



Special Collections and University Archives

**W.H. Hughes Coal Company Papers
Manuscript Group 148**

**For Scholarly Use Only
Last Modified January 26, 2015**

**Indiana University of Pennsylvania
302 Stapleton Library
Indiana, PA 15705-1096
Voice: (724) 357-3039
Fax: (724) 357-4891**

W. H. Hughes Coal Company Papers, Manuscript Group 148
Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Special Collections and University Archives
Boxes, Linear Feet

Historical Note

The W. H. Hughes Coal Company was founded in 1886, and the C. A. Hughes & Company was started as the Standard Coal Company by Charles Alexander Hughes (1860-1921) in 1888. There were other coal companies owned by the Hughes family including the Lilly Coal Company. In 1906, the Standard Coal Company of Cambria County, Pennsylvania, produced 56,309 tons of Bituminous Coal. C. A. Hughes was General Superintendent of the company, which was based out of Altoona. The company operated three mines in Cambria County, which expanded to more than a dozen operations. Charles Robert Hughes and his brothers inherited the company after their father C. A. Hughes died in 1921. They operated the company out of their office in Cresson, Pennsylvania.

The C. A. Hughes & Company produced an excellent grade of Bituminous Coal, mined from the celebrated "B" seam, which produced a white ash coal from what is known geologically as the Wilmore Basin. For more than 70 years, Hughes coal was shipped across the country and was used by blacksmiths, the steel industry, the railroad, and for other metallurgical purposes. C. A. Hughes & Company produced 392,055 tons of coal in 1929 and 359,173 tons in 1930.

In 1930, James S. Campbell was the Superintendent for the C. A. Hughes & Company (Hughes No. 2), the W. H. Hughes & Company (Hughes No. 3 and No. 4), and the Lilly Coal Company (Lilly No. 3 and Klondike). All of these companies were owned by the Hughes brothers, the sons of Charles A. Hughes. There were three mines operated by the W. H. Hughes & Company in Cambria County; Hughes No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3. The earliest mine, Hughes No. 1, was in Bens Creek near Cassandra, Pennsylvania. Later mines, Hughes No. 2 and No. 3, were opened in Lilly and Portage, Pennsylvania. Old Hughes No. 2 Coal Navy Standard Pool 1 was first mined by the W. H. Hughes & Company in 1899, and it produced about 1,500 tons of coal daily. Hughes No. 2 mine was located in Washington Township, Cambria County, near the Pennsylvania Railroad main line town of Cassandra, about 22 miles west of Altoona.

Charles Alexander Hughes (1860-1921) was the great grandson of John Hughes who came from Wales to live in Ebensburg, Pennsylvania, where he married Margaret Jones in 1809. Their son, John Hughes, Jr., married Martha Jones, and their son was Richard John Hughes. Richard John Hughes married Alice McCausland, and their son Charles Alexander Hughes was born in July 1860. Richard John Hughes started a coal company on land that his father had bought in Cambria County, Pennsylvania.

When Charles A. Hughes was about 18 years old, he moved to Philadelphia, where he became a court stenographer, and he took testimony for the Molly Maguire cases in 1877-1878. He devised his own system of short-hand note taking. While living in Philadelphia, he met Amalie Hahman, whose father was a florist who developed a new species of lily. Charles and Amalie Hahman were

married in 1886, and Amalie changed her first name to Amelia. They moved to Altoona, and Charles A. Hughes joined his father in the coal business. They opened an office in the Central Trust Building in Altoona, and the company was first called the Standard Coal Company. In 1888, Charles A. Hughes established the C. A. Hughes & Company, miners and shippers of Sonman seam and smithing coal. Around 1898, the Charles A. Hughes family moved back to Philadelphia, and a superintendent was hired to manage the coal company. The family would vacation in the summer at a cottage outside of Hollidaysburg, which is still in the family.

Charles A. Hughes attended tax sales in Cambria County and was able to buy acres of coal for 50 cents an acre. Charles and Amelia Hughes raised four children. Their eldest son was William Harold Hughes (born in 1888) who owned several coal companies including the Lilly Coal Company, which produced 94,970 tons of bituminous coal in 1906. Their second son was Charles Robert Hughes (born in 1894), and he served in the U. S. Navy during World War I and was a mining and civil engineer and involved in the coal business. Charles Robert Hughes was the father of Virginia Hughes Anslinger. The third son of Charles and Amelia Hughes was Richard Kenneth Hughes (born in 1898) who was involved in the coal business and lived in Philadelphia until his death in 1929.

When Charles A. Hughes died in 1921, his sons inherited the family coal business. In about 1930, they built an office in Cresson, Pennsylvania. One of the brothers' schoolmates, Ralph Moore, was president of the C. A. Hughes & Company for several years. The deep mines were located in Bens Creek near Cassandra and Lilly, Pennsylvania. They opened the Hughes Store in Lilly, which closed around 1955.

There were company houses built near Bens Creek, and the mines used mules for the side headings. The mines were electrified and mechanized around 1930 including underground telephone lines and rooms to view mine maps. The company owned the underground lighting, batteries, and equipment including the miners' pick axes. Mules were soon replaced by locomotives and conveyor belts in the drift mines. Many people who lived in Lilly worked for the C. A. Hughes Coal Company. There was "patch" company housing just outside of Lilly where people lived right at the mouth of the mine.

In the 1950s, the company started to strip mine for bituminous coal. The Lilly Coal was a very high grade of clean burning Bituminous Coal due to its low volatility and low ash content, which made it good "clinkers" for the blacksmiths to rest the implement on the clinkers. The deep mines closed in about 1959 after more than 70 years of operation. In 1960, a limited partnership was formed to mine Bituminous Coal with just four or five miners, this operation remained in business until 1965.

Scope and Content

The W. H. Hughes Coal Company Papers consist of artifacts, company store records, correspondence, ledgers, maps, payroll records, scans of photographs and slides, and reports.

Series Descriptions

Provenance

The W. H. Hughes Coal Company Papers were donated by Virginia Anslinger in June 2010. She has provided historical information and photographs to supplement the collection.

Restrictions

None.

Processor

Processed by Special Collections staff in 2010.

Container List

Series I

Box 1 (to be added)