THE RECONSTRUCTION OF JEFFERSON FRANKLIN LONG GEORGIA’S FIRST BLACK
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE AND HIS FORTY-SEVEN DAYS IN OFFICE

by

MONICA KAUFMAN PEARSON

(Under the Direction of Valerie Boyd)

ABSTRACT

Jefferson Franklin Long made history in 1870 when he was elected as the first black
candidate to represent Georgia in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was the second black in
the U.S. House and was the first to speak on the floor of Congress. Long is quoted in numerous
newspaper articles in the late 1800s and his coverage by the press in Macon and nationally has
been used in several academic pages and books but there has not been an examination of his 47
days in the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. He has largely been forgotten, a
little known black history fact. This study aims to add to the reconstruction of Jefferson F. Long,
to add flesh to his homes in part through his voting record and through examining how he was
mediated by the press, black and white.

INDEX WORDS: Jefferson Franklin Long, Georgia’s first black U.S. Congressman, first
black congressman to speak on the U.S. House Floor, Reconstruction
elections in Georgia
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DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to my mother, Hattie Wallace Edmondson, who never stops learning, to my husband John Pearson and to my daughter, Claire Deveaux, for their unconditional love and support.
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My sincere thanks to Dr. Janice Hume for opening my eyes and mind to historical research and the stories it can tell; Professor Valerie Boyd, the former middle school student I inspired who now inspires and advises me; Muriel McDowell-Jackson, John Muller, Kerrie Cotton Williams and Andrew Young for their enormous contributions of time and support.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER

1  THE SEARCH FOR JEFFERSON F. LONG

2  THE RECONSTRUCTION OF JEFFERSON LONG’S 47 DAYS IN WASHINGTON D.C. AS GEORGIA’S FIRST BLACK U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

3  ANDREW YOUNG ON JEFFERSON FRANKLIN LONG

4  CONCLUSION

Page

v

1

15

29

37
Dread is the only word to describe my feelings about driving to Macon, Georgia on a perfectly beautiful sunny day in September 2013. To make it palatable, I dusted off my fun-to-drive car, my 31-year-old Porsche 911 Targa, gassed it up and shifted my mind from why I hated going to Macon to why I had to go to Macon, as I hovered at 70 miles per hour on I-75 South for an hour and fifteen minutes.

There’s a lot to like about Macon, Georgia: home of the International Cherry Blossom festival; 11 historic districts with 5,500 historic structures on the National Register; home to the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame and world famous black soul singers, Little Richard, born as Richard Penniman, and Otis Redding.¹ And while I have attended the festival, toured some of the historic sites, including Redding’s burial plot on his family property, and even emceed an induction ceremony for the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, I hate going to Macon. Just the name dredges up painful memories of my father, my mother and a woman named Juanita.

Sometime during my first year working at WSB-TV in Atlanta in 1975-1976, I was invited to speak at a church in Macon. At the end of the service, a woman, whose face and form I’ve obliterated from my mind, along with the church name, told me, I looked just like my daddy and to tell my mother hello.
The drive back to Atlanta was a blur. I couldn’t wait to call my mother in Louisville (no cell phones back then) and tell her that her friend, Juanita said hello. “Tell her to go to hell! That damn bitch took your daddy from me,” my mother replied. It was the first time I ever heard mama cuss. Just the name Juanita resurrected anger and memories from 25 years before. My mother couldn’t believe the woman who led to my parents’ divorce when I was three years old, had the nerve to introduce herself to me and then send a message to her.²

Now, nearly 30 years later, I am back in Macon, not to look for Juanita to give her my mother’s message of “Go to hell”, but to find and flesh out one of Macon’s little known historical people, Jefferson Franklin Long. Elected in 1870, he was Georgia’s first black U.S. Representative and served 47 days in 1871 as the representative for the Fourth Congressional District. He was the first elected black person to speak on the floor of the U.S. House.³ Yet the history he made is buried in the past. I want to resurrect his story and the history he made in the U.S. House. But he left no papers, so I had to go to Macon, where he lived but was not born, to dig for more facts about him.

My emails to Historic Macon Foundation and Tubman African American Museum got responses that led me to Muriel McDowell-Jackson. Getting to her was not easy. The Middle Georgia Regional Library on Washington Avenue seemed to be a mystery to everybody I stopped to ask for directions, including a postman, a policeman and a guy on the corner by the Tubman African-American Museum, a place I wanted to visit later that day. Luckily on this trip to Macon, I had a cell phone to use to call the library and get directions. Seems if I had asked people for the location of the library near Washington Park, I could have saved some time, gas and frustration. After an hour of driving around the city and finally getting directions by phone, I pulled into the parking lot of a building that from the front looked more like a Beaux Arts
office building or apartment building than a library; a building I had passed at least three times while looking for it. The entrance and sign were on the backside of the building.

Once through the double glass doors and a detector of some kind, I turned left and went through a single glass door to the archives area. The quiet forced me to ask in whispered tones for Muriel McDowell-Jackson. I was greeted by a teapot of a woman, with a knowing smile, framed by a wisp of fuzz above the lips, Frida Kahlo-like, on her café au lait skin; her sandy colored natural hair was loosely bunched but not held together by the pencil protruding from it. Her hair and her attitude were no nonsense. She’s a Macon native, who left town to be educated, returned, married and is raising her children in the city she loves. She now is the head genealogy librarian and archivist at the Middle Georgia Regional Library on Washington Avenue in Macon. She led me to a table where she had pulled out books and copies of articles that had been written about Jefferson Franklin Long, many of which I already had seen during my research to prepare to meet her. Then she focused my attention on a microfilm machine, two tables from where I sat. She had pulled reels of microfilm for me to view, to find and make copies of articles on Long from newspapers of his era, particularly the *Macon Telegraph* and the *American Union*. This was a first for me, threading the machine and twirling the handle, focusing my eyes on the fuzzy print, looking for something that would clear up my questions about who Jefferson Franklin Long was in 1870.

Much of what I read on microfilm substantiated what I’d researched online, from books and academic papers. His story starts in slavery and confusion in the county seat of Knoxville in Crawford County, Georgia, March 3, 1836. 4 While his mother’s name is not known, one of two men might be his father. Both are white. One was famous for a medical first. According to Jefferson F. Long family lore, in an online oral history by his granddaughters, Dr. Crawford W.
Long was Jefferson’s father. Crawford Long was the first doctor to use ether as anesthesia during surgery.\(^5\)

The other possible father was infamous for the way he died. According to a newspaper article in 1871, James C. Lloyd was hung for being involved, as an accessory, in the murder of a man.\(^6\) Jefferson Long was listed as being owned by Lloyd in the 1840 census in Knoxville. The Lloyd family eventually moved to Macon and Long was sold to a businessman, Edwin Saulsbury, who set up Long in the tailoring business. Long also worked at a neighboring newspaper as a typesetter, and that is where he honed his reading, writing and knowledge of politics and civics.\(^7\) When and how he earned his freedom is not known exactly but an article in *The Macon Telegraph*, described him as running his tailoring business as a “free man, while all his race were slaves.” Most of his clients were white, the only ones who could pay for his services, during and after the Civil War.\(^8\)

When I asked what Macon was like before and after the Civil War, Mrs. McDowell-Jackson suggested I take a hike, to “The Cottage.” Its full name is the Sidney Lanier Cottage House Museum. Lanier was a famous novelist, poet, composer, musician and literary critic, who was born in the cottage in 1842. It was his grandparents’ home.\(^9\) Walking from the library and turning onto High Street, I left the 21\(^{st}\) century and was propelled back to the 19\(^{th}\) century. The street literally was paved with bricks.

Except for a few horseless carriages, the houses on High Street, appeared time warped and wrapped, preserved just like “The Cottage” built around 1840. It and the homes around it were spared by Union General William T. Sherman as he marched to the east of Macon and headed to the sea and Savannah, during the Civil War, terrorizing everyone in his path.\(^{10}\)
"The Cottage" is listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of its architecture but also because of it being Lanier’s birthplace. It also is designated as a Landmark of American Music and Landmark of American poetry.  

It took a lot of knocking to get someone to open the door at “The Cottage” to let me into the gift shop to buy the guide to Macon during and after the Civil War. There was only one copy of the book left. My credit card receipt bookmarked where Long was mentioned and I continued to thumb through my edition, signed by author, Conie Mac Darnell, as I walked back to the library.

There were so many black faces in the book and not all were slaves. Most were prominent black people, including Jefferson Franklin Long, educators, preachers and black Union soldiers. This black and white story was told in black and white print. The only color was the cover and the 1872 city map of Macon. The author of the book was a former history teacher who wrote it to mark the 150th anniversary of the Civil War and Emancipation in Macon. He also wrote it as a guide, “because I hope the maps will encourage people to visit the places where these folks live, worked, went to church, died and were buried….The purpose of this narrative guide is not to answer important questions of causes and effect, but to provide perspectives by using the words and actions of black and white participants within a defined area-the Confederate crossroads city of Macon, Georgia.”

Mrs. McDowell-Jackson looked at the old city map and explained prosperous black people back then lived in the Pleasant Hill Neighborhood. It no longer is as pleasant to live in as it was during Long’s time. The area has fallen on hard times; boarded up houses and businesses and overgrown lots. She also spread out insurance company maps for me, and showed how the
community that began as homes for freedman and the cemetery that gave them final rest, literally were cut to pieces by the construction of I-75. Old maps located Long’s businesses and home but finding them now would be impossible, she said. They’ve been torn down and even the names of the streets have changed.

Mrs. McDowell-Jackson showed me where the Long family used to live on Ocmulgee Street, now Riverside Drive. When I asked about Long’s extensive library that I had read about, she knew nothing about it. But she remembered there was a rocking chair that belonged to Long and was donated by “someone” and now was at the Tubman African American Museum. No chance to see it on this trip since it was Monday and the museum was closed. What about the cemetery where Long was buried? No chance to see it either, since it was five p.m. and starting to get dark. Mrs. McDowell-Jackson frowned upon my driving around in an overgrown cemetery near dark, in a neighborhood overgrown with abandoned houses and neglect. As I headed out the door for home, she warned the short trip down to Macon would be a long trip back to Henry County because of rush hour traffic. And she was right. It took almost two and a half hours to get home.

The trip to Buckhead in Atlanta was a lot easier on October 2, 2013, and it led to a jewel of a discovery: a book that was part of Long’s library that so far, no one had cited. It all started with an online search of ArchiveGrid which led me to an oral history given by some of the granddaughters of Jefferson Long who grew up in Atlanta. Long and his wife Lucinda had seven children, four boys and three girls. The fourth child was Annie Long who married Henry Rucker and produced eight children, six girls and two boys. Three of those girls, Lucy Rucker Aiken, Neddie Rucker Harper and Hazel Rucker were interviewed in 1977 for Harvard University’s, Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America. Much of their conversation was about
their history-making father, Henry A. Rucker, but they also talked about their grandfather, Jefferson Long. Once I downloaded the transcript of their oral history, I went back to ArchiveGrid and learned of the Long, Rucker and Aiken Family Papers at the Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center. The collection was described as covering the Long Family. I don’t know what I expected but what I found in the first box allowed me to touch what Long had touched 143 years ago. I ran my fingers over the tattered leather-bound book that probably was new when Jefferson Franklin Long first took it to Washington, D.C. In this gold engraved “Autographs” book were the signatures of other black Congressional history makers in 1871 and a few white Congressmen, who served with Long.

On both the blue and white plaid interior cover and on the first white, now-yellowed page, there in large Palmer penmanship is written, J.F. Long’s Library.
As I carefully turned the pages and photographed the signatures on them, I realized, Jefferson Franklin Long was a history maker who also collected autographs of the famous people, both black and white, with whom he worked in the 41st Congress. At that time, the United States was made up of 37 states and nine territories. His book contains signatures from 18 U.S. Senators and seven U.S. Representatives. Hiram R. Revels of Mississippi dated his entry in 1871 as H.R. Revels. He was the first black person to serve in either House of Congress and came in as a U.S. Senator, in January of 1870. He was not elected but selected by the Mississippi State Legislature as was the practice back then in that state.
The first black Congressman to be seated in the U.S. House was Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina, who was a four-term Congressman. Long captured his autograph too.
On another page, Long’s flowery signature is under that of another Georgia Representative, Marion Bethune from Talbotton, Georgia, who served a little bit longer than Long, from December 22, 1870 to March 3, 1871. He ran for re-election and lost. Long served from January 16, 1871 to March 3, 1871 and did not run for re-election because it was made clear, “Negroes would be kept out of public office by whatever means necessary.”

The autograph book ended up in the possession of Long’s daughter, Annie Long Rucker and so far, the autograph book is the only known paper artifact that survived. The autograph book sat in a box at the Kenan Research Center of the Atlanta History Center since 1980, but my research indicates no one had written about it until now. Its existence was a surprise to Muriel McDowell-Jackson and especially to Dr. Andy Ambrose, Executive Director of the Tubman African American Museum in Macon. He shook his head and chuckled, trying to figure out how he missed it when he worked at the Atlanta History Center. Once he saw my pictures of the autograph book, he told me, he planned to contact the Atlanta History Center for
photocopies so the pictures could be displayed in the planned new Tubman facility, with another artifact that belonged to Jefferson Long, a rocking chair. I learned about it from Mrs. McDowell-Jackson at the Middle Georgia Regional Library during my September visit to Macon. Now it was November 26 and Ambrose and his staff were preparing to close the doors of the museum for a couple of hours so they could celebrate Thanksgiving with a pot luck lunch.

I was given permission to take pictures of the rocking chair, something visitors normally aren’t allowed to do, while Jeffrey Bruce, the director for exhibitions looked up who donated the rocking chair and when. He shrugged his shoulders when asked if he knew anymore about the contributor, Dorothy Douglass, who donated the chair in 1999. All the records contained were her name, the year the chair was donated and that it came with no proof of authenticity. As I photographed the chair, I tried to imagine Long sitting in it, gently rocking, while looking over the autographs he collected in his book during his brief tenure in Congress.
While lunch was being set up for the staff, Jeffrey Bruce offered to lead me to Linwood Cemetery where Jefferson Long is buried. It had been raining lightly all day but became a deluge as we drove away from the Tubman.

We passed old homes being renewed and then entered what used to be the prosperous black part of town: Pleasant Hill. We pulled onto a street with empty shot-gun houses riddled with decay and vandalism. The pavement gave way to a gravel road. Then we reached the cemetery.

My look of dismay at the appearance of the cemetery gave me away. I didn’t have to say a word. Bruce told me, the cemetery was in better shape now than it used to be, thanks to a group of volunteers. There was a time even drug dealers wouldn’t walk through it, he said. With that he hopped back into his car, told me to come by the museum when I finished and then he was gone.

With the rain pelting the car and me, I decided to drive the gravel path through and around the cemetery to try to find the headstone for Long, who was buried in 1901. Somehow
the cold rain added to the pall of the cemetery with its high grass, broken tombstones and general malaise. How sad that the final resting place of a decorated black Marine, Rodney M. Davis also is so unkempt. There is a 14 foot statue of him in the cemetery, overlooking I-75. Luckily Macon’s only Medal of Honor recipient is remembered elsewhere in the city with another statute and an exhibit at the Tubman Museum. A Navy frigate is named after him. He died in Vietnam when he fell on an enemy hand grenade to save the lives of other Marines in a bunker. All I could think about was how the neglect of the historic black cemetery mirrored the neglect of the history makers buried there. Just as I was about to give up and plan a third trip to Macon on a good weather day, I found what I was looking for but it wasn’t what I had seen in pictures. The simple gravestone that once marked Long’s grave long ago, no longer exists. No one seems to know what happened to the original, but it was replaced by one that details Long’s accomplishments. His wife is buried to his right and a son to his left.
I have touched two artifacts—the autograph book and the rocking chair—that were Jefferson Long’s. Both were tangible evidence to me of his having lived and I now felt more connected to him as I tried to connect him to present day historians through my paper. The Tubman African American Museum now knows of one more Long artifact, his autograph book, that can be copied to expand their exhibit on Long in their new facility.

And there is something new coming to Macon to hopefully resurrect the Pleasant Hill neighborhood and Jefferson Franklin Long’s place in Macon and Georgia history.

First, the home of Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Little Richard, aka Richard Penniman, will become a community center, after it is moved with 26 other homes to the other side of the Interstate. The Georgia Department of Transportation plans to make improvements where I-75 and I-16 meet.

There will be two new parks and one of them will be named for Jefferson Long, Georgia’s first elected black U.S. Representative and the first black elected official to speak on the U.S. House floor.

And in case you’re wondering, no, I did not look up Juanita. I don’t know how to and even if I did, wouldn’t. There are some people in the past who we need to leave in the past, but Jefferson Long is not one of them.
CHAPTER 2

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF JEFFERSON LONG’S 47 DAYS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

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GEORGIA’S FIRST BLACK U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

Jefferson Franklin Long’s journey from Macon, Georgia to Washington, D.C. began when he first became involved in politics around 1867, through the Georgia Equal Rights Association, which later became the Georgia Equal Rights and Educational Association. It promoted literacy, education and voter registration among the former slaves.22

Long’s oratorical skills, his business acumen and his community involvement brought him to the attention of the Republican Party. The party was hated by Southern whites, who were staunch Democrats and the hatred began with President Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War. Lincoln freed the slaves in the Southern States by signing the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. The next year, the 13th Amendment was passed by the Senate to abolish slavery, but the House didn’t pass it until January of 1865 and it wasn’t ratified by the States until December of 1865.23 Between January and December of 1865, The Civil War ended on April 9, 1865 when General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox in Virginia. And five days later, President Lincoln was shot and died on the morning of April 15, 1865.24
Eric Foner wrote about the feelings of black mourners in the streets of Washington, D.C. as described by Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy. “The colored people, “Welles wrote, ‘and there were at this time more of them perhaps than of whites, were painfully affected’”25

Lincoln was succeeded by Andrew Johnson who attempted to start Reconstruction without including blacks in the Southern governments. The Republican controlled Congress and the President butted heads, to the point of impeaching Johnson, who almost lost his job but for one vote.26

Along the way, Congress reacted by passing the Civil Rights Act of 1866; the Reconstruction Act of 1867, “which mandated the establishment of new governments in the South with black men, for the first time in our history, enjoying a share of political power.”27

And in 1868, the 14th Amendment was ratified by the states and it made slaves and their descendants American citizens.

It was not until 1870, with the passage of the 15th Amendment, black men were given the right to vote. All of this was pushed by a Republican Congress, seen by the South as overbearing, interfering and unwanted. For the most part, Southern whites despised Republicans but Southern blacks embraced the party of Lincoln.

Historian, Nicholas Lemann writes, “One of the most amazing achievements in the history of black America was the creation, in just a few years of an elaborate political machinery—Republican, of course—that produced far higher (in fact, pretty close to 100 percent) voter turnout among freed slaves in the South than the United States as a whole has now. One result of this was that the South elected dozens of Black officials to national office.” 28
It was in this climate that black voters sent Jefferson Long to Congress, after Georgia was readmitted to the Union on July 15, 1870. Georgia was the fifth Southern state to secede from the Union and the last to be readmitted. Before it could be readmitted, the state had to ratify the 15th Amendment and return black legislators to the Georgia General Assembly, who earlier had been expelled. Once that was done elections were set in Georgia for December of 1870, for the Georgia General Assembly, the U.S. senate and House of Representatives. One person would serve in the third short session of the 41st U.S. Congress and another representative would serve a full term in the 42nd Congress.

The election was not that simple. There was a riot in Macon. People were killed and injured and it took three days to complete voting. In the end Jefferson Long was elected to the short term and Thomas Jefferson Speer, a white man, was elected to the full term. There is much more to that story as is detailed by Edmund L. Drago’s, Black Politicians and Reconstruction in Georgia: a Splendid Failure and Ephraim Samuel Rosenbaum’s, The Incendiary Negro: The Life and Times of the Honorable Jefferson Franklin Long.

Republicans were accused of only electing a black to the short term as a political move to garner black support for the party, while maintaining the status quo and power with a white candidate for the longer term. The motivation did not matter and Jefferson Long was sworn in January 16, 1871 in Washington D.C. And his first vote on his first day was “yea” to a request to suspend the rules, so a Senate bill on the Central Branch Union Railroad could be moved from the Committee on Public Lands back to the Speaker’s table. It failed, as did the second vote to suspend rules. The third request for a rule suspension passed, as did the bill on telegraph communication between the United States and foreign countries. Long’s first day was
over at 4:30 p.m. but his 47 days in office were just beginning. In just a few weeks, Long would make history with his speech on the house floor, the first by a black elected official.

**Press Coverage in Black and White**

Both black and white newspaper editors understood what they reported and emphasized could shape what their readers believed about freed black people in office and in a free society. William Haskins wrote.

The image of blacks remained essentially unchanged in the southern white press after the Civil War...Any effort to construct a new, more positive image of blacks was conspicuously absent from southern editorials. Consequently, the responsibility for filling this void fell upon the shoulders of black journalists. They faced the awesome task of communicating the ideas, beliefs, motives, etc. that created a rhetorical vision significantly different from their expressed in southern white papers.”

Black newspapers and white newspapers had different motives for their coverage. The mainstream white press had a much larger audience and regulated what that audience read about black legislators. It was not flattering, for a reason. “When slavery was abolished and blacks given the vote, whites increased their rhetorical activity as of means of constraining ‘free’ blacks,” wrote, Cal M. Logue. “To convince audiences that blacks should not be involved in state government and to mobilize whites, spokesmen argued bluntly that ex-slaves were uncivilized creatures. Whites created the savage-form from personal characteristics whites had attributed to slaves.” Logue found that the press portrayed blacks as untrustworthy, immoral, lazy, liars and a threat to the purity and dignity of the white, especially the white woman. Logue also found with the Charleston, South Carolina newspapers, the *Daily Courier* and the Charleston *Mercury*, “Both papers consistently expressed anti-black sentiment and were missionaries for maintaining the subservient relations of black to whites which had existed
during slavery. Both papers editorialized against Reconstruction policies which promised to elevate blacks to positions of political power.”36

The result of the negative press had a long term effect on America and specifically black America, according to David Domke. “It would seem likely, then, that discourse in the press served a critical role in entrenching attitudes of racial superiority and indifference among white Americans. This surely contributed to the American social, political, legal and economic environments that institutionalized racial inequality over the last quarter of the nineteenth century.”37

The black press tried to combat the negative images presented in the white media. Black newspapers were few in number as compared to the majority newspapers. No one is sure how many black papers existed before and during the Civil War and Reconstruction.38 What we do know is before the Civil War the emphasis in the black press had been the abolition of slavery, but after the war, racial unity and civil rights guaranteed under the Constitution were the important themes.39

William Haskins observed another reoccurring theme, “The unshakeable belief that blacks are people too. To conclude otherwise give tacit support for the opposition’s static and singularly narrow vision of blacks as something less than human.”40 The black press also hoped by reporting positive stories about middle class blacks and the good deeds and accomplishments of other blacks, it would not only encourage and instill pride in former slaves, but also, according to Patrick Washburn, “This would impress whites and hoped it would help to end the racism and stigma of inferiority under which they were forced to live.”41 For the black press, the villain was anyone who saw blacks as anything but human and equal.
**Long Press Coverage**

The black and white battle of the press was evident in the coverage of Jefferson Franklin Long from the moment he was sworn into office on January 16, 1871. The *Evening Star*, reported the same day in the “Washington News and Gossip” column, “Another Colored Member—in the House this afternoon, Jefferson F. Long (colored) was admitted as a representative from Georgia.” 42 In New York, the next day, *The Sun* reported Long being admitted and described him as “(colored)” and noted, “He is of darker complexion than Rainey of South Carolina,”43 the first black U.S. Representative elected. *The New York Times* reported, “Georgia in Congress Once More” and named the four Georgians admitted, as well as their party affiliation, but only one was identified by race, Jefferson Long. “The latter is a dark mulatto, with crisp hair, and evidentially having more of the African in him than anyone of his race who has yet appeared in Congress.”44 The Memphis, Tennessee *Public Ledger* mentioned the four Georgia representatives too but only named Long and changed his description slightly “evidentially having more African blood in him that any negro yet elected to Congress.”45

The black press presented Long differently. *The Louisianaian* in New Orleans wrote in two sentences, “Honorable Jefferson Long, of Georgia was admitted to his seat in Congress on the 16 January. Mr. Long is a colored man.” The *New National Era*, published by Frederick Douglass, the black abolitionist, mentioned complexion too but only at the very end of the article, the longest of any mentioning the Congressman. The headline read, “Another Colored Member of the House.” And the rest of the column gave Long what he was not getting in mainstream media, credibility and respect, while at the same time telling black readers, even if you had been a slave there is hope for advancement. Here is the column.
“Georgia, the State that rebellion has clung to with a drowning man’s grips, is represented today in the House of Representatives by one of her long-despised sons. Hon. Jefferson Long, of the Fourth Congressional District of Georgia, who took the oath of office on the 16th instant, is an American citizen of African descent, and has in the old era been inventoried as property with sheep and swine in the very district he now represents as a man on the floor of the House of Representatives. And he is a man—a gentleman; we were convinced of this in a five minutes’ conversation with him. He thoroughly understands the situation in his State, and is not of the opinion that a general amnesty will prove a panacea for the evils that the black loyalists are forced to endure at the hands of Democrats and rebels of that state. Mr. Long is about 35 years of age, of a light brown complexion with manly and independent carriage, and gives the impression of a man actuated by a high sense of duty and of the position he occupies.”

The same article was published verbatim and without attribution seven days later in The Union, Official Paper of the United States, Official Paper of the State of Georgia, a Republican paper, published in Macon, GA. Another report in the same edition, told readers Long was seated in the House Chambers next to C.C. Bowen of South Carolina. Bowen had served in the Confederate Army in the Coast Guard. Now he was a Republican. Member drew lots for their seats.

On January 24, 1871, Long made the news again. It was a vote to decide whether to seat Thomas Beard, a black Georgia Republican in the U.S. House, rather than white Democrat, Stephen Corker. Corker had defeated Beard in an election for the Fifth Congressional District. Beard believed violence kept black people away from the polls and that was why he had lost. He claimed many of the people who would have voted for him were “‘shot, beat or otherwise maltreated” by “organized bands of desperadoes [sic]’

Beard filed a “memorial” an appeal, with the House, asking Corker not be seated.

C.A.P., no name just the initials of a regular columnist in The Atlanta Constitution, reported what he saw from the gallery. Republican General, now Congressman Benjamin
Franklin Butler of Massachusetts called “the Beast,” by Southern Democrats, took to the well to speak. He said the Georgia Democratic Party could only have made significant gains in elections because of “THE BLUDGEON, THE BOWIE AND THE PISTOL.” C.A.P. called this, Butler’s “stock slander.” Congressman Long said nothing during the proceeding but caught the ire of C.A.P. anyway. He described Long, as a “worthless ‘yaller nigger’ lollled with an insolent air; rolling the whites of his eyes around the ladies in the galleries now and then in an insolent manner.” Thomas Beard, the challenger for the 5th District seat was described by C.A.P. as, “a yellow biped who rejoices in the name of Beard, but has none on his face.”

Despite the support of Long and Butler, Beard was not admitted by a vote of 42 for and 147 against.

The event that got Congressman Long nationwide attention happened February 1, 1871, when he became the first elected black to address the House of Representatives. He spoke in opposition to a bill that would allow former members of the Confederacy to serve in Congress without swearing allegiance to the U.S. Constitution.

He noted, “We propose, sir, to remove political disabilities from the very men who were the leaders of the KuKlux and who have committed midnight outrages in that State.” He reflected on the killings and beating of black people by white people in Georgia who, “Before their disabilities are removed, they say ‘We will remain quiet until all or our disabilities are removed and then we shall take the lead.’” He claimed, they “hate this government” and are free to do what they want. “When we take the men who commit these outrages before judges and juries we find that they are in the hands of the very KuKlux themselves who protect them.” And he predicted. “If this House removes the disabilities of disloyal men by modifying the test-oath, I venture to prophesy you will again have trouble from the very same men who gave you trouble
before.” He said he had to vote against the proposal for the good of the people in his district and the United States of America. Eighty-nine other members of the House joined him but 118 voted to repeal it.

After a day like that, he needed a break and the Evening Star reported he was a guest at a reception given by John W. Forney, a white journalist, publisher of a newspaper and former clerk of the U.S. House. The event was held at the newly opened black-owned Wormley Hotel, known for its seafood, including the turtle soup, and elegant rooms.

That good night became a nightmare morning. The reaction in newspapers to his speech and vote the day before was brutal. An Ohio paper reported, “That a negro should hold such views is perfectly natural, and it is not hard to explain why scalawags and carpet-baggers should endorse them, but why a respectable white man should favor them is indeed a political curiosity.” The Atlanta Constitution on February 4, 1871 kept it short, three sentences, beginning with; this was his “maiden speech,” gave his reason for voting against repealing the test oath and then ended, “Long, luckily, will be a short Congressman.” The Special Correspondent to the Atlanta newspaper, called Long a “dusty shadow” who spoke in “a very energetic manner,” but whose “grammar and pronunciation would hardly pass muster outside of Congress.” He also called Long a tool.

There were other indignities of the job that weren’t suffered privately but publically in the news. Long was a tailor, yet was described as wearing a “shiney broadcloth, and wearing a shiney beaver,” as C.A.P reported in his column. He also chided Long for arriving at his desk early, before the noon session began. And C.A.P. took great glee in re-telling a story, he described as “A Very Natural Mistake.” When Congressman Long went to get his coat from the cloak room, a white page slapped him on the back and assumed he was coming to get a coat for a
white congressman. The slap was returned with a look of “contempt” by the Congressman but the page still didn’t realize there was a problem. He slapped Long on the back again and told him to hurry up and get the coat before he got into trouble with the white congressman. He finally he asked Long if he was a porter in the House. C.A. P. told his readers an episode like this was bound to happen with “a large number of colored members in the House.”

There was at least one positive review, written by Earl Lynde in The American Union newspaper of Macon, on February 2, 1871 after the famous speech. He called the Congressman, honorable and said despite his color, Long “is a splendid debater and meets an antagonist with all the consummate skill of a science fencer. His action though nervous and animated to a degree, is lucid, and always to the point, and he is fully able to hold his hands against any one in the House of Representatives.” Lynde called Long more honest than his predecessor and ended by writing, “Mr. Long marks an era in the politics of Georgia.”

Those kind remarks about Congressman Long were few and far between in majority newspapers, as I’ve shown previously in this study. Few people, black or white had access to the Congressional Globe since it was housed in Washington, D.C. in the Library of Congress. So few people could read for themselves which bills Long supported and which of those passed and failed. For instance, when the house voted on “Female Suffrage,” The Cuthbert Appeal newspaper reported on January 27, 1871 on page 3 that 55 congressman voted for it and 105 against it, including “every Democrat.” But “Jeff Long voted yea!” And few knew he voted for these bills that passed: the creation of the District of Columbia; the construction of a building to house a Post Office and Judicial offices in Trenton, New Jersey and providing a territorial government for the territory of Wyoming.
Few in his time saw him for what he was, living history. But he also watched history being made, and not just on Capitol Hill. When the Howard University Law Department graduated its first class, he was there. Newspaper coverage was sparse in *The Evening Star* on February 4, 1871. The black newspaper, *New National Era*, devoted a lot of space to the graduation in its February 9, 1871 issue. Each student was listed with his area of expertise. Two U.S. Senators and three Representatives, including Long, were in attendance. Speakers included General Oliver O. Howard, who served as Commissioner of the Freedman’s Bureau, and was one of the founders and president of Howard University. Also in attendance was General William T. Sherman, the Civil War hero who just had been appointed by the 41st Congress, Regent of the Smithsonian Institution. To the *Star*, it was just a graduation but to the *New National Era*, it was a time to celebrate black pride and rally the troops.

“These young men go forth into the world…to give to the false and hate inspired charge of the black man’s natural inferiority a living, forcible and effective denial…this graduating class of colored men has shown…that the race can joyfully hope, with undisturbed advantages, to become, by perseverance and industry, the peer of any race in the country intellectually, morally and financially.”

And that is what Congressman Long tried to do, even while some newspapers pictured him as lazy and out of touch. He never missed a day of work. On his last day, March 3, 1871, he worked half a day, but it was his 35th birthday. The only days off in the third session were Sundays. While most days wrapped up between 4 and 5 p.m., there were a few sessions that went until 9 and 10 p.m. According to the Congressional *Globe*, Long voted ever day, and only abstained from voting eight times. Records indicate the abstentions usually had to do with whether or not a bill should be returned to committee or whether rules should be suspended to discuss a bill or a call for an early adjournment. There were 158 roll call votes in the Third
session of the 41st Congress and he made 124 of them, only because the session started December 6, 1870 and he was not elected until late December of that year and didn’t take office until January 16, 1871.

After 47 days in office, Jefferson F. Long returned to Macon, Georgia and did not run for reelection. He remained active in the Republican Party, even being a delegate to the Republican National Conventions in 1872, 1876 and 1880. Over time he became disenchanted with the party because he believed it ignored the needs of black people. He even successfully supported a so-called Bourbon Democrat for Governor, Alfred Holt Colquitt in 1880. But Long never changed his party affiliation.64

While one historian claimed Long never ran for office again, Ephraim Rosenbaum disagrees and writes there is evidence Long ran for a seat in the Georgia legislature in July of 1881.65 He was soundly defeated. Long continued warring with the Republican Party, watched it relinquish the South to the Democrats, who back there were the party of segregationist. Long did not wait on government to make things better for black people. He was an organizer of the Union Brotherhood Lodge, with branches all over central Georgia to help black families survive. He ran his businesses and raised his seven children with his wife Lucinda in Macon, until his death by influenza at the age of 65 on February 4, 1901.

In death his image and his importance were controlled by the media and not his family. *The Atlanta Constitution* reported his death February 10 at the end of a column with the heading, “What the Negro is Doing. Matters of Interest Among the Colored People.” The last paragraph simply expressed sympathy to Mrs. H.A. Rucker and her family at the loss of her father, “Hon. Jefferson Long, of Macon Ga., once congressman from this state.”
Two Macon papers published a surprising amount of coverage. On the day of his death, *Macon News Monday Evening* called him a “remarkable character” and said, “He had always been respectful to white people, and was in turn respected by them. He was a negro of more than ordinary intelligence and was very effective on the stump being a good speaker.” *The Macon Telegraph* often skewered Jefferson Long when he was in Congress and their obituary on February 5, 1901 was lengthy. But this obituary was not about honoring a history maker but remembering a former troublemaker. It was about talking to the black community about what was expected from them.

Readers were reminded, “He was most active in state politics immediately after the war, and figured as a leader in one of the bloodiest race wars that this community ever had.” His time in Congress was mentioned in the headline but not again until the bottom of the first column and they quote Long as saying about his time in Congress, “I learned one thing while I was in Washington. It is no place for an ignorant negro.” The paper reported after Long left politics, “He had ceased to be offensive to the white people and in his latter years he made many friends among them.” The obituary spent more time sending a message to the black population of Macon than it did talking about the successful life and career of Georgia’s first black U.S. Representative, the first elected black to speak before the U.S. House of Representatives. The newspaper noted, “All who knew Long after his political career was ended, declare that he made a good citizen and his extensive influence with his race was used to make them feel that they would be friendly with the white people.”

In death Jefferson Long became something he was not, early in his life, compliant. The Macon newspapers told their readers, especially black readers, what they wanted them to know about Long, versus his real place in history. By doing that, they presented to black and white
readers what a “good Negro,” should be. And this was not unusual for the times as Janice Hume writes in *Obituaries in American Culture*.

> “Memories and history are not fixed things, of course, but are mere representations or constructions of reality that can change based on present needs. Obituaries represent the dominant society by revealing a type of conformity of individual citizens. Those who remain apart from the dominant culture are remembered only if they serve some sort of purpose, such as to reinforce subjection or illustrate a news or cultural value, or if they have one trait so powerful as to prevent its being ignored. The unique individual, then could be subsumed by the dominant society.” 66

In the year of Long’s death his warning, delivered on the U.S. house floor 30 years earlier, came true. Through poll taxes, residency requirements, literacy tests, Ku Klux Klan activity and more, Southern blacks lost the right to vote. And by December 8, 1901, a *Washington Times* newspaper headline read, “Congress is Now Without a Negro. The Chance of Others Being Elected is Slender.”

In Georgia, it would be 101 years before the next black person represented the state of Georgia in the United States House of Representatives. Andrew Young was elected in 1972.
CHAPTER 3

ANDREW YOUNG ON JEFFERSON FRANKLIN LONG

Andrew Young has lived in the same house in Southwest Atlanta for 48 years. As his career and travel expanded over the decades, so has his house, from ranch to multi-level and gated, from a traditional brick front that belies the soaring glass terrarium on the backside. It is a well lived in house; chock-full of paintings and African artifacts, books, furniture and photographs he’s collected over his years as a minister, civil rights leader, congressman, mayor, ambassador, filmmaker, husband, father, grandfather and friend.

Young says he learned of Jefferson Franklin Long when he ran for Congress the first time in 1970 and lost. He admitted not knowing much about Long, then or now, except for his history-making election.

I filled him in on Long being the first elected black congressman to speak on the floor of the U.S. House; how he was a businessman; self-educated; a former slave and community activist who was described as a great speaker. Those qualities brought him to the attention of the Republican Party who got him to run for Congress after Georgia was readmitted to the Union, during Reconstruction.

While Long was drafted by his party to run for Congress, Democrat Andy Young was drafted another way. Young told me he never planned on running for public office; never thought
of being the first black U.S. Representative from Georgia since Reconstruction. He saw himself as an organizer in the Civil Rights Movement, working alongside the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. And when he started his political journey, he knew 100 years between Jefferson Long’s 1870 congressional campaign and Young’s 1970 campaign was too long for Georgia to be without black representation in Congress. But he wasn’t thinking about himself as the candidate.

It all began the week before Dr. King went to Memphis in 1968, where he would be assassinated on April 4. Young accompanied him to a meeting in New York with singer and civil rights fund raiser, Harry Belafonte, black Congressman John Conyers of Michigan and Richard Hatcher, the newly elected Mayor of Gary Indiana.

“We were talking about how do we take the energy of the movement and move it into politics. And Martin said, ‘You ought not have to go to jail and have a big demonstration to get a bill passed or every time you need some attention from a member of Congress. You should elect people of good will to Congress.’ He never said black people, he said people of good will to Congress who represent those who put him in.”

Young recalls that after Dr. King was killed, the conversation began in earnest around late 1969 and early 1970 among the Civil Rights leaders who had surrounded Dr. King, including Ralph David Abernathy, Joseph Lowery, Young and others outside SCLC, like John Lewis. He no longer was with the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) but with the Voter Education Project. He wrote a letter to Julian Bond, a member of the Georgia House of Representatives. In the letter he asked Bond to run for a congressional seat because, Young believed Bond was the perfect choice, “He could raise money outside the district, could
work well with young people, could mobilize volunteers and was someone who was not afraid to talk to white people.”

But family pressure came to bear. “Martin had just been killed and Julian had five little children. The district was only 32 per cent black and his family asked him not to run.” And so Bond did not run. Young said Vernon Jordan then stepped up and said he was considering a run for the 5th Congressional seat too. At the time he was the field director for the NAACP in Georgia. But before he could announce, he was offered a job in 1970 with the United Negro College Fund in Washington, D.C., and he took it.

While the search for a candidate continued, Young went to New York to see Harry Belafonte to thank him for fundraising concerts he and Aretha Franklin had performed for SCLC. As Young recalled, Belafonte asked what SCLC was going to do about Congress. Young explained why Julian Bond wasn’t running.

“Harry didn’t even say a word to me,” Young recalled. “He picked up the phone and dialed [his wife] Julie and said, ‘See if you can find a weekend where Sidney Poitier and Lena Horne and I can get together and why don’t you try Alan King too.’ And when she said, ‘what are you going to do that day, what is this for,’ he said, ‘Andy’s running for Congress.’”

As Andy Young told me the rest of the story, he chuckled and shook his head as he remembered his immediate response. “I said wait a minute. I see my job as organizing campaigns for other people to run. I said we might do better running Hosea down in Savannah, where the black percentage was higher. I would rather stay in SCLC and help elect three or four congressman than be a congressman myself. And he [Belafonte] said, ‘the best way to elect a congressman is to show that it can be done. End of discussion.’”
Young remembers trying to beg off by saying he had to talk to his wife Jean about it first and promised he would, once he got back to Atlanta. But Belafonte called her first and when Young got home Jean already was on the bandwagon with their three daughters in tow.

At 83, Andy Young says he can’t remember the date he formally announced he was running for the 5th District Congressional seat but he knows he did it at Paschal’s, a black-owned hotel, restaurant and jazz club on, what was then West Hunter Street, now Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. Paschal’s was the epicenter of the black political community. Almost every morning, political strategy was served up with fried chicken and grits, created by the two brothers who started the business.  

And with the announcement, Andy Young said he knew he had to raise money and get out the vote, black and white. As promised, Harry Belafonte had a huge dinner and dance on June 10, 1970 at New York’s Pierre Grand Ballroom with performances by Belafonte, Lena Horne and Alan King. It was the first fundraiser for the congressional campaign.  

When he returned to Atlanta, Young recalls a coalition of white women in the Morningside area had coffee klatches where Coretta Scott King would introduce him to small groups. Those invited were asked to hold similar meetings which Young would attend, sometimes two and three a day. “I decided the only way to get white votes was to meet people personally. And we wanted people to get over what their reservations were about me.”  

In the September 1970 Democratic primary he defeated three other candidates (one black and two white) to face off against the incumbent Republican Congressman Fletcher Thompson, who’d been in office since 1967. Young said the campaign was ugly and racist while the news coverage was not.
Young remembers an altered picture that appeared on Thompson’s campaign literature that showed Young angrily staring into the face of a Ku Klux Klansman in Grenada, Mississippi. The caption on the handbill read, “If Andrew Young is elected, the Black Panthers are going to get your daughter.” Young was furious. This was an old and edited picture, taken out of context. When it was taken, Dr. King was still alive and was in Granada with Young, Hosea Williams, singer Joan Baez and others who were escorting kindergartners to school through a mob. Young said they made the trip there because a week before, Klansmen in that mob literally had bashed little black children into plate glass windows to keep them from going to school.

Young said he cradled a little boy in his arms and talked to him as they walked through the crowd. “He was afraid and I said,’ Look, you can’t let them know you’re afraid. Look ‘em dead in the eye and grit your teeth and don’t let them know you’re afraid.’ And we walked them on to school through the mob.” But in the Thompson campaign handbill, Young recalled, everyone else was taken out of the picture, including the child he was holding.

But this was not the only time during the campaign something was taken out of context. Young believed a statement he gave to an ABC television reporter, provided fodder for his opponent and damaged his congressional campaign. He was asked about the December 4, 1969 shooting death of 21 year old, Chicago Black Panther leader, Fred Hampton. Young said Hampton was asleep and unarmed when Chicago police raided the apartment and shot him to death.75 Young recalls telling the reporter angrily, how awful he thought the shooting had been. “And this ABC reporter said, ‘you wouldn’t care if western civilization had to crumble in order that everybody else might have a decent life; you wouldn’t mind would you? I said I don’t know that I would.’
And that [video and statement] went all across the country and Fletcher Thompson ran
with it.” It ran on WSB TV in Atlanta on September 25\(^{76}\) And Thompson started showing the
film of it on his campaign stops.

On October 1, Young issued a news release denying he was a “member of the
Communist Party, the Black Panther Party or any other group which advocates violent
revolution.” He restated, “I was being questioned on a philosophical question: The salvation of
Mankind. That is a broad question, especially when it (is) in abstract form. The interview was
being conducted on a hypothetical level.” He continued, “I don’t support anybody who opposes
the Constitutional standards of Society. I don’t believe in violence. I do not support the decline
of Western Civilization. My whole life has been devoted to the progress of Man’s civilization in
all Hemispheres.”\(^{77}\)

But it was not enough, even after ABC issued an apology and admitted the quote was
taken out of context, Young said. The general election was November 3, 1970 and Andrew
Young lost to Fletcher Thompson by 20,000 votes. That loss, Young told me, just made him
want to run again and that’s when he decided to put history on his side: the history of Jefferson
Franklin Long.

His campaign staff put together a pamphlet with the headline “The Chance of a Century.”
Inside was a picture of Jefferson Long with 1870 over his head, facing a picture of Andrew
Young with 1972 over his head.

Respected educator and Morehouse College President, Dr. Benjamin E. Mays wrote to
the black community in the pamphlet and gave it a history lesson with his words. “Jefferson
Long is a proud name in black history. In Congress, he fought for the right of black people to
vote and for protection of black voters from violence…..Jefferson Long made history a century ago. You can make history on November 7th by electing Andrew Young to Congress”

Young said his campaign strategy was different this second time around. A small amount of money was spent on television while the majority was spent on a get-out- the- vote campaign, getting black people to the polls. “And we had a 74 percent turnout in a pouring down rain. We got the Ethiopian who owned taxis to help us. Anybody could call any taxi and get a free ride to the poll; we had buses picking up people downtown and taking them to the polls and we had the most elaborate get out the vote effort they had ever had in this town.”

By then the district had been reapportioned and Young said black representation went from 32 percent in 1970 to 38 percent in 1972. Andy Young beat out his Republican opponent, Rodney Cook.

Young was sworn into Congress in January 1973 and on February 15, 1973, his only son was born and Andy Young made a decision.

“I thought it would be appropriate to name him for the previous congressman because I didn’t particularly think that the burden of my name was something he [his son] would want to be bothered with and he didn’t. So I wrote on the birth certificate, Jefferson Franklin Young, after the congressman who preceded me by 101 years.” Unfortunately, Young’s wife, Jean, vetoed the name. “When Jean saw the birth certificate,” Young recalled, “she crossed it out and put Andrew Jackson Young the third, so that settled that!”

As our interview came to a close, I asked Young if he thought he shared any attributes with Jefferson Long. After some thought, Young replied, “I don’t know, but I do think the thing that impressed me about all the Reconstruction politicians and that whole generation--George
Washington Carver, W.E. B. DuBois, my grandfather, and Jefferson Long--you had the feeling these were all kind of supermen.”
CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Jefferson Franklin Long of Macon made history in Georgia and in the nation during his short tenure in Congress. Yet few people recognize his name or know much about him, including Andrew Young his successor, who was elected 101 years later, as the first black representative from Georgia since Reconstruction. Long left no papers, only physical artifacts; a rocking chair and an autograph book.

Long was born a slave, who taught himself to read and write. When freed by his owner, Long became a successful businessman and orator who was a civil rights leader before the term was coined. Through his carriage, speech and work ethic, he was an example of what a black man could be, if given an opportunity.

This study sought to reconstruct Jefferson Franklin Long, adding flesh to his bones, by examining media coverage and other records of his 47 days in Washington, D.C., as the second black member of the U.S. Congress; the first from Georgia and the first to speak on the United States House Floor.

The Congressional Globe of 1871 showed the consistent voting record of a man, who understood what was going on, even though there were newspaper reports to the contrary in Macon, Atlanta and around the national in the mainstream media.
The white press used stereotypes, meant to instill fear in the white population about black people, in order to keep black citizens from gaining or maintaining political power. The white press worked to dishonor Long and trivialize him, particularly in the South.

In the black community, there were fewer newspapers and fewer customers who could read and write. For this black audience, the goal of black newspapers was to highlight racial pride, middle-class values, success stories, equal and human rights. With Long, they wanted to honor him and use him as an example of hope and success, since he was a former slave.

As a former slave and a black Southerner, Long understood why he needed to speak out in opposition to the repeal of the loyalty oath, which required former members of the Confederacy to swear allegiance to the U.S. Constitution before running for national office. Long predicted that if the oath were repealed, it would re-invigorate the Ku Klux Klan and be detrimental to black citizens. The oath was repealed but with his speech he became the first black elected congressman to speak on the U.S. House floor.

In the year of Long’s death [1901] his warning delivered on the U.S. House floor 30 years earlier, came true. Through poll taxes, residency requirements, literacy test, Ku Klux Klan activity and more, Southern blacks lost the right to vote. And by December 8, 1901, The Washington Times newspaper headline read, “Congress is Now Without a Negro. The Chance of Other Being elected is Slender.” In Georgia, it would be 101 years before the next black person represented the state in the U.S. House. Andrew Young was elected in 1972 to represent the 5th Congressional District.

Though long obscured, Jefferson Franklin Long’s legacy now slowly is being resurrected. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported in January 2014, that a park will be built and named
after Jefferson Franklin Long in the Pleasant Hill Neighborhood of Macon where he lived and now is buried.

But why is it important to study Jefferson Franklin Long in the 21st Century? There are several reasons. His life gives a different view of Reconstruction, especially in the South. While Reconstruction usually is portrayed in the South as bad for white Southerners, for black people there were opportunities for the first time to participate in the governments, local and national, become educated with the establishments of schools and colleges and to become landowners through the Freedman’s Savings and Trust Company, known as the Freedman’s Bank. Yes, there was white opposition and Ku Klux Klan activity but overall it was a time of growth for many black people, which often is not highlighted in the story of Reconstruction. One wonders had Abraham Lincoln not been assassinated would Reconstruction have succeeded? Would he have kept Union troops in the South to stymie the growth of the Ku Klux Klan and to enforce the laws that protected black people, especially the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Civil Rights Act of 1875 which provided for equal accommodations? The U.S. Supreme Court struck down the bill in 1883 saying the Constitution didn’t extend to private businesses.

The study of Long is important because he serves as a lesson and example to people of color, immigrants and refugees, living right now. Long was a former slave, who learned to read and write; owned land and operated businesses in a time when he was not seen by many in the South as a human being. After all, slaves were seen as property, bought and sold like cattle. His life is an example of overcoming what appear to be insurmountable odds to be a success but also he used his knowledge and influences to try to lift up his race at the time.
The study of Jefferson Franklin Long also provides a look at the power of media to shape opinions, both positive and negative in the black and white press. And sometimes what was real was misrepresented to foster stereotypes and shortcut progress. The first black Congressman to be seated in the U.S. House was Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina, who was a four term Congressman. But as Cal Logue found in his research, South Carolina newspapers continued to be anti-black and wrote editorials opposing Reconstruction and the uplifting of black people.

Lastly in studying Jefferson Franklin Long I see parallels in the media coverage of Long and the nation’s first black U.S. President Barack Obama. Both are mixed race. Media coverage of both often time focused on race. The citizenship and validity of Mr. Obama’s birth certificate constantly have been questioned because of his Kenyan father, white mother and birth in Hawaii. There were magazine covers and newspaper pictures that darkened the face of Mr. Obama as he ran for office, as during Reconstruction the features of black people often were overdrawn, made caricatures to lessen their humanness to instill fear. And while name calling was evident in the coverage of Long, we have seen a Congressman calling the President a “liar” from the House floor and more.

The study of the life of Jefferson Long shows is not just about the past but also about where we are in the United States today in dealing with race, politics and media.
My mother reconfirmed our conversation when I asked her about it January 25, 2014. She also told me the rest of the story that she didn’t tell me back then. After divorce, mother met Juanita’s boyfriend, Woodrow Watson, who also was from Macon. Mother still had a key to where she lived with daddy over Schultz Grocery Store. Woodrow suggested, they get together, but to start housekeeping, they needed major appliances. Mother told me while daddy and Juanita were at work, Woodrow raided daddy’s apartment and took the gas stove and then went to the apartment he used to share with Juanita and took the refrigerator.


In 1869 J. Willis Menard of Louisiana, who was black, was not allowed to take his seat in the U.S. House and was sent home because the House “refused to acknowledge his election as legitimate.” For 15 minutes, on February 27, 1869, he told Congress why he should be seated and with those remarks became the first black American to address Congress. Philip Dray, The Epic Story of Reconstruction Through the Lives of the First Black Congressmen: Capitol Men (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008), 59 & 70.


In April and May of 1997, three granddaughters of Long participated in the “Black Women Oral History Project.” The interviews are part of the Harvard University, Schlesinger Library on the History Of Women in America. Lucy Rucker Aiken says in a transcript, sequence 12, “my grandfather, Jefferson F. Long..my grandfather’s father was Crawford F. Long. But that can’t go in history. I wouldn’t dare put that down, see because he was white and he was quite renowned in Georgia.” http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:RAD.SCHL:10048761

There is no way to test the validity of this statement in the oral history and paternity is not the focus of my study.

Hawkinsville Dispatch, June 23, 1871. Source: ECN, Early County News Blakely. He headline reads, “Jeff Long’s Father to be Hung for the Murder of Colonel George W. Fish. Long is described as mulatto.

Conie Mac Darnell, Walking on Cotton: Civil War & Emancipation Era Guide to Macon, Ga. (Macon, GA: Center City Press, 2013), 8 and 96. The name of the newspaper is not given by the author nor listed in the notes and sources.


Ibid, v.

14 The family tree information was provided by Muriel McDowell-Jackson, the Head Genealogy Librarian/Archivist, Middle Georgia Regional Library.

15 According to the summary on ArchiveGrid, of all the papers in the collection, Henry Allan Rucker was a former slave who became a barber shop owner in Atlanta and was the first black person to receive a presidential appointment as “Collector of Internal Revenue for the District of Georgia.” http://beta.worldcat.org/achivegrid/collection/data/318536927.


20 Information came from Mr. Hogan of the Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center, in a telephone conversation at 10:25 a.m. on May 29, 2014.


26 Ibid., 332.

27 Ibid., 334.


35 Ibid., 403.

36 Ibid., 403.


41 Ibid., 118.


46 Public Ledger, January 17, 1871 Memphis, TN.

47 Frederick Douglass, New National Era, January 19, 1871 microfilm.

48 The Union, January 26, 1871, Macon, GA microfilm.

49 In an article in the Evening Star, March 4, 1871, it reports on the new members of the 42nd Congress presenting Their credential, including “four colored men,” also reported, “The drawing for seats will take place on Monday.”  http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1871-03-04/ed-1/seq-1.
According to the Glossary of Congressional Terms from the U.S. House of Representatives, History, Art and Archives, a memorial is “an appeal from an individual or group asking the House or Senate to oppose a measure or government practice.”

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“Jeff Long on the Ku-Klux,”*The Atlanta Constitution* (1869-1875); February 4, 1871; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Atlanta Constitution* (1868-1945).

C.A.P. “Our Washington Letter: An Interesting Day for Georgia—The Fight is Over” *The Atlanta Constitution*, (1869-1875); February 7, 1871; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *The Atlanta Constitution* (1869-1875).

60Ibid., February 3, 1871.

61Ibid., February 8, 1871.


63Frederick Douglass, *New National Era*, February 9, 1871. 2, microfilm.


Rosenbaum in his 2011 article cited in endnote v and wrote, “Though the historian John Matthews has made an Oft-repeated assertion that Long’s ‘political activities ceased’ before 1884, that is not the case. Indeed
Long created what amounted to a schism in the state party against the carpetbagger wing. He became increasingly severe on white Republicans, calling them, ‘demi-devils’ and writing to the Macon Telegraph from Washington to say they were ‘doing everything they can to keep the negro under their foot, and if any such thing as slavery were to be had, the white Republicans of Georgia would try to use a colored man to bring it about.” See endnote 9.

60 Janice Hume, *Obituaries in American Culture* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2000), 152.

61 Much of the information in this chapter was gathered during an interview with Andrew Young, minister, former SCLC organizer, congressman, ambassador and mayor at his home in Atlanta on April 1, 2014 from 12:35 p.m. until 2:30 p.m.

62 John Lewis and Julian Bond were among the student founders of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. Lewis was Chairman from 1963 to 1966. Bond was the Communications Director. He also won a seat in the Georgia legislature but was not allowed by the legislature to take it because of his opposition to the Vietnam War. A U.S. Supreme Court decision allowed him to be sworn in January of 1967 and take his seat. [http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/julian-bond-b-1940](http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/julian-bond-b-1940) [http://www.naaccp.org/preview/pages/julian-bond](http://www.naaccp.org/preview/pages/julian-bond) [http://johnlewis.house.gov/john-lewis/biography](http://johnlewis.house.gov/john-lewis/biography).

63 Julie was Harry Belafonte’s wife.

64 Hosea Williams was a minister and civil rights activist who at the time was living and working in Savannah, GA with the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a chemist. He later joined SCLC and was one of the leaders of the March from Selma, Alabama to Montgomery that culminated in what is now known as “Bloody Sunday” where police attacked marchers on the Edmund Pettis bridge. [http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/hosea-williams-1926-2000](http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/hosea-williams-1926-2000).

65 Paschals started as a luncheonette on West Hunter Street by James and Robert Paschal. Their lunch counter grew into a dining room, a hotel and a jazz club, La Carousel Lounge. It was one of the few integrated facilities in the city and it was the meeting place for black politicians who worked out campaigns and more over grits and eggs and fried chicken. As a young reporter for WSB-TV, whenever I needed to find a black politician, I knew early mornings at Paschal’s was the place to see and be seen. [http://www.paschalsrestaurantllc.com/paschals.html](http://www.paschalsrestaurantllc.com/paschals.html).

66 This information came from an actual program of the event, part of the Andrew J. Young papers in the Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System.

67 [https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/woodruff/uncategorized/andrew-youngs-campaigns](https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/woodruff/uncategorized/andrew-youngs-campaigns)

68 Fletcher Thompson did not run for re-election to the U.S. House in 1972 but instead ran for the U.S. Senate. He won the Republican primary but lost the general election to Democrat Sam Nunn.

69 A Chicago Tribune report from December 4, 1969 states 19 guns and 1,000 rounds of ammunition were found in the apartment. A federal investigation that was disputed by Chicago police found that the Panthers fired one shot and police fired a minimum of 82 shots. This information was retrieved from [www.chicagotribune.com/news/politics/chi-chicagodays-pantherraid-story,0,3414208.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/politics/chi-chicagodays-pantherraid-story,0,3414208.story) on May 29, 2014.

Thompson shows controversial ABC newsreel of Andrew Young advocating the downfall of Western government.”

77Quoted from the Andrew Young for Congress release for Thursday, October 1, 1970 at 2 p.m. and from Typed additional comments on an attached sheet of paper in the Andrew J. Young Papers, Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library On African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System.

78 Pamphlet “The Chance of a Century” from the Andrew J. Young papers, Archives Division, Auburn Research Library on African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System.