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### Maxwell, Hearl (1892-1974) Collection, 1911-1931

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Maxwell, Hearl (1892-1974) Collection, 1911-1931  
.4 linear feet

## **INTRODUCTION**

Personal papers and materials collected by Hearl Maxwell, coal miner and local union official, that primarily relate to activities of southeast Kansas locals and to District 14 of the United Mine Workers of America. Includes correspondence, union circulars, broadsides, election and financial records, minutes, proceedings, photographs, and publications.

## **DONOR INFORMATION**

The Hearl Maxwell Collection was received by the Leonard H. Axe Library of Pittsburg State University on 17 August 2000 from Linda Knoll. The Collection was donated to the Library by the Maxwell family on November 30, 2000.

## **BIOLOGICAL SKETCH**

Hearl Maxwell was born on the family homestead near Arcadia, Kansas. He died at the age of 82 on March 6, 1974. Mr. Maxwell was married to M. Elizabeth Hamilton in Arcadia on June 15, 1915. Mrs. Maxwell was born January 31, 1896, in Bear Creek Springs, Arkansas. She taught in the Crawford County, Kansas, grade schools for 22 years and for 12 years in the Mulberry, Kansas, grade schools before retiring in 1966. Mrs. Maxwell died on July 23, 1972.

Hearl Maxwell was employed in the coal mining industry in the Arcadia and Mulberry area for many years. He was active in labor union affairs, serving at various times as an officer for local unions and for District 14 of the United Mine Workers of America. Later, Mr. Maxwell was self-employed as a truck driver for the coal industry and, during the Korean Conflict, worked in war production at the Parsons, Kansas, Army Ammunition Plant. When the Korean Conflict ended the Maxwells lived in Eureka, Kansas, where Mr. Maxwell was associated with the transportation division of the school system. Following his retirement, the Maxwells returned to Mulberry to make their home. Hearl and Elizabeth Maxwell were survived by four sons and three daughters.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The Hearl Maxwell Collection contains correspondence, broadsides, union records and circulars, convention proceedings, photographs, publications, and miscellaneous materials that primarily document his activities as an officer in the local unions within District 14 of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). Materials within the collection also document the career of District 14 president, Alexander Howat, and the functioning of the UMWA locals in southeast Kansas during the 1920s. The collection is arranged into nine series: **Correspondence, Circulars, Broadsides, Election Records, Financial Records, Minutes, Photographs, Publications, and Miscellaneous.**

The **Correspondence** series is comprised of correspondence from 1911, 1916, 1918, 1922, 1924-1926, 1930, and 1931. Aside from two photograph postcards from Hearl Maxwell to M. Elizabeth "Lizzie" Hamilton Maxwell in 1911 and 1916, the correspondence series consists of letters relating to the activities of the United Mine Workers of America. Included are letters from local, district, and other union officials regarding strikes, relief efforts, elections, assessments, rulings from compensation hearings, contract information and similar topics. Also included are personal letters from miners requesting assistance and letters that document the

conflict between Alexander Howat and John L. Lewis, presidents of the UMWA. Included are unsigned materials critical of Alexander Howat.

The **Circulars** series is comprised of official circulars from the officers and members of the Executive Board of District 14 addressed to the UMWA members and officials of the locals. The circulars date from June 1925 through December 1926 and from 1931. The circulars pertain to relief fund assessments, group insurance, elections, the possibility of moving the District 14 Union headquarters from Pittsburg to Arma or to Frontenac, Kansas, the identification of Pittsburg merchants opposed to the local Retail Clerk's Union, contract negotiations, and similar topics. On the reverse side of a 1931 circular is a fragment of a critical response to Alexander Howat's comments that were published in the Mine Worker's Journal.

The **Broadsides** series is composed of broadsides, flyers, and notices that are undated or date from 1921, and 1925-1926. Included are protests against the U. S. State Department's ruling that barred Shapurji Saklatvala of India from entering the United States; "Alexander Howat answers President John L. Lewis," written from Columbus, Kansas, November 4, 1921; a proposition from the union committee of Arma, Kansas, to move the union headquarters from Pittsburg to Arma; notice of the Pittsburg retailers opposed to the local Retail Clerk's Union; and a call for delegates for the 30th consecutive constitutional convention of the UMWA.

The **Election Records** series consists of document from 1925 and 1926. Included are a tabulation of the election on the question of moving the district headquarters, a return sheet on the election of a district auditor, a tabulated report of the vote on the two percent assessment, and a nomination form for district auditor.

The **Financial Records** series consists of undated invoices and auditor's reports from Local Union 2397, and published reports of the Auditing Committee for District 14 that cover the periods January through June 1925 and January through June 1926.

The **Minutes** series include offprints of the minutes from the 28th Consecutive and 5th Biennial Convention of the United Mine Workers of America for February 15 and 16, 1922. The minutes pertain to the suspension of Alexander Howat and the other District 14 officials. Also included are handwritten copies of the minutes of Local 2397 at Mulberry, Kansas, for meetings held on March 31, 1926 and May 19, 1926. These minutes primarily pertain to relief cases and support for the Retail Clerk's Union against non-union merchants in Pittsburg, Kansas.

The **Photographs** series contains eight photographs. Included are three portraits of Hearl Maxwell; an undated image of Alexander Howat and three men taken at Union Station in St. Louis, Missouri; an undated group image of Hearl Maxwell, Alexander Howat, Johnny Steele, August Dorchy, and Joe McElwrath; an undated image of the employees of the O'Connor-Murphy Piano Company of Pittsburg and Mulberry, Kansas, standing with a delivery truck and banner for UMWA Local 2330; an undated, interior image of the Murphy Music Store in Mulberry, Kansas, with owner Michael Murphy; and an undated image of an unidentified café, presumably located in Mulberry, Kansas.

The **Publications** series consists of documents from 1916, 1919-1921, 1925, and 1926. Included are Proceedings of the 16th Consecutive and Second Biennial Convention of the United Mine Workers of America for District 14; Coal-Mine Ventilation published by the Federal Board for Vocational Education; Contract between Strip Mine Operators and Strip Mine Laborers of District 14, United Mine Workers of America; Constitution and Laws Governing the Kansas State Federation of Labor; a list of names and address of local union officers from District 14

plus the names of District 14 mines and the time and place of union meetings; and volume 1, no. 3 of the Industrial News Bulletin.

The **Miscellaneous** series contains copies of United Mine Workers of America transfer cards for three men; 1925 advertisements from Kansas State Teachers College of Pittsburg offering Smith-Hughes vocational education classes for miners, steam engineers, and electrical workers; Hearl Maxwell's certificate from the Kansas State Teachers College for the successful completion of a twelve week course in mining; Reconstruction in Russia, a published address given at the forum of the Community Church of New York City on Easter Sunday, 1925, by Captain Paxton Hibben; photocopies of memorial obituaries for Hearl Maxwell and M. Elizabeth Hamilton Maxwell; and a photocopy of a hand-drawn sketch of Hearl Maxwell.

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