The Evening Bulletin, Wednesday, February 4, 1976

OBITUARIES

Vincent Sorrentino dies; giant in jewelry business

PROVIDENCE — Vincent Sorrentino, 84, a poor Italian immigrant who went on to found the world's largest ring manufacturing company and head the state welfare system, died yesterday at Northridge General Hospital, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., after an illness of several weeks. He was the husband of Katherine (Sawler) Sorrentino of 359 Rumstick Point Rd., Barrington.

Born on Feb. 22, 1891, in Castellamare di Stabia, Naples, a son of the late Luigi and Anna Marie (Caruso) Sorrentino, he was educated there and came to Providence with his family in 1906.

He started work almost immediately as a plumber's apprentice and later became a jeweler's apprentice.

Within a year of his marriage to the late Katie Goldstein he founded the Uncas Manufacturing Co. in 1911. It was a dingy, one-room jewelry plant which became the largest of its kind in the world and is still based on Atwells Avenue.

His wife kept the books, sold the jewelry, interviewed salesmen of raw materials and did housekeeping while Mr. Sorrentino ran the manufacturing end of the business. Both worked 18 hours a day in those times and ate an apple apiece



Vincent Sorrentino

association, and a member of Fashion Jewelers, Inc., of New York. He was also a former director of the Better Business Bureau of Rhode Island and the Providence Chamber of Commerce.

He received an honorary doctorate in business administration from Bryant College in 1963.

He was a past president of the Aurora Civic Association, which he helped found in 1931, and a former director of the Federal Hill House, which honored him in 1953. Other philanthropic activities included this

Central Committee. He was welfare head for two years.

He was Thomas E. Dewey's presidential campaign manager for Rhode Island in 1944 and four years later became general chairman of the state's Republican All-American Division.

When Italy went to war against the United States in the Second World War, Mr. Sorrentino resigned as director of the Columbus National Bank and suspended publication of the 50-year-old Rhode Island Echo, the Italian-American weekly newspaper he had taken over in 1940.

He retired as president of Uncas in 1960, leaving the job to his son Stanley, but stayed on as chairman of the board of directors until his death.

He was a member of the Calvary Baptist Church in Providence; the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Providence Lodge No. 14; and the Rotary. He was chairman of the Boy Scouts of Rhode Island in 1939 and 1940. He was active in the Rhode Island Heart Association.

Mr. Sorrentino was also a former member of the Providence Redevelopment Agency.

His first wife died in 1949 and in 1952 he married the former Katherine Sawler of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Mr. Sorrentino was a 32nd degree Mason of the Ancient

SORRENTINO VINCENT REF 1ST WIFE KATIE GOLDSTEIN