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2024

### Craighead County Post Office records

Arkansas State University - Jonesboro

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Finding Aid of

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# CRAIGHEAD COUNTY POST OFFICE RECORDS

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1892-1931

NEAD 007

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Archives & Special Collections  
Arkansas State University  
Dean B. Ellis Library  
P.O. Box 2040  
State University, AR 72467  
Phone Number: 870-972-2960  
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## Contents

<b>Summary Information</b> .....	2
<b>Abstract</b> .....	2
<b>Acquisition</b> .....	2
<b>Processing Information</b> .....	2
<b>Conditions Governing Access</b> .....	2
<b>Rights Statement</b> .....	2
<b>Preferred Citation</b> .....	2
<b>Historical Note</b> .....	2
<b>Scope and Content Note</b> .....	3
<b>Arrangement</b> .....	3
<b>Subjects</b> .....	4
<b>Names</b> .....	4
<b>Collection Inventory</b> .....	4
<b>Series 1: First Class Post Office</b> .....	4
<b>Subseries 1.1: Postmaster’s Account and Record Book, 1900-1904, 1918</b> .....	4
<b>Subseries 1.2: Copy Book for Jonesboro Post Office, 1905-1910</b> .....	4
<b>Series 2: Forth Class Post Offices</b> .....	4

## Summary Information

**Compiled By:** Meredith McFadden

**Creator:** Henry Houghton

**Date:** 1892-1931

**Physical Description:** 0.8542 linear feet. The collection consists of 14 bound volumes.

**Language:** English

## Abstract

This collection documents the Post Office system in and around Jonesboro during the early 20th century. During that period, First Class and Fourth-Class Post Offices worked together to provide an essential service to the largely rural community. This collection includes Post Office record books which record postage sold, undelivered mail, official correspondence, and wages or commission earned. The material in the collection was generated by the postmasters- primarily Henry Houghton - and tracks the expansion of the postal system in rural Arkansas at the turn of the century.

## Acquisition

The collection was transferred to Archives and Special Collections by the Arkansas State University Museum in 2013. Further additions to the collection are not expected.

## Processing Information

This collection was processed by Julia Corrin, Meredith McFadden, Jennifer Hardin, and Flora Smith.

## Conditions Governing Access

This manuscript collection consists of physical materials. This collection has not been digitized. This collection is open for research use only in the Reading Room. It is not available for request through Interlibrary Loan. Please contact the archive via email ([archives@astate.edu](mailto:archives@astate.edu)) at least a week in advance of your arrival to ensure the availability of the material.

## Rights Statement

Copyright has not been transferred to Archives & Special Collection. Standard copyright laws (U. S. Title 17) still apply.

## Preferred Citation

Craighead County Post Office Records, Item Name and Date, Box and Folder Numbers, Archives and Special Collections, Dean B. Ellis Library, Arkansas State University.

## Historical Note

In 1896 Rural Free Delivery (RFD) was implemented by the Postal Service in Virginia and expanded to 29 other states, including Arkansas, within a year. Arkansas's first rural delivery route opened in October in 1896 and was based out of Clarksville, Arkansas. Prior to RFD, the 65% of Americans living in rural areas

had to travel to the nearest post office to pick up their mail, while citizens living in urbanized areas had their mail delivered to their home.

Due to a sharp rise in use of the postal system following the implementation of RFD, the Fourth-Class Post-Office classification was expanded. Unlike First Class offices, Fourth Class offices were run by private citizens who earned a commission based on P.O. box rentals, packaging materials sold, and cancelled stamps as well as how much waste paper, old newspapers, and printed matter were brought in for recycling.

Among the many Fourth-Class Post Offices opened, this collection documents six locations established in the Jonesboro area. Five of the offices were located in Craighead County: Hasbrook, Greensboro, Herndon, Gilkeson, and Craighead. Vernon Minton ran the office in Hasbrook from June 1900 to November 1900. J.W. Johnson ran the Greensboro office from 1892-1906. Herndon's Fourth Class Post office was opened in 1892 by H.R. Schisler, who ran it until 1895, followed by W.H. Smith, who took over from 1904-1906. The sixth post office was slightly further north in Greene County at Lorado and run by Postmaster H. W. Cathy from 1909-1913.

Meanwhile the official First- and Second-Class Post Office in Jonesboro was run by Postmaster Henry Houghton from 1900-1910. Henry Houghton was born in 1859 and began working in the post office as a clerk. He was promoted to the Postmaster's assistant position and eventually earned the title Postmaster for himself. He died in 1920 leaving his wife, Martha Houghton, and two children.

The Jonesboro Post Office was likely established in the 1880s when the Cotton Belt Railroad went through the city. Free city delivery was a staple service in addition to money orders, selling stamps, and renting boxes. This post office continues to serve Jonesboro today.

## Scope and Content Note

The Craighead County Post Office Records documents the post office system in and around Jonesboro during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It includes record books which recorded postage sold, undelivered mail, official correspondence, and wages or commission earned.

## Arrangement

This collection is arranged in two series.

Series 1: First Class Post Office. The "First Class Post Office" series contains detailed record and account books from the main Jonesboro post office which were maintained by Postmaster Henry Houghton. These books include records of stamps sold, money orders, special deliveries, undelivered mail, as well as copies of official and requisition correspondence in copying books.

Series 2: Fourth Class Post Offices. The "Fourth Class Post Offices" series contains record and account books from various 4th Class Post Offices in northeast Arkansas. These volumes record postage sold and mail that was undelivered. The Gilkeson volume in particular seems to be a record of post office boxes rather than money orders.

## Subjects

- Postal service
- Postal service--United States
- Postmasters
- Postmasters--United States
- United States Post Office (Jonesboro, Ark.)

## Names

- United States Postal Service
- Gilkeson (Ark.)
- Greensboro (Ark.)
- Hasbrook (Ark.)
- Herndon (Ark.)
- Jonesboro (Ark.)
- Houghton, Henry

## Collection Inventory

### Series 1: First Class Post Office

#### Subseries 1.1: Postmaster's Account and Record Book, 1900-1904, 1918

Volume Number	Volume Name	Dates
1	Postmaster's Account and Record Book, Craighead County, AR	1900 July 1 – 1902 June 30
2	Postmaster's Account and Record Book – Jonesboro, AR; Craighead County	1902-1904
3	Postmaster's Account and Record Book – Craighead County, AR	1918

#### Subseries 1.2: Copy Book for Jonesboro Post Office, 1905-1910

Volume Number	Volume Name	Dates
4	Copy Book for Jonesboro Post Office	undated
5	Copy Book for Jonesboro Post Office	undated

### Series 2: Forth Class Post Offices

Volume Number	Volume Name	Dates
6	Postmaster's Account and Record Book – Hasbrook, AR	1900 May – 1905 November
7	Postmaster's Account and Record Book – Lorado, AR	1906-1911
8	Postmaster's Account and Record Book – Lorado, AR	1912-1913
9	Postmaster's Account and Record Book – Greensboro, AR	1892-1897

<b>10</b>	Postmaster's Account and Record Book – Greensboro, AR	1897-1905
<b>11</b>	Postmaster Account and Record Book – Herndon, AR	1900-1906
<b>12</b>	Postmaster Account and Record Book – Herndon, AR	1892-1895
<b>13</b>	Postmaster's Account and Record Book – Craighead County, AR	1905-1906
<b>14</b>	Post Office Register's Records – Gilkeson, AR	1927-1931