

Inventory of the

DeKalb Post Office
DeKalb, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

RC 21

INTRODUCTION

Waite Embree, a local DeKalb historian, acquired the DeKalb Post Office records in the early 1960's. Mrs. Mattie Welch Embree donated the Embree Collection, including the Post Office materials, to the University Archives in 1967. J. Joseph Bauxar, University Archivist, transferred the Embree Collection to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center in June 1978.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 4.5
Number of containers: 7 boxes + 17 oversize drawings
Northern Illinois Regional History Center
Collection 21

SCOPE AND CONTENT

These records partially document the history of the DeKalb Post Office from 1888-1960. There are no records available for the earliest years of the office's existence (1849-1887). Financial records comprise a major series of the collection including postal account books (1888-1943), domestic money order cash books (1888-1938), and international money order cash books (1893-1920). Four letterpress books document the construction and furnishing of the post office building completed in 1906 at First Street and Lincoln Highway. Closely related materials are found in the postmaster's correspondence (1898-1913), the custodian's record book and correspondence (1906-1945), and in files on route changes and mail schedules.

Researchers should note that historical information may be found in the 1960 Post Office Dedication booklet written by Waite W. Embree (Box 5, Folder 9).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The U.S. Post Office established a DeKalb branch on February 8, 1849. Russell Huntley, DeKalb's founder, served as the first postmaster for five years. In 1900 DeKalb became a second class post office, and by 1922, with revenue generated by the American Steel and Wire Company's print shop and advertising department, it achieved first class status. City delivery began in 1899 with a staff of three letter carriers and one substitute. In 1900 DeKalb instituted Rural Free Delivery only four years after the U.S. Post Office began RFD. Service increased again in 1912 with the addition of parcel post.

In 1959 DeKalb added a Highway Post Office to handle mail between Chicago and Clinton, Iowa with stops in Oak Park, DeKalb, Rochelle, Dixon, Sterling, Rock Falls, and Morrison. A mobile unit sorted mail while in transit to communities on its routes. Authorized

by the federal government in 1940, there were 150 similar highway routes throughout the country by 1959. Today, the Postal Service trucks mail from post offices to regional centers which redistribute it by varying modes of transportation.

The DeKalb Post Office has occupied seven different locations since 1849. Prior to 1906, it shared buildings that housed other businesses. Due to inadequate storage space and increased services, a new building, specifically designed for the post office, was erected at First Street and Lincoln Highway. The Post Office built again in 1960 at 330 Grove. Finally, it moved to its current location, 600 E. Lincoln Highway, in 1975. The post office built in 1906 was razed in June 1995.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

DeKalb
DeKalb Post Office
Postal Services

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Postmaster's Letterpress Book, (1898-1913)
	2	Correspondence for the Supervising Architect to the Superintendent, 1904-1906
	3	Correspondence Concerning Post Office Construction, 1905-1906
2	1-2	Correspondence Concerning Post Office Construction, 1905-1906
	3	Construction Inspections for Materials Furnished by Sprague-Davis Iron Works, (1905-1906)
	4-7	Custodian's Correspondence, June 1906-December 1913
	8	Audits and Treasury Department Correspondence, (1890-1920)
3	1-2	Postal Account Books, January 1888-March 1893
	3-4	Postal Account Books, April 1895-December 1899
	5-14	Postal Account Books, March 1900-December 1923
4	1-3	Postal Account Books, January 1924-December 1932
	4-6	Cash Books, February 1888-July 1893
	7-8	Domestic Money Order Cash Book, August 1907-December 1912
	9	Money Order Depository Cash Book, September 1910-August 1913
	10-11	Register of Money Orders Issued, August, 1907-August 1910

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	3
4	12-14	International Money Order Cash Books, July 1893-April 1896; October 1898-December 1903	
5	1-2	International Money Order Cash Book, January 1904-August 1907	
	3	International Money Order Cash Book, August 1918-May 1920	
	4	Custodian's Records Book, April 1906-February 1945	
	5	Route Changes, (1899-1907)	
	6	Rural Mail Routes, DeKalb County, January 22, 1947	
	7	<u>Introducing the Chicago & Clinton Highway Post Office, 1959</u>	
	8	Mail Schedules, (1959-1960)	
	9	Post Office Dedication, 1960	
6	4 volumes	Money Order Cash Books, March 1932-June 1934	
7	4 volumes	Postal Account Books, July 1934-March 1943	
Oversize			
Drawer 10, Folder 1		Post Office Drawings, 1904 (17 sheets) Drawing No. 1 - Approach Plan Drawing No. 4 - Roof Plan Drawing No. 5 - West Main Street Elevation Drawing No. 7 - West Elevation Drawing No. 8 - Rear Elevation Drawing No. 10 - Transverse Section Drawing No. 13 - Interior Elevator of Main Entrance Drawing No. 14 - Dome Details Drawing No. 16 - Ceiling Framing Drawing No. 17 - Roof Framing Drawing No. 18 - Roof Details Fire Proof Vault & Closet Door Misc. Drawing No. M-38 - Detail of Galvanized Iron Flues and Ducts Misc. Drawing No. M-43 - Electric Wiring Details Misc. Drawing No. M-48 - General Details of Toilet Room Three Quarter Inch Exterior Detail Three Quarter Inch Scale Details of Screen	