



Special Collections and University Archives

**Manuscript Group 208
Dr. Charles Jackson Potter Collection**

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Dr. Charles Jackson Potter Collection; Manuscript Group 208
Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Special Collections and University Archives
2 Boxes; 2 Linear Feet

Biographical Note



Dr. Charles Jackson Potter (July 16, 1908-June 10, 1990) was the president and later chairman of the Rochester & Pittsburgh (R&P) Coal Company from 1948 until his retirement in 1988. Dr. Potter also served as President of the Board of Trustees for Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). For his active involvement in the Indiana community, he was inducted into the [Indiana County Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame in 2015](#).

Charles Jackson Potter was born in Greenfield, Missouri, and he was a 1929 graduate of the University of Missouri at Rolla; he also earned his Master's degree from UM-Rolla in 1930. He earned his PhD in Chemical Engineering from West Virginia University in 1932. He started working in the coal industry at the Continental Coal Company of Fairmount, West Virginia.

In 1938, he was employed by the Department of Interior's Bituminous Coal Division. In 1940, he began working for the Rochester & Pittsburgh (R&P) Coal Company as Vice President of Operations. During World War Two, Dr. Potter took a leave of absence from R&P and served as the Deputy Coal Mines and Deputy Solid Fuels Administrator in the Department of Interior under U.S. Secretary Harold Ickes. For his wartime service, Dr. Potter was awarded the Medal of Merit by President Harry Truman and was made an Honorary Commander, Most Excellent Order of the British Empire by her Majesty the Queen. In 1948, Dr. Charles Jackson Potter began his 22-year tenure as president of R&P. In 1970, he became Chairman, a position he held until his retirement from R&P in 1988.

Dr. Potter received an honorary Doctorate of Engineering degree from the University of Missouri in 1950, and an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from IUP in 1982. He also served as a member and President of the Board of Trustees of Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). In 1975, he was awarded the Erskine Ramsay Medal by the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers. In 1976, Dr. Potter was awarded the Howard N. Eavenson Award by the Society of Mining Engineers, the year before having received the Society's Distinguished Member Award. Dr. Potter was listed for several years in "Who's Who in America," and was awarded many service awards ranging from the medical profession, American Cancer Society, Boy Scouts of America, United Way and many others. He was chairman of the Indiana County Development Corporation from its inception in 1961 until he resigned in 1977. He was a member and chairman of the Indiana County Planning Commission from February 1959 to February 1974. Dr. Potter was made a member of the Board of Trustees of Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1981, a member of the Governor's Energy Council in 1982, and a member of the Board of Governors for the State System of Higher Education in 1983. In April 1990, two months before his death on

June 10, 1990, Dr. Potter was inducted into WVU's Academy of Chemical Engineers. On October 28, 1992, the College of Mineral & Energy Resources at West Virginia University named the [Comer Building Foyer](#) in Dr. Potter's memory.

For more information about the Rochester & Pittsburgh (R&P) Coal Company see [Manuscript Group 51](#) and [Manuscript Group 94](#)). He retired in 1970. For more information, see [Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Company: The first one hundred years](#) (1982) by Eileen Mountjoy. For correspondence to and from Dr. Charles Potter as President and CEO of the Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Company, see [Manuscript Group 51](#). For photographs and oral history interviews, see [Manuscript Group 94](#). Dr. Potter was interviewed several times in 1988-1989, see Manuscript Group 94 Series I Boxes 7-9. The Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Company was featured in the [2009 University Museum Exhibition: A Walk Through Time: Pennsylvania Coal Culture](#) (see the [exhibition catalog](#)).

Scope and Content Note

The collection contains clothing that was worn by Dr. Charles Jackson Potter and furniture that was part of his office in the Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Company Office on Church Street in Indiana, Pennsylvania. These items date from his 22-year tenure as president of R&P from 1948 to 1970, and during his tenure as President and member of the Board of Trustees for Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP).

Provenance

These items were donated by the estate of Dr. Charles Jackson Potter, and the Office of the President at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP).

Restrictions

None, this collection is open for research. Property rights reside with Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), and the IUP Special Collections and University Archives. Literary rights are retained by the creators of the records and their heirs. For permissions to reproduce or publish, please contact the [Special Collections Librarian and University Archivist](#).

Processor

The collection was organized and the finding aid was updated by Harrison Wick on September 30, 2021.

Content List

Box 1 Academic Hoods and Memorabilia worn by Dr. Potter as Trustee Board Member (4 items)

1. July 13, 1990 To: Phillip J. Zorich (IUP Libraries) From: Judy Moorhead, IUP President's Office (Dr. John Welty), correspondence regarding the academic hoods of the late Dr. Charles Potter
2. Pin: University of Missouri, 50-year alumnus, 1929-1979, from Hamilton Jewelers, 715 Locust Street, St. Louis, Missouri
3. Academic Hoods (2)
 - a. Purple, Crimson, and Black

b. Orange, Gray, and Black

Box 2 Underground Mining Clothes worn on R&P Inspection Tours by Dr. Potter (9 items)

1. Wooden sign painted white with black letters: C. J. Potter (3.5x16 inches)
2. Jean Coverall Jacket (Head Light, Union Made, Made in the U.S.A.) labeled with initials C.J.P.
3. Jean Coverall Pants (Test Sanforized, Made by Rice Stix) labeled with initials C.J.P.
4. Black Leather Boots (Size 12) red pin stripping and nailed soles
5. Overshoes (Brown's Boot Shop, Made in the U.S.A.) black vulcanized rubber
6. Blue and White Handkerchief (24 inches square)
7. Blue and White Work Gloves
8. Brown Leather Work Belt with dog tag stamped: Dr. C. J. Potter
9. White Hard Hat with R&P Coal stickers and built-in safety goggles with leather lining (MSA Comfo Cap, Size 7 ½) labeled with initials C.J.P.

**Oak furniture from Dr. Charles Potter's R&P office on display in Stapleton Library Room 302
This furniture was located in the Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Company Office Building on
Church Street in Indiana, Pennsylvania**

- A. President's Desk (desk is on casters and made of quarter-sawn Oak)
- B. President's Desk Chair (high fixed-back chair made of quarter-sawn Oak)
- C. Bookshelf and Hutch (made of quarter-sawn Oak)
- D. Conference Table (table on casters and made of quarter-sawn Oak)
- E. Macy's Wooden Lawyer Bookcases with glass doors (three bookcases, each three-stack, made of quarter-sawn Oak, circa 1920)
- F. Wooden Chairs (two fixed-chairs with curved back) and (one chair on casters with spring-back, made of quarter-sawn Oak)



Dr. Charles Jackson Potter's desk and chair from R&P, 2009 University Museum Exhibition