

September 8, 1998

710 W. Victory Drive  
Savannah, GA 31405-1728

Mr. J. Wiley Ellis, Chairman  
The Hodge Foundation  
% Ellis, Painter, Ratterree & Bart  
Post Office Box 9946  
Savannah, GA 31412-0146

Dear Mr. Ellis:

This letter is written in support of Historic Savannah Foundation's request for a three-year grant to fund a new staff position to coordinate educational programs and stimulate historic restoration projects among the city's African Americans which is long overdue.

This is a diverse community but so often insufficient concern is given to making Savannah all-inclusive. There is a serious need to obtain a vigorous African American involvement in Savannah's inner city rehabilitation. An able, well-trained, experienced staff person, working full-time, can contribute greatly to the successful renewal of downtown and mid town area without wholesale displacement of the present residents.

It is very appropriate that the Hodge Foundation is asked to give enthusiastic support to the employment of an additional staff person at Historic Savannah who will work to accomplish the above. I knew Mrs. Sarah Mills Hodge and have personal knowledge of her many generousities. We feel deeply that she would approve.

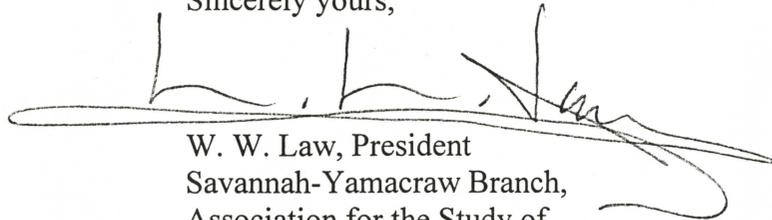
During the Depression years, when I was a lad of ten or eleven – when my unemployed father had died the year before, leaving my poor, struggling Mother to provide for three small children of which I was the oldest – I would look forward to the Mrs. Hodge's Christmas party at the Savannah Boy's club (now the Callen Boys and Girls Club) for hundreds and hundreds black children were most grateful for the gifts each of them freely received from Mrs. Hodge.

We later learned that Mrs. Hodge generously supported the building of a new Charity Hospital completed in 1929, in our neighborhood. Also, the Mills Memorial Home was erected and operated by her for the care of aged Black Savannahians in our neighborhood. And there was the Hodge Kindergarten on Bay Street (in Yamacraw) and the Art Deco Cottage at the entrance gate of Georgia State College (now Savannah State University) erected as the President's residence.

When the Black community had an opportunity to suggest names for public schools for Black children, they included the names of three outstanding white Savannahians, George W. DeRenne, Mrs. Sarah Mills Hodge and Captain Frank W. Spencer, who with compassion had devoted much of their lives to improving the plight of Black citizens.

We sincerely pray that the Hodge Foundation will continue Mrs. Sarah Mills Hodge legacy by agreeing to generously supporting an important new position.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. W. Law', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and extends to the right of the line.

W. W. Law, President  
Savannah-Yamacraw Branch,  
Association for the Study of  
Afro-American Life  
and History