



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Lawrence D. Reddick World War II project**

1943-1953 [bulk 1943-1945]

Sc MG 490

Home to Harlem Project, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

## Summary

**Creator:** Reddick, Lawrence Dunbar, 1910-1995

**Title:** Lawrence D. Reddick World War II project

**Date:** 1943-1953 [bulk 1943-1945]

**Size:** 3.46 linear feet (6 boxes)

**Source:** Gift, Ella Ruth Reddick, 1998 Gift, Ella Ruth Reddick, 1998

**Revision History:** This finding aid was updated by Allison Hughes.

**Abstract:** Lawrence D. Reddick served as curator of the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature, 1939-1948. An African-American historian, Reddick was interested in the role of the black soldier in U.S. wars and published on this topic. Concerned that the role of black soldiers during World War II would not be portrayed accurately by the government, the mainstream or black press, Reddick initiated a campaign to document the experiences of blacks in the military using their first hand accounts. He placed an ad in newspapers served by the Associated Negro Press, requesting that letters written by black soldiers to their families be sent to the Schomburg Collection. In addition, he conducted interviews with black servicemen and women from 1944 to 1946, and collected memorabilia and other World War II related items. The Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project Collection, 1943-1953 (bulk 1943-1945) consists of correspondence with black servicemen and women, summaries of interviews Reddick conducted, as well as research files maintained by him. The series Letters and Interviews, 1943-1945 consists of more than a hundred letters that black servicemen and officers, and a few black servicewomen, wrote principally to their families and friends relating the individuals' experiences. The servicemen were stationed in all of the theaters of operation, and some were stateside at various training camps throughout the United States. Of note is a letter Dwight Eisenhower wrote in 1947 in response to a letter from Reddick, stating his opposition to discrimination of American soldiers based upon color or race. Also included in the collection are summaries of interviews Reddick conducted between 1944 and 1946 in Harlem with former servicemen and officers. The interviewees were forthright in their discussions about their experiences with both black and white soldiers and officers, and the people in the countries where they served. There are also summaries of interviews with several black servicewomen and one white serviceman, as well as civilians. Individuals interviewed include William E. Artis (artist), Warren Cuney (writer), Benjamin O. Davis (Air Force General), Ewart Guinier (who later headed the first African-American Studies Department at Harvard University), William H.

Hastie (civil rights attorney), Roi Ottley (author and journalist) Leigh Whipper (actor).

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Lawrence D. Reddick World War II project, Sc MG 490, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Related Materials:**

Lawrence Reddick papers, Sc MG 974, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

## **Creator History**

Lawrence D. Reddick served as curator of the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature, 1939-1948. An African-American historian, Reddick was interested in the role of the black soldier in U.S. wars and published on this topic. Concerned that the role of black soldiers during World War II would not be portrayed accurately by the government, the mainstream or black press, Reddick initiated a campaign to document the experiences of blacks in the military using their first hand accounts. He placed an ad in newspapers served by the Associated Negro Press, requesting that letters written by black soldiers to their families be sent to the Schomburg Collection. In addition, he conducted interviews with black servicemen and women from 1944 to 1946, and collected memorabilia and other World War II related items.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Lawrence D. Reddick World War II Project Collection, 1943-1953 (bulk 1943-1945) consists of correspondence with black servicemen and women, summaries of interviews Reddick conducted, as well as research files maintained by him. The series Letters and Interviews, 1943-1945 consists of more than a hundred letters that black servicemen and officers, and a few black servicewomen, wrote principally to their families and friends relating the individuals' experiences. The servicemen were stationed in all of the theaters of operation, and some were stateside at various training camps throughout the United States. Of note is a letter Dwight Eisenhower wrote in 1947 in response to a letter from Reddick, stating his opposition to discrimination of American soldiers based upon color or race. Also included in the collection are summaries of interviews Reddick conducted between 1944 and 1946 in Harlem with former servicemen and officers. The interviewees were forthright in their discussions about their experiences with both black and white soldiers and officers, and the people in the countries where they served. There are also summaries of interviews with several black servicewomen and one white serviceman, as well as civilians. Individuals interviewed include William E. Artis (artist), Warren Cuney (writer), Benjamin O. Davis (Air Force General), Ewart Guinier (who later headed the first African-American Studies Department at Harvard University), William H. Hastie (civil rights attorney), Roi Ottley (author and journalist) Leigh Whipper (actor).

The series Writings and Research Files, 1943-1949 contains manuscripts and material Reddick created or gathered for articles and a book he had intended to write; nearly all focus on the black experience during World War II. Included a file about Commander Howard O. Queen's role in the 366th Infantry Regiment and formation of the 92nd Infantry Division. Several of his manuscripts, both published and unpublished, form part of this series, including an incomplete manuscript about black soldiers from the

Civil War through World War I.

Additional research material consists of a file about discriminatory practices, folders about black officers, World War II heroes, the Army's policy toward black soldiers during the war, and President Truman's committee on equality of treatment. Of special interest is a scrapbook about the Manhattan Beach Coast Guard Training Station in Brooklyn containing photographs and news clippings about black officers. Reddick maintained a large set of files regarding employment of blacks from 1940-1945 divided into such categories as agriculture and various war-related industries as well as War Manpower Commission reports. Additional files pertain to conscientious objectors and notes from Army aptitude tests taken by black soldiers.

**Arrangement:** Collection organized into two series: I. Letters and Interviews; and II. Research Files

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American soldiers  
African Americans -- Employment  
Black author  
Military camps -- United States  
Women soldiers -- United States  
World War, 1939-1945 -- African Americans  
World War, 1939-1945 -- Participation, African American

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Interviews  
Scrapbooks

### **Geographic Names**

United States -- Armed Forces -- African Americans -- History  
United States -- Armed Forces -- Women

### **Names**

Artis, William E., 1914-1977  
Cuney, Warren  
Davis, Benjamin O., Jr., 1912-2002  
Dodson, Owen, 1914-1983  
Eisenhower, Dwight D. (Dwight David), 1890-1969  
Granger, Lester B. (Lester Blackwell), 1896-1976  
Guinier, Ewart  
Hastie, William, 1904-1976  
Johnson, Charles Spurgeon, 1893-1956  
Ottley, Roi, 1906-1960  
Pickens, Harriet, 1909-1969  
Reddick, Lawrence Dunbar, 1910-1995  
Whipper, Leigh R. (Leigh Rollin), 1877-1975  
Manhattan Beach Coast Guard Training Station (Brooklyn, New York, N.Y.)  
United States. Army  
United States. Navy

## Container List

### Letters and Interviews

#### Lawrence Reddick

- b. 1 f. 1 Announcements Soliciting Letters
- b. 1 f. 2 Letters from Black Officers 1944
- b. 1 f. 3-4 Letters from Pvt. Ralph Jones to Kenneth Smith 1943-1944
- b. 1 f. 5 Letters About Ralph E. Jones by Dr. Ruth Foster, and Reddick's Notes 1946
- b. 1 f. 6 Letters from Lucia Straham (American Red Cross) to Mrs. Willie S. Straham, Mother 1945 June-November
- b. 1 f. 7 Letters from Servicemen During and After World War II 1942-1947  
Includes Correspondence with Dwight D. Eisenhower.
- b. 1 f. 8 Letters from Servicemen Written After World War II Ended 1945-1946

#### Interviews 1944-1947

##### Servicemen 1944-1947

- b. 1 f. 9 Anderson, Allan R 1946 May 10
- b. 1 f. 9 Artis, William E 1945 December 12
- b. 1 f. 9 Bailey, Albert M
- b. 1 f. 9 Brewster, Reginald T 1945 December 21
- b. 1 f. 9 Brown (No First Name)
- b. 1 f. 9 Bryant, Bill 1944-1947
- b. 1 f. 10 Capdeville, George
- b. 1 f. 10 Carroll, E.G 1946 January 12
- b. 1 f. 10 Carter, Herman J.D
- b. 1 f. 10 Couch (No First Name) 1946 January 12-February 20
- b. 1 f. 10 Cruz and Robinson (No First Names) 1946 January 12
- b. 1 f. 10 Cuney, Warren
- b. 1 f. 10 Davis, T. Eddy
- b. 1 f. 10 Ferrell, Robert
- b. 1 f. 11 Foster, Lem
- b. 1 f. 11 Fuller, Luther E 1946 April 24
- b. 1 f. 11 Gamble, Raymond S 1946 March 5
- b. 1 f. 11 Garrett, Joseph 1946 May 4
- b. 1 f. 11 Gibson, Robert S 1945-1946
- b. 1 f. 11 Gittleson (No First Name) 1945 December 7
- b. 1 f. 11 Granger, Lester B 1946 April 4
- b. 1 f. 12 Guinier, Ewart 1946 May 20
- b. 1 f. 12 Hastie, William H 1946 March-April
- b. 1 f. 12 Hayes, Lawrence 1946 March 18
- b. 1 f. 12 Jackson, Earl
- b. 1 f. 12 Jones, Ernest L
- b. 1 f. 12 Kerr, L.J 1946 March 29

Letters and Interviews (cont.)

Lawrence Reddick (cont.)

Interviews (cont.)

Servicemen (cont.)

- b. 1 f. 12      Langhorne, J.L 1946, April 27
- b. 1 f. 12      Latimer, Ralph 1946 June 22
- b. 1 f. 13      Marshall, St. Clair A
- b. 1 f. 13      Mitchell, George
- b. 1 f. 13      Orgaro, Johnnie 1946 February 14
- b. 1 f. 13      Otley, Roi
- b. 1 f. 13      Perkins, William M 1946 June 4
- b. 1 f. 13      Phipps Kenneth 1946 October 7
- b. 1 f. 13      Queen, Howard 1946 May 7-27
- b. 1 f. 14      Robinson, James H 1946 June 12
- b. 1 f. 14      Russell Jr., H.C 1946 June 21
- b. 1 f. 14      S., H.S 1945 December 13
- b. 1 f. 14      Simmons, John T 1945 December 7
- b. 1 f. 14      Simms, Harry
- b. 1 f. 14      Stevens, Leonard D 1945 December 27
- b. 1 f. 14      Taylor, Leonard 1946 January 22
- b. 1 f. 14      Thompson, Ruxton 1946 March 25
- b. 1 f. 15      Whipper, Leigh 1946 May 21
- b. 1 f. 15      White Jr., Walter 1946 August 22
- b. 1 f. 15      Wright, Ernest 1946 April 17
- b. 1 f. 15      Young, Wilbur 1946 August 9
- b. 1 f. 15      Zinberg (No First Name)
- b. 1 f. 16      Servicewomen 1946
- b. 1 f. 16      Flats, Frances 1946 March 25
- b. 1 f. 16      Kearney, Mary F 1946 April 11
- b. 1 f. 16      Mills, Lottie 1946 March 14-16
- b. 1 f. 16      Robinson, Bessie
- b. 1 f. 16      Wells, Clara
- b. 1 f. 17      Charles Dollard, Carnegie Corporation 1946
- Evelyn Marable
- b. 2 f. 1      Letters from Servicemen from the China, Burma,India Theater of  
Operations – Gentry Blackstone 1945
- b. 2 f. 2      Correspondence with Servicemen from the European Theater of  
Operations 1943-1945
- b. 2 f. 3      Letters from Servicemen from the European Theater of Operations – Joel  
C. Marable and William Marable 1943-1944
- b. 2 f. 4      Letters from Servicemen from the Mediterranean Theater of Operations  
1943-1945
- b. 2 f. 5      Letters from Servicemen from the Pacific Theater of Operations 1943-1945
- Prairie View College, Texas
- b. 2 f. 6      Letter from Professor Malcolm Davis – Collector of the Letters 1945
- Letters from Servicemen

Letters and Interviews (cont.)

Prairie View College, Texas (cont.)

Letters from Servicemen (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 7 Babino, John L. from Training Camps in Texas – Written to Bertha Mae Strait 1943 January-May
- b. 2 f. 8 Osborn, J. W. from Walter Reed General Hospital, Washington, D.C. Written to Bertha Mae Strait 1943 March-May
- b. 2 f. 9 Written from Training Camps in the US 1943-1945
- b. 3 f. 1 Written from the European Theater of Operations 1944-1945  
Written from the Pacific Theater of Operations
- b. 3 f. 2 B-E 1944-1945
- b. 3 f. 3 J-W 1944
- b. 3 f. 4 1944
- b. 3 f. 5 George Schulyer 1943-1944  
Fred Washington  
Correspondence with Servicemen From the European Theater of Operations
- b. 3 f. 6 A-G 1943-1945
- b. 3 f. 7 J-W 1943-1945
- b. 3 f. 8 Correspondence from the European Theater of Operations - War Correspondent Oliver (Ollie) W. Harrington 1944  
Correspondence from the Pacific Theater of Operations
- b. 3 f. 9 A-B 1943-1944
- b. 3 f. 10 C 1943-1944
- b. 3 f. 11 D-Ha
- b. 3 f. 12 He-Hu 1943-1944
- b. 3 f. 13 Hill, Sergeant Raymond J., Jr 1944
- b. 3 f. 14 J-Pe 1944-1945
- b. 3 f. 15 Pi-Z 1944  
Correspondence from US Training Camps
- b. 3 f. 16 B-G 1943-1944
- b. 3 f. 17 H-Y 1943-1944
- b. 3 f. 18 Negro Actors Guild - Letter 1944

Writings and Research Files

Manuscripts by Reddick

- b. 4 f. 1 Re Black Soldiers Civil War–World War I, Incomplete
- b. 4 f. 2 "Blacks and US Wars: Why Blacks Joined US Wars"
- b. 4 f. 3 "The Color of War"
- b. 4 f. 4 "The Colored Man at the White University - Navy" 1947 August 14
- b. 4 f. 5 "To Fight or Not? The Negro Always Makes Up His Mind in U.S. Wars"
- b. 4 f. 6 "The Negro Policy of the American Army Since World War II"
- b. 4 f. 6 "The Relative Status of the Negro in the American Armed Forces"
- b. 4 f. 7 Articles by Reddick re: Blacks in the US Military 1947-1950  
"Brotherhood Under Fire: the Negro and American Democracy in World War II"  
Unpublished book by Reddick, with research material.

Writings and Research Files (cont.)

Manuscripts by Reddick (cont.)

"Brotherhood Under Fire: the Negro and American Democracy in World War II" (cont.)

- b. 4 f. 8-9 Chapter II: Training For What?
- b. 4 f. 10 Chapter III: What US Soldiers Thought and Abroad Tales
- b. 4 f. 11 Chapter IV: Heavin' and Totin': Black Service Troops Supply and Transportation
- b. 4 f. 12-18 Chapter V: The Truth About the 92nd
- b. 4 f. 19-20 Chapter VII: Tales of Tails (African American Troops and British Women/Brown Babies)
- b. 4 f. 21 Chapter VIII: In Mixed Combat
- b. 4 f. 22-24 Chapter X: The Navy Story
- b. 4 f. 25-28 Chapter XI: Crack-Up (Psychiatric Problems)
- b. 4 f. 29-32 Research Material
- b. 4 f. 33 "The Negro in WWI"
- b. 4 f. 34 Notes

Research Files

- b. 5 f. 1 Black Eagles - Tuskegee Army Air Field
- b. 5 f. 2 Black Pilots
- b. 5 f. 2 Interview with Benjamin O. Davis, William Hastie, and Others 1945-1946
- b. 5 f. 3 U.S. War Department Press Releases 1943-1946
- b. 5 f. 4 Printed Material
- b. 5 f. 5 General
- b. 5 f. 6-7 Black WACS and WAVES 1944-1947
- b. 5 f. 8 Black Nurses
- The Negro and U.S. Army Statistics
- b. 5 f. 9 1940
- b. 5 f. 10 1941
- b. 5 f. 11 1942
- b. 5 f. 12 1943
- b. 5 f. 13 Lawrence Willie Langford – Confidential File on World War II 1948
- b. 5 f. 14 Scrapbook – Manhattan Beach Coast Guard Training Station, Brooklyn – Clarence Samuels and Benjamin Jones 1943
- b. 5 f. 15 "Unit History 387th Air Service Group 15 April '45-15 July '48" by Elmer D. Jones and John D. Silvers – Manuscript
- b. 5 f. 16 "Army's Negro Policy – World War II"
- b. 5 f. 17 "The Negro Hero in World War II"
- b. 5 f. 18-19 "Negro Officers" (and Related Topics)
- b. 5 f. 20 "93rd Infantry Division"
- b. 5 f. 21 African-American World War II Veterans – Printed Material 1945-1946
- b. 5 f. 22 Reference Material, General 1942-1944
- b. 5 f. 23 Reference Material - Typescripts - Other Authors 1942-1943  
Includes typescripts by Bullock, Wendell; Crosswaith, Frank; Hamilton, West A.; and Hastie, William H.
- b. 5 f. 24 Reference Material - Typescripts - Other Authors 1945-1946  
Includes typescripts by Poland, Wilbert S.; Scott, Bert; and Waters, Enoch P.

Writings and Research Files (cont.)

Research Files (cont.)

- b. 5 f. 25      Reference Material – Publications – Other Authors 1943-1945  
Department of National Defense – National Defense Conference on Negro Affairs
- b. 5 f. 26      Part I April 26, 1948
- b. 5 f. 27      Part II April 26, 1948
- b. 5 f. 28      Reference Material – Pacific Front 1944
- b. 5 f. 29      United States Marine Corps
- b. 5 f. 30      Defense Training – Notes
- b. 5 f. 31-32    African-Americans in World War II – General
- b. 5 f. 33      Printed Material 1942-1946
- b. 6 f. 1-2      Excerpts from Army Aptitude Test
- b. 6 f. 3      Conscientious Objectors
- b. 6 f. 4      Winfred Lynn Case 1942-1945
- b. 6 f. 5      "A Memorandum on Aspects of Negro Morale" by Charles S. Johnson – Manuscript
- b. 6 f. 6      Notes – "Trouble at Jersey City Q.M. Depot" "Notes Suggested by Reading the Diary of Al Ethelred Blakely, Ex-Soldier" 1943
- b. 6 f. 7      "The Negro in the Army" – Report 1948-1949  
Blacks in the Military
- b. 6 f. 8      World War II
- b. 6 f. 9      Equality of Treatment During the 1940's 1949
- b. 6 f. 10      1907-1953
- b. 6 f. 11      Writers - Black Soldiers and War Correspondents 1946-1948
- b. 6 f. 12      Joint Army and Navy Committee on Welfare and Recreation
- b. 6 f. 13      Living Conditions After World War II - African Americans 1945-1947
- b. 6 f. 14      Post-World War II Correspondence Etc 1946-1947
- b. 6 f. 15      General Non-Black
- b. 6 f. 16      Notes - Trip to Washington, D.C 1946 March 1-2
- b. 6 f. 17-19    Notes - General
- b. 6 f. 20-21    Index Card Notes
- b. 6 f. 22      News Clippings 1937-1949  
Black Employment During World War II
- b. 6 f. 23      "Internal Migration and the War" by Henry S. Shryock, Jr 1943
- b. 6 f. 24      The United States Employment Service and The Negro War Applicant – Manpower Commission Handbook 1944 January  
War Manpower Commission Region II 1944-1946
- b. 6 f. 25      Non-Discrimination Program – Manual 1944 October 2
- b. 6 f. 26      Non-Discrimination Policy and Practices 1944-1946
- b. 6 f. 27      "The Negroes' Role in the War: A Study Of White and Colored Opinions" 1943
- b. 6 f. 28      United States Employment Service 1945
- b. 6 f. 29      FEPC Cases (Alienage)
- b. 6 f. 30      FEPC Cases – Notes



Writings and Research Files (cont.)

Research Files (cont.)

Black Employment During World War II (cont.)

- b. 6 f. 31 Printed Material 1940-1945
- b. 6 f. 32 Employment Pre-Pearl Harbor, Notes
- b. 6 f. 33 Notes 1943
- b. 6 f. 34 Employment Trends – Total and Negro – Late 1942 – Notes 1942
- b. 6 f. 35 War Production and Negro – Trends – Notes
- b. 6 f. 36 Labor and Industry – Notes and Printed Material
- b. 6 f. 37 Agriculture – Notes and Printed Material
- b. 6 f. 38 Aircraft – Notes
- b. 6 f. 39 Automobiles – Notes
- b. 6 f. 40 Clerical – Notes
- b. 6 f. 41 Construction – Notes
- b. 6 f. 42 Domestic Service – Notes
- b. 6 f. 43 Electrical Equipment – Notes
- b. 6 f. 44 Federal – Notes and Printed Material
- b. 6 f. 45 Iron and Steel – Notes and Printed Material
- b. 6 f. 46 Local Transportation – Printed Material
- b. 6 f. 47 Machine Tools – Notes
- b. 6 f. 48 Ordnance – Notes
- b. 6 f. 49 Railroads – Printed Material
- b. 6 f. 50 Ship Building – Notes and Printed Material
- b. 6 f. 51 Black Civilian Workers During World War II Army Service Forces -  
Lemuel Foster
- b. 6 f. 52 Postwar Military Policy and Labor Market 1948