

[Archives & Special Collections, Columbia University Health Sciences Library](#)

[Columbia University. School of Dental and Oral Surgery. Historical Collection](#)

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY. SCHOOL OF DENTAL AND ORAL SURGERY.

Historical Collection, 1892-1989 (bulk 1916-1936)

.35 cubic feet (1 box)

SUMMARY: Miscellaneous records, including correspondence and printed material, documenting the history of the Columbia University School of Dental and Oral Surgery (founded 1916) and its predecessor institutions, including the College of Dental and Oral Surgery of New York (1892-1923).

HISTORICAL NOTE:

- 1892 Columbia President Seth Low discusses the possibility of establishing a dental school with a group of prominent New York dentists led by Dr. Charles F. W. Bödecker. However, the University declines to pursue the idea.
- 1915 Nov. 15 Faculty of Medicine urges the founding of a dental school “along University lines.”
- 1916 Mar. 6 University Board of Trustees approves recommendation of Faculty of Medicine.
- May The Committee for a Columbia University Dental School publishes “A Dental School along University Lines.” It calls for a four-year course, the first two to be identical to the medical course, and recommends an entrance requirement of two years of college, the most stringent in the nation at that time.
- James N. Jarvie, brother of Committee member Dr. William Jarvie, pledges \$100,000 for a dental school endowment.
- Sept. 27 Two students begin dental course at the College of Physicians & Surgeons.
- 1917 Mar. 5 University Board of Trustees formally establishes the School of Dentistry, retroactive to September 1916. It is only the fourth university-affiliated dental school in the country at that time.
- Mar. New York School of Dental Hygiene is absorbed.
- Apr. New York Postgraduate School of Dentistry merges with Columbia.
- 1922 Columbia awards its first DDS to Joseph Schroff.
- 1923 July 1 College of Dental and Oral Surgery of New York (CODOS), founded in 1892 as the New York Dental School, merges with

Columbia; combined institution is renamed School of Dental and Oral Surgery (SDOS)

SDOS moves to former CODOS buildings on East 34th & 35th Streets.

- 1928 Sept. SDOS moves to Vanderbilt Clinic wing of the new Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center.
- 1934 Willard Rappleye, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine (College of Physicians & Surgeons), also becomes Dean of SDOS, a position he retains until his retirement in 1958; day-to-day running of the School is left to an Associate Dean.
- 1935 Dec. 12 Deranged handyman murders two faculty members including Associate Dean Arthur T. Rowe.
- 1945 Feb. 5 Faculty of Dental and Oral Surgery merged into Faculty of Medicine, although SDOS retains a separate corporate identity.
- 1959 Jul. 1 Faculty of Dental and Oral Surgery reconstituted as separate faculty.

Gilbert P. Smith becomes the School's first separate Dean since 1933.

ADMINISTRATORS

James C. Egbert (Director, University Extension), Chairman, Administrative Board, 1917-1920

Frank T. Van Woert, Chairman, Administrative Board, 1920-1923; Director, 1923-1926

Alfred Owre, Dean, 1927-1933

Willard C. Rappleye, Dean, 1934-1958

Arthur T. Rowe, Associate Dean, 1933-1935

Houghton Holliday, Acting Associate Dean, 1935-36; Associate Dean, 1936-1945

Bion R. East, Associate Dean, 1945-1948

Maurice J. Hickey, Acting Associate Dean, 1948-1949, Associate Dean, 1949-1956

Gilbert P. Smith, Associate Dean, 1956-1959; Dean, 1959-1968

Melvin L. Moss, Dean, 1968-1973

Edward V. Zegarelli, Acting Dean, 1973-1974; Dean, 1974-1978

Allan J. Formicola, Dean, 1978-2001

Ira B. Lamster, Dean, 2001-

SCOPE AND CONTENT: This is an artificially created collection of historical records relating to the School of Dental and Oral Surgery (SDOS). While it contains records from the throughout the School's history, the bulk documents the period 1916-1936.

The largest part of the collection appears to have come from the records of Dr. Henry Gillett, a member of the SDOS organizing committee and long-time professor of dentistry at the School (Box 1:2-5). Dating from 1916 to 1927 and including letters received and carbons of his responses, the correspondence covers both his work for SDOS as well as his tenure as Dean of the New York Postgraduate School of Dentistry (founded in 1916 but affiliated with SDOS from 1917). Henry S. Dunning, William J. Gies and Frank T. Van Woert are among his correspondents. There is also an undated memoir by Gillett on the founding of the New York Postgraduate School and its relationship to SDOS (Box 1:14).

Also included in the records is William Dunning's correspondence, 1929-1941, with Alfred Owre (Dean, 1927-1933) and, later, Houghton Holliday (Associate Dean, 1935-1945). Correspondence, letters of condolence and newspaper clippings relating to the 1935 shooting deaths of two faculty members by a crazed handyman are in Box 1:12. Leuman Waugh's overview of orthodontics instruction at SDOS can be found in Box 1:11. A wide variety of miscellaneous secondary historical material for both SDOS and the College of Dental and Oral Surgery is in Box 1:14-15.

PROVENANCE: Internal evidence suggests most of the collection was created by SDOS administrators, while other material seems to have been donated to the School before being accessioned by Archives and Special Collections in the 1980s.

The collection originally formed part of the "William J. Gies Collection in the History of Dentistry," an amalgam of Dunning family papers, Gies memorabilia, SDOS records, and records relating to SDOS that had been removed from the Central Records of the Office of the Vice President for Health Sciences. With the accession by Archives and Special Collections of the complete Central Records of the Vice President in 1993, it was decided to return the Vice President's records in the "Gies Collection" to Central Records and split the remainder of the Collection into its component parts.

Collection processed, and finding aid written by Stephen E. Novak, 2001. Processing was supported by funding from the William J. Gies Foundation for Dental Education.

**School of Dental and Oral Surgery.
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Box 1

1. Synopsis of Correspondence (undated): lists of correspondence, publications, alumni, memoranda, reports, etc., possibly compiled by William B. Dunning
2. Gillett, Henry W.: correspondence with Henry S. Dunning, 1916-1918, and other materials on the founding, organization and funding of the School of Dental and Oral Surgery (SDOS)
3. Gillett, Henry W.: administrative correspondence with William J. Gies, Frank T. Van Woert, William Jarvie; list of dentists; equipment estimates; invoices; Van Woert tribute, etc., 1917-1918
4. Gillett, Henry W.: administrative correspondence with Frank T. Van Woert, Henry S. Dunning, etc., 1919, 1924-1927
5. Gillett, Henry W.: correspondence as Dean, New York Postgraduate School of Dentistry, 1916-1919; includes information on faculty recruitment, merger with Columbia, courses; letters from Louis Weinstein, William Jarvie, Theodor Blum, Lewis Mobley, William J. Gies, Henry S. Dunning
6. Van Woert, Frank T.: correspondence with F.A. Goetze (University Treasurer), Maurice William, etc, 1918-1919
7. Dunning William B.: correspondence with Houghton Holliday, Assoc. Dean, and Alfred Owre, Dean, 1929-1941; includes list of donors to SDOS, with amounts, 1916-1929; inscription for Jarvie Infirmary plaque; photostat of minutes of NY Odontological Society regarding consolidation of dental societies
8. Blum, Theodor: dispute with Dr. Riethmuller; income from courses, 1917-1918
9. Chayes, Herman E.S.: appointment to SDOS faculty as professor of crown and bridgework, 1916
10. Owre, Alfred: publications, 1920s-30s; correspondence with Owre's son, 1980-1989
11. Waugh, Leuman: correspondence with Dean Gilbert Smith on the history of orthodontics instruction at SDOS, 1959; "Report on the Restoration of Autonomy to the Faculty of Dentistry at Columbia University" made to the New York Academy of Dentistry, 1959
12. Dental School Shooting (Dec. 12, 1935): newspaper clippings; letters of condolences from dental school deans; correspondence re: memorial service, flowers, survivors, 1935-1936
13. Handling of Patients in Infirmary: undated memorandum by O.J. Chase.

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Box 1 (cont'd)

14. History of Dental School 1892-1941: Photostat of charter, New York Dental School (later College of Dental and Oral Surgery of NY) and excerpt from NYS Regents' minutes, 1892; William Jarvie obituary, 1921; Gillett's history of founding of SDOS and its relationship with NY Postgraduate School of Dentistry; manuscript draft of "C.U.S.D.O.S. First Quarter Century" including table of contents and 3 chapters; J. Howard Reed's notes on College of Dental and Oral Surgery of NY (CODOS)
15. General Historical material, 1917-1964: William Dunning-Roger Howson correspondence on history of SDOS (1940); faculty lists, 1917-1942; misc. correspondence
16. Maslansky, Manuel: article on Amos Westcott, founder of New York College of Dental Surgery (1851-1856), including correspondence, manuscript and reprint, 1941
17. College of Dental and Oral Surgery of New York: excerpts from Trustees' minutes, 1910-1923
18. Abstracts of Literature on Status of Dental Education in U.S.: bibliography, call slips, quotations
19. Printed Matter, 1919-1952: both general and Columbia University material on dentistry and dental education