

Looby, Zephaniah Alexander, 1899-1972
Papers, 1922-1981

Processed by:
Sam Cameron; Assistant Archivist
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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Zephaniah Alexander Looby was born April 8, 1899 in Antigua, British West Indies. His parents were John and Grace E. (Joseph) Looby. In 1914 he migrated to the United States. Enrolling in Howard University, he graduated in 1922 with a A. B. Degree.

After graduation, he went to New York City to attend law school at Columbia University where he received a law degree in 1925. From there he continued to obtain the J. S. D. degree from New York University in 1926. The same year he became a naturalized citizen of the United States. He began practicing law in Memphis, Tennessee.

In September, 1926 he came to Nashville, Tennessee where he taught Business Economics at Fisk University. In 1928, he was admitted to the Nashville Bar. Along with this he taught courses at Tennessee A and I College, Meharry Medical College, and Fisk University during the 1930's and 1940's. In 1932, he organized the Kent College of Law with the express purpose of training colored men and women for the profession of law.

One of his most famous defenses was of the Black citizens of Columbia, Tennessee in 1946. In 1951 he was elected to the Nashville City Council, where he served until his retirement in 1971.

In 1960 his home at 2012 Meharry Boulevard was bombed as a result of his defense of Nashville students who had staged a sit-in at lunch counters in the downtown area. He was active in civil rights, politics, the church, and the Nashville Community at large. He was a life time member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, the Urban League, and the National Bar Association among many others, as well as a recipient of many awards. He was known as Mr. NAACP and Mr. Civil Rights.

He married Grafta Mosley of Southland, Arkansas in 1934. Mr. Looby died in Nashville, Tennessee on March 24, 1972.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Z. Alexander Looby Collection contains 479 items, which consists of correspondence, newspapers and magazine clippings, awards, certificates, printed matter and photographs.

Correspondence includes such notable individuals as Roy Wilkins, Raymond Pace Alexander, W. J. Faulkner, the Honorable Carlton L. Taser, the Nashville Student Protest Movement and Mrs. Robert T. Burt. The newspaper and magazine clippings cover the years 1926 to 1971, and document many of the activities in which Mr. Looby was involved. There are photographs of Mr. Looby's home bombed in 1960.

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Register

Box 1

Looby, Z. Alexander

- f. 1. Biographical Note
 Correspondence, General
 2--Adams-Barker--1944-62
 3--Beatty-Brothers--1960-66
 4--Brown-Burt--1956-71
 5--Carter-Current--1946-69
 6--Dandridge-Dyett--1955-61
 7--Earley-Ellington--1952-60
 8--Faulkner-Fuson--1946-69
 9--Gary-Grant--1960
 10--Hardeman-Hull--1960-71
 11--Jefferson-Lanius--1946-69
 12--Layton-Lane--1956-69
 13--Mance-Murphy--1946-69
 14--Nashville Student Protest Movement-Potts--1960-66
 15--Ransom-Rustin--1946-69
 16--Sawyer-Smith--1946-72
 17--Smith-Stradford--1946-71
 18--Tatum-Townsend--1945-66
 19--Vernon-Young--1946-69
 20--Unidentifiable--1960-61, n.d.

Box 2

- f. 1-Looby, Z. Alexander--Writings and Speeches. "Why I am Supporting The Dewey-Warren Ticket." Tell Magazine, October 3, 1948.
2-"Preparation for Leadership In the Great Society."--n.d.
3-Untitled
4--Statement of Columbia, Tennessee Court Case--1946
5--Shelby Park Golf Course Court Order--1954
6--J. C. Napier Bar Association Resolution Re The Bombing of Attorney Z. Alexander Looby's House--April 30, 1960
Looby, Z. Alexander--Programs and Personal Appearances
7--November 10, 1946
8--January 5, 1947
9--March 3, 1947
10--March 30, 1947
11--May 16, 1948
12--May 13, 1954
13--June 7, 1955
14--February 12, 1956

Programs and Personal Appearances (cont'd)

- 15--March 22, 1959
- 16--May 17, 1959
- 17--April 30, 1960
- 18--July 15, 1960
- 19--December 11, 1960
- 20--July 1, 1963
- 21--April 1, 1963
- 22--April 6, 1967
- 23--November 16, 1969
- 24--July 30 - August 2, 1972
- 25--Looby, Z. Alexander--Campaign Literature--1955
- 26--Materials Re Kent School of Law--1932-34 } 1938
- 27--List--Contributors to Z. Alexander Looby's after his house was bombed
in 1960
- 28--Photographs
- 29--Photographs
- 30--Photographs-Bombed House April, 1960
- 32--Articles Re Death of Z. Alexander Looby--1972
- 33--Memorabilia
- 34--Printed Matter -- *Settling a Sit-In v. Misc materials*
- 31--Photo -- *Republican Nat'l Convention 1956*

Box 3

Magazines and Newspapers Clippings--

- f. 1--1926
- 2--1943-45
- 3--1946
- 4--1947
- 5--1948
- 6--1949
- 7--1951-52
- 8--1953-55
- 9--1966
- 10--1957
- 11--1958
- 12--1959
- 13--~~1946~~ 1960
- 14--1961-62
- 15--1964
- 16--1965
- 17--1966
- 18--1969
- 19--1971
- 20--N. D.

Box 4

Awards and Certificates

Awards and Certificates (cont'd)

Box 5

Awards and Certificates

Box 6

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Box 7

" " "

Box 8

Looby Z. Alexander--Awards and Certificates

Box 9

" " " " "

Box 10

" " " " "

Box 11

Looby, Mrs. Grafta M.--Correspondence, General

f. 1--Burrell-Judd--1960-76

2--Lytle-Stowers--1960-77

3--Sublette-Wilson--1973-75

4--Unidentifiable--1960-61

5--Photographs--1976

6--Newspaper Clippings--1972-1981

7--Looby, Z. Alexander--Writings By Others--

"Decision To Hide Great Edifice Has Minority Support--February 17, 1950

8--"In Honor of Z. Alexander Looby, "November 16, 1969"

9--"State of Metro," April 3, 1972

10--Looby, Z. Alexander--Collection--Magazine, Fisk News, November, 1953

11--Proposed Charter of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson
County, April, 1962