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## Dorothy L. Vance Collection

Dorothy Lobitz Vance

Frank X. Vance

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# Dorothy L. Vance Collection

## About Henri Castro and Medina County, Texas

Collection Number SC 23  
Blume Library Special Collections

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### Descriptive Summary

**Creator:** Dorothy Lobitz Vance  
**Donor:** Frank X. Vance; Donor number: 1971.2  
**Extent:** Three cubic feet (originally 266 folders)  
**Inclusive Dates:** 1842-1898, 1954-1962  
**Language:** Primarily English, some French and Spanish  
**Formats:** Manuscripts, typescripts, facsimiles, photographs, notebooks  
**Finding Aids:** List of Surnames of Settlers (hardcopy typescript only)  
Indexes to court dockets found in:  
*The Vance Legal Documents and Their Historical Significance: A Thesis presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of St. Mary's University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in History by Mary Lou Hornbuckle, B. S. A., San Antonio, Texas; March 1991*

**Alternative Forms:** Ship Passenger Lists on Microfilm number 877  
**Restrictions:** None

**Description:** This is a collection of research on the subject of Henri Castro and his colonizing enterprise in Medina County, Texas. It includes an index of settlers obtained from various sources such as ship passenger lists, news clippings, family bibles, and Medina County court records. Facsimiles of the court documents from 1844 to 1898 are arranged in a separate series alphabetically by surname of litigant. In addition, there are documents and ephemera collected either as originals or in facsimile arranged alphabetically by subject headings. Included are 12 of the 27 shipping lists recorded by Henri Castro. The research notes accumulated by Dorothy Vance are contained in six handwritten notebooks. The notes concern biographies of the Alsatian settlers and an inventory of records held in various repositories about Medina County and its pioneers. A seventh notebook is from the H. E. Haas Collection accumulated by Dorothy Vance and included among her papers. Finally, the collection includes the typescript for an unpublished historical novel, *The Land of Promise*. There are 120 photographs intended for illustrating the novel.

**Processing:** An inventory was made of the collection upon its arrival at St. Mary's University during the summer of 1971. Over the years, different efforts to process the collection

have resulted in the loss of the original order which is suggested by the inventory. For example, at one point, the Medina County Court records were housed and described separately from the rest of the collection as if they were unrelated to each other. In addition, the 266 folders enumerated in the collection inventory at the time of its arrival at the repository, were later combined and reduced in number.

**Chain of Custody:** Frank X. Vance presented his wife's research to Saint Mary's University during the summer of 1971. Carmen Perry reviewed the material and prepared an inventory. A contract of gift was signed dated November 3, 1971.

**Biographical Note:** Frank X Vance (---) and Dorothy Lobitz Vance (1913-1962), residents of Hondo, Texas, were lawyers who practiced in Medina County. Dorothy Lobitz Vance was a native of Fort Logan, Colorado. Her father was in the military. She attended college in Denton and then Law School at the University of Texas graduating in 1936. She spent two years in the practice of law and then married. Frank Vance was born in Devine, Texas. His father was James William Vance whose ancestral home was on the Vance-Jackson Road in San Antonio. Frank Vance received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas State University at San Marcos, taught school for a year and then attended Georgetown University, Washington, D. C, where he received Ll. B and Ll. M degrees in the early 1930s. He moved to Hondo, Texas in 1937 to practice law. He taught at St. Mary's University Law School in 1937-1938. After marrying, the Vances practiced law together for about a year and a half. They had six children, five boys and one girl. In addition, she was active in the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women. Mrs. Vance spent approximately the last ten years of her life researching the lives of the original settlers of the Castroville colony. She wrote a history of Medina County that used some fictional characters as a device for making a story of it. During the last two years of her life, she made many attempts to find a publisher for it. But because her book was primarily a county history but told through some fictional characters, it qualified neither as fiction nor non-fiction. She died in 1962 at the age of forty-nine, unable to find a publisher.

## Summary of Series

- Series One: Castroville Settlers by Surname
- Series Two: Research Document File by Subjects
- Series Three: Notebooks of Research
- Series Four: Passenger Lists from 1842-1844
- Series Five: Dorothy Vance Correspondence, 1954-1961
- Series Six: *Land of Promise* Historical Novel
- Series Seven: Medina County Court Records, 1844-1898

## Series One: Castroville Settlers by Surname

**Content Note:** This list is arranged alphabetically by surnames. Surnames beginning with the same initial letter are combined into one folder. For each name there is a sheet of paper with abbreviated references to sources about that person such as court records, land surveys, shipping lists and notebook pages. Some of the sheets are handwritten, some are typed. There is no key to the abbreviations. For some surnames there are in addition inclusions of typescript notes and original documents that may have been added by library staff from other folders during past processing efforts.

### Cab 3-3

Folder 1	List of Surnames
Folder 2	A
Folder 3	B
Folder 4	C
Folder 5	D
Folder 6	E
Folder 7	F
Folder 8	G
Folder 9	H
Folder 10	I
Folder 11	J
Folder 12	K
Folder 13	L
Folder 14	M
Folder 15	N
Folder 16	O
Folder 17	P
Folder 18	Q
Folder 19	R
Folder 20	S
Folder 21	T
Folder 22	U
Folder 23	V
Folder 24	Vance
Folder 25	W
Folder 26	Z
Folder 27	Displaced page

## Series Two: Research Document File by Subjects

**Content Note:** The folders contain research notes, news clippings, and original documents. The folder titles are not those found in the original order. The original folders were combined and retitled.

### Cab 3-3:

Folder 28	American Council of Catholic Women, address by Dorothy Vance, 1960
Folder 29	Art: "Bringing them home for Christmas," illustration, 1918
Folder 30	Castro, Henri
Folder 31	Castro, Henri: Relations with Republic of Texas, 1843-1845
Folder 32	Castro Colony: names, ships, histories
Folder 33	Castroville: Articles

Folder 34	Castroville: History
Folder 35	Court Records
Folder 36	County histories
Folder 37	Fort Parker
Folder 38	Haass Papers
	The Judge H.E. Haass Papers are at the Baylor University Archives and served as an alternative source for Mrs. Vance who was able to obtain access to them during the 1950s. Miscellaneous articles; 2 numbered series; see also Notebook No. 2
Folder 39	Hondo Air Base
Folder 40	Huth Family
Folder 41	Indianola
Folder 42	Jewish Settlers
Folder 43	Land Survey: 1832
Folder 44	Lutheran Church
Folder 45	Maps
Folder 46	Medina County Road Law
Folder 47	Occupations
Folder 48	Railroads
Folder 49	Recipes
Folder 50	St. Louis Church
Folder 51	San Antonio
Folder 52	Schiwetz, E.M.: Texas sources
Folder 53	Ships
Folder 54	Texas: Constitution, committees, financial compensation

### Series Three: Notebooks of Research

**Series Description:** These notebooks record Mrs. Vance survey of primary sources. All notes are handwritten. Some notebooks hold adhesions. The contents below were provided by Mrs. Vance. Similar subjects appear scattered among various notebooks.

#### Notebook 1 Contents

##### SC 23 Box 1

1. Primary sources: Henry Castro, etc. – where located
2. Texana in Vance Collection
3. Documents with original signatures, notes and instruments
4. Index of H. E. Haass material (checked three files summer 1957)
5. Pioneer families – Medina County

#### Notebook 2 Contents

##### SC 23 Box 1

“Notes Made from Castroville, Medina County, Papers in H. E. Haass Collection, (courtesy Mrs. Walter Knork, Daughters of the Texas Republic, Hondo)”

#### Notebook 3 Contents

##### SC 23 Box 1

- 1 Town of Castroville
- 2 Probate Records
- 3 Vendor Licenses

4 County Court Records, September 1848 to 1868

Notebook 4 Contents

SC 23 Box 1

First Tab

1 Reminiscences of a Texas Missionary, Rev. P F. Parisot	1
2 History of Catholic Church - Parisot (letter from Dubuis about Castroville)	2
3 Pioneers in Sack Cloth, Carlos E. Castañeda	10
4 Pamphlets of Lazarists of Texas – letters	11
5 Domenech’s Missionary Adventure, by Domenech	15
6 Lone Star Vanguard, Ralph Bayard, CM	18
7 Domenech’s Missionary Adventure, by Domenech	19
8 Olmstead, Journey through Texas	31
9 Personal Narrative, John Russel Bartlett	33
10 Texas in 1848 - Bracht (Viktor), translated from the German by Charles Schmidt	34

Second Tab

11 History of the German Settlement in Texas, 1831-1861, Rudolph Bresele	1a
12 Castro’s Colony - M.A. thesis U of T 1928, A. Goldthorp	5a
13 State Archives information	13a
14 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary 1846-1946, first Presbyterian Church	24a
15 Old and New San Fernando – Torrente	25a
16 Presidios de Texas – Chabot	25a
17 Vote (DLV) on Mex. attending Church from paper at Alamo	
18 Southern Messenger - about Odin, Dubuis	27a
19 Vote (DLV) Witte Museum	28a
20 James Paul papers	29a
21 Bishop Dubuis, L. V. Jacles	
22 Notes from “The Anvil” in Castroville	37a

Third Tab

23 Bexar Transcripts	01b
24 Blessing cornerstone	22b
25 Davis visit	23b
26 Conversation at Witte Museum	24b
27 “The Morning Star”, Texas newspaper	27b
28 Church bells in Castroville	37b
29 Random notes, Houston library	39b
30 Medina Co. District Court files	44b

Notebook 5 Contents

SC 23 Box 1

1 Trip Through Texas, McClintock	1
2 Naturalists in Texas	3
3 History of Diocese of Galveston	4
4 Reminiscences of	9
5 News Items in Early San Antonio Papers	13
6 Remember by Charles Naylor, San Antonio	19

7 Texas Nature Observation	20
8 San Antonio de Bexar, A guide, 1840	25
9 Republic of Texas by Anson Jones	27

### Notebook 6

#### SC 23 Box 1

Material copied from H. E. Haas Papers courtesy Mrs. Walter Knork, Daughters of the Texas Republic, Hondo

### Notebook 7 (2-ring binder)

#### SC 23 Box 1

This binder contains random notes (some typed, some handwritten) from various sources, mainly books as well as many adhesions.

### Series Four: Passenger Lists from 1842-1844

**Series Description:** Dimensions, data fields, etc.

Missing Lists: *Probus*, 61 families; *Albertin*, 29 families; *Alberinda*, 29 families;

FS	Passenger List for <i>Marie Clare</i>	23 families	undated
FS	Passenger List for <i>L' Ebro</i> 2 pages	42 families	2 Novembre 1842
FS	Passenger List for <i>Lyons</i>	30 families	18 Janvier 1843
FS	Passenger List for <i>Louis Phillipe</i>	23 families	26 Fevrier 1843
FS	Passenger List for <i>Jean Key</i>	52 families	25 Octobre 1843
FS	Passenger List for <i>Henrich</i> 2 pages	96 families	22 Novembre 1843
FS	Passenger List for <i>Ocean</i> 2 pages	39 families	9 Avirl 1844
FS	Passenger List for <i>Jeannette Marie</i>	13 families	12 Mai 1844
FS	Passenger List for <i>Batteau Numero 9</i>		6 Octobre 1844
FS	Passenger List for <i>Notre Norwegien</i>		19 Octobre 1844

### Series Five: Dorothy Vance Correspondence, 1954-1961

**Series Description:** The correspondence is arranged within each folder by chronological order. The letters are about two subjects: either requests for research information or requests about writing and publishing her novel about Medina County history. Henri Castro left no known deposit of personal papers which required Mrs. Vance to see alternative sources as she explained in a letter to Professor William R. Hogan of Tulane University. Her text was completed by 1960 and her efforts turned to getting it published.

Folder 55	Correspondence: General Respondents	1954-1961
Folder 56	Correspondence: Mexico	1954, 1957
Folder 57	Correspondence: Doyon, OMI, Rev. Bernard	1954-1957
Folder 58	Correspondence: University Repositories	1954-1957
Folder 59	Correspondence: France	1956-1957
Folder 60	Correspondence: Jewish Repositories	1956-1957
Folder 61	Correspondence: Rosenberg Library, Galveston	1956-1957
Folder 62	Correspondence: Mrs. Perry Kallison	1960
Folder 63	Correspondence: Literary Agents	1960-1961
Folder 64	Correspondence: Publishers	1960-1961

## Series Six: *Land of Promise* Historical Novel

**Historical Note:** Despite much effort by Mrs. Vance and by her husband after her death, the novel remained unpublished. Literary agent Maurice Crane (letter of January 31, 1961) explained why the manuscript was not likely to be sold to a publisher: "This is primarily an historical account...not intent upon keeping the reader interested in the unfolding of a suspenseful and dramatic story, so much as in getting in all the details of the history. University presses do most of the history, but they shy away from fiction."

- Folder 67      Bibliography used by Dorothy Vance  
SC23 Box 1    Typescript of *Land of Promise* by Dorothy L. Vance,  
Typescript for an unpublished novel about the history of Medina County  
Folder 68      Alternative Last chapter  
Cab 23-1      Photographs, 120 black and white snapshots from an old album  
See Photo Collection SC23  
Building exteriors with some interiors  
Natural settings;  
Historic cemeteries  
People: Carl Reidinger (owner of *Hondo Anvil Herald*); Mrs. Carl Reidinger;  
Lucy Maverick with Mrs. R.J. Noonan; and Ruth Lawler

## Series Seven: Medina County Court Records, 1838-1898

**Series Description:** In pursuit of her research, Dorothy Vance collected information from the records of the Medina County Court that concerned specific individuals of interest to her history of the Castro colonies. So the cases in this series, approximately 228, are a selection of the total. The records consist of original documents, mostly printed forms with the particulars of each case handwritten in 19<sup>th</sup> century script and spelling. How Dorothy Vance obtained these records is not known with certainty but she may have found them in the personal papers of a former county official (see page xi of the Hornbuckle Thesis).

**Processing Note:** The present arrangement of the individual cases in separate folders was made by Carmine Perry during the 1960s. The cases are not in original order but are arranged in alphabetic order by the name of the first litigant listed. Unfortunately, this means that the bulk are listed as "State of Texas." To facilitate research access, it is recommended that one use the Hornbuckle Thesis.

**Hornbuckle Thesis:** Mary Lou Hornbuckle's thesis compiled under the direction of Prof. Josephine Schulte, has as its purpose "to catalogue and index the Vance Collection for researchers." The thesis provides two indexes designated Index A and Index B. Index A is in order by case number followed by a summary of the type of case, the charge, date and page number where a transcription can be found. Index B is in alphabetical order by the names of litigants allowing the researcher to find the case numbers applying to each person named. Finally, Hornbuckle provides a typed transcription of the documents. Her work overcomes the obstacles in using the Vance collection that was occasioned by reordering the case files by name rather than number.

- Cab 3-1      A to Z