

Putnam County, Letters Left at the Post Office in Greencastle, 1881

Transcribed by Ruth Dorrel with an introduction by Rachel M. Popma

Before the Civil War, the U.S. Postal Service delivered mail only from one post office to another. Therefore, except in the few locations where personal delivery was available for an additional fee, citizens were required to collect their mail at their local post office. An 1863 Act of Congress provided for the establishment of the direct delivery system we know today, although the service was at first limited to cities in which the income from local postage could cover its cost. Rural areas and small towns did not receive free direct delivery until 1902.¹

For those living in outlying areas and those who simply were busy with other concerns, stopping regularly at the post office to check for mail was not always possible or convenient. The lack of a forwarding service also meant that mail was often left behind when people moved from one place to another. As a result, local postmasters commonly prepared lists of “left letters” to inform recipients of mail waiting for collection. Newspapers periodically published these notices as a public service.

The following notices of left letters were prepared by Greencastle, Indiana, postmaster George J. Langsdale and published in the *Greencastle Banner* from July 14, 1881, until December 29, 1881. Other than the insertion of a comma after the surname and an occasional period after an initial, the names below have been transcribed as they appeared.

Notes

1. *The United States Postal Service: An American History, 1775–2006*, Publication 100, pp. 20, 24, online at United States Postal Service, Postal History, <http://www.usps.com/postalhistory/welcome.htm>.

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, July 14, 1881

(Published July 14, 1881)

Baldwin, William	Miller, Mrs. Rebecca
Danton, Grace	Miller, Mrs. Jane
Davenport, Alex	Nough, Mrs. Lone
Frakes, Mrs. Melissa	Piercy, Geo.
Gifford, James W.	Rouark, Mrs. Rebecca
Hougle, Lewis	Shoptaugh, James
Ham, M. F.	Smith, Mrs. W. M.
Haynor, Susan	Taylor, Moses
Jackson, Fred O.	Tucker, Mrs. Sarah S.
Lancaster, Rohesa	Wicks, James
Miller, Mrs. Elizabeth	Welty, Emma
Murphy, Lizzie	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, July 14, 1881

(Published July 21, 1881)

Barker, L.	Robson, D. M.
Garner, Ed.	Stake, Wm.
Hathaway, George C.	Stark, Mary E.
Harris, Mrs. Susie	Stoner, Mrs. Elizabeth
McKinsey, Lizzie B.	Watson, Jenny
Reed, Margaret Ann	Wright, William C.
Roberts, Lide [2]	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, July 21, 1881

(Published July 28, 1881)

Baird, Mrs. Sarah E.	Kelly, Jack B.
Browning, John S.	Lenerd, Mary
Brick, John	Manier, H. M.
Brown, Jennie	Ruark, Mrs. Rebecca—E
Caroway, Mary	Stagg, Emma
Cooper, Emma	Smith, William H.
Clark, Lucy	Wayman, Captain
Fritts, William	Young, John
Hobbs, Emma	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, July 28, 1881

(Published August 4, 1881)

Caress, Randolph	Frakes, Ed.
Ellsworth, W. R.	Southerland, Edgar
Fitzgerrald, Katie	Tally, Samuel
Kress, Mrs. Emma	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, August 4, 1881

(Published August 11, 1881)

Burks, Mrs Eliza
Fitzgibbon, Emma
Gowin, George A.
Johnson, Mrs. Hannah
Jewett, Harry L. [3]
Knapp, Mrs. C. F.
May, Mrs. Margaret
Riley, Thomas
Stiner, N. J.
Snyder, John
Smith, Effie
St. Clair, Mrs. Anna
Summers, John
Vert, Ella

August 11
Adams, Jessie
Brown, Hannah
Baker, Wm.
Browning, Mrs. Mary
Curry, Mrs. Sarah
Devore, Mrs. Dan
Gifford, James Wm.
Hunter, Mrs.
Bennett, Haywood
Job, Mary
Lindsay, R. P.
Thomas, George

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, August 18, 1881

(Published August 25, 1881)

Arnold, James C.
Denny, Graham
Hendricks, Dr.

Jacobs, Charlie
Tobin, Liza
Williams, Mrs. [H.] E.

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, September 1, 1881

(Published September 8, 1881)

Allen, Mrs. Mary
Bons, Alice
Black, George E.
Froley, Mrs. Mary
McLaughlan, Miss
Myers, Sim P.
Ragle, Thomas
Stark, Millard
Shepard, William
Thomas, Mrs. A.

August 25
Asher, Tena
Brown, William
Davis, Mrs. Ellen
Evans, Mrs. Sidney
Hamilton, Dr. R. S.
McKinsey, Jacob
McKinsey, Olliver
Miller, Annie V.
Morrison, Ada
Marton, Isaiah
Staley, Lizzie
Salmon, Mrs. Sallie
Stutesman, Samuel
Young, Cynthia
Hartranft, Mrs. Emma

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, September 8, 1881

(Published September 15, 1881)

Johnson, B. F.	Allen, A. W.
Adkins, Luke	Jones, Sanders
Bettis, Nanay	Myers, Mrs. Sarah F.
Bussett, W. F.	McCray, Fleming
Divine, M. M.	Shepherd, William
Gaylord, Frank A.	Woods, Mary E.

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, September 15, 1881

(Published September 22, 1881)

Alion, E. B.	McKeag, Chas. E.
Bridges, A. L.	Martin, Lillie
Bruakson, Henry C.	Mearrier, H.
Boswell, Mary	McManis, D.
Bailey, A. J.	Martin, Louis
Clark, Samuel	Wood, Mrs. Kate
Curtis, Bishop M.	Wells, L.
Ellis, Maud E.	White, R. F.
Fowler, Willis	Jacobs, Charlie
Maloney, Joseph	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, September 29, 1881

(Published October 6, 1881)

Anderson, Mrs. Mary	Miller, Mrs. Anna V.
Adams, John V.	Myers, Columbas
Bandy, Mattie	Munson, Dora
Clark, Ida D.	Privett, Uriah
Dayton, G. A.	Stanons, Edwin
Green, William	Smithson, Mrs. Ella
Koo[?]ler, S.	Taylor, Mrs. [Ra]san M.
Lankford, Lucy	Wilborn, S. R.
Miller, Pinkie	Wridle, Mrs. Liza
McCauliff, W. E.	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, September 29, 1881

(Published October 13, 1881)

King, Laura (2)	Beliman, Mary J.
Little, Mrs. M.	Edward, Charles
Metcalf, Ralph (2)	Girten, Mrs. Louisie
McCarty, Mrs. Mary	Gardner, James M.
Maloney, John	Griffith, Mattie
Medaker, Mrs. Fannie	Goddard, Henry
Phillips, James	Hubbell, Charles H.
Shaw, John	Haney, Mrs. Mag
Wallace, L. C.	Houck, Mrs. Josie
Walker, William	Jewett, Joe
Behrmann, Amelia	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, September [sic] 13, 1881

(Published October 20, 1881)

Newgent, Willie A.	Binkley, Christian
Patric, Josie	Day, Mary
Perkins, C. F.	Ferguson, Geo. E.
Pl[?]ice, H. C.	Graham, Thos. A.
Perkins, Eva	Hunter, Hanison
Reeves, H. C.	Hazen, W. J.
Sand[?]rs, Orlando	Hart, Emma
Stokes, Monnie	Hammond, J. D.
William[?], Mrs. M. H.	Houck, R. P.
Anderson, Lewis	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, October 20, 1881

(Published October 27, 1881)

Altinom, Mark	Laurence, Josie
Blizzard, Charlie	Mills, Rachael
Birch, Mrs. Mary J.	McMahan, Milton
Clearwater, Mollie	McCoy, Harriett
Carey, M. V.	Marshall, Lucy B.
Coomes, Mrs. R. E.	Stutsman, Mrs. Matilda
Eichelbaum, F.	Sub[i]jett, Rena
Holbert, George	Stock[b]oner, R. B. (2)
Hazen, W. S.	Tyler, L. M.

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Post-Office, October 27, 1881

(Published November 10, 1881)

Bodenhammer, W. S.	November 3	November 10
Brown, Mrs. Martha	Messick, J. B.	Hogue, Williamson
Bowen, John C.	Plummer, Sarah E.	Morn[']s, Lizzie
Dicks, John	Phillips, Gad	Muir, Henry W.
Gasway, Lewis	Reed, Mrs. N. F.	Nelson, Harrie
Johnson, N. R.	Reeves, William	Rivers, J. F.
McCoy, Hattie	Smith, Frank R.	Woods, John W.
McCoy, William	Sigler, Hubbard A.	Whitehead, George W.
Reed, Mrs. Demming	Vaughn, Addie (2)	Adams, John V.
Shay, Mary	Wright, Hattie	Anderson, James
Stevenson, Harry	Wright, Mary	Black, M.
Stups, Mrs. Jane	Anderson, James	Boners, Stephen
Taylor, Minnie	Beny, Harry	Rice, Mrs. Mary (2)
Toney, Mrs. Emma	Cooper, Belle	Dickens, Mrs. Hannah
Ruark, William	Darnall, Dexter	Hin, W. F.
Torr, G. M.	Freed, Jacob	
Wheeler, Chettie (2)	Frasier, O. B.	
Wraily, Benjamin F.	Grose, General Wm.	
	Hanah, Eva	
	Lancaster, B. F.	
	Mitchell, E. C.	
	Metcalf, Ralph	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Ind. Post Office, November 17, 1881

(Published December 8, 1881)

A[rn]old, Lizzie	<i>November 24, 1881</i>	<i>December 1, 1881</i>	<i>December 8, 1881</i>
Arnold, Sarah E.	Banta, Mrs. Jane B.	Black, Stephen	Blackwell, Frank
Coffman, Cora C.	Brown, Mrs. M. A.	Blue, Mary	Burton, James
Crouch, John	Baker, Wm.	Brown, Mrs. B. L.	Christy, Mrs. Lamira
Clearwaters, Oscar	Cröse, W. R.	Cofer, Mrs. Melinda	Caldwell, William
Davenport, Alex	Collins, Nora	Douglas, Surrepta	Evans, Mrs. B. E.
Davenport, Jennie	Clark, Mrs. Cassie	Garion, Chathaniel	Ford, William B.
Finn, Bartholomew	Dicks, W. A. or James	Keegan, Rosa	Fitzpatrick, Mrs. Susan
Francis, John	Danbury, Phillip	Lansford, John W.	Fukaway, Al
Haldeman, Mrs. Henry	Garner, E. S.	Marion, Sarah	Hare, Ettie
Koffman, Mrs. Alma	Grimes, Sarah	McDawley, James	Hancock, Laura
Kimbrough, Henry	Gasaway, Mrs. Ellen	Moern, Denman	Fremont, Charles
Taylor, P. N.	Shutty, Houston	Miller, J. M.	Michills, A.
Wilson, Harry (2)	Short, Li[n]a	McCoy, Eliza	McMahon, Thomas
Lane, Mary A.	Staley, Lizzie	McClai[n], Mrs. Sarah	Mills, Mrs. Marinda
Lewis, Charles L.	Swift, V. H.	Miller, A. E.	Rebecca, Mary
Lewis, Cassie (2)	Wright, Fannie	Aieters, A.	Stokes, M. F.
Murphy, J. W.	Wood, Mrs. Elizabeth	Owens, Charles W.	Thrahan, James D. (3)
Moles, E. H.	Winburn, Vina	Phillips, Mary	Short, Jacob
McGrew, Lillie	Wilson, Harry	Robinson, Bessie M.	Whitlock, John M.
McClelland, Mrs.	Wilson & Davis	Voin, Addie	Wood, Mrs. Jane
Newgent, Sarah E.			Massy, W. F.
Nelson, Mrs. T.			
Nelson, Jessie (2)			
Reeves, Etta			
Swartz, J. W.			
Law, Ollie			
Wood, Anna			

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Ind. Post Office, December 15, 1881

(Published December 15, 1881)

Axman, A. O.	Justus, Morgan
Anderson, Dr. J. S.	McIntyr, Mrs. Alice
Alley, Effia	Littleton, W. F.
Barker, J. F.	Liece, John
Case, W. R.	Payton, Mrs. Amanda J.
Cooper, Laura	Phillips, G. M.
Celey, Alice	Riley, P. B.
Davenport, Matilda	Ragh, Thomas
Devlin, Sidney	Riley, Elizabeth
Fulk, Eliza	Rankins, Lula
Garner, Helen	Pel[f]er, John
Harland, Hinson	Tucker, Atta
Henderson, J. R.	Weeks, A.

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Ind. Post Office, December 21, 1881

(Published December 22, 1881)

Boyd, F. J.	Minear, Emma
Crawley, Winfield	Osborn, Fanny
Cummings, Harry	Reeves, S[ta]cy
Cau, Nannie	Ruark, J. W.
Davenport, Sarah	Scott, Mrs. P. R.
Fee, James W.	Tally, Samuel
Grumm[en], Pheba	Vawter, Lessie
Goggin, Thomas	Wood, A. D.
Manier, H. M.	

Unclaimed Letters Remaining in the Greencastle, Ind., Post Office, December 29, 1881

(Published December 27, 1881)

Butler, Charles E.	Murphey, Wm.
Calhoun, M. C.	Nichols, Laura J.
Carlin, Henry	Priest, James
Ford, Mattie	Perkins, Daniel H.
German, Katie	Parker, Andrew J.
Helton, Henry	Patton, J. C.
Ha[ve]rick, Lucy	Parker, Annie M.
Jacobs, W. S.	Ruark, Hrs. Minnie M.
Moo[r]e, Levi F.	Read, Mrs. Annie
Miles, Stephen S.	Senour, P. P.
Mallery, Mary	Skaggs, Thompson
Mires, Mary	Williams, Garrette
Miller, Wm.	Wright, Mrs. Mary

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