints/Correspondence (Post Office)
14. Employment Opportunities
15-18. Expense Lists, 1938, 1946-1956
19. Financial Records, not dated (not microfilmed)
20. Financial Statements, 1945-1946
21-22. Financial Statements, 1953-1955
23. Leadership
24-25. Legal Documents (laws, forms, etc.)
26. Membership Campaigns
27-33. Membership Lists
34. Membership Records - National

35. Minutes, 1934, 1937, 1944
36. Minutes, November 1952-May 1953
37-39. Minutes, June-Dec 1953
40-44. Minutes, 1954
45. Minutes, 1955
46. Minutes, 1956
47. Minutes, not dated
48. Misc. Civil Rights Materials
49-50. Misc. List of Names, not dated

(Begin Microfilm Reel 4)

51-52. Misc. Notes, 1942-1956
53. Misc. Notes (complaints, cases)
54. Misc. Notes (employment, history), not dated
55. Misc. Notes (reports, etc.), not dated
56-57. Press Releases
58-59. Promotional Materials, Meeting Programs
60. Related Committees and Organizations
61. Reports, Summaries
62. Student Retainer and Information Sheets, 1955
63. Duplicate Materials (not microfilmed)

Box 4

NAACP Files, Regional, Alabama, and National, Correspondence

(Continue Microfilm Reel 4)

1. 1936
2. 1937
3. January 1938
4. February 1938
5. March 1938
6. April 1938
7. May 1938
8. June 1938
9. July 1938
10. Aug-Sept 1938
11. October 1938
12. November 1938
13. December 1938
14. March-Dec 1939
15. Jan-March 1940
16-17. April 1940
18. May 1940
19. June 1940
20-21. July 1940
22. August 1940
23. September 1940
24-25. October 1940
26. November 1940
27. December 1940

28. Jan-Feb 1941
29. March 1941
30-31. April 1941
32-33. May 1941
34. June 1941
35-36. July 1941
37. August 1941
38. Sept-Dec 1941
39-40. 1942
41-42. March-Oct 1943
43. November 1943-March 1944
44-45. April-June 1944
46. September 1944-December 1945
47-48. not dated
49. Membership/Newsletters
50. Press Releases, 1941-1943
51. Report Forms

(Begin Microfilm Reel 5)

52. Constitution
53. Correspondence, 1945-1951
54. Correspondence, 1952-1953
55. Meetings
56. Membership Records
57. Bulletins
58. Meetings
59. Membership Campaign Material
60. Pamphlets
61. Press Service
62. Press Service (not microfilmed)
63-64. Publications
65. Structure

Box 5

Mobile Housing Board (MHB), Correspondence

(Continue Microfilm Reel 5)

1-4. 1966
5-9. 1967
10-19. 1968
20-32. 1969
33-44. 1970
45. 1971-1973
46. not dated

Box 5

Mobile Housing Board (MHB), Minutes

(Begin Microfilm Reel 6)

47-49. 1966
50. Jan-Feb 1967
51. Feb-March 1967
52. April-May 1967
53. June 1967
54. July 1967
55. August 1967
56-57. September 1967
58. October 1967
59-60. November 1967
61. December 1967
62. January 1968
63. February 1968
64-67. March 1968
68. April 1968
69-70. June 1968
71. July 1968
72. August 1968
73. September 1968
74-75. October 1968
76. November 1968
77. December 1968
78-79. January 1969
80-81. February 1969
82. Feb-March 1969
83. March 26, 1969
84. April 1969
85-86. May 1969
87. June 1969
88. July 1969
89. August 1969
90-91. October 1969
92-93. November 1969
94. December 1969
95. January 1970
96-97. February 1970
98-99. March 1970
100-102. April 1970
103. May 1970
104. June 1970
105-106. July 1970
107. August 1970
108. Miscellaneous

Box 6

Mobile Housing Board, Subject Files

(Begin Microfilm Reel 7)

1. Alabama Association of Housing Authorities
2. Appraisals
3. Articles/Newsclippings

4. Bids/Appraisals
5-6. Budgets, 1968-1970
7. Bylaws
8. Carriage House Restaurant
9-11. Complaints
12. Contractors/Developers
13-14. Contracts
15. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
16-17. Financial Records (reports)
18. Financial Records (travel)
19. Forms (blank)
20-24. HUD, 1966-1970
25. HUD, Grant Program Handbook, 1969
25A. HUD, Low-Rent Housing Engineering Survey Report, 1967
26-28. List of Pending Items, 1969-1970
29. Management Study, March 1970
30. Maps/Floor Plans
31. Miscellaneous
32. Mobile Housing Board v George N. Cross et. al.
33-34. National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
35-36. Notes
37-38. Personnel, Job Descriptions
39-42. Personnel, Records
43-44. Printed Materials
45-46. Printed Materials, Journal of Housing
47. Public Housing Program, September 1967
48. Public Housing Program, March 1968
49. Public Housing Program, September 1968
50. Public Housing Program, December 1968
51. Resolutions/Policies
52. South Alabama Regional Planning Comm. Report, December 1969
53-56. South Alabama Regional Planning Comm. Report, not dated
57. Tenant Newsletters
58. Turnkey Homes

(Begin Microfilm Reel 8)

59. Urban Renewal Activities, March 1968
60. Urban Renewal and Public Housing Activities, May and July 1970
61-64. Urban Renewal Projects, Ala. 2.1-2.12
64-65. Urban Renewal Projects, Ala. R-33, 34, 38
66. Urban Renewal Projects, E. Church Street Area, Ala. R-33
67. Urban Renewal Projects, E. Church Street, Status Report, Dec. 1967
68. Urban Renewal Projects, Water Steet Area Project, Ala. R-34
69-72. Urban Renewal Projects, Central Texas Street, Ala. R-38
73. Urban Renewal Projects, Central Texas Street, April 1967
74. Urban Renewal Projects, Report, March 1970

Box 7

Other Committees and Organizations

(Continue Microfilm Reel 8)

1. Alabama Civic Affairs Association, 1959
2. Alabama Public Affairs Assocation, 1958
3. Ala. State Advisory Comm. to the U.S. Civil Rights Comm., 1964-1966
4. Ala. State Advisory Comm. to the U.S. Civil Rights Comm., 1966
5. Ala. State Advisory Comm. to the U.S. Civil Rights Comm., 1967
6-7. Ala. State Advisory Comm. to the U.S. Civil Rights Comm., 1968
8-9. Ala. State Advisory Comm. to the U.S. Civil Rights Comm., 1969-1972
10-12. Ala. State Advisory Comm. to the U.S. Civil Rights Comm., 1972-1973
13. Ala. State Advisory Comm. to the U.S. Civil Rights Comm., n.d.
14. Ala. Committee for Equal Justice, Correspondence, 1945
15. Ala. Committee on Correctional Institutions and Procedures, 1969
16-17. Ala. Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning, 1969
18-22. Ala. Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning, 1970
23. Ala. Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning, 1971
24-27. Ala. Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning, 1972
28-29. Ala. Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning, 1973
29A. Ala. Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning, 1973 (not filmed)
30. Ala. Advisory Council for Comprehensive Health Planning, 1974-1975
31. Ala. Council for Volunteer Family Planning, 1971-1972
32. Ala. Council for Volunteer Family Planning, 1973
33. Ala. Council for Volunteer Family Planning, 1974-1975
34. Ala. Council for Volunteer Family Planning, n.d.

(Begin Microfilm Reel 9)

35. Ala. Council on Human Relations, 1955-1971
36. Ala. State Conference of Negro Veterans, 1946
37. AFL-CIO, 1943
38. AFL-CIO, 1943-45
39. Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, 1939-1941
40. Citizens Civic Council, 1955
41. Mobile Beacon, 1957-1961
42. Mobile Comm. for the Support of Public Education (MCSPE), Articles, 1972-1974
43. MCSPE, Correspondence, 1971-1972
44. MCSPE, Correspondence, 1972
45. MCSPE, Correspondence, 1973-1974
46. MCSPE, Correspondence, 1974-1975
47. MCSPE, Correspondence, 1975-1976
48. MCSPE, Emergency School Aid and Grants, 1972
49. MCSPE, Emergency School Aid and Grants, 1973
50. MCSPE, Emergency School Aid and Grants, 1974-1975
51. MCSPE, Emergency School Aid and Grants, not dated
52. MCSPE, Financial Records, 1972
53. MCSPE, Financial Records, 1974-1975
54. MCSPE, Financial Records, not dated
55. MCSPE, Incorporation, Membership, Bylaws, Lease, 1972-1974
56A. MCSPE, Minutes, Notes, 1967-1972
56B. MCSPE, Minutes, Notes, 1974
57. Mobile Public Transit Committee, 1966
58. Mobile United, Revitalization of Downtown Mobile, 1973-1976
59. Mobile United Citizens Association, 1956-1958
60. Salvation Army Advisory Board, 1974-1975

61. Today's World, 1958-1959
62. United Seaman's Service, 1944-1945

Box 7A

Editorials and Articles

(Begin Microfilm Reel 10)

63. 1940-1943
64. 1944
65. not dated
66. 1947
67-75. 1948
76-83. 1949
84-93. 1950
94-99. 1951
100. 1952
101-105. not dated and incomplete

Box 8

Personal Correspondence

(Continue Microfilm Reel 10)

1. 1930-1934
2-3. 1935
4. 1936-1937
5. 1938-1939
6-7. 1940
8. 1941
9. 1942-1943
10. 1944
11-12. 1945
13-16. 1946
17. 1947-1950
18. 1951-1952
19-20. 1953

(Begin Microfilm Reel 11)

21. 1954-1955
22. 1956
23-24. 1957
25-26. 1958
27. 1959
28. 1960-1962
29. 1963-1964
30. 1965
31-32. 1966
33-36. 1967
37-40. 1968

41-42. 1969
43-45. 1970
46-49. 1971
50-51. 1972
52-54. 1973
55-57. 1974
58. 1975
59. 1976

(Begin Microfilm Reel 12)

60-64. Correspondence, not dated
65. Correspondence, Newsletters, Invitations, Programs
66-74. Correspondence, Fire Bombing of LeFlore Home, 1967

Box 8A

Personal Records

(Continue Microfilm Reel 12)

75-76. Biographical Information
77-79. Financial (not microfilmed)
80. Legal
81. Memorial for LeFlore, 1976-1977
82-83. Overton Hygenic Mfg. Co., 1930-1939
84-95. Postal Employee Records, 1935-1973
96-101. Thesis by Joe Whatley, 1974
102-106. U.S. Senate Campaign, 1972

Box 9

Azalea Home Builders, Ltd.

(Begin Microfilm Reel 13)

1. Contractors
2-7. Correspondence, 1973
8. Correspondence, 1974
9. Financial Reports
10-15. General Partners Meetings, 1973
16-17. General Partners Meetings, 1974
18. Job Proposals and Completions, 1974-1975
19-20. Miscellaneous Properties
21-26. Office Messages, 1971-1973
28. Partnership Records, Bonds, Licenses, Insurance
29. Personnel
30. Proposals and Completions, 1974-1975

(Files 31-46 have not been microfilmed.)

31. Appraisals, Inspections
32. Banking Records

33-38. Building Supplies, 1973-1975
39. Contracts
40. Floor Plans
41. Forms
42. Newspaper Clippings
43. Notes
44. Office Supplies
45. Payroll
46. Printed Materials

Box 10

Alabama State Legislature

(Continue Microfilm Reel 13)

1-5. Legislative Campaign, 1974
6-10. Correspondence, January 1975
11-16. Correspondence, February 1975
16A. Correspondence, re: Bishop State, Feb-March 1975

(Begin Microfilm Reel 14)

17-21. Correspondence, March 1975
22-30. Correspondence, April 1975
31-37. Correspondence, May 1975
38-43. Correspondence, June 1975
44-45. Correspondence, July 1975
46-50. Correspondence, August 1975
51. Correspondence, September 1975
52-54. Correspondence, October 1975
55. Correspondence, November 1975
56. Correspondence, December 1975
57. Correspondence, not dated
58-59. Correspondence, Legislative Meetings, and Misc.
60-68. Correspondence, Bills and Proposed Legislation
68A. Legislation Sponsored by LeFlore

Box 10A

Published Materials

(Begin Microfilm Reel 15)

69. Alabama Progressive Economic Council, Inc.
70. Black Veterans
71-74. Civil Rights Committees, Meetings, 1943-1952
75-77. Congressional Records, Politicians, etc.
77A. Education
78. Health
78A. Housing
79. Interstate Commerce Commission
80-81. Newsclippings (not microfilmed)

82. Opportunities Industrialization Center
83-84. Periodicals, Articles, 1938-1967, and not dated
85-86. Southern Negro Youth Congress
87. United Seaman's Service Log

Box 10A

Legal Materials

(Files 88-93 have not been microfilmed.)

88. Clarence Moses, Attorney Records, 1959-1966
89. James E. Kidd Case
90. Med-Dent Health Services Bylaws
91. Girard Raine, Postal Employee Records, 1947-1952
92. Pecola D. Moore and Anthony L. Moore, Guardianship Case, 1963-1965
93. Thomas McAboy Jr., U.S. Army Proceedings

Box 10A

Photographs

(Continue Microfilm Reel 15)

94. LeFlore (individual and group shots)
95. George W. Carver Hotel Celebration
96. Police Brutality and Union Strikers
97. Group Meetings
98. Lynching Victims, Monroe, Georgia, 1946
99. Black Firemen and Policemen