Chapter IX

THE PROPOSED EVACUATION OF WESTON (1942-1943)

From September 20, 1942 to January 18, 1943, a giant portion of Fr. James H. Dolan's time as provincial was consumed with the strong possibility of evacuating the Weston College community and finding a substitute place spacious enough, fire proof enough, and properly constructed enough, to house this community. The United States Army had announced plans on September 20, 1942 to Fr. Dolan to set up a military hospital at Weston.

On October 6, 1942 there was an afternoon meeting of the province consultors along with Fathers Daniel J. Lynch, James M. Kilroy, James T. McCormick and Joseph R.N. Maxwell. Fr. Provincial, James H. Dolan, recounted a September 20th visit from Colonel E. S. Linthicum of the U.S. Army Medical Corps. The colonel wished to sound cut views, as well as to express his own ideas on the possibility of taking over Weston College as an army base hospital.

Fr. Provincial had responded by explaining the nature of the college as a religious home. To be cooperative, he had indicated that its basement might serve on a small scale. Although this visit was to be considered confidential, the colonel called at Weston on September 23. In the absence of the rector, Fr. Robert A. Hewitt, he had been shown through the basement and the immediate college grounds by George Wheeler, then the chauffeur of the college.
Some day in early October, Colonel Linthicum, along with a Colonel Reddy, again visited Weston. They were allowed to inspect the entire building and judged that this was the sought-out location for 1600 patients and a staff of 185. If the community must move, they indicated that Holy Cross could serve as a haven. With the planned lowering of the draft age to include youths of eighteen and nineteen years, there should be adequate, if not even ample space, at Holy Cross. That evening Fr. Hewitt alerted Fr. Provincial to this more thorough visit, and to the real possibility of early evacuation. Fr. Hewitt also informed his house consultants of the situation.

Prior to the amplified consultants' meeting on October 6, Fr. Lynch, who had been a lieutenant colonel until he was honorably discharged on May 7, 1942, had been asked to inquire into the standing of Linthicum and Reddy. He reported that they represented the Army Medical Corps, and had instructions from Washington to locate a place for a hospital. In a conference he had with them, Fr. Lynch had learned of their intention to recommend Weston as an eminently desirable place. As a substitute dwelling for the Jesuits at Weston, they stated that the army would obtain some suitable building such as the Wentworth Hotel in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, or the New Ocean House in Swampscott, Massachusetts. The army would also help with the moving, Fr. Lynch had been informed.

With this factual data before the consulting group, Fr. Provincial asked what action should be taken. In view of Fr. Assistant's pledge to offer all the facilities of Jesuit
colleges, one argued that Weston must be given over if so requested. There should, however, be insistence on an appropriate substitute, a guarantee of entrance to, and use of the cemetery, and a safeguarding of the chapel. A similar view was expounded by a second ex-Provincial once it was clear that Weston was wanted. If it were, then it should be given readily, but with the conditions on needs and protection. A third man would also make a gesture to give Weston, but also with guaranteed conditions on needs and protection. A fourth believed, that further study should be made of the army's need through the Surgeon-General's Office. If however, the need was then clear, it should be given over. Three more believed that a serious request would be forthcoming and that the Society should be prepared to yield. Fr. Lynch was fully convinced that a formal request would come, and that the college should then be readily given up.

A vote was taken as to whether representation against a takeover should be made to some appropriate Washington authority. Four voted against such a representation. One favored an inquiry rather than a representation. One favored any possible form of a representation. One would wait until a formal request would come. The final vote opposed representation as a policy, but favored some written statement, a quasi-representation, as it were, to Col. Linthicum, rather than to Washington.

Then another question arose in the supposition that the place was to be given up. Should the move of the Weston community be to one or two places, or should efforts be made to
distribute scholastics and staff among existing scholasticates. Woodstock was known to be full. St. Mary's in Kansas might have an empty building. West Baden's empty but inside rooms were judged unsuitable. Not knowing any more than this, and with less known of other places, no vote was taken on this aspect. What was thought on moving all to one place, or dividing the community into two groups, is not evident. But Fr. Provincial, in the case of Parrington, Rhode Island, was to indicate that a division could be acceptable.

Possible places to which to move were suggested, including the Poland Springs House, Mt. Washington Hotel, and the Cape Codder Hotel. New Ocean House was judged too public and without sufficient grounds. The Wentworth was in a war-danger zone.

The meeting closed with Fr. Kilroy's request, that on the following day, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, all who had a free Mass offer it either that the move be averted, or that the best solution be found. This consultors' meeting was, it might be noted, the last one participated in by Fr. William L. Keleher as scius, since on November 1, 1942, he became master of novices.

Hard on the heels of this consultation, came another visit of inspection to Weston on October 9th by Col. Linthicum, with three specialists, one on water, one on buildings, and a third on hospital direction. To Fr. Hewitt, the colonel stated that, if Weston were taken, the army would do all it possibly could to assist. To Fr. Hewitt's mind, the takeover was
definite. Fr. Provincial, who was then at an assistancy consultants' meeting in Poughkeepsie, was alerted to this news. By October 11, he had consulted with John Drummey, the province's financial advisor, on a financial statement to be prepared in these circumstances. No more of this statement was heard. On October 13, Fr. Zacheus Maher, American Assistant, agreed to have Fr. Hewitt go to Washington, as was proposed by Fr. Provincial, to confer with Brigadier General William Richard Arnold, Chief of Chaplains, on the situation, and on Arnold's view of a policy to be followed.

On October 17, the New York Provincial, James P. Sweeney, reported by phone that Dr. Raymond Sullivan of St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City, had been called to Washington to confer with Dr. Somerville, Surgeon-General. Sullivan's advice was sought by the army on the advisability of taking large educational institutions as base hospitals. Sullivan, who had been in charge of such work in World War I, opposed such a policy on the grounds of lack of staff and proper care. In his opinion, if an institution was to be taken over, it should preferably be a hospital. The news of these views of Dr. Sullivan were believed by Fr. Sweeney to afford grounds for delay in relinquishing Weston. The grounds of poor medical policy could be alleged against a takeover, and be more forceful than an insistence on the religious home aspect of Weston. Fr. Sweeney also believed that Dr. Sullivan knew more about the specific case of Weston than he allowed himself to admit.

Information from Fr. Robert F. Healey, S. J., of Holy Cross
College, has indicated that further assistance came from his father -- Judge Arthur D. Healey, whom President Franklin D. Roosevelt had appointed as a federal district judge.

On October 19th, Colonel Linthicum called at Newbury Street to inform Fr. Provincial that Colonel (later General) Sherman Miles, Commanding Officer of the First Corps Area, had recommended to Washington that Weston be taken, and advised that arrangements begin for an early move. A guarantee concerning the availability of the cemetery was given and Holy Cross was still suggested as an appropriate place, although it was pointed out to him that the naval and air corps units would keep dormitory space there occupied. As a strong card, the colonel quoted Fr. Maher's offering of the facilities of Jesuit colleges and universities. After this stage, any thoughts of representation had been dampened by Fr. Hewitt's visit to Washington.

With Colonel Miles' views so clear, visits to possible sites were begun. The first visits were to the Mt. Washington House, the Mountain View House, and others in the area of Whitefield, N.H. These first forays were made on October 21 by Fr. Provincial, along with Fr. Thomas J. Smith, and Fr. John McGrory. The very day before, when arrangements for this New Hampshire trip were being made, Col. Linthicum had visited Holy Cross and recognized the impossibility of this place as a substitute for Weston. At this stage, he hedged on whether the army would aid in locating a place. He knew that such a job was not his but, whose function it was, he did not know. At his request, the floor plans of Weston were forwarded to him by Fr.
Hewitt, on October 21.

To aid in the search an appointment was made by Fr. William. E. Fitzgerald for Fr. Provincial to meet in Lewiston, Maine, with Mr. Lane, the owner of Poland Springs. Fr. Maxwell also scheduled a visit on the 23rd to the Equinox House in Bennington, Vermont. Publicity on the rumored move was heard in the town of Weston. Fr. B. Loring Young worried about the loss of the Weston College men as air wardens and civilian defense workers. On October 28, the Boston Traveller had a feature article on the army inspection of Weston College, and the prospects of an early decision.

On October 28, the first date for the evacuation was announced. Representatives of the Army Engineer Corps in a visit to Weston, informed Fr. Hewitt that vacating must come by December 1, 1942, and Fr. Hewitt was asked to present this instruction in writing to Fr. Provincial. The group also scheduled another visit to Weston for the next day. On October 30, Fr. Provincial did receive a letter saying that a representative of the Army Real Estate Department would call on him during the following week to arrange a lease of Weston College as an army hospital. The meeting took place on Friday, November 6. In the meantime, through Fr. Maxwell, inquiries had been made about the availability of the old Colby College quarters in downtown Waterville, Maine. It was learned that they were being used by students for the duration of the war.
The conference of Friday November 6 was five hours in length. Fr. Provincial had Fr. Thomas L. McLaughlin with him; one Colonel Rebber, U.S.A., had two civilians with him -- a Mr. Hughes and a Mr. McHenry. One of the results of this meeting was a trip by Fr. Provincial along with Mr. McHenry to the Paddock estate in Barrington, Rhode Island. The place was judged adequate for the philosophers, and perhaps the fourth year fathers with a staff. The following day, Bishop Francis P. Keough of Providence, was approached on this matter. He insisted that a diocesan regulation prohibited his welcoming any more tax-exempt religious groups (already totaling at least forty-one) in his territorially small diocese. He was, it appears, the only one of the New England bishops approached, who declined to cooperate in an emergency location of Weston College. Bishop Maurice F. McAuliffe of Hartford, and Bishop John B. Peterson of Manchester were most gracious in their welcomes.

On November 11, Fr. Provincial travelled to New York to explore some lead within that province territory. The lead was another dead-end. By November 22, Fr. Provincial could detail all these trips to the consultors, as well as the substance of an undated conversation with Captain Frank Doudera, owner of the Balsams in Dixville Notch, N.H. This place could be bought for $275,000, although the navy was allegedly offering $500,000. If this place, as was true of so many more, proved to be inadequate or over-expensive, he thought of approaching Congressman John W. McCormack of Massachusetts to have the whole project dropped. Two consultors opposed such an approach. A
third would agree to such an intervention if nothing else proved possible. The most recently appointed consultor was not present because of illness in a Washington hospital. After this meeting, Fr. Provincial resumed his inspections. On November 24, a series of hotels in New Hampshire was visited, and on December 4, a place near Poland Springs.

The final days for search and moving were at hand. On December 8, Fr. Provincial conferred with Colonel Linthicum, and on the same day Fr. Tom Smith went with Mr. Albert L. Robinson for further inspection at Weston. On December 9, the official letter came from General Miles stating that by January 15, 1943, Weston College must be evacuated for the army's needs. On the following day, Fr. Provincial interviewed Mr. McHenry, the civilian representative of the army, who was a Catholic. Mr. Robinson soon visited an estate in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, and, on December 13, informed Fr. Smith of the unsatisfactory condition of the place. He added that even so polite a person as Fr. Dolan would not even get out of a car to inspect a place so obviously a sorry one.

A crucial consultors meeting with all present was held on December 15, 1942. General Miles' hand-delivered letter of December 9 announcing January 15 as evacuation day, was read. He had indicated that so important a letter on so delicate a matter could only be hand-delivered to a Father Provincial. The provincial's reply was approved by the consultors with the deletion of one paragraph. The terms of the lease called for an annual payment of $100,000.
During this meeting a phone call came from Mr. Robinson concerning an official interview with Captain Comber. Other groups he had learned were allegedly interested in the Balsams, and one group had a quasi-option. There could be no question of renting the place. It must be bought with all its present equipment for $275,000. No improvements for winter heating would be made. There were also some final comments on the Griswold in New London, Connecticut which was wooden, rather old, quite small, and unheated.

On the following day, Mr. Robinson, on his return from New York, had an interview with Fr. Provincial. On December 17, in a phone call, Col. Linthicum urged as early an evacuation as possible. By December 19, Mr. Robinson sent word that any other potential buyers of the Balsams had ceased their interest, and he recommended the purchase. He could add the information that the Beaconsfield had been procured by the army and that the final hours of decision on Weston by the Surgeon-General and the Army Engineers had arrived. A final listing of possible places came in these final days through Fr. Hewitt, but they were of no service.

As the January 15 deadline approached, the consultors met on January 5, 1943. The Balsams, though not wholly satisfactory, was the best available place to which to move. The latest news on the use for Weston was stated to be a general hospital, not just a First Service Command hospital. This could mean a purchase rather than a leasing. Col. Linthicum had earlier given assurance that leasing alone was planned. It was
also thought that the army might be offered Keyser Island or North Andover, and even that one wing of Weston might be leased for hospital purposes. Fr. Provincial objected to this proposal on one wing of Weston. Some final letters of General Miles, signed by Adjutant Philip Hayes, were also shown to the consultors.

A final meeting for seventy minutes occurred in Fr. Provincial's office on January 13. Very rarely does one learn any great detail on province business in the official province diary of this period. For Wednesday, January 13, there appeared a three-page account of this meeting, reminiscent of the fuller records made by Fr. James H. Dolan when he was socius to the provincial from January, 1932, to May, 1937. Present at this meeting were Colonel John R. Hall and Captain Souder of the Office of the Surgeon-General in Washington. The First Service Command Headquarters in Boston was represented by Colonel Linthicum and Mr. Cripp, a civilian engineer. Col. Hall made clear the need for Weston and its suitability, which he had concluded from a visit there on the preceding day. It could accommodate from 800 to 1500 people.

Fr. Provincial thanked the visitors for coming at so busy a time for them, and indicated some points he would like to reiterate. Moving the Weston community of 265 was not moving them as college students from a dormitory, but was moving a religious community from its permanent home. Hence, the urgent need of being assured of a new home prior to any change. He did have the Balsams in mind despite its less than satisfactory
character. And even its availability, he added, was only discovered after an extremely lengthy search of some thirty places. Now sixty to seventy-five days would be needed for its rehabilitation. Also, in view of the evacuation, assistance would be expected from the army in moving and in obtaining difficult-to-acquire needs in a more bleak climate. It should also be understood that Weston was to be leased and not bought, especially in view of the enormous gifts which benefactors had supplied to it.

Perhaps with some subtle point in mind, Fr. Dolan asked Colonel Hall to explain the difference between the original request for Weston as a hospital for the First Service Command, and its presently proposed use as a general hospital. The Colonel replied with pleasure that the use of Weston as a general hospital would probably extend the time for using Weston, since its patients would require extended treatment. All this conversation and its implications were to be reported to the Surgeon-General, General James C. Magee, and an early reply would be forthcoming.

In the province diary for January 18, there are eight and one-half lines to say that letters from Gen. Magee and Col. Hall announced the decision not to take Weston. New construction elsewhere would care for the needs. Col. Hall's letter is interesting. He wrote that, when he came for the January 13 visit, he had believed that New England Province officials had instituted the proposal to take over Weston College. This was apparently how Fr. Maher's general offer had been concretized.
Realizing the complications in a move, he had at once recommended that the project be dropped and with this view General Magee had at once concurred. A glass of wine at table at 300 Newbury Street is announced in Fr. Minister's diary as a fitting celebration that Weston need not be evacuated, or its inhabitants moved to Dixville Notch.

But prayer, too, played a capital role. At Weston, Fr. Anthony C. Cotter, and retired Bishop Joseph N. Dinand, were known for their practice of, and exhortation to making novenas of Masses to prevent moving. Fr. Cotter's diary indicated that he had finished the second such novena on the morning of the day when the announcement came that there was to be no moving. On January 21, his diary recounted a glowing account, from Fr. Tom McLaughlin, of how well off the province would have been if the move had taken place. Fr. Cotter then asked himself without an answer, whether he would have made these novenas, had he known that the province would thus have been financially on the top of the world.

Some younger men with more spirit of adventure are said to have been disappointed that they could not have participated in the proposed move to Dixville Notch. It might have been another January moving as was the trek from Frederick, Maryland, to St. Andrew's in Poughkeepsie, New York, in January, 1903, or as was the arrival in early January 1922 for the opening of Weston (then, Fairview) in 1922.
When the college scholasticate population did move in the late 1960's, it was to small communities in Cambridge, Brighton and Chestnut Hill. The novices occupied one-half of the second corridor of Weston in 1970-71, after leaving Shadowbrook in September, 1970. Weston had continued its existence under Fr. Paul F. Izzo as local superior from the moving of the scholastics, and many of the professors. Land across Merriam Street and some across Concord Road, nearer its juncture with Merriam Street, were later sold to the town. No one seemed interested in buying the remaining land with its huge scholasticate. Plans to sell its lower lands slowly came to realization and the town purchased them in 1977.

The ancient house began in 1975 to be remodeled as a retreat house and as a residence for retired Jesuits, especially with the long-sought infirmary for the sick. Since the name of Weston College was transferred to Cambridge and became, in 1975, the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, the parent name was changed to Campion Residence and Renewal Center. From Fairview, its name had become Weston College partly, at least, because of the request for this honor from some town people. Now it commemorates the scholarly English martyr saint, whom the late Fr. John F. Quirk, S.J., denoted the Patron of Scholars.

The Work of James H. Dolan, S. J.

Many small events occur in the history of a province that cannot be snugly fitted into an historical narrative. When it is considered that from September 20, 1942 to January 18, 1943 the chief energy of Fr. James H. Dolan as provincial had to be
expended on choosing a site for a displaced Weston community, and on conferring on conditions to be met prior to moving, it could be of some interest to learn what other activities, routine or special, demanded his attention and/or participation.

One sign of the solidarity and charity of the Society is seen in the attendance at the wakes or funeral services of Curs or of their close relatives. During these months while he was at home after scouring for sites, or meeting as an assistancy consultant with Fr. Zacheus Maher in New York, Fr. Provincial found time to be the symbol of Society charity. There was the funeral of the mother of Fr. Harry B. Muollo (later a victim of the Shadowbrook fire) on November 5; the wake and funeral of the sister of Fr. Francis W. Anderson on December 3 and 5, with a tiring trip to New Hampshire during the intervening day; the funeral of Fr. Joseph A. Keller, at Holy Trinity on December 14; the funeral of Fr. William Loque on December 18, and of Fr. John E. Lyons on December 19; the funeral Mass for the father of Fr. Harry MacLeod on December 24; the wake and funeral of the mother of Fathers James and Thomas Brennan on January 7 and 8; and the wake and funeral of the father of Fr. Hubert Conniff on January 15-16. He had also celebrated the Solemn High Mass at the Immaculate Conception Church in Boston on December 22 for Fr. General Ledochowski, who had died on December 13, 1942.

Authorizing letters of dismissal also falls to the lot of a provincial. It is a strange part of his cura personalis. In the first consultors' meeting, after he had learned of the possible evacuation of Weston, a case arose about a man who had
often applied for dismissal but, in each case, had withdrawn the application. His case was finally settled when another request came on January 3, 1943. A totally different request was heard and settled on December 20. A third more complicated instance, made known on January 5, required a personal conference with Fr. Provincial.

Mental cases arising suddenly and consuming time and nervous energy, also constituted a part of cura personalis. One such patient was visited at Metropolitan Hospital on December 11, and a different patient required a visit to Mattapan on December 31. With Brother Edward R. Weatherhead gravely ill at St. Francis Hospital in Miami, the place for his burial needed consideration. A burial in the South was decided upon. It later turned out that, after Brother's death on October 8, it was more feasible to transfer the body to Boston. After a Mass in Miami, the burial took place at Weston on October 12. There were serious health problems that fall with juniors at Shadowbrook, and a conference was needed with its Fr. Minister (Harry Williamson). The list, too, of twenty-five candidates for last vows had to be scrutinized carefully. So much for cura personalis.

Problems of province expansion and recruitment also arose during these months. Even with the large numbers of chaplains assigned to the armed forces, Fr. Provincial was ready to establish secondary schools in other parts of New England. Just a few days after being alerted to the potential moving of Weston, he and Fr. Edward A. Sullivan, a native of Holyoke,
visited Bishop Thomas M. O'Leary, then ordinary of the old undivided Springfield Diocese, to explore the feasibility of a Jesuit secondary school in the city of Springfield. The bishop was cordial, and suggested looking around for a location, and promised to confer with his consultors.

In mentioning this Springfield visit to the province consultants, Fr. Dolan also apprised them of the possibility of acquiring the Ellis Estate on Salisbury Street in Worcester. If this were taken as the location for a secondary school, it would be a province venture. The Holy Cross College consultants had already declined to re-inaugurate the Holy Cross prep school discontinued in 1914. The province consultants did not approve favorable action on the purchase and use of the Ellis estate. They preferred to concentrate on Springfield as the one present site in the undivided Springfield diocese. Later, the Notre Dame Sisters of Namur acquired the Ellis property, and began their Notre Dame Academy there.

Candidates were also in Fr. Dolan's mind during these war-time months. On October 26, Fr. Assistant had informed provincials that, for the war's duration only, they might accept candidates who had finished only three years of high school. This more elastic standard does not appear to have been followed in New England. When colleges in late January or early February of 1943 accepted as college freshmen, qualified high school students halfway through their senior year, the Society accepted some of this same group the following summer (1943). Among such students was William L. ("Milo") Connolly. To indicate this
entrance policy, whether of those halfway through fourth high or in later stages, Fr. Provincial informed the new novice master on December 26, that six candidates could be expected at Shadowbrook on February 1, 1943.

Ordinary administrative problems on policy and personnel require the continuing attention of a provincial even when he is perplexed about such a major task as the moving of the Weston community. On November 1, 1942, his socius of three years became master of novices, and the former master, Fr. John J. Smith, became socius even though not totally recovered from a painful skin disorder. Within the same month of November, Fr. Smith was hospitalized for a few weeks in Washington, and Fr. Dolan took time to visit him. Less than a well socius can be a handicap to even a less busy provincial, and there was wonderment expressed when the disability required a rest in Jamaica.

During that interval the ever-ready Fr. Kilroy served as acting socius. In two more weeks came the sudden death of Fr. John F. Cox, the pioneer rector and principal of Cranwell School. Fr. Cox was a hard-working man with generosity to, appreciation of, and loyalty to his staff. It would be hard for a subject to outmatch him in work, or to come anywhere near his backing up of teachers against unruly and lazy students. Fr. Keleher's change from the office of socius had been arranged before the confidential announcement of the proposed Weston takeover. Then, most unexpectedly, a new rector had to be arranged for Cranwell.
While the war was to bring some economic relief to the province from the salaries paid to the military chaplains and carefully accounted with Fr. Tom McLaughlin, revenues from province taxes levied on the colleges declined. Hence, there was some reorganization of the Jesuit Seminary Guild and of the Jesuit Mission Office. Both were under Fr. John A. Madden, also the superior of 300 Newbury Street. Just days before the news of the no-moving of Weston was announced, Fr. Louis J. Gallagher returned to Boston from New York where he was with the incipient I.S.O. (Institute of Social Order). On January 17, Fr. Gallagher was announced a superior of 300, and director of the Seminary Guild and, on January 23, 1943, Fr. Thomas F. McDermott was appointed a separate director of the Jesuit Mission Office. Then once again, as when Fr. George M. Murphy was mission procurator, both of these revenue-raising organizations had separate directors and offices.

There were always special calls on province funds besides those of maintaining its province houses. Fr. Assistant wrote on January 3, 1943 for a contribution to enlarge the Vatican Radio. Such money was to be a gift for the golden jubilee of the episcopal consecration of Pope Pius XII.

In addition to a meeting of the New England Province Corporation on January 12, 1943, there was the task of preparing a series of three ternas for rectors, and the choice of two superiors (St. Andrew House on Newbury Street and Campion Hall in North Andover) during these months which Fr. Dolan would surely consider as, and denominate "parlous". With Fr.
Assistant living in this country with very special powers, ternas in war years went to him for approval or disapproval. A first set of three ternas was arranged in December 1942 for Cranwell, Boston College High School and St. Mary's in the North End. The choices did not meet the approval of Fr. Assistant, so they were returned. It is curious that, of the nine names submitted, only one, a third of one of these first ternas, was ever appointed. So on January 5, a new set was submitted, this time including Weston because of an intended transfer. The first choices on all these four ternas were approved.

It has been seen that, on the very day before the announcement that Weston was not to move, the first change was announced. Fr. Gallagher was superior at St. Andrew Bobola House. On February 15, Fr. Edward J. Whalen, the first minister at Fairfield, replaced Fr. Edward A. Sullivan at St. Mary's, and Fr. Sullivan succeeded Fr. Hewitt at Weston the same day. On the following day, Fr. Hewitt became Rector of the Immaculate and Boston College High School, replacing Fr. Francis L. Archdeacon.

For a short time, Fr. Archdeacon ("Archey"), long prefect of studies at Regis (1923-24; 1925-35), briefly (1935-February 1937) dean of freshmen at Boston College, was assigned to North Andover. Then he began a long and distinguished service at St. Mary's with its perpetual novena of grace and his variety of study clubs. He reached even his Sixtieth Jubilee in 1967. One sometimes wonders why, as St. Mary's went into a decline for a variety of reasons, he was never
rector or prefect of the church. But in his secondary capacity, he showed, without fanfare, what a subject can do.

These matters of charity, cura personalis, expansion, recruitment, finance and administration, both ordinary and special, are listed to illustrate how the energy of a provincial was expended when a great block of his energy, deploying, planning and praying were concerned with one urgent matter from September 1942 to January 1943. Contemporaries and sub-contemporaries have smiled at James H. Dolan's plodding, even princely ways. But, in a crisis, he could lead, hold and enunciate his conscientious convictions, and wear down the United States Army by insistence on what it must do in return for the temporary use of a scholasticate home. He must have felt the rebuff especially during this crisis of the Bishop of Providence. This refusal was compensated for by the kindly welcome from the bishops of Hartford, Manchester and Portland. If he felt the rebuff, it did not ruffle his countenance or his deportment. He was "ab omni perturbatione securus". At the most, his two hands would go up and he might say "Father, O Father."

Father James H. Dolan (June 4, 1885 to August 1, 1977) made a four-fold major impact on the first twenty-five years of the New England Province. He was socius to a provincial (1932-37), provincial for seven and a half years (May, 1937 to December, 1944), acting provincial (January, 1950 to October, 1950), and rector-president of Fairfield in its transition from preparatory school to university status (1944-51).
Nor were his impacts confined to these four positions. As a regent from 1912 to 1917, he had taught as a class teacher (Latin, Greek and English) at Georgetown in its preparatory school for three years and two years in the college of arts and sciences. As a young priest, he taught three years (1922-25) at Holy Cross. During two of these years (1923-25), when he taught psychology and natural theology to seniors, he prepared an extensive set of mimeographed notes which were the staple texts for these subjects in many Jesuit colleges up to the 'sixties.

Prior to serving as socius, he had been rector-president of Boston College from August, 1925, to January 1, 1932. At Boston College, he saw the opening, through the benefaction of William Cardinal O'Connell, of St. Ignatius Parish in 1926, completed the construction of the Bapst Library in 1928, inaugurated the Law School in 1929 and added a new wing with an enclosed garden to St. Mary's Hall by 1931. One would not consider him as impressive a president at Boston College as Fr. Thomas I. Gassen, S. J., or some later presidents. But the memories of him in that capacity there were more kindly than those of a later academic institution he headed. His years at Fairfield are covered in the chapter on its early days.

His years as socius are important since he appears to have received from Fr. James T. McCormick, S. J., a free hand in seeking out locations for a tertianship, provincial residence, retreat house, and in the tasks of either remodelling structures or supervising their construction. His carefully written history of province activities is the fullest of any of the corresponding
officials so that writing a province history of those years was rendered more simple and exact. As socius, he had the task directly from Fr. General Ledochowski of initiating and supervising a new system of financial accounting.

As provincial, Fr. Dolan was in large measure an expansionist, sanctioning or opening up secondary school opportunities at Cranwell School in Lenox, Cheverus High School in Portland and Fairfield Prep. For three years (1939-42), he opened a study house near Boston College chiefly for candidates for master’s programs at Boston College. World War II ended this project.

Nor can it be said that Fr. Dolan was strongly convinced of the value of special studies for a great number of people. He appeared to have placed strong reliance on the extended and normal training in the Society. He could equate physics and chemistry and believe that competence in one spelled competence in the other.

Undoubtedly some light is cast on his provincialate by mentioning his major appointments, by singling out one of his norms for decision, and by noting his dealings with those in trouble. He appointed as rectors such men as Joseph R. N. Maxwell, William E. Fitzgerald, William J. Murphy, Thomas J. Feeney, and reassigned as rectors Robert A. Hewitt and John J. McEleney. He appointed William L. Keleher as master of novices, Raymond J. McInnis as tertian instructor, Arthur J. Sheehan as province prefect, and Thomas L. McLaughlin as province treasurer. Here was a group of many colorful and more than
usually forceful men, who continued to hold the same or other major posts in the province with differing forms of approbation and disapprobation.

For decisions, Fr. Dolan relied heavily, it appears, on the mind of Fr. General with whom he had contact at a 1937 conference with American provincials and at the 1938 General Congregation. It could be risky, even when a sincere form of discernment.

There was sticking force in his status assignments, and few were undone. In keeping with the temper of the times, he used Keyser Island as a place to deal with those whom a later, more enlightened policy, would send to Guest House. His personal correspondence as provincial shows an understanding and long-suffering consideration for men under a cloud. These included men whose talents might otherwise have been lost or whose hearts would be only partially in their work. He could give a man whose integrity had been questioned a small honor to show that the province had truly exonerated him. It was a gracious benevolence.

Perhaps like some well-known public figures, Fr. Dolan's life, in God's providence, was extended too long. After leaving Fairfield in 1951 where had begun the college, he taught philosophy at Boston College, and devoted many hours each school day to hearing students' confessions. When in the early 1970's some oddities began to appear and persist, he went perforce to Campion Center infirmary. Gradually he was less and less regularly lucid. He relived in comic circumstances his roles as
rector and provincial, and gave a sorry picture of his former stable and sober self.

Those who knew Fr. Dolan only in this decline would have no concept of a man who left the provincial office with a solvent treasury after paying off the major debts necessarily incurred in the establishment of a province. Nor could they appreciate the drive that took the external works of the province from two cities and spread them so much wider. Nor could they see his extended insistence on appropriate accommodations with the U. S. Army officials which kept the Weston community of 1941 and 1942 from being housed for an indefinite time in Dixville Notch, New Hampshire. He had easily caricatured weaknesses, but also determination vision and unobtrusive kindness.