

Roanoke Public Libraries
Gainsboro Library
Edward R. Dudley Collection

Collection Description

Repository: Gainsboro Branch of Roanoke Public Libraries

Title: Edward R. Dudley Collection

Physical Characteristics: One (1) legal size record storage box

Donated by: Edward R. Dudley Jr.

Arrangement: The items were originally stored in one (1) legal-sized manilla folder, and are now arranged in fifteen (15) folders and are arranged thematically. Within each folder, items are arranged chronologically.

Creator: Edward R. Dudley

Reproduction Restrictions: No known restrictions on publication. Gainsboro Library copy fees apply.

Processor: Caylin Wigger, January 2025

Biographical Note

Edward Richard Dudley was born on March 11, 1911 in South Boston, Virginia, but was raised in Roanoke, Virginia where he lived on Gilmer Ave. He graduated from Lucy Addison High School before moving on to achieve his B.A. at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina and his Law Degree at St. John's University Law School. Dudley has a variety of accolades including:

- First African American to run for statewide office in New York on the ticket of a major party
- First African American to serve as an administrative judge in New York State
- First African American to serve as a US Ambassador
- Assistant Attorney General, State of New York, 1942
- Assistant Special Counsel to Legal, Education, and Defense Fund, NAACP, serving under Thurgood Marshall
- Legal Counselor to the Governor of the Virgin Islands, 1945-1947
- US Ambassador to Liberia; Chairman, American Commission on Point IV Development in Africa, 1948-1953
- Director, Freedom Fund, NAACP, 1953-1955
- Justice, Domestic Relations Court, City of New York, 1955-1961
- President, Borough of Manhattan, 1961-1965
- Candidate, N.Y. State Attorney General, 1962, on Democratic ticket
- Chairman, New York County Democratic Committee, 1963-1965
- Elected Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, January 1, 1965

- Designated Administrative Judge, Civil Term, Supreme Court, March 1, 1973
- Designated Justice of the Appellate Term, Supreme Court First Department, January 1, 1974

Dudley retired from the New York State Supreme Court in 1985 before he died on February 8, 2005, shortly before turning 94.

Scope and Contents:

- The Edward R. Dudley Collection is comprised of one (1) legal-sized record storage box.
- The collection is comprised of photographs in both color and black and white, newspaper clippings, correspondences, and other miscellaneous items.
- The collection is centered around Edward R. Dudley’s time served as the American Ambassador to Liberia. As the first Black American to serve in this role, his collection highlights this important role he partook in.
- The collection is broken up into fifteen (15) folders that consist of the materials mentioned above.
- The collection dates from 1946-2005

Container List

Box 1 of 1

Folder 1 - Correspondence from the American Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia, 1950-1953

Folder 2 - Correspondence from the Department of State, 1948-1951

Folder 3 - Correspondence from the Executive Mansion in Monrovia, Liberia, 1948-1950

Folder 4 - Correspondence from the Federal Security Agency US Public Health Service, 1952

Folder 5 - Correspondence from the Foreign Service of the United States of America, 1952

Folder 6 - Correspondence from the Government of the Virgin Islands of the United States, 1946

Folder 7 - Correspondence from the House of Representatives, 1950

Folder 8 - Correspondence from the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc., 1946-1951

Folder 9 - Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1949-2005

Folder 10 - “A Community Leadership and Work-Shop Educational Training Plan for Liberia”

Folder 11 - NAACP Freedom Week Flyer, 1955

Folder 12 - News Clippings

Folder 13 - Edward R. Dudley Historical Marker, December 2024

Folder 14 - Photos

Photo	Description.
DC01	Edward R. Dudley with wife Rae Oley and others.

DC02	Edward R. Dudley at table (second from right).
DC03	Edward R. Dudley with wife Rae Oley, polaroid-sized photo.
DC04	Edward R. Dudley with wife Rae Oley, "Norwegian Cruise Line M/S Dreamward Inaugural Season."
DC05	Edward R. Dudley photograph.
DC06	Edward R. Dudley shaking hands with the King of the Asante people in Ghana at the American Museum of Natural History. "This oughta help keep the smile away. This was taken last week at a dinner given by the American Museum of Natural History for the King of the Asante people in Ghana. There are presently showing an exhibit called 'Asante: Kingdom of God.' Hope you are both well Ed" "Nana Oduro Namepau II, Paramount Chief, Essumajaj District Justice Edward R. Dudley; Thomas D. Nicholson; Otumfuo Opoko Ware II, Asantehene" "5 neg 20."
DC07	Edward R. Dudley, fourth from right, with a group of others outside a building.
DC08	"Dudley for Attorney General Vote Democratic Vote Row B."
DC09	Edward R. Dudley (first from left) with a group of four others featured in a newspaper.
DC10	Edward R. Dudley (first from right) pictured with John F. Kennedy, featured in the newspaper.

Folder 15 - Miscellany, 1949-1963