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Vincentian Archival Records on the University of Dallas

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VINCENTIAN ARCHIVAL RECORDS ON UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS

Information about the University of Dallas is generally difficult to obtain. The materials in this study detail the various Vincentian sources. The archives of the General Curia are in Rome. The provincial council minutes for the Western Province are kept in the Western Province headquarters, Earth City, Missouri. Copies are available in the DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives (DRMA), DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois. The General Council Minutes are the records of the discussions of the superior general's council. The original volumes are kept at the General Curia in Rome. The *Official Catholic Directories*, although not complete accurate, reflect the general situation of the reported enrollment of the University of Dallas.

The Vincentians began in Dallas with Holy Trinity College, 1907. It closed at the end of the academic year 1928-29. [See Stafford Poole, "The Educational Apostolate: Colleges, Universities, and Secondary Schools," in John E. Rybolt, C.M., ed., *The American Vincentians*, Brooklyn, NY, 1988, pp. 329-38.]

[Abbreviations:

CM: Congregation of the Mission, the Vincentians

LA: Los Angeles, referring to St. Vincent's College

OSB: Order of St. Benedict, the Benedictines

SJ: Society of Jesus, the Jesuits]

I. Correspondence in Archives of General Curia, Rome; Microfilmed

From William P. Barr

1. 27 October 1929: Mother Albertine is willing to pay \$250,000. Building is not readily usable.
2. Barr to Superior General, (Feb.?) 1929: Original in English; translated by Souvay to French:
 1. 110 in high school; 50 in college; only 2 or 3 paid full-time tuition. 3 or 4 paid partial; the rest are on scholarships. Why? To insure numbers for accreditation by State Board of Education, which required a minimum of 50.
 2. No real friction between superior and confreres; Carney left CM.
 3. Confreres work hard there; teaching, also in parish work. Men were exemplary, regular.
 4. Institution was begun too large. CM urged to do so by bishop and businessmen. No real cooperation between Dallas clergy and CM.
 5. Only one drive; cash raised was about \$80,000; never \$500,000. Merchants wrote off debts of about \$50,000. Reason: apathy of bishop, hostility of some clergy to bishop and CMs. Another debt to the province, about \$500,000.
 6. Debt was \$157,000.
 - ...
 9. Athletics: needed money; director raised funds; but this didn't work, and the program was closed.
 10. 19 1/2 acres at Dallas is all that is owned. Loma Linda was a failure; Barr got rid of it without much loss.

11. Non-Catholics amount to 5% in high school. Sometimes discipline was too severe; it was never too lax.

12. CMs have tried recruiting during vacations.

13. Failure was due to "lack of interest of a practical character on the part of the bishop and clergy." The bishop never asked for help for University of Dallas.

14. In a year's time, the province can pay its debts and be in a healthy financial position for the first time in 20 years.

From Others [Listed by microfilm sources]

Roll 2

1905, #499: 25 July, bishop asks for college

1910, #606: 22 September, Finney explains debts and loans

#610: 30 December, Finney explains compromise with banks which hold notes

1911, #616: 16 February, Mercantile Trust (St. Louis) will amalgamate loans with partial payments to banks

#636: 28 October: property in LA and Cape sold

#637: 24 November: Have to borrow \$14,000 to pay mortgages in Dallas, Chicago

Roll 3

1911, #431: Souvay on the state of the province [37 pages]

1908, #445: Nugent mentions \$800,000 debt in Chicago, result of bank failure; same for Dallas; individual houses have borrowed for their own debts; provincial contracts debts without the permission of his council.

1911, #457: Mortgage on Cape Girardeau for \$50 or \$75,000, without council's permission.

II. Souvay to superior general, 30 September 1928

1. Measures taken:

--closed boarding department, but still ran a deficit

--two years of college, then to a high school, but still ran \$5000 deficit a year.

The real deficit was about \$20,000 per year.

2. Extravagant measures taken by [the Finney brothers] didn't help; cost the province about \$1 million.

3. Can't supply priests or brothers to the Laneri High School in Fort Worth.

4. Bishop of Dallas didn't respond to letters; but he asked OSBs to "rehabilitate" the Laneri College.

5. Bishop of Dallas offered \$5000 of his personal funds to help out for one year, provided the province would stay. Province said no.

6. CM owned everything at Dallas—property, etc.

7. Bishop was no real help when the CM left. Some nuns were to buy the property for \$450,000, which was a good sum for the CM.

III. Provincial Council Minutes concerning Dallas

1905: August	Levy tax on houses for University of Dallas.
November	Barnwell the new visitor; property in LA bought for a new college
1906: January	Barnwell dies
April	Borrow Money for Dallas and Chicago
December	(Same)
1910: March	Loan received from Paris for province
May	Plans to close St. Vincent's in LA
1912: June	Sell land in Dallas to raise funds
1913: March	Sell farm in Cape for debts [for Dallas?]
1914: May	Sell LA property, funds to province; money loaned to Dallas
1917: February	Sell land and borrow money for Dallas
December	Bishop should help with money in Dallas
1918: January	Provincial council met without the provincial; to get the government to rent and other CM houses to help; the consultants need a real idea of the financial condition of the province; lay off lay professors; economize; sell property in LA
February	Sell lots in Dallas; tell superior general the truth about the needs.
May	Get rid of laundry in Dallas; always a loser
July	Get bishop to invite in other religious
September	MacHale visits from Paris; sell property, farm, and LA land, to raise money
November	Finney proposes fund drive; province didn't want to declare bankruptcy in Dallas
1921: March	Offer received for purchase of University of Dallas
July	Sell property to the bishop; vote deferred
1923: September	Co-education at University of Dallas discussed
1926: June	Debts reduced at Dallas
August	Cut out senior college at Dallas, also boarders, also athletics
1927: April	Ask Mr. Doheny to help with funds for Dallas; if not, then sell it

May	Mr. Doheny will help; close junior college at Dallas
July	Sell Loma Linda in Dallas; borrow to help raise funds.
1928: January	Grave problems in Dallas; might even have to give up parishes in Dallas and Fort Worth
May	Ask bishop to pay salaries for Denver
July	Probably University of Dallas will not open in September
July 17	Decision made not to open in September
August	Bishop Lynch will give money and ask parishes to help
September	Plans to sell University of Dallas.
October	Ready to sell for \$200,000
December	Mr. Doheny helped with Dallas
1929: May	Plans to sell University of Dallas to bishop
1941: December	S.J.s will purchase University of Dallas buildings

IV. General Council Minutes concerning Dallas

1909: 4 January	Decision to send M. Planson to investigate debts of Chicago and Dallas; instead, MacHale will go.
14 June	MacHale doesn't want to get rid of Finney, but to have strong consultants; many confreres blame Finney for financial troubles
Sept/Oct.	M. Villette comes to USA to examine finances, principally due to Chicago, and to P.V. Byrne's work. Finney asks for funds from Paris; possible?
1910:	Money will be sent to USA; 500,000 francs, at 4% interest
1911	New loans needed for Chicago, Dallas
March	L.A. will be given to S.J.s
May	Chicago in deep trouble; visitor of Ireland, Walshe, will visit.
November	LA property sold (\$160,000) and farm at Cape (\$11,000)
1914	More property sold to help with debts
1918: 25 March	(Finney's letter) debt of several million francs; asks for about \$1 million; <i>Maison Mère</i> in Paris can't manage it; very chancy that it can be paid back; Finney also wants to ask for help from Spain; very risky.
13 September	USA going to sell property to raise \$1.2 million; DCs will buy farm [Loma Linda] at Dallas for \$200,000. Finney should be removed.
16 September	Concerning Dallas, the Daughters of Charity have agreed to purchase the farm for \$200,000. The province will give \$100,000 to the Daughters in the form of a promissory note. Note that the farm already has a mortgage of \$100,000. The Daughters will also loan \$100,000 to another owner who will assume the

mortgage. The province should have recourse to the Holy See, but this is not alienation of Church property, simply alteration of a mortgage.

16 December The Holy See should be asked for a sanation for the measures adopted by the province.

1928: 15 October Barr can close Dallas; he needs to get the permission of the Holy See. The debts there grew year after year.

1929: 4 March Barr will write a report to Cardinal Bisleti about the financial situation at Dallas.

V. Enrollment figures, from Catholic Directories

1907	(no figures)
1908	120
1909	150
1910	185
1911	204
1912	206
1913	200
1914	238
1915	223
1916	
1917	200
1918	175
1919	170*
1920	170*
1921	170
1922	
1923	160
1924	175
1925	191
1926	191
1927	154
1928	150 (Academy only)
(1929	St. Joseph's Home for Girls)

* The figures from the university's own records show 130 for 1919; and 217 for 1920; these are probably more accurate than those in the Catholic Directories, which often repeat data.

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