



Guide to the Fred Houghton Papers

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Houghton, Fred B., 1894-1977
Title:	Fred Houghton Papers
ID:	MS-00204
Date [inclusive]:	approximately 1909-1998
Date [bulk]:	approximately 1950-1975
Physical Description:	9.72 Cubic Feet (15 boxes)
Physical Description:	8.13 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Fred Houghton Papers (1909-1998) consist of Houghton's legal and personal files on his Blue Chip Ranch property in Las Vegas, Nevada. The materials include legal cases, maps, reports, and correspondence concerning water access on the property, and his work with the Las Vegas Well Users Association, which primarily contains correspondence in conjunction with Las Vegas's water politics. The collection also contains court cases during the 1930s when Houghton worked as a lawyer in Chicago, Illinois, as well as legal files for his time as a public defender for the State of California. The personal files in the collection primarily consist of correspondence, banking records, diaries, and notebooks.

Preferred Citation

Fred Houghton Papers, 1909-1998. MS-00204. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Biographical Note

Fred Houghton was born in Chicago, Illinois on August 27, 1894. Houghton attended the University of Chicago Law School, and passed the Illinois State Bar examination at the age of 25. He received

his Bachelor of Laws (LLB) degree in 1919. The next year, Houghton opened his own law practice and maintained the law firm until 1943, when he moved to California.

Houghton worked as a public defender for the state of California from 1943 to 1950. He lost the only case of his career there, and subsequently decided to retire. Houghton retired to Las Vegas, Nevada, and on April 17, 1951 he purchased property just west of the city, and called it the Blue Chip Ranch.

The City of Las Vegas attempted to prevent citizens from drawing water from underground wells, and this policy galvanized Houghton to join the Las Vegas Well Users Association (LVWUA), an organization that contested Las Vegas's water politics. The LVWUA fought to secure well water access for private properties throughout Las Vegas. Houghton spent the rest of his life living on the ranch, and died in November of 1977.

References:

Johnson, Nell. "Desert Ranch Brings Peace to Attorney." *The Nevadan*. June 7 1964.

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Scope and Contents Note

The Fred Houghton Papers (1909-1998) consist of legal cases, maps, reports, and correspondence concerning his Blue Chip Ranch property, located just west of Las Vegas, Nevada on Smoke Ranch Road. The collection also contains court cases during the 1930s when Houghton worked as a lawyer in Chicago, Illinois, as well as legal files for his time as a public defender for the state of California. The collection also contains correspondence, banking records, diaries, and notebooks. A majority of the collection is focused on Houghton's membership in the Las Vegas Well Users Association, which contains court cases and correspondence in conjunction with Las Vegas water politics.

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Arrangement

Materials are arranged alphabetically by topic.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research, with the exception of materials that are restricted to protect personally information. Restrictions are noted at the file level of this inventory, and will be open for research use January 1, 2025.

Publication Rights

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Acquisition Note

Materials were received periodically from 1978 to 1989; accession numbers 78-044, 89-076, and T135.

Processing Note

In 2018, as part of a backlog elimination project, Lee Hanover reboxed and arranged the materials, wrote the finding aid, and entered the data into ArchivesSpace.

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Names and Subjects

- Water resources development -- Nevada
- Ranching
- Las Vegas (Nev.) -- Politics and government
- Legal Cases -- Las Vegas -- Nevada

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
Personal papers	
American Meteorological Society: indexes and Weatherwise publications, 1958-1960	box 01
Arid Lands Research: newsletter, 1966-1969	box 01

Army: discharge papers, unit information, letters, and American Legion card, 1919-1959	box 01
Blue Chip Ranch: invoices, 1955-1961	box 01
Brochures: Arizona, California, and Nevada, 1955-1961	box 01
City of Las Vegas v. Houghton, 1972	box 01
City Planning Commission: agendas, applications, correspondence, and property lot maps, 1969	box 01
Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics: Clark County briefs, calendars of events, and ranching and gardening materials, 1959-1967	box 01
Chicago appellate and supreme court cases, 1936-1937	box 01
Chicago and California: magazines, information booklets, and stickers, undated	box 01
Chicago legal cases, 1930-1935	box 01
Clark County v. Houghton, 1972-1973	box 01
Correspondence, 1922-1976	box 05
Physical Description: 25 Files	box 06
	box 07
Crowdus v. Mason, 1933-1935	box 01
Diary and notebooks, 1949	box 01
Dog registration: annual registrations, 1952-1953	box 01
Education: Dartmouth directory and calendar, and University of Chicago law degree, 1914-1947	box 01
Elks Lodge, no. 1468: letters, fliers, and lists of officers, 1967-1968	box 01
Estate appraisal and financial reports, 1953-1998	box 01
Estate and probate materials: Elva M. Shearer, 1959	box 01
Financial materials, 1937-1971	box 01
Flamingo Hotel: promotions and correspondence, 1967	box 01
Godfrey v. Jones, 1930	box 02
High school year book, 1913	box 02
Houghton's lawsuit against Las Vegas Valley Water District over well water: court cases, requests for documents, and correspondence, 1958-1961	box 02
Houghton's lawsuit regarding land purchases for highway right of way and power lines, 1971	box 02

Joseph v. Ray: case file, correspondence, and newspaper clippings, 1930-1933	box 02
Las Vegas Valley Well Users Association: testimonies, reports, court cases, bank statements, correspondence, political platform, fliers, and newspaper clippings, 1954-1965 Physical Description: 5 Files	box 02 box 03
League of Women Voters: platforms and policy information, 1966	box 03
Legal documents: Chicago law materials, 1930-1935	box 03
Manfold v. Erth, 1933	box 03
Mangold Printing Company: account book and letter, 1934-1935	box 03
Menus: The Bonanza Inn and Silver Star Kitchen, 1949, undated	box 03
Newspaper clippings: water and political articles, 1958-1964	box 03
Nevada Business Review, 1959-1968	box 03
Nevada policies, history, and legal documents, 1956-1978	box 03
Nevada State Park Commission: list of parks, points of interests, and informational pamphlets, 1956	box 03
Notebooks and calendars, 1936-1947	box 03
Photographs: Ray School class of 1909, Houghton and his dog, 1909, 1960	box 03
Real Estate: Houghton's escrow and title documents, engineer's plot maps, utility orders, correspondence, and a legal case Houghton represented, 1930-1971 Physical Description: 5 Files	box 03
Silver State Kennel Club: the Fanger Gazette, club meeting programs, and correspondence, 1959-1971	box 04
State Bar of Nevada: exams, 1961-1964	box 04
Smoke Ranch Road: utility and construction correspondence, 1971	box 04
Summary of legal forms of action, legal terminology, and examples of legal actions, undated	box 04
Swartz v. County of Clark: involves Houghton's property, 1960-1965	box 04
Tax and trust documents, 1959-1962	box 04
Tax and trust documents for Houghton's property, 1955-1958	box 04
Tinsley v. Sprankle: case files, correspondence, and summons, 1927-1933	box 04
U.S. Department of Commerce: geodetic surveys regarding leveling, 1947-1960	box 04
Vegas Heights Water Association: deeds, articles of incorporation, by-laws, and notes, 1953-1954	box 04

Voting materials: water policy and Senator Alan Bible's political platform, 1962-1968	box 04
Wallet: contents, 1959	box 04
Water Well No. 140: petitions, court hearings, testimonies, and correspondence, 1956-1962	box 04
Water: Ground and Well Water Planning and Development Review, information and policy requests, and receipts from the Las Vegas Valley Water District, 1960-1973	box 04
World War I Veterans: assorted materials, 1968	box 04
Houghton's Chicago, Illinois legal files, 1930-1950	box 08
Restricted: Materials are restricted to protect personally identifiable information, and will be open for research use on January 1, 2025.	box 09
	box 10
	box 11
	box 12
	box 13
	box 14
	box 15