

**Southern Vermont College
Records, 1911-2019
Doc 804**

Introduction

The collection comprises the surviving historical records of Southern Vermont College, located in Bennington, Vermont, and its predecessor institutions: St. Joseph's Business School, St. Joseph's Commercial School, St. Joseph Business College, and St. Joseph [Junior] College. It also includes a significant amount of historical information on businessman Edward Everett and the construction of his estate in Bennington, which S.V.C. acquired for its campus in 1974. S.V.C. closed in June 2019 due to financial insolvency. The collection, measuring one cubic foot, was received from the college in September 2019.

Historical Note

Southern Vermont College had its origins in St. Joseph's Business School, founded in 1925 by the Sisters of St. Joseph. It was also sometimes referred to during this period as St. Joseph's Commercial School. It was located on North Street in Bennington and offered a two-year commercial course. In 1935 it changed its name to St. Joseph Business College. In 1963, under the name St. Joseph College, it moved to West Main Street. In 1973 it received state accreditation to award bachelor's degrees in liberal arts and business administration. Starting at this time, the Sisters of St. Joseph relinquished control of the college (choosing to focus exclusively on running the College of St. Joseph in Rutland, which the order had founded in 1956). In 1974, a new non-sectarian board of trustees was appointed, and the college shed all of its religious affiliation and was renamed Southern Vermont College.

Also in 1974, along with a new name and non-sectarian orientation, S.V.C. also moved its operations to the former estate of Edward Everett, which it acquired in a property swap from the Holy Cross Novitiate. (See below for biographical information on Everett.) S.V.C. reached its peak enrollment of 510 students in 2012. However, demographic trends in the early 2000s saw declines in the overall numbers of high school graduates in Vermont and presented challenges to S.V.C.'s efforts to maintain adequate enrollments. In 2018, with dwindling financial resources, on probation by its accrediting body (the New England Commission of Higher Education) a near certainty, the board of trustees decided to cease operations at the end of the 2019 spring semester. (Administration of its student transcripts was transferred to the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.)

Edward Hamlin Everett (1851-1929) built a lavish estate in Bennington which S.V.C. acquired for its campus in 1974. Everett was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and became very successful in the glass manufacturing business, which he entered through his step-father, Henry W. Putnam. Putnam moved to Bennington in 1864 (the Putnam Manufacturing Company established one of its bottle factories there). By 1910 Everett had become very wealthy and was vigorously acquiring real estate all over the world. At around the same time he was having a lavish mansion built in Washington, D.C., he purchased (reportedly for \$50,000) the John S. Holden farm on the eastern flank of Mt. Anthony in Bennington: 500 acres of open fields and 200 acres of

woodlands. It was intended mainly as a summer residence but on a lavish scale befitting its spectacular surroundings. He engaged the noted Gilded Age architect George Oakley Totten and thirty-two Italian stonemasons to construct a replica of a 14th-century Norman castle. Construction began in 1911 and was completed in 1914. Subsequently Everett acquired another 700 acres to establish what was then the largest privately maintained apple orchard in the world, ranging for ten miles south of Mt. Anthony. Everett died in 1929. The mansion was sold in 1952 to the Holy Cross Novitiate. It was transferred to St. Joseph College in 1974 in a real estate swap.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains the records of Southern Vermont College of Bennington, Vermont, and its predecessor institutions (St. Joseph's Business School, St. Joseph's Commercial School, St. Joseph Business College, and St. Joseph [Junior] College) from its establishment in 1926 to closing in 2019. Records include class photographs, bulletins, commencement programs and videos, news clippings, student publications, alumni records and general historical information. There is also a significant amount of historical information on businessman Edward Hamlin Everett and the construction of his Bennington estate, built 1911-1914, which S.V.C. acquired for its campus in 1974.

Separated Material

The following materials were transferred to the VHS museum collections:

- Nylon banner, Southern Vermont College
- Two felt pennants: St. Joseph College and Southern Vermont College

The following item was transferred to the VHS manuscript collection:

- Walter C. Mould, "Doorway to Vermont Beauty and Heritage," grew up on Everett Estate, circa 1980 (MSA 862:19)

Related Collections

- St. Joseph's Business School, oversize class photographs (1928, 1929, 1931, 1933, 1934, 1937, 1938 + one undated)
[Size D: F-SCH-St. Joseph's Business School, Bennington]
- *Summit* (Southern Vermont College yearbook), 1986-2019 (Vault X: 378.743 SoVQ)
- St. Joseph College, *The Sycamore*, 1964-66 (Small Newspaper 378.743 SaJQs)

Inventory

Doc 804:01	S.V.C. history – miscellaneous
:02	S.V.C. history – miscellaneous
:03	S.V.C. history – primarily Edward Everett and Everett mansion
:04	S.V.C. history – primarily Edward Everett and Everett mansion
:05	S.V.C. public relations files on Edward Everett

- :06 S.V.C. public relations files on Edward Everett
- :06a Pages from an album of reproduction photographs documenting construction of Everett mansion, 1911-1914, and other Everett projects, compiled by Theodore Lyman Moody, supervising engineer (folder 1 of 3)
- :06b _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, (folder 2 of 3)
- :06c _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, (folder 3 of 3)
- :07 S.V.C. public relations files on Edward Everett – auction sale of mansion
- :08 S.V.C. public relations files on Edward Everett – postcards, 1924
- :09 Joan M. O’Neill, “The Everett Mansion and Southern Vermont College: An Historical Analysis,” April 18. 1980
- :10 S.V.C. Lecture Series: “History of Everett Mansion” (DVD), 2012
- :11 St. Joseph Business School – bulletins, 1948 and n.d.
- :12 St. Joseph College – bulletins, 1963-1971
- :13 S.V.C. viewbooks and handbooks, 1986-1994 and n.d.
- :14 Commencement class photos, 1927-1948
- :15 Commencement class photos, 1949-1976
- :16 Commencement class photos, c. 1977-2003
- :17 St. Joseph’s Business College – miscellaneous group photos
- :18 Commencement clippings, 1947-1965 – preservation photocopies
- :19 Commencement programs, 1934, 1963-1997
- :20 Commencement programs, 1998-2018
- :21 Commencement videos, 2006-2013 (DVDs)
- :22 Commencement videos, 2014-2019 (DVDs); also 4 wooden-encased computer memory sticks (thumb drives) containing graduation content, 2015-2018
- :23 Student publication: St. Joseph’s Commercial School, *The Argonaut*, 1936, 1938-39
- :24 Alumni Association records – mimeographed lists
- :25 S.V.C./SJC Alumni Directory, 1995 (bound, 2 c.)

Peter Nelson
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