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**The Seventy-ninth annual meeting of the English Section
of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association
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University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON
28 - 29 May 2012**

CANADIAN CATHOLIC HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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List of Contributors

Brandon S. Corcoran and **Laura J. Smith** are both Ph.D. candidates in the Department of History at the University of Toronto. Smith's dissertation examines Irish Catholics and Irish Catholicism in Upper Canada before 1840. Corcoran's dissertation is a comparative study of Irish Emancipation and Repeal societies in Canada and the United States between 1825 and 1848.

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Editors' Foreword

We are pleased to present Volume 79 of *Historical Studies* on behalf of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association. Several themes emerge in this year's collection. Two papers treat ethnic and religious tensions within the Catholic church in nineteenth century Ontario. Brandon Corcoran and Laura Smith investigate the founding of the Friends of Ireland in Bytown to the dismay of Scotsman Bishop Alexander Macdonell. Michael Wilcox examines French-English tensions among the Christian Brothers in Ontario. The other two contributions focus on twentieth century Catholic personalities – one a lay politician, the other a clergyman in the media. Greg Donaghy explores the influence of Catholicism in Paul Martin, Sr.'s political formation. M.C. Havey breaks new ground by presenting the first account of Rev. Matthew Meehan's media career.

We are grateful to all those who contributed to the writing, assessing and revising of the articles for this edition of *Historical Studies*. The journal and the association thank Fr. Edward Jackman, O.P., Secretary General of the CCHA, and the Jackman Foundation for the generous support and encouragement that has made this volume possible. We also acknowledge the support that St. Joseph's College, University of Alberta is providing Dr. Cuplinskas in carrying out her editorial duties. We regret to inform our readers that *Historical Studies* will no longer be including the "Bibliography of Canadian Religious History." The Association, however, continues to make articles from previous issues accessible on the CCHA homepage (www.cchahistory.org).

Indre Cuplinskas
Patricia E. Roy

**Papers presented at the Annual Meeting
Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo,
Waterloo, Ontario**

28 - 29 May 2012

but not included in this volume:

Kevin Anderson, “Dispelling the Medieval Darkness: Anti-Catholicism in Canada, 1910-1929”

Calum Beck, “Peace by Distance: Gentlemen’s Agreements and Protestant-Catholic Relations on Prince Edward Island”

Colleen Gray, “The Mental World of Charles de Glandelet (1645-1725), French Priest in the New World”

Carol Hopp, “On the Transfer of the Reverend Matthew G. Meehan Media Collection to the Archives of Ontario”

Cornelius Jaenen, “Catholicism and Belgian Immigration in Western Canada, 1880-1960”

Joint Session with Canadian Society for Church History

Edward MacDonald, “Repeal and Religion on Prince Edward Island, 1843-1845”

Christo Avalis, “In the Service of the Lowly Nazarene, the Canadian Labour Press and the Case for Radical Christianity, 1925-1939”

Megan Baxter, “Know God, Serve Others: Religion in the Canadian Girls in Training in the Interwar Years”

Indre Cuplinskas, “Doing it Rite: Catholic Action and Liturgical Renewal in Quebec”

Bishop Macdonell and the Friends of Ireland: Mixing Politics and Religion in Upper Canada

Brandon S. CORCORAN and Laura J. SMITH

From his arrival in the heavily Protestant and loyalist province of Upper Canada in 1804 Bishop Alexander Macdonell worked to transform the Catholic Church there from a small collection of scattered and under-resourced frontier missions into an established diocese with well-funded and fully staffed parishes in every major area of settlement.¹ In short, he put Catholicism on a respectable footing in the colony. To accomplish this goal and to further Catholic fortunes within the empire as a whole, Macdonell ingratiated himself with the colonial elite and petitioned both the colonial and imperial governments for funding and support. He argued that Catholics deserved such assistance because they were loyal and orderly subjects of the Crown. A rapidly increasing number of Catholic immigrants after 1815, however, strained the already limited resources of the Church and occasionally made it difficult for Macdonell to demonstrate the order and loyalty of the Catholics under his charge.² Though Macdonell made inroads

¹ Alexander Macdonell was born in Glengarry, Scotland, 17 July 1762 and died in Dumfries, Scotland 14 January 1840. Macdonell (also frequently addressed and signed as McDonell) was educated at the Scots Colleges at Paris and in Spain before returning to Scotland to work as a missionary in the Highlands. Committed to advancing the fortunes of Scots Catholics within the British Empire, he convinced the government to employ his parishioners as a fencible regiment and himself as their chaplain. The regiment served in Ireland during the 1798 rebellion before it was disbanded in 1802. As a reward for their service, Macdonell secured grants of land in Glengarry County in Upper Canada and proceeded to British North America in the fall of 1804. Once there, he was quickly appointed as Vicar General to Bishop Joseph Octave Plessis. When the Diocese of Kingston was created in 1826 Macdonell was appointed its bishop. See J. E. Rea, "Alexander McDonell," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (hereafter *DCB*), vol. VII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 544-551, and *Bishop Alexander Macdonell and the Politics of Upper Canada* (Toronto: Ontario Historical Society Research Publication No. 4, 1974).

² For other examples of how the influx of Irish Catholic immigrants specifically interacted with Macdonell's Church-building projects see Stewart D. Gill, "'The Sword in the Bishop's Hand': Father William Peter MacDonald, A Scottish Defender of the

in advancing his mission, the emergence of a voluntary society in the village of Bytown in 1829 momentarily seemed to threaten all that he had achieved.

The appearance of the Society of the Friends of Ireland in Bytown offers a remarkable glimpse of the ways in which a steady influx of Irish Catholic immigrants affected Macdonell's Church-building project. It also reveals much about how Upper Canadian Irish Catholics constructed identity and community when their place in the British Empire was continually under negotiation. Their attempts to partake in the politics of Ireland at times deterred Macdonell's efforts to strengthen and grow the provincial Church. For these reasons, and because of his promises to colonial officials to keep the colony free of transplanted agitations, Macdonell opposed the expansion of the Friends of Ireland into Upper Canada. In Bytown however, where an ongoing dispute with the parish priest temporarily weakened his influence and command, the politics of Ireland briefly supplanted the local and colonial Church in importance.

Between 1825 and 1829 more than thirty branches of the Society of the Friends of Ireland were established throughout the United States and the British North American colonies. The Society aimed to lend financial and moral support to the Catholic Association in Dublin and its campaign for the political 'emancipation' of Catholics within the United Kingdom. Anyone who wished to become a member of these auxiliary societies had to first subscribe to the Catholic 'rent,' a monthly or yearly subscription used by Daniel O'Connell and the Association to fund their constitutional campaign in Ireland. The Irish in British North America were not far behind their American counterparts in mobilizing support for the cause of emancipation,³ and by December 1828 branches of the Friends of Ireland had been established in three of the largest cities – Halifax, Montreal and Quebec.⁴ Branches were also established in Bytown and in Trois-Rivières.

Catholic Faith in Upper Canada," Canadian Catholic Historical Association *Study Sessions*, 50 (1983): 437-452; and Murray Nicolson, "William O'Grady and the Catholic Church in Toronto prior to the Irish Famine Migration," in Mark G. McGowan and Brian P. Clarke (eds.) *Catholics at the "Gathering Place": Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991* (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993), 23-40.

³ The first emancipation society in the United States was established in New York City in the summer of 1825; however, the majority of the American branches of the Friends of Ireland were established in late 1828. For more on these societies see Thomas F. Moriarty, "The Irish American Response to Catholic Emancipation," *The Catholic Historical Review*, 66, no. 3 (1980): 353-373.

⁴ According to census returns for 1827 the population of Halifax was 14,439; of Montreal, 39,500; and of Quebec City, 30,954. The Irish populations in each Place are more difficult to determine. Terence Punch has suggested that most of the 3,627 Catholics in Halifax in 1827 were Irish or of Irish background, and Robert Grace has suggested that in the same year there were at least 3,000 persons of Irish birth in Montreal and perhaps as many as 5,000 in Quebec City. See Robert J. Grace, *The Irish in Quebec: An Introduction*

By the time news of the recent Catholic Relief Bill reached North America in late April 1829 these societies had attracted close to seven hundred members and raised nearly £200.⁵

Only one branch was located in Upper Canada and the seeming absence of interest and support in places with small but established Irish Catholic populations such as Kingston and York⁶ baffled many of the Friends of Ireland in Lower Canada. Through a series of public addresses they appealed to their countrymen and to all reform-minded subjects there to join their cause. In December 1828 the corresponding secretary of the Quebec society, Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, issued the first of these appeals in his end-of-the-year report to Dr. Daniel Tracey, president of the sister society in Montreal and lead organizer of the Friends of Ireland in Lower Canada. While he expressed hope that Irishmen throughout British North America would join in their cause, O'Callaghan made it clear that he was appealing particularly to the Irishmen in Upper Canada. In fact, despite the many reasons for satisfaction with the progress of the Friends of Ireland over the preceding months, O'Callaghan regretted "the tardiness Upper Canada evinces in giving her sanction to the good work." Knowing that his report would be printed in the Montreal *Irish Vindicator*, O'Callaghan issued his own personal appeal: "Men of Kingston! – Men of York! Men of the Upper Province, why sleep they? ... If they will not be *generous* let them be, at least, *just*."⁷

That the men of the upper province would do neither further bewildered the Friends of Ireland. In the *Vindicator* and in speeches before the Montreal society, Tracey simply refused to accept the indifference of Irishmen in Upper Canada to the cause. The sheer number of societies spread across the North American continent indicated that the cause of emancipation had some appeal to Irishmen of every denomination and every domain, even

to the Historiography (Québec: Institut Québécois de Recherche sur la Culture, 1993), 60, 64; and Terrence Punch, *Halifax: The Immigrant Generation, 1815-1859* (Halifax: St. Mary's University, 1981), 20.

⁵ The Halifax branch alone raised £100, the single largest sum and over half of the amount raised in British North America. See the *Morning Chronicle* (London) 27 December 1828. Also see the *Canadian Spectator* (Montreal) 27 September and 4 October 1828; *Quebec Gazette* (Neilson's *Gazette*) 29 September 1828; *Irish Vindicator* (Montreal) 6 January, 9 January, 20 March, 27 March, and 12 May 1829.

⁶ An 1834 census of Catholics in Upper Canada found 3240 in the parish of Toronto (and its environs) and 4163 in the parish of Kingston (and its environs). The prevalence of migration and the transiency of the population in this period make it difficult to determine how many Catholics actually resided in either place in 1829. The ethnicity of the laity in either parish was not indicated. Archives of the Archdiocese of Kingston (hereafter AAK), "Letter book 1833-68 Incl. Statistics of Catholics in Upper Canada," 17-18.

⁷ *Irish Vindicator* of 30 December 1829. Edited by Daniel Tracey, the *Vindicator* served as the official organ of the Friends of Ireland in Lower Canada.

where they already enjoyed full rights and privileges. More importantly, there was evidence that Upper Canadians did wish to express their support for Catholic emancipation in Ireland; several contributions to the Quebec 'rent' were sent from the province, often accompanied by sympathetic letters.⁸ The establishment of a branch of the Friends of Ireland in the village of Bytown in early January 1829 only further demonstrated that there was indeed interest and support for the Catholic Association in Upper Canada.

A growing lumber industry and the start of construction on the Rideau Canal in 1826 initiated rapid growth in Bytown.⁹ The significant Irish Catholic population drew from both the temporary canal labourers and an ambitious and enterprising merchant class.¹⁰ Many of these entrepreneurs were sufficiently prosperous that they could turn their attention to community building projects such as the construction of the first Catholic church and to political movements beyond the borders of their community. The proceedings of the first meeting in Bytown of the Society of the Friends of Ireland indicate that prominent Irish Catholics had closely watched the progress of the Friends of Ireland elsewhere in North America and established their branch at least in part in response to the appeals of O'Callaghan and Tracey. The first resolution passed by the society actually expressed regret at not having convened sooner but, notwithstanding the delay, "no people could possess more friendly disposition, more lively sentiments of condolence, more anxiety and heartfelt feeling for the degradation of our fellow man in Ireland, than we did and do feel." They later explained that they had not formed a society earlier because they thought that "some Town of older standing" should have the honour of hosting the colony's first branch. At the end of 1828, they deemed it prudent to answer the calls from Lower Canada and

⁸ Residents of Upper Canada sent several subscriptions to the Quebec Society. See the society's membership list in the *Irish Vindicator* of 12 May 1829.

⁹ Bruce Elliott cites Surveyor General Bouchette's estimate that there were fewer than 150 houses in Bytown in 1828, and suggests that in 1829 the population was close to 1,000. McCabe lists some 635 Irish families in the vicinity of Bytown; however, the Irish population in the village itself (a considerable portion of which were temporary canal labourers) is more difficult to determine. See Bruce Elliott, *The City Beyond: A History of Nepean, Birthplace of Canada's Capital, 1792-1990* (Nepean: City of Nepean, 1991) as well as *The McCabe List: Early Irish in the Ottawa Valley* (Toronto: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2002).

¹⁰ Macdonell estimated that there were approximately one thousand Catholics in the village when he visited in late 1828, see: AAK, Macdonell letter book (hereafter MLB) 1820-29, Macdonell to Weld, 26 November 1828. Of the thirty-one persons who paid a subscription to the Bytown Catholic 'rent,' occupations have been determined for just fifteen. Of these, there were four store or shop owners, two contractors, one brewer, one baker, one surgeon and one watchmaker. For more on early Bytown and prominent Irish Catholics there see Michael S. Cross, "The Dark Druidical Groves: The Lumber Community and the Commercial Frontier in British North America, to 1854," (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1968).

to set an example in their own province. In early January, they announced their intention of making a demonstration in support of emancipation. "Our patience being at last exhausted and our thirst for joining in the common cause daily increasing," they declared in their March 1829 address to the people of Upper Canada, "stimulated us to remain no longer timid or inactive spectators of the passing scene."¹¹

Tracey and others in the Friends of Ireland meanwhile wondered why the majority of Irishmen in Upper Canada remained distant from their cause. The societies in Montreal and Quebec pointed to the Orange Order and other extremist groups as the primary culprits in producing a political climate hostile to the supporters of Catholic emancipation; threats of intimidation and accusations of disloyalty not a lack of interest or patriotism kept the Irishmen of Kingston and York from coming forward. In his March 1829 "Address to the Irish Inhabitants of the British Provinces," Tracey even suggested that the "Orange Assassins" and "Brunswick Bloodhounds" who questioned their loyalty to King and country at every opportunity forced liberal and patriotic Irishmen in Upper Canada into a "mute submission" on the question of emancipation.¹²

The Friends of Ireland in Bytown likewise believed that something (or someone) was working against the expansion of the society into Upper Canada. At the first meeting the newly elected president Daniel O'Connor claimed that "narrow minded and illiberal" people in Upper Canada had stifled the voice of sympathy so apparent in Lower Canada and in the United States. Like Tracey the Bytown group speculated that their countrymen feared that their loyalty might be questioned if they publicly supported extra-parliamentary agitation, either in Canada or in Ireland.¹³ Their March 1829 address asked,

Why does the Irishman of Upper Canada look with apathy and indifference on the exertions that are making all over the Globe to make Ireland as she ought

¹¹ In their March address the Bytown group stated that they had "waited some months to give [Kingston and York] precedence, as we were willing they should have that honor." See the "Manuscript Volume containing Minutes of the Meetings of the Friends of Ireland in By Town, Upper Canada, 11 January, 1829 to 22 April, 1829," in Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC) Daniel O'Connor fonds 1824-1901 (R6692-0-3-E).

¹² For Tracey's speculations regarding the role of the Orange Order in blocking the advance of the Friends of Ireland in Upper Canada see his "Address to the Irish Inhabitants of the British Provinces" in the *Irish Vindicator*, 17 March 1829.

¹³ For a general introduction to loyalism in Upper Canada see Jane Errington, *The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada: A Developing Colonial Ideology* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987) and David Mills, *The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada, 1784-1850* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988). For a more specific discussion of the interaction between Macdonell and the culture of loyalty in Upper Canada see Rea, *Bishop Alexander Macdonell*.

to be – great, glorious and free; does he imagine that His Loyalty to his King and Country would be questioned?¹⁴

By the late 1820s the Orange Order was well established in much of the province and was exerting an influence on public affairs in places such as York.¹⁵ Its presence undoubtedly produced a climate hostile to the aims and purposes of an Irish Catholic organization. In Bytown, however, the Order did not have a strong presence until the 1830s, and while Tracey singled out the order as the likely culprit, the Bytown group never specified the source of opposition and never mentioned the Orange Order in its proceedings. Therefore, though the presence of the Orange Order may have had some effect in preventing the Friends of Ireland from taking root outside of Bytown, evidence suggests that the broader culture of loyalty in Upper Canada produced a decisive opposition from a source not recognized by Tracey – the Catholic Church.

Alexander Macdonell's position towards the introduction of the Irish Catholic Association in any form is unique. Elsewhere the Friends of Ireland could claim some support from the Church, and members of the clergy were active in a number of American and Canadian branches. The best-known example is Bishop John England of Charleston, South Carolina. A founding member and officer in his local branch, he was also instrumental in the expansion of the society throughout the United States. At the behest of the Friends of Ireland in New York, in the summer of 1826 Bishop England urged the Irish Catholics of Lower Canada to rally to the cause of emancipation; Tracey highlighted this address as a primary motive for founding the Friends of Ireland in Canada (Montreal) two years later.¹⁶ The society established in Halifax in November 1828 was largely the result of the efforts of the parish priest and vicar general, Rev. John Loughnan.¹⁷ In the same month several members of the local clergy, including the Vicar General of Quebec, Rev.

¹⁴ LAC, O'Connor fonds, "Minutes of the Meetings of the Friends of Ireland in By Town."

¹⁵ For general works on the Orange Order in Canada see Cecil Houston and William Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore: A Historical Geography of the Orange Order in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980); and Hereward Senior, *Orangeism: The Canadian Phase* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972).

¹⁶ On Bishop John England's role in the Friends of Ireland see Moriarty, "The Irish American Response." For his address to the people of Lower Canada see the *Truth Teller* (New York), 10 June 1826, and for Tracey's comments on this address see the *Irish Vindicator*, 27 February 1829.

¹⁷ Rev. Loughnan called for the first meeting of the Friends of Ireland and emancipation at the behest of some of his parishioners. Loughnan appears to have been responsible for collecting the subscriptions and donations to the 'rent' in Halifax. See the *Morning Chronicle* (London), 27 December 1828.

Jérôme Demers, joined the Friends of Ireland in Quebec City.¹⁸ It should be noted that not all branches of the Friends of Ireland claimed the support of the local clergy. The Montreal society, for instance, had little if any such support. While not all members of the clergy enrolled as Friends of Ireland, few outside of Upper Canada actively sought to thwart the society.

Early in his career Alexander Macdonell began working tirelessly to establish himself and the Catholics under his charge as loyal and deserving subjects of the King. He recognized rather astutely that Catholic fortunes within the Empire and within ultra-loyalist Upper Canada required continued demonstrations and assertions of service and loyalty. Consequently his appeals for government funding depended heavily on those themes. As Vicar General of Upper Canada Macdonell stressed the loyalty and obedience of Catholics, especially Scots Catholics, who were then, with the exception of French Canadians, the primary ethnic group under his charge. He told Lord Bathurst, the Colonial Secretary, that religion implanted and reinforced the loyal principles the Scots had inherited from their fathers, and government funding for their Church would increase their gratitude and sense of duty towards the government.¹⁹ Declaring that Catholicism and its hierarchical structures was a natural barrier to the insidious influence of American republicanism, Macdonell argued that Catholics were naturally inclined to show obedience to the similarly hierarchical Empire.²⁰ Likewise, the “double barrier” of religion and language protected the Gaelic-speaking Scots Catholics from the “contagious politics of their democratic neighbours.”²¹ Such narratives convinced the Colonial Office to assent to Macdonell’s request for salaries for himself, three clergymen and three schoolteachers in 1817.²²

Much to Macdonell’s dismay, however, the Colonial Office stipulated that these funds were to come from the provincial treasury not from London. The historian J. E. Rea suggested that Macdonell would have preferred to receive his salary from the Colonial Office as a consistent and reliable source of funds independent of the provincial government.²³ Some members

¹⁸ The others were the Revs. Parent, McMahon, Poulin, Ferland, and Painchaud. Note that of the six clerical members of the Quebec society five were of francophone backgrounds. For Tracey’s oration on this topic see the *Canadian Spectator* of 19 November 1828, and for the membership rolls of the Quebec Society see the *Irish Vindicator* of 12 May 1829.

¹⁹ AAK, Macdonell correspondence (hereafter MC), box 2, AI2C5, letter 8, Macdonell to Bathurst, January 1817.

²⁰ Rea, *Bishop Alexander Macdonell*, 9; AAK, Macdonell correspondence, box 2, AI2C7, letter 1, Macdonell to Maitland, 9 March 1826.

²¹ AAK, MC, box 2, AI2C5, letter 8, Macdonell to Bathurst, January 1817.

²² AAK, MC, box 1, AI1C3, letter 3g, Goulbourn to Macdonell, 6 June 1817.

²³ Rea, *Bishop Alexander Macdonell*, 44.

of the Family Compact opposed funding the Catholic Church from the colonial treasury. Indeed, provincial political squabbles required seven years of appeals before the payments were issued. While in London in 1824 petitioning for his salary arrears, Macdonell furthered the interests of his Church by capitalizing both on the government's new efforts at assisted emigration to British North America and on its increasing anxieties about the growing unrest among Catholics in Ireland.

In the early 1820s, the Colonial Office was exploring ways to harness and encourage the large-scale migration of Irish that began in the previous decade. In the summer of 1823 it sponsored the emigration of approximately 600 Irish Catholics from the Blackwater region of County Cork to eastern Upper Canada.²⁴ The Blackwater was home to the "Rockites," a secret agrarian protest movement whose disruptive and violent activities prompted landlords to call for some form of government intervention.²⁵ Under the direction of the under-secretary Robert Wilmot Horton, the Colonial Office conceived this assisted emigration scheme on the assumption that given some land the Irish peasant would calm down, forget his disorderly ways, and become a good British subject. Horton hoped to sponsor a second much larger wave of emigration if the first scheme proved successful.

This proposed influx of Irish Catholics into Upper Canada presented Macdonell with both a challenge and an opportunity. If the emigrants brought their disorderly and disloyal behavior with them to their new homes they would disrupt his carefully cultivated narrative of Catholic loyalty and seriously damage the reputation of the bishop and his Church. However, if he could convince government officials that funding for his Church was critical to the successful integration of the Irish Catholics into Upper Canadian society, then Macdonell could take steps to ensure their loyalty and good behavior while simultaneously furthering the fortunes of the provincial Church as a whole. Consequently, he slightly revised his narrative of Catholic loyalty. Whereas the Scots Catholics had inherited loyalty from their ancestors, the Irish Catholics could be made loyal and kept orderly through the intercession of well-supported clergy and schoolteachers.

Recognizing that large sums of money would be allocated for Horton's proposed scheme, Macdonell suggested spending a portion of the funds to ensure that these new settlers had ample access to clergy and schoolmasters. In a series of letters to Horton, Macdonell argued that the "influence of

²⁴ Wendy Cameron, "Selecting Peter Robinson's Emigrants," *Histoire-Sociale/Social History*, IX, no. 17 (May 1976): 29-46.

²⁵ For the most recent and the most comprehensive study of the 'Rockites' see James S. Donnelly Jr., *Captain Rock: The Irish Agrarian Rebellion of 1821-1824* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

religion when judiciously exercised over the Irish Roman Catholics is the most effectual means of rendering them good Christians and loyal subjects.” It was necessary, he added, that the number of clergy and teachers in the colony must be proportionate to the number of Roman Catholics settled in the province. With adequate funding for staff Macdonell was certain of his ability to ensure the “general good conduct even of the Irish” and maintain a “powerful control over them.”²⁶ The bishop later recalled that he pledged to Horton and the Colonial Secretary Lord Bathurst that “if fair play were given to the Irish Catholics and justice done to them, [he] would pledge [his] life, their conduct would be as loyal and as orderly, as that of any of His Majesty’s subjects.”²⁷

Bathurst was especially receptive to Macdonell’s assurances regarding the conduct of Irish Catholics abroad.²⁸ Increasing unrest and agitation in Ireland in the summer of 1824 caused anxiety for many in the British government. Being watched especially closely was the Irish Catholic Association which, since its founding in 1823, had experienced a meteoric rise to the front and center of Irish politics. Originally intended to unite the Irish Catholic middle-class and gentry for a renewed campaign against the remaining restrictions against Catholics in the United Kingdom, under the guidance of Daniel O’Connell the Association had transformed itself into one of the first mass-membership political movements in history. The ‘rent,’ a monthly subscription of one penny, affordable for many in the working classes and in the peasantry provided a steady source of funds for the Association and allowed O’Connell to claim the political support of the Irish Catholic people. Each penny was seen as a vote in favor of his

²⁶ AAK, MC, box 2, AI2C6, letter 19, Macdonell to Horton, 23 August 1824.

²⁷ AAK, MC, box 4, AI4CL1, letter 8, Address of Bishop Macdonell to the Irish Catholics of Upper Canada, 1 December 1838; AAK, MLB, 1820-29, Macdonell to Weld, 6 May 1827.

²⁸ Although by 1829 Bathurst accepted the removal of Catholic disabilities as the most expedient policy, much of his political career had been spent in opposition to such a measure. As late as 1827, around the time of his correspondence with Macdonell, Bathurst and a number of fellow ministers resigned rather than serve with the incoming first minister and known Catholic sympathizer, George Canning. Though just two years later he would join many of these same ministers in guiding a relief bill through Parliament, Bathurst’s opposition to extra-parliamentary agitation, and therefore to the Catholic Association, continued. In fact, before voting in favour of emancipation he voted for that body’s suppression. It is clear from his correspondence with Macdonell that as Secretary of State for War and the Colonies Bathurst entertained fears that the Association might gain influence amongst Irish Catholics abroad and by them spread discontent and disloyalty. For a general study of Bathurst’s career see Neville Thompson, *Earl Bathurst and the British Empire, 1762-1834* (Barnsley, South Yorkshire: L. Cooper, 1999). For the most concise and favourable account of the change in opinion among Tory politicians in this period, see Wendy Hinde, *Catholic Emancipation: A Shake to Men’s Minds* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992).

campaign, and more importantly, his methods of agitation.²⁹ It is unlikely that in 1824 either Macdonell or Bathurst could have anticipated the appearance of the Friends of Ireland in North America, but it is clear that the Colonial Secretary harbored some fears that the Catholic Association might exert some influence outside of Ireland. Rea has suggested that Macdonell saw in these concerns another opportunity to advance the mission of the Upper Canadian Church as a defender of the order and stability in the empire.³⁰

Macdonell continued to exploit these concerns. In December 1824, he informed the Colonial Office that Bishop Edward Fenwick of Cincinnati, who was then touring Catholic Europe in an effort to raise funds for his diocese on the Ohio frontier, was contemplating soliciting the patronage of the Catholic Association. Fenwick believed that the increasing number of Irish settling in his diocese gave him a strong claim for the Association's assistance.³¹ Macdonell strongly implied that if Bathurst did not contribute to his cause, the Irish Catholics of Upper Canada might also turn to the Catholic Association. If Bathurst provided funds, however, Macdonell promised to dissuade the colony's Irish Catholics from "entertaining any hopes or expectations from such a quarter."³² Whether Macdonell believed that the Catholic Association might one day gain a foothold in Upper Canada is impossible to determine. Nevertheless, by raising the specter of the Catholic Association gaining influence, he seized on government anxiety about the volatility of Irish Catholics whose loyalty to the empire was a continual question mark.

Bathurst's response was quick. In a letter marked private, the Colonial Secretary pledged a personal contribution of fifty pounds to the Church of Upper Canada and instructed Macdonell to use him as a reference in applying to the Canada Company³³ for further funds. These measures were taken, Bathurst wrote, in the understanding that "no application [was] to be made to the Roman Catholic Association of Ireland."³⁴ Having received the

²⁹ For one of the best studies of the campaign for Catholic emancipation in Ireland see Fergus O'Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation: Daniel O'Connell and the Birth of Irish Democracy, 1820-1830* (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1985).

³⁰ Rea, "Alexander McDonell," *DCB*, 547.

³¹ One of the stated purposes for opening the Catholic 'rent' in 1824 was to assist the expanding Catholic church in the United States, specifically by providing £5,000 to educate priests to go to North America and by building schools and chapels there. However, there is no indication that any funds were ever allotted for such purposes. For more on the proposed and actual uses of the Catholic 'rent' see pages 55-63 in James Reynolds, *The Catholic Emancipation Crisis in Ireland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954).

³² AAK, MC, box 2, AI2C6, letter 22, Macdonell to Bathurst, 17 December 1824.

³³ The Canada Company, established in 1824, bought government land in Upper Canada, which it then planned to sell to settlers.

³⁴ AAK, MC, box 1, AI1C3, letter 7, Bathurst to Macdonell, 20 December 1824.

desired response, Macdonell effusively thanked the Secretary and assured him that his subscription had already “had the desired effect.” Positioning himself again as the guardian of Irish Catholics in Upper Canada he swore that “any application from the Catholics of Upper Canada to the Catholic Association of Ireland ought naturally to be made through me who have had the whole burden of providing for their religious establishments ever since I have been in the Province and I pledge my life that I will neither apply myself nor permit any others under my control to apply to such a quarter.”³⁵

Macdonell certainly sought to capitalize on Bathurst’s fear that transplantation of the movement was possible, but it is not clear if the bishop actually shared that fear. The subject disappeared from his correspondence with Bathurst but Macdonell revived the issue in March 1826 after he toured Irish settlements in eastern Upper Canada with Lieutenant Governor Sir Peregrine Maitland. The bishop reminded the Lieutenant Governor that in each place he had witnessed “the loyal principles and good disposition of the Irish Emigrants and of the Catholics in general.” Yet, without proper provisioning for clergy and schoolmasters the peaceful settlement of Catholics was never a sure thing. Macdonell warned Maitland that without three hundred pounds to purchase religious and educational books, the Irish Catholics of Upper Canada might acquire the books and tracts apparently being printed and distributed widely by the Catholic Association. Macdonell thought it best that the colonial government act immediately to obtain more suitable texts – lest that militant body find its way into the territory.³⁶

Thus in the spring and summer of 1824, Macdonell found himself in the right place at the right time to exploit Horton’s ardent desire to make his assisted emigration plan a success and the Colonial Office’s anxiety about the Catholic Association’s agitation being transplanted abroad. However, it would be presumptuous to assume that Macdonell was acting solely for opportunistic reasons. Macdonell’s own conservative religious and political views would have been cause enough for opposing the extra-parliamentary agitation of O’Connell and his followers. Rea has described him as “strictly orthodox and deeply conservative” in theology, and Thomas D’Arcy McGee once referred to him as the “greatest Tory in Canada.” Indeed, Macdonell was closely linked to the Family Compact, the pro-government elite in the province, who, though they did not share his religion, shared his politics, and recognized him as a potential source of power over the Catholics in Upper Canada. In return for his support and his efforts to bring the Church into line with them, they accorded Macdonell a share in the patronage system and gave his opinions on public affairs some consideration; he was, as Rea put

³⁵ AAK, MC, box 2, AI2C6, letter 23, Macdonell to Bathurst, 27 December 1824.

³⁶ AAK, MC, box 2, AI2C7, letter 1, Macdonell to Maitland, 9 March 1826.

it, an “associate member of the governing elite.”³⁷ The possibility that Irish Catholic emigrants might have some explicit connection with the Catholic Association posed serious problems for his aspirations and standing in Upper Canada.

His personal, political, and philosophical grounds for opposing the society notwithstanding, Macdonell had other more practical concerns about how the Friends of Ireland could threaten the growth and influence of the Catholic Church in Upper Canada. As his letters to colonial officials illustrate, the provincial Church faced a consistent shortage of funds, and Macdonell was often forced to depend on donations from the government and individuals to erect a limited number of churches and schools and to retain even a small number of priests and teachers to staff them. Such sources of funding were anything but consistent and he also had to rely on both local initiatives and resources. Any society that threatened to distract his flock was therefore suspect; by pledging financial assistance to the Catholic Association, the Friends of Ireland also earned the bishop’s hostility.

Macdonell’s concerns were not altogether unfounded and events in Bytown confirmed many of his fears. He had visited the village in early September 1828 to help resolve some outstanding differences between the laity and Patrick Haran, the resident priest.³⁸ These differences, revolving largely around parish finances, were apparently settled during a meeting between Haran, Macdonell, and a number of leading Bytown Irish Catholics such as Daniel O’Connor, Michael Burke, Thomas Hickey, Charles Friel and John Pennyfeather. To the bishop’s delight, the meeting opened a subscription to raise funds to construct the village’s first church. The group divided Bytown into sections to better coordinate and facilitate its efforts, each section in turn being assigned to one or two collectors: one for the upper town, two for lower town between Rideau Street and the Ottawa River, and two more to cover the area from Rideau Street to the canal. The group met twice more over the next month to finalize their plans, even going as far as to award contracts for the construction of the church.³⁹ Macdonell left

³⁷ Rea, “Alexander McDonell,” *DCB*, 546.

³⁸ A native of County Sligo, Haran emigrated with his brother and presented himself to Macdonell with references in the summer of 1822. Macdonell appointed him first to Richmond before moving him to Bytown in 1827 when the opening of the canal and the expansion of the timber trade there attracted large numbers of Catholics. AAK, MLB 1820-29, Macdonell to Burke, 3 July 1822; Macdonell to Haran, 20 November 1822; MC, box 2, AI2C7, Macdonell to Maitland, 9 March 1826. Haran’s short residence in Bytown is commemorated in verse: William Pittman Lett, *Recollections of Bytown and its Old Inhabitants* (Ottawa: Citizen Printing and Publishing Company, 1874), chapter IX.

³⁹ Rev. P. Alexis Barbezieux, *Histoire de la Province Ecclesiastique d’Ottawa et de la Colonisation dans la vallée de l’Ottawa* (Ottawa: La Cie d’Imprimerie d’Ottawa, 1897), 146-147.

Bytown gratified that the village, the newest outpost of the provincial Church, was fully on the desired course. Indeed, in November 1828 he wrote rather glowingly of his visit, boasting of the successful arrangements he had made for building a church there.⁴⁰

Despite this auspicious start, the Bytown committee did not meet after Macdonell's departure and ultimately failed to achieve its goal. In his *Histoire de la Province Ecclesiastique d'Ottawa* the Reverend P. Alexis de Barbezieux vaguely suggests that because of some unidentified oversight the committee had to forfeit the land set aside for the church to Thomas McKay, a prominent local entrepreneur.⁴¹ De Barbezieux overlooked the ways in which the Friends of Ireland in Bytown competed with the church-building committee for the interest and resources of the village's nascent Catholic community. There is no record of the church-building committee meeting after October 1828, and yet more than half of those who participated in the "meeting of the Catholics of Bytown" in September 1828 attended the first meeting of the Friends of Ireland in January 1829. Many church committee members were prominent in the society. Charles Friel and John Pennyfeather served on the executive committee over which Daniel O'Connor presided as president. Rev. Patrick Haran chaired the first meeting and was appointed as the society's corresponding secretary, a position of prestige in the Friends of Ireland and one often reserved for the most prominent members.⁴² Thomas Hickey was one of five members appointed as collectors of the Catholic 'rent' in Bytown, and while Michael Burke did not have a post, he was one of the first members to join the society. Moreover, each of the nine church committee members who joined the Friends of Ireland paid at least five shillings in membership fees; Friel, Haran, Hickey, O'Connor, Pennyfeather and one other, John Joyce, actually paid one pound and five shillings, enough to cover both their yearly membership dues and the transmission of their names to the Catholic Association to be enrolled as members of that body. If their involvement in the Friends of Ireland did not alone frustrate Macdonell, then surely such financial generosity to the Irish cause did.⁴³

The Friends of Ireland borrowed more from the church committee than just members. When it decided in April 1829 that it needed a more

⁴⁰ AAK, MLB 1820-29, Macdonell to Weld, 26 November 1828.

⁴¹ De Barbezieux, *Histoire Ecclesiastique* 148.

⁴² For instance Daniel Tracey took on this role for the Montreal Friends of Ireland and Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, his close associate, did the same in Quebec City.

⁴³ Seventeen people attended the 7 September meeting of the Catholics of Bytown, according to de Barbezieux, *Histoire Ecclesiastique*, 146-147. Of these seventeen, nine would later appear in the rolls of the Friends of Ireland: Michael Burke, Charles Friel, Rev. Patrick Haran, Thomas Hickey, John Joyce, James Keays, William Northgraves, Daniel O'Connor, and John Pennyfeather. LAC, O'Connor fonds, "Minutes of the Meetings of the Friends of Ireland in By Town".

efficient system to collect the Catholic 'rent,' it adopted a method similar to that proposed by the church committee in September 1828. Whereas the society initially relied on voluntary contributions, by April it realized it needed to bring its message to a wider audience and solicit, not just collect, the 'rent.' In similar fashion to the church committee, the Friends of Ireland divided its efforts into two collection districts – lower town and upper town. The dividing line between these two districts was Rideau Street, and four collectors were to be appointed to the lower town, where the Society had less of a presence, and just two to the upper town. The mission was "to secure subscriptions in aid of the friends of this society," in order to "further advancement of the sacred cause in which we are engaged."⁴⁴

While it is doubtful that the existence of the Friends of Ireland was the sole cause for the delay in constructing Bytown's first church, the society certainly diverted attention and resources from the church-building project. In the three months in which they were active, the Friends of Ireland in Bytown attracted thirty-one paying members and raised just over twenty pounds. All but five members took out subscriptions for a year or more. This was no small feat in such a young settlement, especially one comprised largely of recent arrivals and the labouring classes. Politics, or rather the politics of Catholic Ireland, temporarily trounced religious concerns for many of Bytown's leading Irish Catholics by supplanting the church-building committee and inadvertently thwarting Macdonell's carefully orchestrated plans for Bytown. Had this success been replicated beyond Bytown it would have represented more than a source of embarrassment for Macdonell, who had, after all, boasted of his influence and control over his flock, and pledged to keep such societies out of Upper Canada; it would have constituted a major setback in the expansion of the provincial Church.

As parish priest of the nascent Catholic community of Bytown the Reverend Patrick Haran had a critical role in guiding the local progress of Macdonell's church-building project. In Upper Canada at the end of the 1820s, Haran and his three fellow Irish priests were, with the expanding Irish population, increasingly valuable commodities. Though Irish priests were often a thorn in the bishop's side, he nevertheless acknowledged that they were essential to the progress of his increasingly Irish Church.⁴⁵ Haran was also vital to the formation of the Friends of Ireland in Bytown. Haran was no doubt aware of the bishop's political views and of the likely effects of

⁴⁴ LAC, O'Connor fonds, "Minutes of the Meetings of the Friends of Ireland in By Town".

⁴⁵ AAK, MC, box 3, AI3C3, letter 29, Plessis to Macdonell, 24 October 1821; MLB 1820-29, Macdonell to Alexander Macdonell, Esq., 12 December 1822; Macdonell to Baby, 27 December 1822; Macdonell to Alexander Macdonell, Esq., 8 December 1828; Macdonell to O'Grady, 29 January 1829.

establishing a branch of the society on local church-building efforts. Still, he was the only member of the Upper Canadian clergy who publicly supported the Friends of Ireland. That the Friends of Ireland appeared in the only Upper Canadian town with an Irish priest *and* a significant Irish Catholic population was no coincidence; nor was it a coincidence that Patrick Haran had been suspended from some of his duties as parish priest before attending the first meeting of the Friends of Ireland and was eventually stripped of his faculties.

Patrick Haran had mixed success as parish priest of Bytown. The dispute with prominent Irish Catholic members of the church-building committee in 1828 had not ended in his favour. Bishop Macdonell had sided with the lay members of the committee and in so doing publicly exposed Haran's alleged history of financial mismanagement at his previous parish.⁴⁶ By removing him from all fundraising activities for the new church, the bishop inflicted a blow to Haran's reputation and authority in the parish. Yet, in January 1829, Haran had the honour of being called to chair the first meeting of the Bytown Friends of Ireland, which was composed chiefly of members of the church-building committee. Though he attempted to decline the position citing concerns about the "party feelings" that might be construed should a priest lead the organization, he served as corresponding secretary, assuming the task of coordinating efforts with the branches in Lower Canada and beyond.⁴⁷ While we can surmise that his relationship with the Irish Catholics of Bytown had been largely repaired by January 1829, Haran's relationship with Macdonell never recovered. Indeed Macdonell's treatment of Haran may have prompted the priest to participate actively in the Friends of Ireland.

Haran's participation in the Friends of Ireland seems to have been the final straw for Macdonell. Though Macdonell began to search for a priest to replace Haran following the fundraising dispute, financial misdemeanors and disputes with the laity did not warrant immediate removal.⁴⁸ Instead, Macdonell delayed removing Haran's faculties until the spring of 1829. Macdonell was vague about his reasons for doing so, citing a petition from parishioners and promising to speak to Haran in person on the matter.⁴⁹ Later, Macdonell referred to the "cogent and irresistible cause" that necessitated

⁴⁶ Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto (hereafter ARCAT), Bishop Alexander Macdonell papers, M AD03.01, Haron to Macdonell, 23 April 1828; AAK, MLB 1820-29, Fraser to Burke, 13 May 1828; Fraser to Catholic Committee of Bytown, 13 May 1828.

⁴⁷ LAC, O'Connor fonds, "Minutes of the Meetings of the Friends of Ireland in By Town".

⁴⁸ AAK, MLB 1820-29, Macdonell to McMahan, 31 January 1829.

⁴⁹ AAK, MLB 1820-29, Macdonell to Haran, 1 June 1829; Macdonell to Rev. Angus Macdonell, 2 June 1829; MC, box 2, AI2C7, letter 14, Macdonell to Catholics of Bytown, 11 August 1829.

Haran's removal and the "worldly connections" in which Haran had become entangled because he had "associated too much with [his] hearers."⁵⁰

A comparison with an unsuccessful attempt to establish a branch of the Friends of Ireland in Kingston further demonstrates how Macdonell's worsening relationship with Haran permitted the successful founding of the Bytown society. Shortly after establishing the Friends of Ireland in Montreal, Daniel Tracey asked influential Irishmen across the colonies to form their own branches. In October 1828 Walter McCunniffe, a prominent Irish Catholic in Kingston, indicated to Tracey that efforts were underway to establish a society in Kingston.⁵¹ This communication surely heightened Tracey's expectations that Irishmen in other parts of Upper Canada would soon follow suit, and certainly deepened his disappointment when he received no additional correspondence from McCunniffe or anyone else in Kingston.

McCunniffe's failure to follow through may be explained by his close relationship with Macdonell. By 1828, Walter McCunniffe was a prominent merchant who enjoyed some standing in Kingston's Irish and Catholic communities. He had a close relationship with Bishop Macdonell with whom, along with the bishop's most loyal vicar general, Rev. William Peter Macdonald – that "sword in the bishop's hand," he served as trustee of the Catholic Church in Kingston.⁵² McCunniffe was also superintendent of Macdonell's interests and properties in Kingston. Recall that in 1824 Macdonell had promised Bathurst that neither he nor anyone under his control would be connected to the Catholic Association. The contrasting outcomes of attempts in Bytown and Kingston to establish branches of the society suggest that Macdonell used his influence over would-be members to obstruct their efforts. In Kingston, where his presence was strong and his relationship with McCunniffe professionally if not personally sound, no branch of the Friends of Ireland was ever established. Conversely, in Bytown, where Macdonell's relationship with the parish priest had deteriorated the Friends had their only branch in the province.

⁵⁰ AAK, MLB 1820-29, Macdonell to By, 28 May 1829; MLB 1829-34, Macdonell to Lalor, 26 July 1831.

⁵¹ For an account of the meeting at which Tracey announced the letter see the *Canadian Spectator*, 8 October 1828. That Tracey sent such letters to prominent Irishmen in Upper and Lower Canada is apparent from the proceedings of the Friends of Ireland in Bytown and in a letter from John Stewart, editor of the *Bathurst Independent Examiner*, to Rev. Patrick Haran, dated 13 April 1829. This letter is copied in O'Connor Fonds, LAC, "Minutes of the Meetings of the Friends of Ireland in By Town".

⁵² Nicholas Flood Davin, *The Irishman in Canada* (Toronto: Maclear and Co, 1877), 365; Louis J. Flynn, *Built on A Rock: The Story of the Roman Catholic Church in Kingston, 1826-1976* (Kingston: Archdiocese of Kingston, 1976); Gill, "The Sword in the Bishop's Hand," 437-452.

Having spent most of his career insisting on the loyalty of the empire's Catholic subjects, Macdonell understandably viewed the appearance of the Friends of Ireland anywhere in his territory as highly undesirable. That society's support of the Catholic Association's extra-parliamentary campaign implied for many Tories a tacit support for agitation against government and authority; this directly contradicted Macdonell's narratives of Catholic loyalty and proclivity for hierarchy. Similarly, the expansion of the Friends of Ireland into Upper Canada would tarnish Macdonell's reputation with colonial officials in London and in York. He had after all positioned himself as the guardian and arbiter of the province's Irish Catholic community and had even pledged his life to keep the Catholic Association from exerting any influence in his territory. The emergence of the Friends of Ireland in Upper Canada in 1828 and 1829 would have raised questions about Macdonell's power and influence and directly threatened his mission of proving Catholic loyalty both in the colonies and in the empire at large. In addition, with the consistent shortage of funds faced by the Church in Upper Canada Macdonell opposed any competing claim on his parishioner's pockets. The purpose of the Friends of Ireland was to collect the 'rent,' and Macdonell did not want one penny of Irish Catholic money to leave the province. And yet at Bytown, on the periphery of Macdonell's surveillance but at the center of a booming economy, an influx of middling-class and reform-minded Irish Catholics and the influence of parish priest Patrick Haran made conditions ripe for the brief but fascinating appearance of the Friends of Ireland.

A Catholic Journey: Paul Martin Sr., Politics, and Faith

Greg DONAGHY¹

When the results of the first round of voting at the Liberal leadership convention were released on a warm afternoon in April 1968, the cheering delegates gasped with surprise. Canada's veteran foreign minister, Paul Martin Sr., once the clear favourite to succeed Prime Minister L.B. Pearson, had finished a dismal fourth. Soon to turn 65 years old, his day was done, and he knew it. Though tempted, as he sometimes was, to give way to self-pity, Martin stifled the urge. Instead, he smiled wanly, released his supporters, and pledged his loyalty to the next Liberal leader. The writer Hugh MacLennan, whose iconic novel of French-English conflict, *Two Solitudes*, echoed the tensions that the bicultural Martin had faced throughout his political career, was impressed. "Along with millions of others who followed the Convention on television," he wrote the defeated candidate, "I was moved by the dignity and quietness you so naturally displayed. You set us all an example of how a wise and great public servant can conduct himself under extreme pressure."²

Defeat – this was his third failed bid for the Liberal leadership – came to define the older Martin, whose popular reputation and standing never fully recovered. Though he spent the next decade as a senator and senior diplomat, he was readily dismissed by a new generation of hard-edged journalists. Toronto columnist Geoffrey Stevens mocked Martin's senate work as one "perpetual goodwill visit to countries that no one in Canada has ever heard of."³ Similarly, when Martin was named high commissioner to the UK in 1974, journalist Hugh Winsor rushed to remind CBC listeners that Martin was "a political has-been, a reminder of the ambivalent 50's and

¹ The author would like to Fr. Mako Watanabe and Sr. Annetta Ryan of Pembroke, who share Martin's Catholic impulses, for their encouraging comments on this article. An earlier version was delivered as the 2012-13 John J. Wintermeyer Lecture on Religion and Politics at St. Jerome's University, Waterloo. The views in this article are the author's alone.

² Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Martin Papers, Vol 273, File: Leadership Correspondence, Hugh MacLennan to Paul Martin, 7 April 1968.

³ Geoffrey Stevens, "Tissue paper tinsel and a hearty Ho, Ho," *Globe and Mail*, 25 December 1973.

60's.”⁴ *Maclean's Magazine* despatched its rising star, Marci McDonald, to London, where she penned a savage send-up of Martin in a piece entitled “The forgotten man.”⁵ Historians, at least those who bothered to notice Paul Martin Sr., seemed inclined to agree, writing him off as a simple “parish-pump politician.”⁶

The authentic Paul Martin was much different. His politics and ambitions were anything but simple, and were deeply rooted in his Catholic faith, upbringing, and education. Martin matured in an era when the Catholic Church, particularly the French-Canadian church from which he hailed, represented a conservative bulwark against modern liberalism. But the youthful Martin evolved into an unusual sort of Catholic politician. He shed the conservative faith of his childhood. Instead, he embraced the transformative Catholicism that he encountered at Toronto's University of St. Michael's College, which encouraged him to engage his faith with the modern challenges of the contemporary world. He emerged from school professing progressive, even radical, notions of workers' rights and global order, of an activist state supplying pensions and health care. He embraced politics as his vocation, a reflection of his faith, and he set out to transform his country and his world.

The Political Paul Martin

Paul Martin was always more, much more, than just an “old pol” on the make. When he moved to Windsor in 1930 to take a job as a junior lawyer, he was 27 years old and stone broke. He had borrowed a classmate's rail pass to get there. In his bags, he carried fresh degrees from the University of Toronto and Osgoode Law School, and graduate qualifications from Harvard and Cambridge. His instincts, though sometimes cautious and pragmatic, were progressive, reformist, and forward-looking. His career would unfold as a consistent (and under-valued) battle for social justice at home and abroad.

There were good reasons for Martin to settle in Windsor in the fall of 1930. He had visited the city in the 1920s, encountering a booming and dynamic metropolitan center. With horse racing tracks on the major North American circuits (where Martin had worked briefly as a summer student), distilleries pumping booze into prohibitionist America, and a high-paying

⁴ The National Archives – United Kingdom (hereafter NA), Foreign and Commonwealth Office (hereafter FCO) 23/92, “Transcript of a Commentary by Hugh Winsor,” 10 October 1974.

⁵ Marci McDonald, “The forgotten man,” *Maclean's*, 89, no. 14 (August 1976): 22-27.

⁶ Norman Hillmer and J.J. Granatstein, *Empire to Umpire: Canada and the World to the 1990s* (Toronto: Copp Clark Longman, 1994), 266.

automotive sector, Windsor was an attractive cross between “Las Vegas and the Silicon Valley.”⁷ The border city made political sense, too. It had strong local Liberal organizations and a sizeable population of French-Canadian Catholics, who seemed tailor-made for an aspiring politician of Martin’s bicultural background. The small border city, with a population in 1929 of just over 100,000, was a vital part of a familiar Catholic network, sustained by the Basilian Fathers, who ran Martin’s former college in Toronto as well as Windsor’s Assumption College.⁸

Martin’s adult political career began in the early 1930s, as the Great Depression seized Canada. Within a few short years, industrial production was down 42 percent, and unemployment was up, peaking at an astounding 27 percent.⁹ Neither Conservative Prime Minister R.B. Bennett, nor the Liberal opposition leader, Mackenzie King, understood the extent of the crisis or the need for reform. Paul Martin did. He nailed his colours firmly to the Liberal Party’s progressive, reform wing. He defied the warnings of his petty and jealous leader, Mackenzie King, and backed Mitch Hepburn’s reformist take-over of Ontario. He also joined the party’s national secretary, Vincent Massey, whom King regarded as a “noxious rival,” in his search for a “New Liberalism” of active, interventionist government. These were courageous steps for an aspiring politician to take, and they drew King’s ire.¹⁰

Martin campaigned hard for social and economic reform in the mid-1930s as he fought for the Liberal nomination in Windsor, and then for victory in the 1935 general election. Capitalism would stay. “To say that we must overthrow all that we have built does not sound rational,” he argued. But there would have to be “great changes.” He placed individual welfare at the core of his program: “We have been living in a system whose sole point is profit,” he thundered in 1934, “a system which is not only bad for economics but bad for morality.”¹¹

An early disciple of radical British economist John Maynard Keynes, Martin favoured more state intervention long before it was fashionable to do so. He demanded unemployment insurance, old age pensions, and mother’s allowances. He insisted on labour’s right to collective bargaining, and he championed measures – changes to the Criminal Code to allow freer speech and freedom of assembly – that made it possible for workers to insist on those

⁷ Donaghy Interview with Herb Gray, 8 August 2007.

⁸ Population figures from Trevor Price and Larry Kulisek, *Windsor, 1892-1992, A Centennial Celebration* (Windsor: Chamber Publications, 1992), 91.

⁹ A. E. Safarian, *The Canadian Economy in the Great Depression* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970), 100.

¹⁰ LAC, W.L.M. King Diary, 5 August 1932.

¹¹ “Says Federal Government Should Shoulder Task of Enforcing New Social Law,” *Windsor Daily Star*, 8 February 1934.

rights: "Industry must realize that it has some responsibility for the welfare of its workers," he declared. "That's not socialism. It is social justice."¹²

Life was tough as a back-bench MP in Mackenzie King's Liberal government, elected in 1935. "If ever there was a man that was remote, it was Mackenzie King," Martin observed. "You know, if Mackenzie King said hello to you, God, you got home and you put that in the book."¹³ The pragmatic and ambitious Martin was constrained by party discipline; nonetheless, he challenged his prime minister's cautious inactivity: he championed the new League of Nations and a more activist foreign policy; he backed a national scholarship program for university students; and he sponsored legislative action for unemployment insurance.

He won a sterling reputation as a leading voice of progressive reform, but little else. When the Second World War came in 1939, Martin remained stuck on the government's backbenches. It was, he wrote his young wife, Nell, "almost like being sent to Coventry."¹⁴ That changed with the fall of France in May 1940, the transformation of the war into a "people's war," and the rise after 1942 of the federal branch of the left-wing Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. As King's government responded to these changes by embracing an agenda for postwar reform, the wily prime minister found Martin a new role: Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour.

Public advocacy was Martin's genius, and after 1943, he emerged as one of the leading spokesmen for the government's wartime and postwar agenda. He backed labour to the hilt. He tackled industrialists and employers, boldly reminding them that "Workers are not trash."¹⁵ The war was being fought to "democratize" the workplace, he insisted, and labour must be free to organize and bargain. He championed government regulation and planning, as well as Keynesian measures to promote full employment and economic security. He promised unemployment insurance and better vocational training, mother's allowances and child welfare, better pensions and health insurance. He got plenty of flak from Toronto Tories and the Catholic hierarchy in Quebec, but he won over labour by his heartfelt convictions. "The workers trust him;" wrote *Montreal Labour*, "they know he will leave nothing undone."¹⁶

¹² "Hecklers Are Busy at Conservative-Liberal Debate," *Windsor Daily Star*, 7 October 1935.

¹³ University of Toronto Archives (hereafter UTA), Bothwell Papers, Robert Bothwell and John English interview with Paul Martin, 11 November 1974.

¹⁴ Paul Martin, *A Very Public Life*, vol. 1, *Far From Home* (Ottawa: Deneau, 1983), 263.

¹⁵ "New Approach to Labour," *Globe and Mail*, 16 November 1943.

¹⁶ "The Royal City of Windsor, Ontario," *Montreal Labour World*, Spring 1944.

The prime minister had come to trust Martin too. As the war came to an end, King overcame his scruples about having an extra Ontario Catholic in his cabinet, and he promoted Martin to Secretary of State. The new minister remained on his party's left-wing. Though labour issues fell beyond his mandate, Martin helped resolve a major Ford strike in Windsor in late 1945. He recruited moderate union leaders from the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) and the U.S. headquarters of the United Automotive Workers (UAW) to pressure local union leaders, Roy England and George Burt, to negotiate.¹⁷ Martin intervened again when the Windsor UAW hesitated to accept Ford's demand that the two sides send the key issue of union security to an arbitrator selected by Ottawa. He backed the appointment of Supreme Court Justice Ivan Rand, assuring CCL Vice-President Pat Conroy that Rand had "progressive ideas."¹⁸ The settlement made the compulsory union check-off a characteristic of postwar labour relations in Canada, and ensured labour's right to collective bargaining. King, who fancied himself a reformer, sighed with satisfaction. "I find Martin a help around the cabinet table in defending labour's position," the prime minister confided to his diary.¹⁹

This was the kind of change that Martin welcomed as an integral step towards his Canada. There was soon more. In 1946, the Windsor MP unveiled Canada's first real Citizenship Act. "It was time we [knew]," he explained, "what a Canadian is."²⁰ The cabinet post left him time to join Canada's delegations to the new United Nations, and he emerged as an advocate for an active postwar foreign policy. He won few victories against the cautious inclinations of the professional diplomats and their wary prime minister, but he revelled in the UN's promise of international cooperation. He was excited by its willingness "to bite into everything" and "speak out against injustice no matter whom it might embarrass."²¹

Over the next decade, Martin served on most Canadian UN delegations, working hard to strengthen the world body as an instrument for global peace and cooperation. He helped Foreign Minister Lester B. "Mike" Pearson advance the prospects for a Korean armistice in 1952-53²² and he brokered a deal to restart East-West disarmament talks in 1954. Most notably, in 1955,

¹⁷ William Kaplan, *Canadian Maverick: The Life and Times of Ivan C. Rand* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press and Osgoode Society, 2009), 191-92.

¹⁸ Herb Colling, *Ninety-Nine Days: The Ford Strike in Windsor* (Toronto: N.C. Press, 1995), 138.

¹⁹ LAC, King Diary, 19 July 1945.

²⁰ Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 2 April 1947, 509.

²¹ [Blair Fraser], "Backstage at Ottawa: Johnny Canuck, Diplomat," *Maclean's Magazine*, 15 January 1947.

²² For details, see Greg Donaghy, "Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Canada, the United Nations, and the Search for a Korean Armistice, 1952-53," *War and Society*, 30, no. 2, (August 2011): 134-46.

he cleared the way for universal membership in the organization. Though the UN was open to “peace-loving” states, as the Cold War intensified in the 1940s, both the United States and the Communist Soviet Union used their Security Council veto to exclude applicants whose political sympathies lay with the opposition. By 1955, 22 countries were lined up to join. Despite fierce opposition from Washington, London, and Paris, Martin rallied the General Assembly against the Great Powers, and forced them to admit all sovereign states, making the UN truly representative. Canadian diplomat John Holmes cheered him for “this gesture of faith and confidence in the world as it exists.”²³

Martin’s domestic accomplishments were more important. King promoted him in late 1947 from Secretary of State to Minister of National Health and Welfare, where he stayed until King’s successor, Louis St. Laurent, was defeated ten years later. Cabinet shifted right during that era, leaving Martin, as one reporter remarked, the sole “Liberal in a sometimes high-Tory cabinet.”²⁴ That meant trouble. The most influential minister, C.D. Howe, treated Martin with open disdain. “Well, here comes Paul,” he liked to say, “the saviour of mankind.”²⁵

Martin girded himself for battle. He recruited a team of reform-minded doctors and progressive administrators, and drove them very hard indeed. His deputy minister, George Davidson, described him as “the most difficult and demanding Minister I ever worked for and at the same time the most worthwhile, the most rewarding.”²⁶ He recruited the University of Toronto’s great welfare advocate, Harry Cassidy, and revamped the wartime plans for social welfare that had stalled over constitutional difficulties. He abandoned comprehensive measures as unattainable, and plotted a piecemeal strategy for change. In the spring of 1948, Martin pushed through cabinet a program of federal health grants that would inject \$30 million annually into public health and hospital construction, creating infrastructure vital for public health care.²⁷

He returned to the charge in the 1950s. He won the battle to replace the existing and much-hated means-tested pension with a universal benefit that added a whopping \$300 million to the federal budget. But expanding health care was a tougher fight. He almost won St. Laurent’s support for a national health insurance program in 1952, but the prime minister

²³ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol. 167, John Holmes to Martin, 4 January 1956.

²⁴ Harold Dingman, “Report to the Nation,” *Liberty Magazine*, [September 1947].

²⁵ Paul Martin, *A Very Public Life*, Vol. 2, *So Many Worlds* (Toronto: Deneau Publishers, 1985), 67.

²⁶ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol 275, File: Birthday 1965, George Davidson to Martin, 23 June 1965.

²⁷ LAC, Privy Council Office (hereafter PCO) Records, Vol 66, File C-20-5, Paul Martin, Memorandum on Health Insurance, Cabinet Document 659, 20 April 1948.

back-tracked, worried that “the country had bitten off more than it could chew.”²⁸ Martin himself was trotted out to explain the retreat, a bitter humiliation that still rankled when he wrote his memoirs thirty years later. Another blow followed in 1953, when St. Laurent made hospital insurance much less likely by unilaterally announcing that Ottawa would not support it until “most” provinces did.²⁹ By 1955, Martin was so marginalized that he was excluded from cabinet talks on fiscal relations with the provinces. And then, suddenly, the balance of power shifted. When Conservative Premier Leslie Frost of Ontario welcomed hospital insurance, Martin was quick to exploit the opening and force St. Laurent’s hand. By early 1957, the final pieces of a hospital insurance plan were finally falling into place.

The Catholic Paul Martin

Citizenship, universal pensions, and health care – the foundation stones of modern Canada. Not bad for a “parish-pump politician.” But what, precisely, gave rise to his ambition and fueled it? What forces shaped his social and political ideas? In a secularist century, the surprising answer lies in his faith, his religion, his Catholicism.

Born in 1903 to French-Canadian parents, Martin was the second-oldest in a family of seven children. He was born in Ottawa, but grew up in Pembroke, a remote and rough-hewn lumber town on the edge of the Ottawa River. He inherited a devout French-Canadian Catholicism. His family stood, as he later put it, “very close to the Church in devotion, belief, and association.”³⁰ The family fasted regularly, attended Mass daily during Lent, and ended each day with the rosary. It lived in one of a small number of houses clustered close to Pembroke’s St. Columbkille Cathedral, and rented from the local bishop.

The family’s devotions were hardly unusual, but their significance was reinforced in the Martin household by more immediate evidence of divine intervention. At the age of four, Paul contracted polio, an illness that was sometimes fatal and often left even its surviving victims badly crippled. The prognosis was poor. “Goose oil and prayer,” recommended the local doctor,

²⁸ Queen’s University Archives (hereafter QUA), Dexter Papers, Box 6, Folder 41, Bruce Hutchison to Grant Dexter, 20 March 1952.

²⁹ Malcolm G. Taylor, *Health Insurance and Canadian Public Policy: The Seven Decisions That Created the Canadian Health Insurance System and Their Outcomes*, 2nd ed. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill–Queen’s University Press, 1987), 108.

³⁰ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol 351, Norah Story interview with Paul Martin, 13 May 1971.

“that’s all that can help that boy.”³¹ Martin’s mother, Lumina, trusted in prayer. She bundled her son onto the train and set off for the popular shrines of Ste. Anne de Beaupre and the new chapel of St. Joseph on the slopes of Mount Royal, where Brother André gathered the faithful. Recovery was slow, but eventually, Martin walked again, though he was burdened with a weakened left shoulder, an impaired left arm, and a partly-blind left eye. “It was Brother André,” Lumina always insisted, “who made other cripples walk, who made it possible for Paul.”³²

Polio set Martin apart. He had few close friends his own age in town, and because of his illness, he spent a great deal of time with Lumina, absorbing her fears, her ambitions, and her faith. His mother hailed from a family of small-town lawyers, priests, and shop-keepers, whose feet were planted precariously on the lowest rungs of the middle class, and she inherited their upward aspirations. Lumina fretted constantly about the family’s finances, and impressed upon all her children the vital importance of getting ahead in this world as well as the next. She was, her son recalled, “a very aggressive woman... the activist in the family.” Above all, Martin added, she was “very ambitious for her children.”³³

Like his mother, Martin worried about the family’s finances and considered himself poor, a haunting insecurity that he never escaped. As a teenager, Martin strongly resented the differences in wealth and influence that divided Pembroke’s affluent mill-owners from its poorer citizens, and he could recall being touched deeply when his own father lost his job in 1921: “He was a strong man physically, and I can see yet the agony, the frustration, the sorrow, the disappointment, the bitterness that he experienced.”³⁴ This sensibility fuelled a progressive social and economic outlook that grew stronger as Martin matured.

Martin was a worrywart too. His good humour was frequently offset by a solemn seriousness and sense of purpose. Lumina often spoke about “the nobility of public life,” and even as a small child, her son wanted to be a politician. Mostly, however, Lumina spoke about the priesthood, and she was deeply gratified when Martin showed evidence of a priestly vocation, daily rising at the crack of dawn to serve as an altar boy at the 6:30 a.m. Mass at the local Convent of Mary Immaculate. When Bishop Patrick Ryan offered to pay Martin’s high school fees to follow his calling,

³¹ Tom Hazlitt, “Martin and his memories return to sleepy Pembroke,” *Toronto Star*, 6 March 1968.

³² Harold Dingman, “Personality: Paul Martin,” *New Liberty*, September 1948, 63.

³³ UTA, Bothwell Papers, Bothwell and English interview with Paul Martin, 11 November 1974.

³⁴ UTA, Bothwell Papers, Bothwell and English interview with Paul Martin, 11 November 1974.

a time-honoured route upward for ambitious and devout Catholics, Lumina and Paul seized the chance. Paul was fifteen when he left home in 1918 to study at the Collège Apostolique St-Alexandre de la Gatineau in the small Quebec town of Ironsides.

Martin did well at St-Alexandre over the next three years, though he was never at home there. Nicknamed the “Holy-Ghost-Up-the-Gatineau” after the Spiritan fathers who ran it, St-Alexandre was a bilingual “petit seminaire” training priests for English and French-speaking parishes on both sides of the Ottawa Valley. Run by a tough and athletic Alsatian priest, Joseph Burgsthaler, college life was meant to be shaped by a driving “thirst for a disciplined liberty.”³⁵ There was lots of discipline, but little liberty. The clock tower bell tolled the passing of each monotonous day: prayer, study, meals, play. Students, confined to the isolated campus along the banks of the Gatineau River, rose at 6 a.m. for daily Mass, breakfasted on porridge and toast, and ate dinners of pea soup, meat, and pudding.³⁶ The curriculum was narrow – traditional Catholic theology as well as Latin and Greek composition and literature. This was not the life Martin wanted, and when he encountered a former teacher decades later, he was unusually bitter in his reminiscences, telling his wife that “[w]e all thought he was a son-of-a-bitch.”³⁷

The school’s impact on Martin’s politics was much more fundamental. By 1918, his attachment to the Liberal Party and its leader, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, was already in place, inherited from his father. St-Alexandre, however, would sharpen Martin’s identity as a French-Canadian. Like many communities in the Ottawa Valley, Pembroke was deeply divided along linguistic lines between its French and English-speaking inhabitants. Endless conflicts with the larger anglophone population and the provincial restrictions on French-language education embodied in Regulation 17 created pressures that made assimilation almost inevitable. The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 and the imposition of conscription in 1917 over French-Canadian opposition sparked a crisis in Canadian unity.

The national crisis echoed through Pembroke and in the Martin household. “I can remember feuds around our family table,” Paul recalled, “meal after meal, month after month.”³⁸ This division was doubtless

³⁵ Jean-Francois Pelletier, “Le Saint-Alexandre d’il y a soixante-dix ans,” <http://www.college-stalexandre.qc.ca/patrimoine/70ans01.html>, accessed: 10 April 2009. See also, Alphonse Gilbert, c.s.sp., *La Vie à St-Alexandre* (Limbou: Collège St-Alexandre, 1953).

³⁶ Martin, *Far From Home*, 19.

³⁷ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol 184, File: Letters to Mrs. P Martin, Martin to Nell Martin, [July 1942].

³⁸ UTA, Bothwell Papers, Bothwell and English interview with Martin, 1 November 1974.

uncomfortable for young Paul, and St-Alexandre represented an avenue of adolescent escape and self-definition. There, like most of his French-Canadian classmates, he embraced the wave of nationalist enthusiasm that swept through Quebec's classical colleges. The students he met "were very Quebec... they were very French, very nationalistic." "I was a Nationalist in those days," he later boasted, and "prejudiced against English-speaking people."³⁹

Childhood gave Martin three things: a restless ambition, linked to his mother and his recovery; a vague awareness of economic inequality and social justice; and a devout (but traditional) Catholicism, which was inevitably bound up in his narrow identity as a French-Canadian. St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto, where he headed in September 1921, would forge from these key characteristics the core of the mature Martin.

St. Mike's was a different world. When Martin arrived there – rolling up from Union Station on the Yonge Street tram – the college was a bustling hive of physical and intellectual activity. Toronto was just beginning to widen Bay Street, tearing down the college buildings on the eastern edge of campus and transforming St. Mike's into a construction site. Students and faculty dubbed the campus "the sand heap."⁴⁰

The college's intellectual pedigree was more impressive. Founded in 1852 by the Basilian Fathers as a joint Catholic high school for boys and a seminary, St. Mike's had joined the University of Toronto in 1910 as a semi-autonomous, federated college. It remained profoundly Catholic in inspiration and outlook. It was staffed almost exclusively by priests and religious, and continued to enrol significant numbers of students headed for religious life, even in the 1920s. Many students, including Martin, attended daily Mass, and a three-day silent retreat during Holy Week was compulsory. Women students, admitted only in 1911, were segregated and generally took their classes by themselves. "It was," an early woman student recalled bitterly, "a man's world."⁴¹

The masculine Catholic environment eased Martin's transition from the rural, bilingual St-Alexandre to the urbane and English-speaking St. Mike's. "It was very foreign to me," Martin admitted. "It was all very strange, but very exciting. I was happy almost from the first day I put my foot on the

³⁹ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol 351, Story interview with Martin, 13 May 1971.

⁴⁰ University of St. Michael's College Archives (hereafter USMCA), Henry Carr, "Playground Changes," in *SMC Year Book*, vol. 13, 1921-22; E.J. McCorkell, *Memoirs* (Toronto: Basilian Press, 1975), 57.

⁴¹ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol 361, Story, "Jottings on St Mike's."

grounds of St. Michael's."⁴² Martin delighted in the college's more liberal discipline – enjoying the freedom to go out at night and to choose courses – and at the prospect of expanding his horizons. In this respect, the outward-looking college he encountered in 1921 fitted him to a T. Confident and ambitious, Toronto's English-speaking Catholic community was actively shedding its immigrant Irish past and embracing a modern identity as loyal, ambitious, and civic-minded Canadians.⁴³ Under the guidance of Fr. Henry Carr, a young and liberal-minded Basilian, St. Mike's worked hard to embrace the university and the world around it. Carr, who became superior and college president in 1915, encouraged his students to pursue sports, especially football and hockey, and other intra-university activities as a means of breaking out of the Catholic ghetto.⁴⁴ St. Mike's welcomed Carr's ambitions for a Catholic elite prepared to lay siege to the exclusive social and economic bastions of Protestant Toronto.

Federation too was changing St. Mike's. Under pressure from the university, the college was moving away from the Catholic theology that had dominated its curriculum since the mid-19th century. Carr delighted in the change, pressing his younger staff to pursue the growing interest among Catholic theologians in the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas. Thomism flourished at St. Mike's. Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903), a scholar and intellectual, had championed the ideas of St. Augustine and St. Thomas in order to construct a modern philosophy of State robust enough to tackle the false philosophies advanced in defence of laissez-faire capitalism and socialism.⁴⁵ Under Leo XIII, Catholic social thinking embraced a "centralist" position intended to maintain individual rights and freedoms within a communitarian social framework. Among the results was Leo's 1891 encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, on capital and labour, which offered Catholics a "centralist" view that legitimized the State's role in protecting private property, while strongly defending the principles of a right to a just wage and labour's right to organize. As he built up the college's staff, Carr looked to Europe where these ideas were being worked out most fully in a

⁴² UTA, Bothwell Archives, Bothwell and English interview with Martin, 1 November 1974.

⁴³ Mark McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 143-47.

⁴⁴ E.J. McCorkell, *Henry Carr: Revolutionary* (Toronto: Griffin Press, 1969), 27; Laurence Shook, *Catholic Post Secondary Education in English-Speaking Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 134-35.

⁴⁵ The following paragraph draws extensively on Brian Hogan, "Salted with Fire: Studies in Catholic Social Thought and Action in Ontario, 1931-1961," (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1986). The author is grateful to Dr. Hogan for discussing his work with him.

range of movements, including distributism, solidarism, and personalism. In 1919, he lured the Thomist philosopher Maurice DeWolf from Louvain, a leading centre of liberal Catholic thought. Prominent Catholic thinkers Sir Bertram Windle, the outgoing president of the National University of Ireland, and Fathers Léon Noël and Gerald Phalen from Louvain followed. Philosophers Jacques Maritain and Étienne Gilson joined them in the 1920s, eventually helping to found the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies. The work of Maritain and Gilson on the right relationship between State and individual, the vital importance of Christian social responsibility, and the centrality of individual freedom represented the “finest flowering” of Leo’s Thomistic legacy and gave St. Mike’s the country’s most vibrant department of philosophy.⁴⁶ “The intellectual temperature here,” recorded one faculty member, “rises ten degrees when these men are around.”⁴⁷

Martin was not fully aware of these currents around him when he encountered Fr. Edmond McCorkell on his second day on campus. The Basilian priest, who became a mentor and life-long friend, had a more significant role to play. He found Martin work to pay for his studies and steered him towards the study of philosophy. By the early 1920s, St. Mike’s regarded philosophy as essential for the education of a “cultured Catholic gentleman.”⁴⁸ It was also good preparation for the rigours of law school, where the college sent an increasing number of men, and where Martin already planned to go. It had the added advantage that one could proceed from the first year pass arts course directly into the second year honours philosophy course, without having to take an extra first year honours course, a consideration for poorer students like Martin.

Martin’s undergraduate courses were a fundamental part of his education, and shaped his politics, his faith, and his identity. In contrast to the otherworldly Catholic orthodoxy he encountered at St-Alexandre, the philosophy program at St. Michael’s was broad ranging, comprehensive, and modern. It began with the Greeks, Plato, and Aristotle, and moved forward through the early Church Fathers, St. Thomas Aquinas, and mainstream western thinkers like Descartes, Mill, and Kant. McCorkell’s lectures on 19th-century thought introduced Martin to the liberalism of John Stuart Mill, and gave an intellectual foundation to the Laurier Liberalism that he grew up with.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Hogan, “Salted with Fire,” 34; Shook, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education*, 161-62; Joseph Owens, *The Philosophic Tradition of St. Michael’s College* (Toronto, University of St Michael’s College Archives, 1979), 19-21.

⁴⁷ Owens, *The Philosophic Tradition*, 22-23.

⁴⁸ Shook, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education*, 160.

⁴⁹ Martin, *Far From Home*, 37.

The Thomism instilled by St. Mike's was equally bracing, and just as lasting. He was drawn as well to John Henry Cardinal Newman, the "slippery and often elusive" English divine, whom the Anglican historian, Owen Chadwick, shrewdly labelled a "conservative innovator."⁵⁰ The Cardinal's reverence for authority and tradition suited Martin's particular heritage and his cautious personality. "One generation," Martin sometimes insisted, "had no right and no capacity to pass judgement on the traditions of mankind."⁵¹ But mostly he was inspired by Newman's demands for an order where Christianity – changing "to remain the same" – retained its force as a "governing factor in society."⁵² Engaged in the world about him, Martin's Newman was a liberal reformer, whose probing, critical mind forged new tools for new problems, ever guided by Christian revelation. In an increasingly secular age, when many progressives were shedding their religious faith, St. Mike's gave Martin grounds to hold tight to his.

Martin's faith and politics were shaped outside the lecture halls, too. He threw himself into varsity life. Unlike most of his classmates, he arrived on campus knowing precisely what he wanted to be: certainly a politician, probably a cabinet minister, and possibly even prime minister. He chose his extra-curricular activities accordingly. He dabbled in sports and drama, but focussed on student politics and debating. Martin's success reinforced his standing at St. Mike's, where he was admired for his maturity, judgement, and "intellectual balance."⁵³ His friends called him "Sweet Paul," a teasing reference to his fondness for desserts, but also a reflection of his friendly disposition.⁵⁴ "His vast amiability," classmate and novelist Morley Callaghan wrote, "made him popular."⁵⁵

St. Mike's nurtured Martin's political ambitions, which marked him out among cynical students as unusual. They saw through his "quasi-political techniques" and sometimes mocked him as a "serious... plodding classmate."⁵⁶ Behind his back, aware of the delight he took in seeing his

⁵⁰ Cited in Michael Higgins, "Cardinal John Henry Newman: a Modern Christian," *The Globe and Mail*, 18 September 2010.

⁵¹ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol 351, Story interview with Martin, 13 May 1971.

⁵² "Faith Needed Martin Warns," *Montreal Star*, 11 October 1945; "Says Exaggerated Conception of Liberty Prevails," *Ottawa Citizen*, 11 October 1945; "The Hon Paul Martin Notes the Timeliness of Newman," *Catholic Record*, 20 and 27 October 1945.

⁵³ Martin is one of the main characters in Morley Callaghan's disguised memoir of life at St. Mike's in the 1920s, *The Varsity Story* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1948), 124.

⁵⁴ LAC, Flaherty Papers, Vol 24, File: Pers. Correspondence, J.M. McCaffrey to Frank Flaherty, 28 October 1931.

⁵⁵ Callaghan, *The Varsity Story*, 124.

⁵⁶ LAC, Phelan Papers, Vol 1, File 9, Josephine Phelan, Draft Memoirs, 73; Callaghan, *The Varsity Story*, 126.

successes noted in the campus press, they tagged him, “The Great One.”⁵⁷ Persuading his contemporaries of his sincerity would be a lasting challenge for Martin. But his professors and teachers, more worldly and more experienced, were less inclined to question the motives of an ambitious undergraduate. His humility and capacity for admiration impressed them. They took him up, opening doors whenever they could.

His connections with McCorkell and Carr led to Burgon Bickersteth, the warden of Hart House. A charter member of the British Establishment, Bickersteth was en route home to England when industrialist Vincent Massey offered him the warden’s post in 1921.⁵⁸ Funded by the Massey family, Hart House was intended to introduce Toronto undergraduates to the best Oxbridge traditions and to serve as the university’s cultural centre. Bickersteth was an inspired choice to guide the new institution. Just 33 years old, the warden was genuinely interested in youth, who responded to his “open-handed manner.”⁵⁹ When he overheard Martin dismiss him as a “damned Englishman,” a story that the Canadian polished to a gem over his lifetime, Bickersteth invited him around for tea.⁶⁰ The effect was magical. Hart House overwhelmed Martin. It was, he recalled, “an unforgettable institution – the library, the lovely dining room, the music room, the paintings – all those things young Canadians never saw at home.”⁶¹

Like McCorkell and Carr, Bickersteth took Martin’s political aspirations seriously. The warden derived a unique joy, he wrote his parents, in “watching young freshmen, green, underdeveloped, narrow and restricted in their outlook ... beginning to play their part on the Dominion stage.”⁶² The Anglican scion lectured the French-Canadian Catholic on the virtues of tolerance and the two became fast friends. Massey, Bickersteth, and their friends embodied the postwar nationalism of an independent Canada, and they taught young Martin where his faith and heritage fit. A tolerant, perhaps even ecumenical, outlook would help remove barriers between classes, races, and religions in Canada. This was especially important for healing the damage created by the First World War’s Conscription Crisis. This perspective encouraged Martin to embrace Alfred Zimmern’s inter-war

⁵⁷ The nickname is used in correspondence between Martin classmates. See LAC, Flaherty Papers, Vol 24, File: Pers. Correspondence, “Cal” to Frank Flaherty, 14 February 1932; see also USMCA, *SMC Year Book*, Vol. 16, 1924-25, 26.

⁵⁸ Claude Bissell, *The Young Vincent Massey* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 58-62.

⁵⁹ Callaghan, *The Varsity Story*, 6; Bissell, *The Young Vincent Massey*, 59.

⁶⁰ Martin, *Far From Home*, 32.

⁶¹ UTA, Bothwell Papers, Bothwell and English interview with Martin, 1 November 1974.

⁶² UTA, Bickersteth Papers, Box 2, Burgon Bickersteth to Mother and Father, 2 February 1936.

internationalism as well, with its strong ecumenical overtones. Hart House transformed Martin. “[Hart] House did something for him,” Bickersteth wrote Prime Minister Mackenzie King in 1929. “[W]hereas he came here as an undergraduate with sharply developed racial and religious prejudices he has now got rid of those.”⁶³ In due course, Bickersteth made sure that Martin met all his Liberal friends, including King.

Four years at St. Mike’s gave form and substance to the liberal ideas that Martin had held on his arrival. During the summer of 1925, soon after his graduation, the Pembroke Kiwanis Club invited the town’s most recent graduate to give a youthful perspective on the pressing issues of the day. As his sponsors had hoped, his French-Canadian nationalism, by no means entirely extinguished, had been smoothed over, replaced by a new attachment to tolerance as the central virtue of Canadian democracy and the keystone of national unity. The University of Toronto, he told his audience, had many religions, but functioned “as one harmonious body” and “teaches us that the solution to our difficulties lies in tolerance.”⁶⁴

Such views placed Martin on the progressive wing of his Liberal Party. His other central ideas on leaving St. Mike’s were equally forward-looking. He insisted on “full and independent nationhood” for Canada, though he was careful to retain a link to the fading British Empire. He flirted with proportional representation and bemoaned the suffocating grasp of party discipline, which stripped individual voters of “independent thought and decision” and replaced them with “the party spirit.” That kind of compulsion, he warned, leads to Communism and the socialist nightmare sweeping across Soviet Russia. While young progressives across Canada were embracing fashionable collective doctrines, Martin grounded his economic ideas in his faith. “I believe the only way to remedy conditions [of poverty],” he told Pembroke’s leading citizens, “is the adoption of the spirit of Christianity and the acknowledgement of God.”⁶⁵ He reminded the town’s factory and mill owners of their “moral duty” to create the conditions of life that would make people happy.

The virtues of tolerance, liberty, and economic justice animated Martin’s talk. They were values that his studies and experiences at St. Mike’s and the U of T had nurtured and reinforced. And they were inevitably rooted in his Catholicism and its transformation.

⁶³ LAC, W.L. Mackenzie King Papers, Vol 159, Reel C2308, #135746, Bickersteth to W.L.M. King, 8 December 1929.

⁶⁴ LAC, Scrapbook 1, Martin Papers, Vol 149, “Pembroke Student Outlines Views of Present Day University Men,” *Pembroke Standard Observer*, n.d.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Martin inherited his faith – the narrow and traditional Catholicism of an isolated outpost on the middle reaches of a northern river. Its limitations were reflected in the “disciplined liberty,” parochialism, and exclusive nationalism that he encountered in his seminary at St-Alexandre. St. Mike’s, and the people he met there, transformed that faith. Martin embraced Carr’s liberating ethos of engagement with the world beyond the Catholic ghetto. He relished exposure to the broad Western philosophical traditions, which gave his Liberalism roots and a reformist twist. He thrived amid the ecumenical network nurtured by Carr, McCorkell, and Bickersteth, crafting a politics that was open, generous, and tolerant.

Throughout the long career that was about to unfold, Martin’s faith remained linked to his politics. In the best Catholic tradition, he treated his political career as a vocation. “I am not afraid to be called a politician,” he often declared. “Next to preaching the word of God, there is nothing nobler than to serve one’s fellow countrymen in government.”⁶⁶ His mother, Lumina, who remained a potent influence in his life, also detected the steady hand of God behind her son’s success. When St Mike’s awarded Martin an honorary doctorate in 1952, she wrote him feverishly: “I shivered a wee bit (with pride). Who knows! but with humility also because God had willed it that you should have done as well.”⁶⁷ Long after his mother’s death, Martin’s parents, faith, and career remained inseparable. “Oh Lord,” he prayed nightly, “be good to my father and mother. May their souls rest in peace. May they give me inspiration to do great things for Canada and the peace of the world.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶ R.M. Harrison, “Now,” *Windsor Daily Star*, 7 June 1945. On this theme, see also “Another Promotion for Paul Martin,” *Windsor Daily Star*, 21 April 1945; “He Consults his Executive,” *Windsor Daily Star*, 30 April 1945; and, R.M. Harrison, “Now,” *Windsor Daily Star*, 26 May 1945.

⁶⁷ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol 153, Lumina Martin to Martin, [date stamped 16 January 1952].

⁶⁸ LAC, Martin Papers, Vol 351, Story interview with Martin, Tape 1, Side 1.

A Master of Religious Media: The Career of Rev. Matthew Meehan, C.Ss.R., 1947-1998

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In contrast to the contemporary highly-charged and well-financed evangelists with glitzy programs, a bespectacled, soft-spoken priest with a modest budget, Rev. Matthew Meehan, C.Ss.R., hosted radio and television shows for four decades to hold the record as the longest continuous religious broadcaster in Canada. Beginning in 1947, Meehan embraced radio and later television to reach a congregation beyond the church walls following in the footsteps of North American preachers since the 1920s. Meehan polished his preaching skills learned in the seminary of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer¹ with formal studies in communications to bring a spiritual message to thousands of homes. A concentration on social issues, particularly the ever-popular themes of family and home life, attracted a general and ecumenical audience. His adoption of current popular cultural trends, use of new electronic technology and a relaxed style kept him on the air long after more flamboyant preachers had left the microphone or screen.

On radio, Meehan followed a well-trodden path. In the United States, Catholics were among the pioneers when religious broadcasts began soon after commercial radio was established.² The Paulist Fathers gave radio talks on religious topics in the early 1920s but the first regular and continuing

¹ Archives of the Edmonton-Toronto Redemptorists (hereafter AETR). The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, (C.Ss.R.) known as the Redemptorists, was founded in Italy by St. Alphonsus Liguori in 1732, a Bishop and Doctor of the Church. The order of priests and brothers is devoted to the pastoral care of the most abandoned souls under the motto of “With Him there is Plentiful Redemption.” In 1840, eight years after arriving in the United States, the Redemptorists came to Canada, preaching missions in southern Ontario and Quebec. In 1874, English-speaking Redemptorists assumed responsibility for their first Canadian parish in Quebec City, adding St. Patrick’s Church in Toronto as their second parish in 1881. Since that first Canadian parish, approximately 800 Redemptorists have served in 55 Canadian parishes as well as preaching thousands of missions/retreats across Canada.

² The first U.S. religious program was a vesper service, conducted by Rev. Edwin J. Van Etten of Calvary Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1921. Thomas

Catholic broadcaster was Rev. Charles Coughlin. Nicknamed the radio priest, Coughlin, a fiery right-winger, made his debut on 26 October 1926 with catechism classes in a program called *The Children's Hour*. In January 1927, he offered the first Catholic liturgy over radio. An impressive response followed and his congregation was christened "The Radio League of the Little Flower" after his parish church of the Little Flower in Royal Oak, Michigan. Canadian-born and educated, Coughlin possessed a beautiful baritone voice, which he raised slowly, gradually increasing the tempo and soaring into passionate tones. His musical diction had an authoritative effect. Over private radio networks Coughlin spoke not only about the Catholic faith and the salvation of souls but also expressed his impassioned opinions on contemporary political and financial issues, including Communism, Jews, the gold standard, Wall Street, bankers and Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt. His tirades appealed to listeners of all faiths who were struggling with the economic and political disaffection of the Depression as his lectures dramatically linked world events and their own lives. Although his broadcasts were not under the jurisdiction of the Church, ecclesial authorities ended his broadcast career in May 1940 following his public opposition to possible involvement of the United States in the Second World War.³

Coughlin was not the only Catholic broadcaster to achieve national fame in the United States. Rev. Fulton J. Sheen, a professor at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, and a popular public speaker, had a different approach than Coughlin. Sheen noted that Coughlin "chooses to confine himself largely to the material. My sermons are confined to spiritual values." In 1928, Sheen gave a series of Sunday evening Lenten sermons over New York City station WLWL. A regular national series on Sunday evenings, the *Catholic Hour* began on WAEF, New York City on 2 March 1930. Under the sponsorship of the National Council of Catholic Men, the series sought to promote a better understanding of the Catholic Church and its doctrines and to contribute to the growth of friendly relations among various religious groups. The first program featured outstanding speakers and liturgical music, sung by the Paulist Choristers and accompanied by

Reeves, *The Life and Times of Fulton J. Sheen: America's Bishop* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2001), 78.

³ This paragraph draws on Donald Warren, *Radio Priest: Charles Coughlin, the Father of Hate Radio* (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 23-35. Coughlin was born in Hamilton and was ordained as a member of the Congregation of St. Basil in Toronto but left the order in 1923. Never under the approval of the Church, Coughlin's first broadcasts were aired locally. In 1930, he was heard over the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), which dropped the program when religion and politics began to meld in the lectures. By the fall of 1931, Coughlin had assembled and later expanded his own independent chain of stations to carry the programs.

a studio orchestra. As the *Catholic Hour* evolved, Sheen became the host and delivered twenty-minute talks from a script that was pre-approved by Church officials. His thoughts were clear and meaningful. For several years, the format included questions from a live audience. His impromptu replies revealed an easy facility with words and ideas. In late 1933 and 1934, his fifteen radio addresses were printed and distributed to half a million listeners. In preparing the broadcasts Sheen asked himself two questions: "What is the purpose of the program and what will non-Catholics think of it?"⁴

Another American Catholic radio legend emerged at the end of the Second World War. Rev. Patrick Peyton, an Irish-born Holy Cross priest, made his radio debut in 1942 on a local station in Albany, NY. Founder of the Family Rosary Crusade and thus known as the Rosary Priest, Peyton, in a soft Irish brogue, preached a non-political message that a world at prayer is a world at peace and families that pray together stay together. In May 1945, his national radio program included religious talks and impassioned pleas to pray, especially through the rosary. The programs featured entertainment and political guests, such as President Harry Truman, singer Bing Crosby and New York's Cardinal Spellman. Omnipresent in Canada and the United States, the rosary campaign reaffirmed its message through *Family Theatre*, inspirational radio dramas featuring Hollywood stars, which aired for 22 years.⁵

In their radio broadcasts, Coughlin, Sheen and Peyton constructed a personal bond between themselves and each listener. They recognized, as media guru Marshall McLuhan observed later, that radio was "the hot medium," which "affects most people intimately person-to-person, offering a world of unspoken communication between writer-speaker and the listener. That is the immediate aspect of radio. A private experience."⁶ Without visual stimulus, radio completely involves the listener in collecting and analyzing information. Through radio, skilled communicators draw an image or describe a situation and the listener fills in the missing pieces.⁷ The process creates a theatre of the mind.

While Sheen, Coughlin, and Peyton dominated religious broadcasting in North America, Meehan was pursuing his studies. The first of eight children, he was born in 1913 and grew up in a closely-knit Toronto family

⁴ This paragraph draws on Reeves, *The Life and Times of Fulton Sheen*, 78-80. *The Catholic Hour* ended in 1952.

⁵ www.americancatholic.org, 1 June 1997. Accessed on 5 Jan. 2013.

⁶ Marshall McLuhan, "From Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man – Radio," in Daniel J. Robinson (ed.) *Communications History in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2004), 23.

⁷ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, ed. Terrence Gordon (Corte Madera, CA: Gingko Press, 2003), xvi.

whose ancestors arrived from Ireland after the potato famine. The warmth of this upbringing and the fervent faith of his parents profoundly affected his views.⁸ Family life was a central theme in many of his broadcasts and writings.⁹ He attended St. Clare separate school and credited a teacher, Sister Odelia of the Sisters of St. Joseph, with encouraging him to pursue a priestly vocation as a Redemptorist¹⁰ following an uncle Rev. Edward Meehan, a pioneer member of the English-Canadian Redemptorists.¹¹ At St. Mary's College, the order's juvenate just outside Brockville, Ontario, Meehan was introduced to the love of language and drama. Preaching was the order's forte. In parish missions, Redemptorists often delivered their talks in a fire-and-brimstone style to enliven the instruction in faith and morals. Their students were taught the art of public speaking through practice and oratorical contests. In 1930, Meehan won the seniors' contest with a rousing speech on Canada.

Following graduation in 1931, Meehan entered the Redemptorist Novitiate in Saint John, New Brunswick, professing first vows in 1932. After studying theology and philosophy at St. Alphonsus Seminary in Woodstock, Ontario, he was ordained on 20 June 1937. A year later he was appointed to a parish in Western Canada, where the Redemptorists were establishing their presence. His trunk arrived in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, but Meehan did not. Redemptorist superiors had selected him to pursue graduate studies and language training since fluency in German, Italian and Slavic languages was necessary to provide pastoral care in the Western Canadian parishes. In addition, the congregation required qualified professors to teach an increasing number of vocations at Woodstock.¹²

⁸ Mark McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, The Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 94.

⁹ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 4, Personnel File 2.

¹⁰ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 3, Personnel File 8. In 1949, Sister Odelia was appointed as the first Novice Mistress of Our Lady's Missionaries, a new community dedicated to the foreign missions. Later she was named as a co-foundress of that community following her eleven years of service.

¹¹ AETR, Toronto Fonds, Series 6-05, Box 20, File 5. One of the first Canadian-born Redemptorists, Fr. Edward Meehan was born in Toronto and grew up in the Redemptorist Toronto parish of St. Patrick's. He was ordained in 1907 and served in Redemptorist parishes in Manitoba, Quebec City and Saint John, NB. When his nephew Matthew entered the Redemptorist Novitiate in Saint John, he was the Assistant Novice Master. He died at the age of 65 in 1951.

¹² AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 4, File 13. Between 1932 and 1939, 55 Redemptorists were ordained and the order assumed responsibility of five new parishes, all in northern Alberta and British Columbia.

Meehan's academic pursuits continued. In September 1938, he began studies in Rome leading to a licentiate in 1939 and a doctorate in 1940.¹³ Returning to Canada, he was appointed professor of philosophy, English, and elocution at the Woodstock seminary. After the first year of seminary teaching, Meehan attended a summer course at the Preaching Institute at the Catholic University of America. In later summers, he broadened his expertise in communications by attending a journalism course at Marquette University in 1944 and the following year at the Summer Radio Institute at Queen's University in Kingston to learn the arts of speaking, writing and directing for radio.¹⁴

His timing was perfect. Since 1931, a few Redemptorist preachers gave occasional religious talks on local radio stations.¹⁵ Religious programming, which had been suspended during the Second World War, returned to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). During the war, the CBC's stature had grown with its full-scale coverage of the conflict by sending correspondents overseas to report on the progress of Canadian troops. Now with an increased audience, the CBC resumed its co-operation with the National Religious Advisory Council whereby the various denominations shared time on a proportional basis. Rev. Charles Lanphier, the director of the Radio League of St. Michael, planned Catholic programming under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Toronto and asked the Redemptorists to provide a series of five weekly programs.¹⁶ Lanphier outlined the formula of the broadcast: "The program briefly is as follows: an introductory hymn of two or three minutes, the address, which should not exceed twenty minutes, concluding with a hymn or hymns."¹⁷ Redemptorist Provincial Superior Daniel Ehman assigned the task to Meehan.¹⁸

On 9 November 1947, Meehan's broadcasting career began on the *Trans Canada Catholic Hour*, a national program broadcast weekly from the Toronto studios of the CBC. Like Sheen, Meehan was a teacher accustomed to speaking and writing about ideas, and his programs reflected an ease in

¹³ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 5, File 1. Meehan studied at the Pontificium Institutum "Angelicum" and wrote *The Cogitative Power according to St. Thomas Aquinas* for his doctoral thesis.

¹⁴ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 4, File 12.

¹⁵ AETR, Toronto Fonds, Series 7, Vancouver Box 1, File 5. Fr. Kenneth Kennedy was the first Redemptorist on radio when he read a Christmas message on radio station CJOC in Vancouver on Christmas Day, 1931. Redemptorists in Western Canada often read radio sermons and wrote spiritual articles for local newspapers.

¹⁶ Archives of Ontario, (hereafter, AO) F 4607, Matthew Meehan fonds, F 4607-1-0-47. Fr. Meehan's program was renewed each year after approval by Cardinal James McGuigan of the Toronto Archdiocese.

¹⁷ AO, F 4607-1-0-2 Lanphier to Meehan, 5 September 1947.

¹⁸ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 4, File 13.

delivery and a polished script. The appeal was the subject matter. In the first series, entitled *Your Family*, he explored different aspects of the family, focusing on marriage, children, teenagers and home life. In a conversational style, Meehan opened with an anecdote describing a familiar situation of a mother yelling at her children and connecting it with a spiritual lesson. In using the hot medium of radio, he was drawing on an everyday occurrence. The radio audience linked the frustrated mother with the spiritual message to turn to God during daily trials. During the program, students from the prestigious St. Michael's Choir School in Toronto sang hymns under the direction of Monsignor John Edward Ronan, the school's founder. By the end of the first series, Lanphier complimented Meehan, "Your series is going over splendidly."¹⁹ Lanphier stressed the importance of the broadcasts, "We consider this – the very finest type of Catholic Action and doing great good both for the Faith and the individual."²⁰ Later series dealt with similar and expanded family and socially related topics, such as *Your Romance* (1949), *Your Marriage* (1950), *Your Children* (1951) and *Your Teenagers* (1952). Meehan revisited these themes throughout his broadcasting career.

The scripts for the CBC broadcasts were complete and typewritten to accommodate the public broadcaster's insistence on approving the wording a week before the broadcast.²¹ The Radio League published the scripts in booklets and mailed them to listeners on request. Like Bishop Sheen's experience with the *Catholic Hour*, it was a popular move. For the 1949 series, *Your Romance*, Fr. Lanphier worried that 7,000 booklets might not be sufficient to satisfy the demand.²² Excerpts from the broadcasts were also printed in U.S. Catholic newspapers.²³ Like those of Sheen, Meehan's radio broadcasts appealed to listeners of all faiths.

Of his core message of family life for the broadcasts, Meehan explained in a 1950 newspaper article, "Your home is the real heart of the nation. Parents had to 'handle with care' the spiritual and physical life of children. Tender care and 'God-education' instead of a 'Godless education' were vital."²⁴ During the 1954 *Trans Canada* season, Meehan introduced general social issues with a series, *Are Canadians Honest?*, discussing honesty

¹⁹ AO, F 4607-1-0-32, Lanphier to Meehan, 2 December 1947.

²⁰ AO, F 4697-1-0-2, Lanphier to Meehan, 19 May 1949. In a 1905 encyclical, Pope Pius X proposed that Catholic Action be numerous works of zeal for the good of the church, society and individuals.

²¹ AO, F 4607-1-0-58, "*The Electronic Church*." The speech was believed to be delivered in 1980.

²² AO, F 4607-1-0-2, Lanphier to Meehan, 19 May 1949.

²³ AO, F 4607-1-0-34, Marie Owen to Meehan, 23 April 1949. Miss Owen read an excerpt of "*Your Romance-Your Wedding Day*" in a diocesan newspaper in the United States.

²⁴ *The Ottawa Journal*, 24 April 1950.

in business, politics and education. Until the end of the *Trans Canada* broadcasts in 1962, the content of the series regularly switched from family to general social issues: *Your Family Comes First* (1956); *Are Canadians Sociable* (1957); *Going Steady* (1958); *Growing Old Gracefully* (1959); *Change of Life* (1961) and *What About Your Conscience?* (1962).

Professionalism enhanced his programming, and Meehan continued his education in broadcasting. In 1949 he studied radio journalism at Northwestern University in Chicago. Later, to expand his knowledge of television techniques, he combined coverage of the last session of the Second Vatican Council in 1965 with visits to radio and television counterparts in Ireland (Radio Eire), England (BBC), the Netherlands, Germany and Rome. A few years later, he attended a communications course at Loyola University in New Orleans.²⁵

In 1952 outside the studio, Meehan's responsibilities grew following an appointment as rector of his alma mater, St. Mary's College. To accommodate Meehan in 1956, the *Trans Canada* series, *Your Family Comes First*, which was increased to ten segments, was produced at CFJR, the local radio station with the college's choir singing the hymns. When he left Brockville to become rector and pastor of St. Patrick's Church (1959-1964) in Toronto, the program's production returned to that city and the church's choirs provided the music.²⁶

Again, Meehan's timing was fortunate. The 1950s marked a golden age for North American Christian churches with attendance approaching 70 per cent of the population.²⁷ Meehan's rising profile as a Catholic radio personality caught the attention of Bishop Joseph Ryan of the Diocese of Hamilton, who invited Meehan to provide Catholic broadcasting at CHML, a private radio station in Hamilton.²⁸ Presenting the familiar themes about life at home and work, the 15-minute shows aired for 19 years and combined music and thought. Similar to the *Trans Canada Catholic Hour*, the Hamilton programs were designed to appeal to families coping with everyday situations. The topics included *Your Life* (1950-1951), *Your Emotions* (1952-1953), *Heart to Heart* (1953-1954)

²⁵ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 4, File 12. Meehan attended the Loyola course in 1969.

²⁶ AO, F 4607-1-0-43, F 4607-1-0-47.

²⁷ Stewart M. Hoover, *Mass Media Religion: The Social Sources of the Electronic Church* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1988), 18. Reeves, *The Life and Times of Fulton J. Sheen*, 229.

²⁸ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 4, File 13. Private AM radio stations like CHML had so increased in size, numbers and wealth following the Second World War that their assets were three times those of the CBC and, unlike the CBC, had a strong local presence. Frank Foster, *Broadcasting Policy Development* (Ottawa: Franfost Communications Ltd., 1982), 159.

and *What's New With You?* (1956-1957).²⁹ These weekly programs, usually broadcast on Sundays, expanded to 30 minutes in 1961 with a new theme under the title of *Music Thru the Ages*, exploring the history of music.³⁰ Later in 1964, the radio show was converted to a one-hour phone-in show on Sunday nights, which was considered a “first” in Canadian Catholic communications.³¹ Under successive titles of *Ask Father Meehan* (1964), *Open Line* (1964-1967) and *Talk Back* (1968-1969), it attracted an average of 20 telephone calls for each program.³² Meehan invited local personalities and experts to discuss a variety of topics, including ecumenism, church architecture, teaching religion, abortion, young people and sports. For a program devoted to sports, he interviewed Ralph Sazio, general manager of the Hamilton Tiger Cats of the Canadian Football League. In that discussion, he asked whether spectators in the stands were too bloodthirsty and possessed “a kill mentality.”³³ Meehan preferred open-line radio because he was “in such immediate close personal contact with those who phoned in, Protestants mostly, as we talked about our life and our faith in Christ along what is today’s popular ‘evangelical TV style.’”³⁴

During the 1950s, at least in the United States, television was replacing radio as the popular medium of mass communication. On 12 February 1952, now Bishop Fulton Sheen³⁵ introduced *Life is Worth Living*, a prime-time religious show. As director of the Society of Propagation of the Faith in the Archdiocese of New York and a successful radio host, Sheen was the logical choice for the archdiocese’s television outlet for Catholic evangelization.³⁶ Filmed in front of a live audience at the Adelphi Theatre in New York City, the show’s simple set looked like a rector’s study, complete with rows of books, a desk, several chairs, and a four-foot statue of Madonna and child. The only prop was a blackboard, which Sheen occasionally used to emphasize

²⁹ AO, F 4607-1-0-7; F 4607-1-0-8; F 4607-1-0-10; F 4607-1-0-13.

³⁰ AO, F 4607-1-0-18.

³¹ AO, F 4607-1-0-21. The show evolved after Fr. Meehan’s guest appearance on “Night Line,” a daily call-in program on CHML with host Percy Allen.

³² AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 4, File 13.

³³ AO, F 4607-1-0-26. The show aired on December 21, 1969.

³⁴ AO, F 4607-1-0-58. “*The Electronic Church.*”

³⁵ Sheen was appointed Monsignor in 1934 and named auxiliary Bishop of the archdiocese of New York in 1951.

³⁶ Reeves, *The Life and Times of Fulton Sheen*, 223. Monsignor Edwin Broderick, assistant director of Catholic Apostolate for Radio, Television and Advertising, asked Sheen to host the show, which aired on the DuMont Network, a minor player in the industry, and whose executives were mostly Catholics. On both radio and television, religious broadcasting tended to be relegated to the early hours of the morning and other times when few were listening. Instead, *Catholic Hour* was scheduled for Tuesdays at 8 p.m. and competed against shows starring comedian Milton Berle and singer Frank Sinatra. In 1952, Sheen won an Emmy Award as Outstanding Television Personality. Later, comedian Groucho Marx was his main competition on the Tuesday night slot. In 1955 the show was broadcast by ABC.

a point and make rough drawings. Dressed in full episcopal regalia, Sheen spoke on general themes, such as alienation in modern civilization, character building, science, suffering and a wide assortment of practical topics, including fatigue, teenagers and work. He talked about God in a way that would rarely offend Protestants and Jews. Sheen was forthright about his anti-communism on television and in books, articles, speeches and sermons. As always, Sheen brought humour often at the beginning of the program, then moved to a more serious matter, closing with a benediction and the phrase, “God love you.” His performance skills of knowing when to move upstage and to modulate his voice and his hypnotic piercing eyes staring at the camera captivated audiences estimated at 30 million.³⁷ Described as the first tele-evangelist, Sheen retired after presenting 127 shows between February 1952 and April 1957. Although ratings were dropping, a dispute with Cardinal Spellman of New York ended the series.³⁸ Sheen returned to television with *The Fulton Sheen Program* (1960-1968) but did not recreate the excitement of the earlier program.³⁹

The initial success of Sheen’s program may have prompted Tom Darling, station manager at CHML, to nudge Meehan about approaching Ken Soble, the owner of both CHML and CHCH-TV, the new Hamilton television station, to inquire “just how you can do something of interest to listeners and viewers on television.”⁴⁰ Three years later on 2 December 1956, Meehan’s first television show aired on CHCH-TV. Under the auspices of Bishop Ryan, the program was entitled *What’s New With You?* – the same title as the radio series. The television version, which consisted of five minutes of news, five minutes of a moral problem and five minutes of a thought for the week, reached an audience in the Hamilton-Niagara-Toronto area.⁴¹ In 1960, the show expanded to 30 minutes shown over 13 weeks. Like Sheen, Meehan tackled a wide variety of topics, tying contemporary culture with religious and social issues with a local and Canadian angle. For the next decade, he continued with the same successful formula as he had begun in radio. Each

³⁷ Reeves, *The Life and Times of Fulton Sheen*, 224-256.

³⁸ Reeves, *The Life and Times of Fulton Sheen*, 255. The cardinal and Sheen disagreed over the allocation of monies from the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. Insiders heard rumours that Spellman forced Fulton off the air.

³⁹ Reeves, *The Life and Times of Fulton Sheen*, 285. Sheen served as a special narrator for CBS network coverage of Pope Paul VI’s visit to the United Nations in 1965.

⁴⁰ AO, F 4607-1-0-61, 30 April 1953. In his early childhood, Fr. Meehan and Ken Soble lived in the same downtown Toronto neighbourhood near St. Patrick’s Church. Meehan referred to Ken Soble as his “angel” in providing air time, the CHCH crew and studio to produce the shows. The station underwrote the show’s expenses. A broadcasting pioneer in his own right, Soble was the first private broadcaster to request permission from the Board of Broadcast Governors to form a company to own and operate a national television network.

⁴¹ AO, F 4607-1-0-61.

series examined an overall theme with special guests representing specific aspects. Meehan believed that any problem affecting society also affected the church, explaining, “You’ll be helping your priest – or your minister or rabbi if you ask them to explain today’s headlines from the viewpoint of God.”⁴² The programs developed into more of a public affairs show than an interlude of sermons and psalms.

With the higher profile on television, Meehan was able to attract a wide variety of guests from among clergy, politicians, sports personalities and artists. Ontario Lieutenant-Governor Keiller MacKay appeared on seven occasions.⁴³ Among the higher profile clergy guests were Archbishop Philip Pocock of Toronto and Bishop Ryan. Other celebrities included hockey star Red Kelly, his wife and young family; Roland Michener, then Canadian High Commissioner to India and later Governor-General of Canada; 1970 Miss Canada, Julie Maloney; and artist William Kurelek.⁴⁴ The formula was borrowed from popular American interview shows such as Jack Paar’s pioneer prime-time talk show⁴⁵ and consisted of musical entertainment and conversations with guests who were seated around a coffee table. Meehan presented issues from a Canadian standpoint and debuted local musicians and choirs, often featuring the Sisters of St. Joseph, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and the St. Joseph Hospital nurses.

At CHCH, Meehan planned all aspects of the shows from creating the themes, arranging guests, selecting the music and establishing production timing and publicity. The first television scripts were typewritten and detailed, with lists of guests, timing and questions. As his expertise grew, the program notes and scripts were written in point-form on file cards. To increase viewership across Canada, Meehan arranged to ship tapes of his programs to interested groups.⁴⁶

⁴² *The Toronto Telegram*, Weekly Edition, 31 May-7 June, 1968.

⁴³ AO, F 4607-1-0-53; F 4607-1-0-69; F 4607-1-0-71; F 4607-1-0-73; F 4607-1-0-76; F 4607-1-0-77. A Presbyterian, John Keiller MacKay served as Ontario Lieutenant-Governor (1957-1963) following a distinguished legal career as a criminal lawyer in Toronto and a justice of the Ontario Supreme Court (1935-1950) and Ontario Court of Appeal (1950-1957). He appeared on *Let’s Talk with Father Meehan: Faiths of Canadian People* (1963); *Let’s Talk With Father Meehan – Let’s Talk About Our New Canadians* (1963); *The Pleasures of Life* (1964); *Let’s Talk about Family Life* (1965); *Let’s Talk about Vatican Two* (1966); *Let’s Go to Expo* (1967); *Where the Action Is* (1967).

⁴⁴ AO, F 4607-1-0-70 (Bishop Ryan); F 4607-1-0-74 (Archbishop Pocock); F 4607-1-0-71 (Roland Michener); F 4607-1-0-71 (Red Kelly). AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 5, File 17 (Julie Maloney).

⁴⁵ Comedian Jack Paar was host of the *Tonight Show* on NBC (1957-1962). On *The Jack Paar Program* (1962-1965), Paar brought an international view, debuting acts, interviewing authors, actors and personalities on a Friday night prime-time slot.

⁴⁶ AO, F 4607-1-0-5-28; F 4607-1-0-61-138.

In 1964, just before the final session of the Second Vatican Council, the Redemptorists appointed Meehan as Director of Communications. He subsequently devoted the majority of his time to media commitments, often announcing the upcoming CHCH series in a Redemptorist news release and publicizing the changes from Vatican II.⁴⁷ Ever mindful of the ecumenical emphasis of the Council, Meehan presented a 13-part series, *Let's Talk With Father Meehan – Faiths of Canadian People*, about the beliefs of other denominations. He was especially proud of this 1963 series introducing ecumenism at CHCH-TV, where “it was still a bit novel to have Protestants and Jews on my programs. I ended up doing an ecumenical series of 13 programs with 13 different faiths, their pastors and parishioners.”⁴⁸ Meehan discussed and developed ecumenism in several avenues. As a special Canadian representative to the final proceedings of the Council, his reports were aired over Vatican Radio.⁴⁹ He continued to explore the changes forged by the Council on CHML and CHCH with a 1965 series entitled *What's New with Vatican Two*.

Always striving to be relevant in contemporary society and to keep current with television programming, Meehan adopted the popular trend of on-location shows. In the 1967 series of *Let's Go to Expo*, he borrowed from the theme of Man and His World from the world exhibition in Montreal. Under the title of *Man and God's World*, the series presented a deeper meaning of Expo 67 and Canada's centennial with segments such as “Man and His Maker” and “Man in the Future.” Some shows shot on the Expo grounds highlighted the atmosphere, architecture, music and song.⁵⁰ In this programming adjustment, he began to provide the television audience with more stimuli. To use McLuhan's terminology, the “cool medium” of television gives a lot of information through well-defined, sharp, solid and detailed images and requires little work of the viewer.⁵¹ For the evolving television shows, Meehan adopted and added popular touches to his programs.

The 1968 series *Spiritual Laugh-In* demonstrated his flexibility and awareness of contemporary tastes. Adapting the title of *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In*, a popular comedy show, the series was filmed in bright sets and in colour to respond to the popularity of colour television sets. The series followed the variety show formula of hit songs and interviews with Meehan

⁴⁷ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 6, File 12. News releases about the upcoming CHCH series were written under the letterhead of the Redemptorist Communications Centre.

⁴⁸ AO, F 4607-1-0-53.

⁴⁹ AO, F 4607-1-0-73.

⁵⁰ AO, F 4607-1-0-76.

⁵¹ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, xvi.

adding catechetical instruction. The subsequent series, *Sweet and Sour*, was set in a coffee house. As host, Meehan table-hopped among the guests as they discussed the sweet and sour aspects of daily life. Guitarists and singers provided the musical entertainment. With enlarged playing cards as the set, guests in the series *Games People Play* discussed the handicaps and frustrations in an age of change and renewal.⁵² These innovative themes and production struck a chord among viewers in the early 1970s. According to television ratings, the program in the Toronto-Hamilton area placed a respectable fourth in the Sunday morning ratings behind *Bowling*, *The Bullwinkle Show* and evangelical preacher *Rex Humbard*.⁵³ An earlier ratings survey taken on Sundays at the 11 a.m. time slot in January and February 1971 indicated that Meehan's show reached 27,600 viewers in 12,700 households. Women were the largest viewer group at 8,700 followed by men at 6,800, teens at 6,100 and children at 6,000. In a covering letter, Douglas Gale, CHCH program director, stated, "As you can see from these figures, your program is appealing to the total family and [I] would have to assume that this profile would not vary that much during the rest of the year."⁵⁴ Mr. Gale analyzed Meehan's appeal: "He communicates, informs rather than preaches. On his program, he doesn't try to convert or aim himself just at Roman Catholics. He tries to communicate with a total audience . . . He's a man's man. A modern man of God who can get his message across without whacking you on the head with a Bible."⁵⁵

Just after the 1971 ratings survey, Meehan accepted an appointment as Director of Radio-TV for the Hamilton Diocese again under Bishop Ryan. Shortly afterwards, the CHCH programs returned to more traditional family and religious-related themes under the titles of *How's Your Marriage* (1971), *Back to Basics – With God's Children* (1972-1973), *What's It All About Lord?* (1973-1974), *Thank God for the Church* (1974-1975), *In the Footsteps of Christ* (1976-1977), *Human Sexuality* (1977-1978), *Life in the Family* (1978-1979) and *It's Family Time* (1980). However, the formula remained constant with guests from the Hamilton area, involving lay experts, clergy as well as more Redemptorist confreres and Meehan family members. Local music talents and high school student choirs continued to provide the musical aspect of the programs.⁵⁶ By leading Marriage Encounter weekends

⁵² AO, F 4607-1-0-80-82-83.

⁵³ AO, F 4607-1-0-56, 29 January 1973. The 1972 ratings over two weeks in March and November 1972 in the Toronto and Hamilton show *Bowling* (133,000); children's cartoons *The Bullwinkle Show* (52,000), *Rex Humbard* (33,000), Meehan (19,800) and evangelical preacher *Oral Roberts* (17,200).

⁵⁴ AO, F 4607-1-0-56, 15 July 1971

⁵⁵ *The Telegram*, 31 May-7 June 1968.

⁵⁶ AO, F 4607-1-0-86; F 4607-1-0-89; F 4607-1-0-93; F 4607-1-0-97; F 4607-1-0-99; F 4607-1-0-103; F 4607-1-0-105; F 4607-1-0-107.

and, later, Retrouvaille sessions for married and engaged couples, Meehan kept himself informed about issues facing families.⁵⁷

For the Hamilton Diocese, Meehan, in conjunction with CHCH-TV, produced and served as commentator for programs of major diocesan events, including its 125th anniversary, Christmas Midnight Mass, Thanksgiving and Marian Day ceremonies.⁵⁸ As diocesan communications director until 1988, he also arranged and publicized the religious broadcasting on the ten AM-FM radio stations, twelve cable television stations and the two television stations in the diocese.⁵⁹

Perhaps influenced by these on-location productions, filming began in 1974 at the local historic sites Dundurn Castle and Whitehern Home and the peaceful settings of the Royal Botanical or LaSalle Gardens.⁶⁰ Some of these shows were similar to Sheen's television series in content, but unlike Sheen, Meehan's later programs were filmed outside the studio. While Meehan stood in the gardens amidst the colour and beauty of nature, his spiritual reflections were delivered in soothing tones. In McLuhan's terms, both Meehan and Sheen were successful television presenters and perfect figures in the cool medium of television. They required little involvement from the audience but provided considerable stimulus through their presentations to the audience. Sheen gave the audience an acting performance along with his talks, while Meehan used the surroundings of a historic house, gardens or an attractive set to add further stimulus.⁶¹ Both were successful practitioners of presenting a theatre of visuals.

In addition to the CHCH programs from 1976 to 1984, Meehan prepared scripts and appeared on the *Sacred Heart Program*, created by the Jesuit radio and television organization in St. Louis, Missouri. Twenty television programs for each series appeared on more than 800 stations in the U.S. For radio, Meehan taped eight-minute segments on topics such as "The Christian Community," "Hope," "Sin," and "Humility."⁶²

As cable television spread throughout North America, Meehan maximized his exposure by delivering programs via satellite. By 1985, many of Meehan's CHCH series were telecast in the U.S. on the Eternal

⁵⁷ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 5, File 13; Box 6, File 18.

⁵⁸ AO, F 4607-1-0-109; F 4607-1-0-91; F 4607-1-0-123; F 4607-1-0-90; AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 5, File 6.

⁵⁹ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03 Box 5, File 6.

⁶⁰ AO, F 4607-1-0-97. The series, *Thank God for the Church* (1974), was the first program to be filmed in the Royal Botanical Gardens of Hamilton.

⁶¹ McLuhan, "From Understanding Media," 23.

⁶² AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 5, File 17; Box 7, Files 8-14. In 1978 and 1979, the Meehan shows were taped in the Toronto studios of the Global TV. Later, he flew to St. Louis for the taping in the studios of Sacred Heart Program Inc.

Word Television Network (EWTN) the cable network that Mother Angelica founded in 1981 in Birmingham, Alabama. Under an agreement with EWTN, his CHCH programs reached 12 million households through 250 cable television stations.⁶³ The last series for CHCH suited Mother Angelica's conservative programming with titles including, *Saints I Like*, *The Apostles Creed*, and *Growing Old Gracefully*.⁶⁴ In return, Mother Angelica was a guest on several of Meehan's CHCH programs.

As well as writing for television, Meehan contributed to newspapers. For a decade beginning in 1981, he wrote two regular columns for *The Canadian Register*. Under the title *Sunday Readings*, he wrote a commentary on the weekly Sunday scripture reading and under *Question Box*, he answered questions about liturgy, practices and history. After the stint with *The Canadian Register* ended, *Question Box* appeared in *Challenge* magazine (1995-1997). As well, he wrote columns for *Canadian Messenger* magazine (1992-1998) and a monthly article for the *Sacred Heart Messenger* magazine (1982-1996).⁶⁵ At the same time, Meehan also undertook special papal and synod assignments. During Pope John Paul II's 1979 tour in the United States, Meehan travelled with the papal entourage, reporting daily from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Des Moines and Washington.⁶⁶ In 1980, he covered the Rome Synod on the Family for *The Catholic Register* and sent reports to CHCH-TV Hamilton via satellite in time for the six o'clock news. During Pope John Paul II's tour of Canada, Meehan wrote for the 1984 special edition of *The Canadian Register* and served as broadcast commentator.⁶⁷ In 1992 at the age of 81, Meehan retired from broadcasting.

Like the U.S. Catholic broadcasters who preceded him, Meehan produced shows for an audience, who shared common values and a moral culture.⁶⁸ American radio and television accelerated the trend toward personality cults, which included prominent new religious personalities.⁶⁹ When Coughlin and Sheen became caught in the bubble of their personal popularity, authorities within the Church ended their broadcasts. Conversely, although well-known in a concentrated market of southern Ontario, Meehan never rose to the dubious state of a personality cult and remained on good terms with his ecclesiastical superiors.

⁶³ AO, F 4607-1-0-120; AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 5, File 17.

⁶⁴ AO, F 4607-1-0-129; F 4607-1-0-131.

⁶⁵ AO, F 4607-1-0-146-190.

⁶⁶ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 6, File 1.

⁶⁷ AETR, Edmonton-Toronto Fonds, Series 6-03, Box 4, File 13.

⁶⁸ Stewart M Hoover, *Mass Media Religion*, 18.

⁶⁹ Quentin J. Schultze, *Televangelism and American Culture: The Business of Popular Religion* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991), 73-74.

Comfortable working in the media of radio, television and print, Meehan saw the unlimited possibilities of delivering the message of God beyond the churches. He was perplexed at the Church's early gingerly "negative and hesitant approach to all media."⁷⁰ Instead he utilized the media to reach all faiths. Education, training and fearlessness in adopting the new electronic technology led to longevity on the airwaves. He adapted programming by borrowing popular and successful formats for his shows. Undaunted by new technology and fads in broadcasting, Meehan undertook the challenge of a phone-in talk show on CHML and a television talk show. Meehan's learned communications skills and polished informal style carved a historic pathway in radio by developing, as McLuhan described, an intimate person-to-person relationship between writer-speaker and listener. Through his scripts, Meehan created a theatre of the mind, drawing an image or a situation for the listener to fill in the missing pieces. In the ever-changing world of television, Meehan adjusted programming by adding more and more defined, detailed attractive images and stimuli for the viewers of McLuhan's cool medium. The move out of the static studio set to film on locations presented the viewer with pleasing, interesting, colourful visual settings.

Through each form of media, Meehan achieved his purpose of spreading the message of God through themes of a multi-faceted world. However, he kept steadfast to the themes of contemporary family and home life, which drew a general and ecumenical audience. From the first scripts of the *Trans Canada* broadcasts to the final CHCH series, Meehan intertwined current issues and family themes from a spiritual viewpoint without whacking the audience with a Bible. During those decades, he evolved into a master of religious media.

⁷⁰ AO, F 4607-1-0-58, "The Electronic Church."

**‘To meet more perfectly the wants
of our people here:’
The Christian Brothers and the Process
of Anglicization in Ontario, 1850-1925¹**

Michael WILCOX

In late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ontario, conflict over language divided French and English speakers within the Catholic Church. Education was at the heart of this polarization, peaking with the contentious Regulation 17 in 1912. The Christian Brothers – a Catholic teaching congregation founded by Jean Baptiste De La Salle in 1680 – were crucial players in this ethno-linguistic tension. This paper analyzes how the Christian Brothers negotiated their identity in the Anglo-Protestant world of southern Ontario from the modest 1851 arrival in Toronto of primarily French-speaking Brothers through to the thriving position by 1925 of an overwhelmingly English-speaking congregation. Aligning the Brothers with the language of their students seemed a practical means of meeting local language and educational standards. But their French-speaking superiors in Montreal believed that recruits to the congregation should be educated in Montreal and in French. Between the 1870s and 1910s, Ontario’s English-speaking Brothers and their allies in the clergy fought vigorously with their French-language superiors about the anglicization of language and customs. Ontario’s Brothers argued that to carry out their apostolate they required a local novitiate where young men would be instructed in the obligations and practices of fraternal community living and be groomed for the rigors of their teaching vocation. They believed that a novitiate where instruction was in English would increase recruitment, expand their educational reach, counter Protestant influence, and respond to inadequate training in Quebec. While the campaign for their own novitiate stirred up discord, their goals

¹ I would like to thank Jon McQuarrie, Beth Jewett, Julia Rady-Shaw, Mark McGowan, along with the editors and the three anonymous reviewers for their perceptive analyses and many helpful suggestions. A very special debt of gratitude goes to Stacy Hushion, who read and re-read several drafts of this paper offering candid critiques and gentle encouragement whenever each was needed. This manuscript is far better because of her insight, and I am deeply appreciative.

were to honour their founder, see their congregation prosper, and serve the Church faithfully. After several false starts they secured an English-language novitiate in Toronto.

A history of the Christian Brothers' quest for an English-speaking novitiate provides a useful window for illuminating cultural and linguistic tensions in Ontario and in Canadian Catholicism. Nowhere was this enmity more evident than in education, and particularly the Bilingual Schools Question. Historians have generally understood the controversy over what was known as Regulation 17 as a struggle between English- and French-speaking Catholics over the use of the French language in the province's schools² and have rightly focused on the French-speaking Christian Brothers in Ottawa: their inefficiencies – real or imagined – in teaching methods, their problems with discipline, and their stubbornness on the question of qualifications.³ Yet, Ontario's English-speaking Christian Brothers also held a meaningful stake in the question that is important for understanding this ethno-linguistic tension and the means to rectify it. The themes mobilized in the Ontario Brothers' campaign for an English-speaking novitiate demonstrate that they extolled the practical and sacred benefits of anglicization and used their platform to articulate a deep-seated prejudice against their French-speaking confreres as they endeavoured to secure stronger local control of community life.

In mid-nineteenth century Canada West (now Ontario), the clergy saw separate schools for Catholic children as essential to preserving religious and minority rights. Roman Catholic traditionally sought to ensure that the Church directed its own educational facilities. They feared that teachers in a single system of public schools would not teach Christianity appropriately

² Margaret Prang, "Clerics, Politicians, and the Bilingual Schools Issue in Ontario, 1910-1917," *Canadian Historical Review*, 41, no. 4 (December, 1960): 281-307; Marilyn Barber, "The Ontario Bilingual Schools Issue: Sources of Conflict," *Canadian Historical Review*, 47, no. 3 (September 1966): 227-48; Robert Choquette, "Linguistic and Ethnic Factors in the French Irish Catholic Relations in Ontario," *CCHA Study Sessions*, 39 (1972): 35-43; Chad Gaffield, *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict: The Origins of the French-Language Controversy in Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987); Frederick J. McEvoy, "'Naturally I am passionate, ill-tempered, and arrogant...': Father Matthew J. Whelan and French-English Conflict in Ontario, 1881-1922," *CCHA, Historical Studies*, 72 (2006): 54-70.

³ C.B. Sissons, *Church and State in Canadian Education: An Historical Study* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1959), 77-91; Franklin A. Walker, *Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario: A Documentary Study* (Toronto: The English Catholic Education Association of Ontario, 1964), Chapters 6, 8, 9, and 10; J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp, and Louis-Philippe Audet (eds.) *Canadian Education: A History* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1970), 283-4; John Zucchi, *The View from Rome: Archbishop Stagni's 1915 Reports on the Ontario Bilingual Schools Question* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), Introduction.

and that children would lose their faith. The clergy and their supporters argued that a separate faith-based education should receive state resources. They believed that some degree of denominational factionalism was tolerable, if not necessary, to foster religious harmony and even nation-building, especially given the heightened political and religious tension surrounding the 1837-38 Rebellions, the Durham Report, and Canada West's subsequent union with Canada East (now Quebec).⁴ To help address fears of religious assimilation, the assembly of the newly-united colony passed the Common School Act (Day Act) in 1841 ensuring that religious minorities – Protestants in Canada East and Catholics in Canada West – could attend publicly-funded separate denominational schools.

Despite this legislation, few Catholic schools were established in Canada West until Michael Power became the first bishop of the newly created Diocese of Toronto. Bishop Power actively supported the expansion of separate schools and encouraged Catholic parents to send their children to them whenever it was feasible.⁵ In a manner typical of the era, Power supported a wide variety of ways and means to deliver Catholic education, including the employment of religious orders in publicly funded separate schools. To this end, he secured the services of the Jesuits in 1843 to serve and teach in the diocese's Native missions and the Loretto Sisters in 1847 to staff schools for the growing population of Irish Catholics who were fleeing the famine.⁶ Power planned a "recruitment venture" in Europe but died of typhus in October 1847.⁷

Power's successor, Bishop Armand de Charbonnel (1850-1860), initiated a more organized campaign to bring religious orders to the diocese that resulted in the flourishing of institutional life and the creation of a large network of separate Catholic schools. As an ultramontanist, de Charbonnel

⁴ Sources on the history of Catholic education in Upper Canada, and later Ontario, include: Franklin A. Walker, *Catholic Education and Politics in Upper Canada* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, Limited, 1955); Sissons, *Church and State in Canadian Education*; Robert Dixon and Mark G. McGowan (eds.), *The History of Catholic Education in Ontario: A Reader* (Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 1997); Michael Power, *A Promise Fulfilled: Highlights in the Political History of Catholic Separate Schools in Ontario* (Toronto: Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association, 2002).

⁵ Mark McGowan, *Michael Power: The Struggle to Build the Catholic Church on the Canadian Frontier* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 214-22. McGowan suggests that these include "common schools employing Catholic teachers in which Catholics dominated in numbers; mixed common schools supplemented by parish-based catechetical programs; publicly funded Catholic separate schools; publicly funded separate schools operated by members of religious orders; and tuition-based schools." McGowan, *Michael Power*, 214.

⁶ Robert Choquette, "Power, Michael," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (hereafter *DCB*), vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 1988, 705-6.

⁷ McGowan, *Michael Power*, 222.

believed in a strict religious hierarchy and demanded ecclesiastical authority in all respects, including education, politics, and morals.⁸ He encouraged Catholics to vote for candidates who supported separate schools, and even threatened parents with the penalty of mortal sin if they did not send their children to separate schools when they were available.⁹ Bishop de Charbonnel's vision and the Catholic philosophy of education were in marked contrast to those of Methodist minister Egerton Ryerson who became Canada West's first Superintendent of Education in 1844. Ryerson believed that separating children by denomination was undesirable but accepted separate religious schools in places where tensions between Catholics and Protestants were especially strained.¹⁰ Most politicians in Canada West agreed with Ryerson, and few were willing to grant concessions to Catholics. Debates about education were exacerbated by additional tensions in urban environments where providing relief for thousands of poverty-stricken and unemployed Irish Catholics stressed municipal coffers to their limits.

To deal with these challenges and educate the faithful, de Charbonnel hoped to build up an efficient and talented contingent of Catholic teachers. Taught by Basilians at their headquarters in Annonay, France, de Charbonnel believed that religious orders were well suited to provide instruction in what he considered most important to Catholic boys and girls: proper morality, deference to authority, character formation, and a reverence for God.¹¹ Moreover, he reasoned that Catholic educators, as vanguards of the faith, would help prevent religious assimilation by the dominant Protestants.¹² In July 1850 de Charbonnel wrote, probably to every bishop and religious order in France, asking for priests and teaching brothers and sisters to come to Canada West. He wanted to strengthen the religious life of the diocese's

⁸ For information on the history of ultramontanism in Canada, see Jean Hamelin and Nive Voisine (eds.) *Les Ultramontains canadiens-français* (Montreal: Boréal Express, 1985).

⁹ Murray W. Nicolson and John S. Moir, "Charbonnel, Armand-François-Marie de," in *DCB*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 1990, 182-5. For more details, see Murray Nicolson, *Catholics in English Canada: A Popular History* (Toronto: Life Ethics Information Centre, 2000), 82-3; and Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-1895* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 40-1.

¹⁰ Sissons, *Church and State in Canadian Education*, 25.

¹¹ General Archives of the Basilian Fathers, Toronto (hereafter GABF) St. Michael's College, Toronto – Documents, 1850, A.313 1852 .01-.39, Concordat between Archbishop Armand de Charbonnel and M. Pierre Tourvieille, 28 January 1855.

¹² GABF, Tourvieille, Pierre, Superior General, 1839-1859 – Letters, Fond A.3112, Box A.3112 1852, Bishop Armand de Charbonnel to Superior General Tourvieille, 6 July 1850. Canada West was the most Protestant region in all of British North America; Catholics made up only 20% of the population in the mid-nineteenth century. For more demographic details, see Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkel, *Canada: A National History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Pearson, 2007), 163-5.

estimated 80,000 Catholics, particularly in Toronto, where one-tenth of that population resided. His efforts resulted with the arrival of the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1851 and the Basilian Fathers in 1852.¹³

The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, known colloquially in Ontario as the Christian Brothers, were founded by the French priest – and later Catholic saint – Jean Baptiste De La Salle in 1680.¹⁴ De La Salle envisioned that this congregation would not be priests, but would labour for the salvation of souls through Christian education; in helping to instill Catholic doctrine in the hearts and minds of youth, the Brothers would be valuable auxiliary servants to the clergy.¹⁵ De La Salle was a pedagogical pioneer who modernized teaching techniques and France’s educational system. Taking exception to tuition-based schools for the wealthy, he opened free schools primarily for the children of the poor. At these schools, he employed group teaching – what he called the “simultaneous method” – in lieu of individual tutoring. Finally, De La Salle stressed the use of the vernacular, rather than the traditional Latin, because it was crucial for students to acquire a trade as well as learn Christian doctrine.¹⁶

¹³ It appears as though the bishop was more concerned about actually getting priests and teachers on the ground and less so about how they would fare as French speakers in this English-speaking milieu. Although the Catholic population of Toronto was overwhelmingly of Irish heritage and therefore English speaking, de Charbonnel looked particularly to French orders such as the Christian Brothers, as well as the Jesuits, Capuchins, Marists, and Oblates to satisfy the diocese’s needs and vacancies. Possible reasons for this approach include his personal connections in France, but also a dearth of English-speaking priests and teaching religious. Whatever the case, the question of language differences between some members of religious orders and the majority of the city’s Catholic population became an increasingly heated topic in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In fact, de Charbonnel resigned his See in 1860 because of a lack of fluency in English, which, combined with his strict religious policies, bred resentment among some members of the laity and clergy. For details, see John S. Moir (ed.) *Church and Society: Documents on the Religious and Social History of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto* (Toronto: The Archdiocese of Toronto, 1991), 25-6, and Nicolson and Moir, “Charbonnel,” in *DCB*, vol. 12, 182-5.

¹⁴ Members are sometimes referred to as De La Salle Brothers or French Christian Brothers. This is to distinguish them from the Congregation of Christian Brothers, sometimes called Irish Christian Brothers, founded by Edmund Rice in Ireland in 1802.

¹⁵ Over the next three centuries, the Christian Brothers became teachers in a wide variety of educational institutions, including elementary and secondary schools, reform and technical schools, preparatory colleges, adult vocational schools, universities, and teachers’ colleges.

¹⁶ John Baptist De La Salle, “Meditations for the Time of Retreat,” cited in Carl Koch et al., (eds.) *John Baptist de la Salle: The Spirituality of Christian Education* (New York: Paulist Press, 2004), 37. De La Salle banned all speaking and teaching of Latin

The first Christian Brothers in Canada arrived in Montreal in 1837 and over the following decade set up several schools and a novitiate. De Charbonnel was well acquainted with the Christian Brothers since he had been chaplain to their novitiate. Upon his consecration as bishop of Toronto, de Charbonnel began asking Brother Philippe, the Institute's Superior General in Paris, to send Brothers to Toronto for "the great cause of education."¹⁷ He invited the Christian Brothers to be distinguished servants of the Church through their teaching endeavours in a bastion of Protestantism. As a religious congregation dedicated to teaching, they would be public advocates for separate schools in a tense political environment. The five Brothers who arrived in Toronto in May 1851 became the pioneer male teaching order in Ontario and were soon a forceful presence not only in educating Catholic boys in the city but also in securing and strengthening the still nascent system of separate schools.

These first Brothers quickly established St. Michael's School and St. Paul's School and Catholic bishops, inspectors, trustees, and parents noted their reputation as vaunted auxiliaries to the clergy. Within two years, de Charbonnel commented that despite "the sad state of the diocese" in general, the state of education was improving as the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of St. Joseph were "teaching with success."¹⁸ In 1861, even Egerton Ryerson, a vocal opponent of separate schools, noted that the Sisters and Brothers at St. Paul's School provided "good training" and "a good system of education" and deserved public gratitude: "They are a blessing to the city of Toronto. They are pointing out to the youthful mind the way to virtue, religion, morality, and useful knowledge."¹⁹ Echoing this sentiment two decades later, by which time Ontario was a province of Canada, Archbishop

amongst congregation members, contributing to a tense relationship between Brothers and clergy in the United States.

¹⁷ Archives of the Generalate, Rome (hereafter AGR), Documents Généraux, Documents Régionaux et Locaux, Canada, District de Toronto (hereafter DRLCDT), No. 171.1, Toronto, Canada-Ouest (Amérique du Nord), Sommaire, Archbishop Armand de Charbonnel to Frère Philippe, 8 Oct. 1850. All translations are the author's unless otherwise noted.

¹⁸ Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (hereafter ARCAT), Charbonnel Papers, LB03.054, Bishop Charbonnel to Cardinal Fransoni, 30 May 1853. He did not mention the Loretto Sisters or the Basilian Fathers in this letter, though they were also teaching in the city by this time.

¹⁹ Egerton Ryerson, *Journal of Education for Upper Canada*, v. 14, 9, September 1861. Ryerson laid out an educational vision that was designed to promote reading and writing skills, foster class and religious harmony, encourage discipline and sociability, and prepare young people for employment as well as civic responsibilities. Teachers were to play an especially integral role in carrying out these aims, as they were to provide "high educational standards and practices that would lead to good citizenship and a place in heaven." AGR, DRLCDT, No. 171: Documents Généraux, No. 1: Ryerson to Bishop de Charbonnel, 24 April 1852.

Lynch called the Brothers “true servants of God” who conducted “holy and self-sacrificing work.”²⁰

But this early chorus of praise was tempered by a healthy dose of condemnation from many of these very same proponents. Their criticisms centred on language issues. The introduction of French-speaking Brothers into predominantly English environs was problematic and led to complaints about the quality of their teaching since some Brothers had limited competency for reading, writing, speaking, and teaching in the English language. In 1875, Provincial School Inspector J.M. Buchan found that even simple tasks such as the spelling of names were not carried out effectively in the Christian Brothers’ schools. He believed that the majority of teachers were “so deficient in knowledge that they would fail to take third class certificates if they were to present themselves before a board of examiners.” Thus, he pushed some Toronto School Board members to question the Brothers’ qualifications and to have them, like secular teachers, submit to provincial standards and examinations for certification.²¹ Similarly, at the first Kingston Board of Trustees meeting on 1 February 1876, school officials complained to Brother Halward, the newly-established director of the Kingston community, about the number of French Brothers, “who, at various times, were sent to them and could not speak ... English.”²² Prejudice against French-speaking Brothers remained well into the early twentieth century.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the language question caused great concern for Ontario’s Christian Brothers. Their fears reflected those of the province’s overwhelmingly English-speaking citizenry, especially its politicians of all stripes who felt anxious about rising francophone immigration and the perceived inferiority of Quebec institutions. The hitherto accommodative stance for French-speaking students and teachers began to wane.²³ At the same time, the number of English-speaking Brothers was climbing, as the Institute recruited men of Irish descent from Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes.²⁴ This process fostered an ethno-religious

²⁰ Brothers of the Christian Schools Archives, Toronto (hereafter BCSA), 700 Series, Duke St. + Bond St. Annals + Personnel, cited in *The Establishment of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Toronto and their Early History* (Transcribed by Brother Walter Farrell, from the Original Handwritten text by Early Brothers in Toronto), 45.

²¹ Toronto Catholic District School Board Archives, 1876 File, “Report of Official Inspection in Oct. 1875.”

²² BCSA, 700 Series, Kingston History + Personnel + St. Catharines History, *Annals of the Community of Kingston*, 1853-1893, 19.

²³ Gaffield, *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict*, Chapter 2.

²⁴ So important were the Irish to the Brothers’ expansion that superiors came to consider all English-speaking subjects as “Irish.” Of the 311 Brothers in the Montreal District, a region encompassing all of Canada, in 1888, a solid 66 (21.2%) of them were of Irish descent and thus English-speaking. A similar, though slightly higher, percentage

identity amongst the anglophone Brothers in Ontario who began campaigning for reforms to suit their English-language surroundings.

The fact that they and their Ontario institutions remained under the direction of French authorities in Montreal deeply frustrated the English-speaking Brothers in Ontario. They constantly complained that the distinct features and habits of their French confreres were incongruous in Ontario, discouraged recruitment, did not enrich community life, and limited expansion of schools. Because of a shortage of recruits, the Brothers only slowly increased the number of their schools. From the 1850s to the 1870s, they opened only ten schools in Ontario: six in Toronto, two in Ottawa (1864 and 1877), and one each in Kingston (1853) and St. Catharines (1876).²⁵ The English-speaking Brothers suggested that their congregation would flourish in the province if an English-language novitiate were established. They lobbied their superiors in Montreal and Paris for “a Novitiate of our own” which would “do much to extend His greater glory.”²⁶ The Brothers argued that Toronto, Ontario’s capital, its most populous city and seat of the Archdiocese, was the logical choice for an English-language novitiate.

In petitioning their superiors for the greater inclusion of English-language services and cultural adaptation, Ontario’s Brothers appealed to reason, practicality, and good sense. Perhaps their most persuasive argument was the idea that greater assimilation into the language of the masses would secure more vocations from an untapped population of young rural Irish Catholic men. To support their case they sought the help of local bishops and priests. Ontario’s English-speaking clergy were all too willing to help out. Toronto Archbishop J.J. Lynch, a strong proponent of English-language interests, wrote several letters in the 1870s and 1880s to the Superiors-General of the Brothers in Paris requesting that an English-language novitiate be built in Toronto.²⁷ In an 1873 letter to the Superior General

(26.8%) of Brothers in formation in the scholasticate, novitiate, and juniorate were of Irish heritage. For more details on nationality and language of Brothers teaching in Canada before 1880, see Nive Voisine, *Les Frères des Écoles chrétiennes au Canada: La conquête de l’Amérique, 1837-1880, Volume II* (Sainte-Foy, Quebec: Éditions Anne Sigier, 1987), 267-73.

²⁵ In Toronto, they also operated a Night School for adults at St. Michael’s College on Richmond Street. For a list of all openings in Toronto, Ontario, and other regions across Canada, as well as those mission apostolates to other countries, see AGR, DRLCDT, No. 170.1, *One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary of Lasallian Education in Toronto, 1851-2001*, 12 May 2001.

²⁶ BCSA, 700 Series, Duke St. + Bond St. Annals + Personnel, Br. Tobias Josephus, *History of the District of Toronto*, 1891, 9.

²⁷ Lynch became de Charbonnel’s coadjutor in 1859 and Bishop when de Charbonnel resigned his See in 1860. Bishop Lynch became Archbishop Lynch in 1870 when the diocese of Toronto became an Archdiocese. See Charles W. Humphries, “Lynch, John Joseph,” in *DCB*, vol. 11, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 1982, 535-8. For

Brother Philippe, Lynch praised the “truly good work” of the Brothers in the city, and wanted it to continue. The best and most efficient means to achieve that end, he reasoned, was to establish a novitiate to recruit English-speaking Irish Catholics from rural Ontario. Ultimately, Lynch’s justification for a novitiate hinged on the question of language. He suggested that the practice of sending English-speaking Catholics to Quebec was impractical and dissuaded young men from joining the order.²⁸ Because the province’s Catholic population was primarily of Irish origin, with significant numbers of English and Scottish Catholics as well,²⁹ he noted, “The English language is therefore the language of the country.” He continued with a poignant and carefully crafted logic:

If you build a novitiate in Toronto, you’d receive these rural young men. They do not want to go to Montreal; it’s too far. Judge for yourself just how advantageous it would be to have Brothers who all speak the same language, have the same habits and share common feelings as the locals. Many of the Brothers currently teaching in our schools are of French origin, born in Lower Canada. Are they capable of honourably directing an English school? ... With your current system, you’re always short on candidates. But if you were to have a novitiate in Toronto, you’d quickly receive many young men who would make excellent Brothers.³⁰

Lynch, a powerful voice working alongside the English-speaking Brothers, hoped that a new novitiate would enable them to open new communities and schools across his archdiocese.

Seeking advice on how to respond to Lynch, the Superior General turned to the Brothers’ Assistant for America, Brother Patrick, who was more familiar with the situation.³¹ Aware that the Brothers had experienced

information on Lynch’s ecclesiastical and cultural influence on Catholicism in Ontario, see Robert Choquette, “The Archdiocese of Toronto and its Metropolitan Influence in Ontario,” in Mark McGowan and Brian Clarke (eds.) *Catholics at the “Gathering Place”*: *Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991* (Toronto: CCHA, 1993), 297-311.

²⁸ In 1873, English-speaking novices went to Montreal to carry out their training. Later they also went to Amawalk (New York) and Ammendale (Maryland).

²⁹ The combined population of Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and English migrants made English the language of almost 82% of the Ontario population according to the 1871 Census.

³⁰ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: Toronto [Noviciat]/Canada Communautés, No. 1, Lynch to Frère Philippe, 28 October 1873.

³¹ Brother Patrick (1822-91), born John Patrick Murphy in County Tipperary, Ireland, moved to Canada very early in his life. He took the habit in 1844 in Montreal, where he taught for many years before becoming the city’s Inspector of Schools. He became Director of the important communities at St. Louis College in Missouri and at Manhattan College in New York, and was Visitor of the District of New York from 1866 until 1873. He replaced Brother Facile as Assistant in 1873 becoming the first Assistant for North America born outside Quebec. Assistants were tasked with administrative control over

little growth in the province, Brother Patrick advised that a novitiate should be built in Toronto. He rationalized that it would foster Ontario-born vocations, because, “apart from the difficulties of language, there are national sensitivities that are difficult to bear during the early stressful months in the religious life.”³² However, the Superior General was restricted by a recent decision of the General Chapter to limit the creation of new community houses that could not guarantee recruitment success.³³ In responding to the Archbishop, Brother Philippe recognized valid reasons for a novitiate, but was concerned about financing it since the Ontario Brothers would “need a house, the funds to furnish it, and resources to maintain this novitiate’s personnel because it is presumed that novices can not pay dues sufficient to cover their expenses.”³⁴ Nevertheless, he ordered the Visitor in Montreal, Brother Armin-Victor, to go to Toronto to discuss the matter with the Archbishop.³⁵ When the two finally met along with a few of the congregation’s Toronto representatives, the Visitor refused to consent to a Toronto novitiate citing the same reasons as the Superior General. Despite this setback, the Brothers in Ontario continued to press for their own novitiate.

Throughout the late 1870s, the Brothers continued to emphasize that preaching the Gospel in their classrooms in the English language was a practical and efficient way of communicating the Church’s message to a young and captive audience. But it was not these linguistic rationales that changed the minds of superiors and enabled the opening of a novitiate. Rather, it was the Brothers’ improved financial condition in the late 1870s. When Brother Tobias Josephus replaced the fiscally-clueless Brother Arnold as director in January 1878, he was able to rein in spending and reduce debts and liabilities; he even reached an agreement with the federal government on the purchase of land and buildings on Duke Street which housed the De

several districts, often encompassing entire countries or a whole continent. They were responsible for keeping the Superior General up-to-date on the goings-on in their respective geographic areas and acting as mediators in disputes. Essentially, the Assistants made up the Superior General’s inner circle. See Voisine, *Les Frères des Écoles chrétiennes au Canada, Vol. II*, 277-9.

³² AGR, DRLCDT, 290.2/1: No. 2, Arrêté du Conseil du Régime établissant un Noviciat à Toronto, 24 November 1873.

³³ The General Chapter, the meeting of the Superior General, the Assistants, Visitors, and Directors from all countries in which the Brothers were employed, usually met about every ten years to adopt any changes in rules they felt necessary.

³⁴ AGR, DRLCDT, 290.2/1: No. 3, Frère Philippe to J.J. Lynch, 26 November 1873.

³⁵ In the hierarchy of the Institute, Visitors, sometimes called Provincials, were appointed by the Superior General and responsible for the overall direction and administration of large geographic areas called districts. They were supposed to visit each community house within their jurisdiction each year to ensure that the Rule was observed faithfully. Before taking these positions, they were to have ample experience in teaching and directing communities at the local level.

La Salle Institute. These developments assured superiors that Toronto's uncertain financial situation was on the mend, leading the Superior General to grant his approbation for a novitiate in early 1880. Toronto priest Father William Bergin praised the decision and noted that the new training school would be built "in order to meet more perfectly the wants of our people here."³⁶ On 25 August 1880, the De La Salle Novitiate and Training School opened on a large, secluded, and "somewhat romantic" property backing the "placid waters" of the Don River, in what was then Toronto's eastern edge. Brother Michael, the first Director of Novices, called the seven young men who moved from Montreal to Toronto a "little band of religious pioneers."³⁷ These postulants led highly-regulated lives with an emphasis on personal piety, prayer, and regular observance of the sacraments and were encouraged to build up a strong spiritual character and practice strict fidelity to their rules and vows. At the end of their formation, worthy novices would receive the habit and become full members of the congregation.³⁸ Toronto's first postulant, a "very pious young Brother" named William Culletin, was vested with the habit in the De La Salle College chapel on 15 December 1880, becoming Brother Tobias Stephen.³⁹ This occasion was viewed as so integral to the future of Catholic education in the province that Archbishop Lynch presided, and bishops, vicar-generals, priests, and all 23 Brothers in southwestern Ontario attended.

Notably absent was Brother Réticius – the new District Visitor based in Montreal – who had been hesitant about the novitiate's opening. Brother Réticius was an exemplary ultramontanist and a staunch defender of a centralized French-language administration based in Montreal. While he considered the Irish Brothers to be "our most intelligent and most devoted teachers," he nonetheless regarded them as "too isolated, too separated" and forming "a community within the community."⁴⁰ He preferred to mix the English-speaking Irish and French-speaking *Canadien* novices in Montreal to foster community spirit. Despite his misgivings, on his first official visit to the Toronto novitiate in July 1881, he commented favourably on virtually

³⁶ BCSA, 700 Series, Br. Tobias Josephus, *History of the District of Toronto*, 1891, 34-5.

³⁷ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: *Annals of the De La Salle Novitiate opened in Toronto August 25, 1880*, undated.

³⁸ Library and Archives Canada, Microfilm K217, 211060-211065, *Novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, 1898. Postulants generally entered in their mid-teens, although some were in their early twenties.

³⁹ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: *Annals of the De La Salle Novitiate opened in Toronto August 25, 1880*, undated. The normal duration for novitiate training was around one year, but likely due to the demand for teachers, William Culletin was fast-tracked through the process, finishing up his novitiate in only four months.

⁴⁰ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 171.1/2: Brother Réticius to Brother Irlide, 30 October 1880.

every facet of its operation. The novices, he wrote to the Superior General, are “pious, plain, generous” and “regularity was perfectly observed. ... With time and by the grace of God, this nursery will provide good subjects.”⁴¹ However, pecuniary and linguistic considerations tempered his optimism about the novitiate’s future. He noted that prosperity would only arise if there was a successful resolution to a new round of financial uncertainty in the Toronto community.⁴² Moreover, Brother Réticius inherited a colossal debt from his predecessor, the greatest portion of which was accrued in Toronto, and he thought it unwise to spend additional funds on Toronto affairs under such circumstances. His reservations also centred on the lack of French instruction. He had “projected that French and English would be taught concurrently, [as] these two languages [are] indispensably necessary” and thus proposed appointing a French-Canadian sub-Director for Toronto’s novitiate, and an equivalent “Irish” Brother for its Montreal counterpart.⁴³

Between 1881 and 1883, Brother Réticius grew increasingly dismayed with the novitiate’s problems, including the small number of Ontario-born candidates and his belief that the English-only policy strayed from the novitiate’s original intent. He seemed particularly hesitant about the increasingly precarious financial situation of the Toronto communities in general, and was reticent to provide more funds.⁴⁴ Réticius argued that the cost of the Toronto novitiate outweighed any gains it made, and consequently proposed to merge the Toronto and Montreal operations.⁴⁵ The landlord’s threat to sell the property if the Brothers did not purchase it sealed the fate of the novitiate. The Brothers’ Montreal District Council unanimously agreed to close it “pending a more conducive time to secure more vocations.”⁴⁶ The novitiate officially shut its doors 20 September 1883, and its four novices were sent to Montreal to complete their training.

⁴¹ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: No. 4, Frère Réticius, *Debuts du Noviciat de Toronto*, 2 July 1881.

⁴² For details on the financial trouble associated with the purchase of the Duke Street building, see Archives des Frères des Écoles chrétiennes du Canada francophone [hereafter AFECCF], Montreal, 501605, Organisation Administrative, Maisons et Institutions.

⁴³ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: No. 4, Frère Réticius, *Debuts du Noviciat de Toronto*, 2 July 1881.

⁴⁴ AFECCF, 501605.72, Organisation Administrative, Maisons et Institutions, Frère Réticius to D.A. O’Sullivan, 5 April 1883.

⁴⁵ Brother Patrick, who made his first official visit in September 1882, echoed the sentiments of Brother Réticius. He was “highly delighted with the place, but was much surprised to find but two novices.” Quoted in AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: *Annals of the De La Salle Novitiate opened in Toronto August 25, 1880*, undated.

⁴⁶ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: No. 5, Warning that the Novitiate would be closing, 15 September 1883.

Having invested much time and effort in this enterprise, the Ontario Brothers were understandably frustrated and saddened by its closing. They suggested that the novitiate needed more time and resources to establish itself and build up recruitment. Although only ten took the habit during its three-year career, the Ontario Brothers and their chaplain thought that bright prospects were available and that many young men would join the congregation if there were more active recruiting.⁴⁷

Archbishop Lynch was particularly concerned about the negative effects of the loss of the novitiate on the Catholic schools in his archdiocese. He wrote to the Superior General, Brother Joseph, that the greatest educational need in his archdiocese was to have suitable English-speaking Brothers. With the closing of the Toronto novitiate, he suggested drawing Ontario teachers from New York rather than Quebec, which “does not have a proper novitiate to teach English to our candidates.”⁴⁸ Hoping to assuage any unease, the Superior General advised Lynch that:

[W]e ... have formed in our Montreal establishment a special section for our English-speaking subjects. ... [W]e will, in a short time, provide a teaching staff that would publicize itself for the population of Upper Canada. ... [I]f we are unable to change our current organization for the communities of Ontario, we have at least the satisfaction to assure your Grace that we are doing everything necessary to respond fully to his desires, and also ensuring the confidence of Catholics.⁴⁹

Brother Joseph concluded by suggesting that a novitiate might re-open in Toronto when financial conditions became more favourable. Ontario’s English-speaking Brothers were unhappy about sending English-speaking recruits to Montreal – or re-starting their advocacy campaign. Yet, in spite of their frustration, or perhaps because of it, they redoubled their efforts for a new novitiate.

In the 1880s, the argument for a Toronto-based novitiate shifted away from potential recruitment opportunities and toward the idea, among other reasons, that it would be an important tool in creating a defensive stronghold in a province with an influential Protestant majority. The Brothers argued that a novitiate in Toronto could train staunchly Roman Catholic teachers who would be effective agents in keeping youth committed to their faith and who

⁴⁷ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: No. 6, Brother Michael to Brother Assistant, 14 September 1883. Of those that made it through from start to finish, only 5 were born in Ontario, the others came from Quebec, the Maritimes, and Ireland.

⁴⁸ AGR, DRLCDT, 171.1/2, J.J. Lynch to Frère Joseph, 21 September 1885.

⁴⁹ ARCAT, ROSII, Fond A44, Box 1, General Correspondence, 1870-1888, Brother Joseph to Archbishop Lynch, 16 October 1885.

might even help spread the Catholic faith to the Protestants in their midst.⁵⁰ Brother Tobias Josephus, Toronto's foremost Christian Brother, pleaded with his superiors for action: "We are praying every day that we may have a Novitiate, if it would tend to promote God's glory here in this bigoted Protestant Province where Catholic education is so much needed."⁵¹ The Brothers' allies in the clergy echoed the call. Writing to the Superior General in 1885, Archbishop Lynch noted that the bishops of London, Hamilton, and Peterborough unanimously desired an English-language novitiate to counteract "a strong spirit of antagonism" that apparently pervaded the public school system.⁵² Both the Brothers and their clerical allies were optimistic that logic would prevail and that superiors in Paris and Montreal would bend to the will of their members.

Concurrently, the Ontario Brothers campaigned for an autonomous district – a large geographic region encompassing many communities under the authority of a Visitor. Many Brothers saw the creation of a district as a means of expanding their own institutions and ensuring the future success of separate schools in Ontario. They argued that the vast size of the Montreal District coupled with its Franco-centric nature meant that the Visitor was ineffectual in carrying out his central functions, such as mediating disputes, evaluating the quality of the schools, and assessing the piety of community members. He could only visit once a year, and, as a French-speaking and Montreal-based official, had limited familiarity with developments in Ontario. Brother Tobias remarked that "most of our Brothers would feel really more at home under a different regime from that which holds sway in the Lower Province ... They cannot examine the classes. They really do not know in what condition our schools are. Moreover, they cannot supply us the Brothers we want here."⁵³ The Ontario Brothers argued that stronger local control of the life of their community would ease governance and give

⁵⁰ Historians John Zucchi and Murray Nicolson argue that Catholic schools run by English-speaking and primarily Irish men and women were established in Toronto and elsewhere during the latter part of the nineteenth century as part of a campaign to care for their own children, integrate immigrant Catholics into the English-speaking Church, resist Protestant assimilation, and match public schools in terms of quality of teachers and students. See Zucchi, *The View from Rome*, xxiii-xxiv and Murray W. Nicolson, "Irish Catholic Education in Victorian Toronto: An Ethnic Response to Urban Conformity," *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 17, no. 34 (Nov. 1984): 287-306.

⁵¹ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/2: No. 2, Brother Tobias to Brother Aimarus, 2 December 1889.

⁵² ARCAT, Lynch Papers, L A028.01, Archbishop Lynch to Brother Joseph, 21 September 1885.

⁵³ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 171/1.3: Brother Tobias to Rev. B. Patrick, 26 September 1885.

a local English-language superior greater knowledge of the Brothers and schools within his realm.⁵⁴

They were rewarded when the Toronto District was opened on 26 May 1889.⁵⁵ The thrilled Brothers believed it to be a sign from their superiors of investment in the province. However, with funds and the approval to build a novitiate still lacking, they continued to lobby for one based on practical and pragmatic concerns such as improved organizational and fiscal management. In particular, the Brothers argued that it was economically unsound to send young men to novitiates hundreds of miles away in Montreal, Baltimore, or New York. Brother Tobias, now Visitor for the fledgling district, warned of the costs of train fare, food, and other living expenses and suggested that having its own novitiate would partly alleviate the Toronto District's impoverishment.⁵⁶ With only four community houses in the entire district, Tobias felt that they desperately needed help to purchase a novitiate property. "We are only nominally a "District," he complained to the Superior General. "If you want us to remain separated, we expect you to provide the means for us to prosper."⁵⁷

Language concerns, however, remained the central focus of the Ontario Brothers' agitation for a novitiate because of the widespread feeling that pedagogical training and basic linguistic competency in Quebec was inferior. While Ontario Brothers had consistently deemed their Quebecois confreres as undesirable for Ontario's English milieu, they increasingly argued that English-language novices trained in Quebec were equally unsuitable because the academic program was conducted primarily in French. Brother Malachy Edward, a senior administrator in Toronto, believed the Brothers should be trained in Ontario where "the system of teaching, the curriculum of studies, [and] the methods of the local and government inspection are all so widely different from that of the Province of Quebec."⁵⁸ Brother Malachy noted a

⁵⁴ This was a long-standing argument, and is voiced most clearly in AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2: No. 6, Brother Malachy Edward to Reverend Brother Patrick, Assistant to the Superior-General, 22 March 1890.

⁵⁵ This region encompassed communities in Toronto, Kingston, St. Catharines, and Renfrew.

⁵⁶ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/2: No. 8, *Notes for Report in Favor of a Novitiate in Ontario*, 23 March 1890.

⁵⁷ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/2: No. 1, Tobias Josephus to Superior-General Frère Joseph, 6 September 1889.

⁵⁸ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/2: No. 6, Brother Malachy Edward to Reverend Brother Patrick, Assistant to the Superior-General, 22 March 1890. Perhaps Brother Malachy was responding to concerns raised by Ontario's first inspector of separate schools, J.F. White, who had consistently criticized Quebec's teacher training centres for graduating teachers according to a lower standard than the Normal Schools of Ontario. For details on White, see Sissons, *Church and State in Canadian Education*, 62-4.

widespread public perception of low educational standards in Quebec and cited a few examples of “considerable bad feeling” against Brothers from Quebec who were unprepared for differences in the relationship between school boards and religious orders. Finally, Brother Malachy provided a logical rationale for a new novitiate in Toronto by warning: “Before long we will be compelled if not by law at least by public opinion to pass our examination and as they are so difficult it will be impossible to prepare our young Brothers in Montreal where so much time has to be given to a French education.”⁵⁹

In echoing these sentiments Brother Tobias emphasized that in the Montreal novitiate, English-speaking young men suffered because “The exercises, conferences, etc. are all in French and this, together with the spirit, manner of training, mentality, etc. peculiar to the French temperament and customs, militated against the proper formation of English-speaking subjects.”⁶⁰ He also noted that young Ontario men “think they are going to a foreign Country when going to Quebec, as most of them do not understand the language of the bulk of the people, and the manners are quite different from the manners and customs of Ontario.”⁶¹ Moreover, he reasoned that in Toronto they would receive higher quality English-language training than in Quebec and be better prepared for teaching in Ontario. Ultimately, Brother Tobias suggested that an English-language novitiate in Toronto would be ideal for novices of both languages since it would give French-Canadian Brothers an opportunity to learn English and prepare them to respond to an Ontario law requiring that English be taught in all of the province’s French schools.⁶²

The Brothers also insisted that English-speaking novices trained in Quebec lacked the proper preparation for the rigours of religious life. Brothers sometimes claimed that they returned to Ontario unsure of what they had learned as religious. Brother Michael, an important advocate for English-language Brothers in Ontario, wrote:

I have known many young men that came from Ireland and after making their Novitiate in Montreal knew absolutely nothing about the religious life, as the exercises were performed in French, and then after spending a few years in community where they found some [knowledge of the religious life], more or less indifferent, at last came to the conclusion that it was about the same to live in the world as in religion and so abandoned their holy state. ... In fact it

⁵⁹ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/2: No. 6, Brother Malachy Edward to Reverend Brother Patrick, Assistant to the Superior-General, 22 March 1890.

⁶⁰ BCSA, 700 Series, The Habit + Novitiate History, *History of the Novitiate of Toronto*, 84.

⁶¹ BCSA, 700 Series, Br. Tobias Josephus, *History of the District of Toronto*, 1891, 2.

⁶² AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/2: No. 8, *Notes for Report in favor of a Novitiate in Ontario*, 23 March 1890.

is only since I came here [to Toronto] that I began to understand the beauty of the religious life, as I had but a faint idea of it before. When I entered the order fifteen years ago, I only remained four months in the Novitiate, and as the exercises were performed in French, you may imagine what kind of Novitiate I made. Is it to be wondered at then, that so many abandon their holy state? It is rather a miracle that so many have persevered.⁶³

Because their religious formation was crucial to their identity as teaching Brothers, anglicization was absolutely essential if their educational endeavors were to have any chance of success.

Brother Aimarus, the Assistant for North America and, as such, the congregation's highest authority on the continent, had some misgivings about organizing and financing a proposed novitiate and feared that the failure of the first novitiate would be repeated. During the summer of 1890, Brother Aimarus frequently asked Brother Tobias about the district's financial situation and the likelihood of procuring recruits. What finally secured Brother Aimarus' blessing for a novitiate was Brother Tobias' success in securing a \$50/year increase for the 19 Christian Brothers teaching for the Toronto Separate School Board. That new income would help cover the costs.⁶⁴ The novitiate opened on 27 December 1890 in a remodelled wing of the De La Salle Institute, under the directorship of Brother Halward. A juniorate was added in 1891 and a scholasticate in 1892. By the beginning of 1893, Toronto was home to four scholastics, 15 novices, and 22 juniors. With these numbers, the congregation opened new communities and schools in Hamilton (1891), Cleveland, Ohio (1893), and the St. John's Industrial School in Toronto (1895).⁶⁵ As Figure I indicates, there were more Brothers, schools, and communities in Ontario in 1895 than at any other point between 1851 and 1925.

While the Toronto District seemed to be functioning well, developments in the congregation's hierarchy and Canadian society contributed to the quick demise of both the district and its novitiate. In 1891, Brother Réticius, who had been unable to establish good relations with English-speaking Brothers while Visitor from 1880-86, replaced Brother Aimarus as the Assistant for North America. Brother Réticius' position on the language question was clear: the goal must be to work "by all possible means to destroy the eternal and foolish ideas of nationality, and strive to make all of our subjects members of one family, that of the children of the Venerable De

⁶³ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/1: No. 5, Brother Michael to Brother Assistant, 14 September 1883.

⁶⁴ AGR, DRLCDT, No. 290.2/2: No. 7: Brother Tobias Josephus to Brother Aimarus, 9 March 1890.

⁶⁵ The two English-speaking communities in Ottawa were also annexed to the Toronto District in 1891.

La Salle.”⁶⁶ This is a particularly salient observation, given that questions of national identity were prominent in this time of controversy surrounding the hanging of Louis Riel, the Manitoba Schools Question, and growing French Canadian nationalism. With this context in mind, it is telling that Réticius sought to diminish ethnic tension within his congregation by concentrating operations in Quebec and thereby reassert French-language authority. On the other hand, perhaps more pragmatic reasons were at the root of his decision. Historian Nive Voisine suggests that not only did Réticius not believe in the viability of the Toronto District and an English-language novitiate because of its financial instability and poor recruitment record but he also thought that closing communities was sometimes necessary for districts to survive, let alone progress.⁶⁷ Whatever the case, Brother Réticius closed the novitiate and dismantled the District in 1896 under the pretense of unsuitable accommodations at the De La Salle Institute and meagre finances in the Toronto District. English-speaking novices were again sent to Montreal to attend the Mont-de-La-Salle Novitiate. Réticius insisted that English-speaking novices would be well-formed in Montreal; they would preserve their language while simultaneously learning French, helping to achieve a “union of hearts” among the congregation in Canada.⁶⁸

Three key developments in the early twentieth century had a significant bearing on the Brothers’ aims of indigenization and anglicization in Ontario. First, in 1907, as part of a broad movement towards improved teacher-education standards, the Ontario Legislature passed *An Act respecting the Qualification of Certain Teachers* (Seath Act). This law required state certification of all teachers in Catholic separate schools, including members of religious orders. The Act resulted from a decade-long dispute between the English- and French-speaking Catholic trustees in Ottawa over the qualifications of the city’s Christian Brothers. These tensions peaked in 1904 when the lay Catholic teacher J.D. Grattan tried to restrain the Ottawa Separate School Board from re-hiring the Christian Brothers in the Notre Dame School and from building an attached residence. He took his case to the Ontario High Court of Justice, arguing that the contract should be invalidated because the Brothers lacked Ontario Department of Education qualification certificates. The superiors of the Christian Brothers in Montreal vigorously defended their members from subjecting themselves to regular examinations and suggested that their record spoke for itself. Judge MacMahon ruled in Grattan’s favour, noting that the

⁶⁶ Quoted in Voisine, *Les Frères des Écoles chrétiennes au Canada*, Vol. II, 112.

⁶⁷ Voisine, *Les Frères des Écoles chrétiennes au Canada*, Vol. II, 74-85.

⁶⁸ Voisine, *Les Frères des Écoles chrétiennes au Canada*, Vol. II, 112, 134-44. In 1896, the position of Auxiliary-Visitor was created as a tacit way of acknowledging that the English-speaking Brothers were to be integral members in the Montreal District. The man had to be English-speaking and reside in Toronto.

Brothers were not fully qualified to teach in Ontario unless they had been certified before 1867. The Brothers challenged this decision, and took their case to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London, then the highest court of appeal for Canadians. Despite the brothers arguing for the benefits of their pedagogical method and exclusion from government interference, the Privy Council upheld MacMahon's ruling.⁶⁹

In this matter, superiors did not necessarily speak on behalf of their members' wishes. Indeed, Ontario's English-speaking Brothers saw the law as a means of professionalization that would build up their membership, expand their reach, and serve the Church. In order to prove their ability and proficiency as teachers, they were determined to meet the new requirements and submitted to the necessary training courses and examinations.⁷⁰ They challenged their superiors' refusal to submit to the provincial requirements while pressing them to re-establish a novitiate. Recognizing that the only means available to secure the Brothers' presence in Ontario was to conform to provincial law, the superiors approved the establishment of St. Joseph's Junior Novitiate, which opened in Toronto in March 1908. In addition to receiving their religious formation, postulants prepared for government examinations for entry into the Normal School.

The second development was the increasing divisiveness of the Bilingual Schools Question. Despite the public call for unity made by most Church leaders, Catholics were divided along ethno-linguistic lines with anglophone Catholics complaining of the lack of quality, real or perceived, in the so-called French-English schools. The tension reached a head in 1912 when Regulation 17 banned all teaching in French after the second grade. Many Catholics, including many members of the Christian Brothers, believed that if Catholics did not abide by the law Protestants would seek to eliminate Catholic schools altogether. English-speaking Catholics wanted their religious right to separate schools to have priority over the language rights of French-Canadians.⁷¹ Ottawa's French-speaking Brothers reacted to Regulation 17 by holding demonstrations, protest parades, and even withdrawing themselves and their students from their schools. Outside the

⁶⁹ For details, see Walker, *Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario*, 192-221.

⁷⁰ BCSCA, Unknown author, quoted in Brother Walter Farrell, FSC, ed., *Deceased Brothers: Toronto (Volume 1: 1869-1940)*, 10.

⁷¹ For more details, see Robert Choquette, *Language and Religion: A History of English-French Conflict in Ontario* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1975), 161-73. The Archbishop of Toronto, Neil McNeil, explained that the English-speaking Catholics of Ontario did not unite with their French brethren on the language question lest they "thereby expose their school system to dangerous attack. The Orangemen would then have their opportunity to inaugurate a real campaign against the whole Separate School system." See ARCAT, Education Papers, The Bilingual Question – General Correspondence, ED BI01.01 a-b, Archbishop McNeil to Bishop Whalen, 6 December 1913.

nation's capital, English-speaking Brothers sided with Protestants, their traditional nemeses, against French Catholics. When it came to matters of education, the Brothers were choosing to align themselves with their co-linguists rather than their co-religionists to ensure their right to Catholic education was secured.

The last development leading to the erection of a permanent novitiate took place within the congregation itself. In May 1913, Brother Imier de Jésus was elected the new Superior General. He was widely regarded as a man deeply invested in recruitment, especially in the wake of measures taken against religious orders and Catholic schools in France.⁷² Imier was well aware of the situation in Ontario and was sympathetic to the cause. One Brother remarked that his election “came as a great blessing to us. We felt that the misunderstandings and difficulties and oppositions of the past were at an end. The future never looked brighter.”⁷³ At the same time, Brother Imier appointed Brother Allais-Charles as Assistant for Canada to replace the staunchly pro-French Brother Réticius. Like Imier, Brother Allais-Charles was cognizant of the conflict between the English and French Brothers and wanted to end that internal division. The Brothers in Ontario did not have to wait too long. On 1 December 1913, permission was granted to open a Senior Novitiate in Toronto.

Figure I: Christian Brothers in Ontario*

Year	Number of Brothers	Number of Communities	Number of Schools
1851	5	1	2
1873	17	1	5
1880	23	2	5
1890	25	2	6
1895	50	7	11
1905	35	3	8
1910	33	4	8
1915	44	5	7
1925	146 ^o	10	10

Source: AGR, Personnel de l'Institut, Toronto District Communities.

*excludes Ottawa ^oincludes 56 Novices

⁷² In dealing with this crisis, Brother Imier's predecessor, Brother Gabriel-Marie, had neither the time nor energy to focus on recruitment. Brother Imier made recruitment a priority by creating the role of Brother Recruiter. When the Toronto novitiate opened, Brother Simon Stock was named to the position, tasked with travelling around Ontario seeking potential candidates. He held that title for the following 34 years.

⁷³ BCSA, 700 Series, *History of the Novitiate of Toronto*, 87.

Their prayers answered, the Brothers were overjoyed. The Senior Novitiate was opened 6 January 1914 to coincide with the Feast of the Epiphany, and Brother Stanislaus Bernard was appointed Director. Nine postulants were promoted from the Juniorate, joining five who returned from Montreal. According to one chronicler, these 14 young men became the “pioneers” of the new novitiate and its opening marked “a red-letter day in our history.”⁷⁴ At the same time, Brother Allais-Charles worked to re-establish the Toronto District in response to the unanimous entreaties from Ontario’s Brothers and their clerical allies. The new district opened in July 1914. Of the 34 English-speaking Brothers at work in Ontario, 27 were born in the province; one in Quebec; and five elsewhere.⁷⁵

After 1914, the Brothers’ institutional growth in Ontario was rapid. A new property was purchased in Aurora, just north of Toronto, to act as the new district’s administrative headquarters and to house the novitiate and retirees. Moreover, the Brothers quickly expanded within Toronto, opened communities in Hamilton, London, and Windsor, and started a popular summer camp on Lake Simcoe. Noting the dramatic changes in their fortunes, one Brother wrote that “All this was a great cause of rejoicing to our Brothers here for it indicated that at last we had some foothold in this Province. We felt at last in all this that God’s blessing was with us in a wonderful way.”⁷⁶ With the novitiate running smoothly and numbers continuing to climb, the Toronto District moved westward, opening a high school for Ukrainians in Yorkton, Saskatchewan and St. Joseph’s College at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. By 1922, they began directing the Brothers’ English-speaking schools in Quebec City and Montreal. By 1925, the Toronto District had 15 schools in seven locations ranging from elementary and secondary schools to industrial and commercial schools and a university.

The arrival of the first French-speaking Christian Brothers in Toronto in 1851 animated debates about language, an issue that intensified over time. To carry out the Church’s wishes and their own institutional aims, Ontario’s Christian Brothers advocated for anglicization because it was a logical gateway through which to honour their founder, expand their educational reach, serve the Church, and build up their own membership. In particular, they pressured their superiors in Montreal and Paris to establish an English-language novitiate to meet the circumstances of Ontario. These Brothers were immersed in a society in which English and Protestantism dominated, where French-Canadian immigration contributed to mounting linguistic intolerance, and where there was a developing professionalization in the government-run

⁷⁴ BCSA, 700 Series, *History of the Novitiate of Toronto*, 91.

⁷⁵ ARCAT, ROSII, Fond A44, Box 1, General Correspondence, 1900-1920, *English-speaking Christian Brothers in Canada*, 1913.

⁷⁶ BCSA, 700 Series, *History of the Novitiate of Toronto*, 81.

education system. The Ontario Brothers argued that these conditions were fundamentally different than in Quebec where the French language dominated and the Catholic Church controlled education. Essentially, they wanted the hierarchy to understand that the preparation for a Brother's apostolate – both in a religious and professional sense – could no longer be done effectively if they had to send their young men to Quebec. However, in the nineteenth century, even the Catholic hierarchy's influence did not ensure English-speaking Brothers could control local community life or secure permanent institutions as their efforts only resulted with two fleeting novitiates and a short-lived autonomous district. Two factors consistently tempered the creation of an English novitiate. First, the precarious financial situation in the Brothers' Ontario communities throughout much of the late nineteenth century was very real, and superiors in Montreal and Paris were naturally concerned about investing in an area with no guarantee of success. Second, an unyielding French-Canadian leadership heeded neither the utilitarian nor the sacred arguments put forth by Ontario's Brothers and their clerical allies. Only amidst the context of the Bilingual Schools Question and the pressure to meet the provincial qualification standards did the Brothers' new contingent of more accommodative superiors establish an English-language novitiate. These new superiors had finally come to recognize that English-speaking Christian Brothers in Ontario campaigned for anglicization as a central means through which to see their faith, their schools, and their own congregation flourish in the province. The institutional expansion that ensued demonstrates that these Brothers played a significant role in accelerating the triumph of the English Catholic Church outside Quebec.

Academic Year 2013-2014

THE JAMES F. KENNEY PRIZE

This prize is awarded annually by the Canadian Catholic Historical Association in honour of its founder, James F. Kenney (1884-1946), for the best essay on any aspect of the history of Catholicism in Canada written in a course by an undergraduate student in any university.

Conditions: Entries must be undergraduate essays between 2500 and 5000 words in length on some aspect of Catholicism in Canada. The author must be a part-time or a full-time undergraduate student in a degree program at an accredited university or college in Canada. The essay must have been written to meet the requirement of an undergraduate credit course during the current academic year.

Submissions: Entries shall be submitted by course instructors no later than 1 May 2014. No instructor shall submit more than two entries. Essays must be typed neatly and should not indicate the instructor's comments or grade. Essays may also be submitted electronically. Entries should be sent to the President, Canadian Catholic Historical Association [Dr. Edward MacDonald, University of Prince Edward Island, 550 University Ave., Charlottetown, PEI C1A 4P3 or gemaconnald@upei.ca].

Adjudication: Entries will be judged by a panel determined by the CCHA. The winner will be announced in the autumn of 2014. There will be no runners-up or honorary mentions. The CCHA reserves the right not to award a prize in a given year should applications not be of sufficient quality.

Prize: \$500

www.cchahistory.org

Abstracts/Résumés

Brandon S. CORCORAN and Laura J. SMITH

Bishop Macdonell and the Friends of Ireland: Mixing Politics and Religion in Upper Canada

The appearance in 1829 of the Friends of Ireland in Bytown offers us a remarkable glimpse of the ways in which the steady influx of Irish Catholic immigrants affected Bishop Alexander Macdonell's Church and church-building projects in Upper Canada. It also reveals much about how Upper Canadian Irish Catholics constructed identity and community in a period when their place in the British Empire was continually under negotiation. Irish Catholics complicated the narrative of Catholic loyalty that Macdonell had carefully constructed since his arrival in Upper Canada, and their attempts to partake in the politics of Ireland at times deterred his efforts to strengthen and grow the provincial Church. For these reasons, and because of promises he had made to colonial officials to keep the colony free of transplanted agitations, Macdonell opposed the expansion of the Friends of Ireland into Upper Canada. In Bytown, however, where his influence and command were temporarily weakened due to an ongoing dispute with the parish priest, the local and colonial Church was temporarily supplanted in importance by politics in Ireland.

L'apparition en 1829 des Amis de l'Irlande (Friends of Ireland) à Bytown nous offre un bel aperçu de l'influence qu'avait eue le flux constant des immigrants irlandais catholiques sur l'Église de l'évêque Alexander Macdonell ainsi que sur les projets d'établissement des Églises en Haut Canada. Ce fait nous révèle également comment les catholiques irlandais du Haut Canada construisaient leur identité et leur communauté à une époque où leur place était encore en négociation dans l'Empire britannique. Les catholiques irlandais avaient mis à mal l'image du loyalisme catholique savamment construite par Macdonell depuis son arrivée en Haut Canada. De même, leurs tentatives de participer à la vie politique de l'Irlande avaient parfois ruiné ses efforts de consolider et d'accroître l'influence de l'Église provinciale. Pour ces raisons et en respect de sa promesse faite aux autorités coloniales de ne pas laisser se transplanter en colonie des agitations, Macdonell s'était opposé à l'expansion des Amis irlandais en

Haut Canada. Cependant, à Bytown, en raison d'une faiblesse passagère de son influence et d'une dispute avec le prêtre de la paroisse, l'Eglise locale et coloniale avaient temporairement perdu son importance au profit de la politique en Irlande.

Greg DONAGHY

A Catholic Journey: Paul Martin Sr., Politics, and Faith

Catholicism defined the private life and public career of Paul Martin Sr. (1903-92), one of Canada's leading Liberal politicians in the decades after World War Two. His youthful Catholicism shaped his approach to political life and sanctified his ambition. As a young man, he rejected the classical conservatism of a junior seminary in Québec, embracing instead the more tolerant version of Catholicism he encountered during the 1920s at the University of St. Michael's College within the Protestant University of Toronto. This paper explores Martin's early faith experiences, and examines the resulting philosophy of social justice and political change that drove this young Catholic to challenge the status quo in Depression Canada, and to help erect the contemporary welfare state in the 1940s and 1950s.

Le catholicisme avait défini la vie privée et la carrière publique de Paul Martin père (1903-92), une grande figure politique parmi les dirigeants libéraux au Canada dans les décennies qui ont suivi la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Son catholicisme jovial avait inspiré son approche de la vie politique et consacré son ambition. En tant que jeune, il avait rejeté le dogmatisme classique d'un petit séminaire au Québec, adoptant plutôt la version plus tolérante du catholicisme qu'il avait connue dans les années 1920 à l'université de St Michael's College au sein de l'Université protestante de Toronto. Cet article étudie les expériences de Martin dans les débuts de sa foi et examine la philosophie de la justice sociale et du changement politique qui en avait découlé et qui avait conduit ce jeune catholique à combattre le statu quo dans Depression Canada, ouvrant ainsi la voie à la création de l'assistance sociale contemporaine dans les années 1940 et 1950.

M.C. HAVEY

A Master of Religious Media: The Career of Rev. Matthew Meehan, C.Ss.R., 1947-1998

For 50 years, Rev. Matthew Meehan, C.Ss.R., hosted radio and television shows and published articles in newspapers and magazines. This article examines the Redemptorist priest's successful longevity in the media. While steadfast in simple themes of family and home life, Meehan adjusted to the current trends in popular culture and media technology to reach a general audience grappling in an increasingly complex and multi-faceted world. Over the decades from the first radio script to the final television series, Meehan evolved as a skilled broadcaster in spreading the message of God in various forms.

Pendant 50 ans, le Rév. Matthew Meehan, C.Ss.R., a produit des émissions à la radio et télévision et a publié des articles dans des journaux et des revues. Cet article est consacré à la longévité du succès médiatique du prêtre Rédemptoriste. Alors qu'il était ferme sur de simples sujets de famille et de vie domestique, Meehan s'était peu à peu adapté aux tendances évolutives dans la culture populaire et la technologie des médias au point de s'abaisser au niveau du grand public, s'arrimant à un monde de plus en plus complexe et multi face. Depuis les décennies où est apparu le premier script radio jusqu'à la tout récente série télévisuelle, Meehan s'est transformé en diffuseur expérimenté du message de Dieu sous plusieurs formes.

Michael WILCOX

'To meet more perfectly the wants of our people here:' The Christian Brothers and the Process of Anglicization in Ontario, 1850-1925

This paper analyzes the campaign for anglicization by Ontario's English-speaking Christian Brothers from the 1870s to the 1910s. These Brothers argued that French-speaking Brothers were unsuitable in Ontario, and worked to establish an English-speaking novitiate as a means of securing an indigenized membership, ensuring greater local control over community life, and conforming to the province's Anglophone milieu. Their efforts proved successful with the creation of the English-language Toronto District in 1914, enabling the Christian Brothers to fortify their membership and solidify their presence in a larger number and wider variety of schools. Despite their auxiliary status in the Church, the Brothers' apostolate ensured that they played a central role in determining its future educational direction.

Cet article analyse la campagne d'anglicisation menée par les Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes Anglophones de l'Ontario, depuis les années 1870 jusqu'aux années 1910. Ces Frères prétendaient que leurs pairs Francophones n'étaient pas les bienvenus en Ontario et œuvraient dans le sens d'établir un noviciat anglophone pour mieux conquérir l'adhésion des Ontariens anglophones, élargir l'autorité locale sur la vie communautaire et se conformer à l'environnement anglophone de la province. Leurs efforts ont porté des fruits avec la création en 1914 du District de Toronto, qui était anglophone et qui a permis aux Frères Chrétiens de consolider leur rassemblement et leur présence par la multiplication et la diversification des écoles. Malgré leur statut secondaire au sein de l'Église, l'apostolat des Frères s'est efforcé de jouer un rôle central dans l'avenir éducatif de l'Institution.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Historical Studies

Journal of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association

1. General Author Guidelines

Published once a year by the Canadian Catholic Historical Association, *Historical Studies* is a fully refereed journal that features articles, critical notes and book reviews. The journal accepts comparative and interdisciplinary approaches and welcomes manuscripts from the greatest possible number of researchers, including graduate students. All manuscripts are assessed through a double-blind process that ensures confidentiality. The editorial board considers only unpublished manuscripts and does not consider works of popularization. The journal only publishes English-language articles.

Submission Guidelines

Manuscripts must be submitted electronically as Word files. Texts should be double-spaced and should be no longer than 35,000 characters (6,500-8,500 words) or *25 double-spaced pages*, including notes.

Authors whose manuscripts are selected will be required to provide the editors with a revised version of the manuscript in a timely manner following the application of any changes and corrections required.

Articles accepted for publication must be accompanied by an abstract (roughly 150 words) as well as a biographical sketch of the author (no more than 75 words).

Article Selection and Copyright

Submissions are evaluated by the editors of *Historical Studies* and by board-selected external readers. The editors decide whether to publish, reject or request a revision of each article. In cases of conditional selection, the editors will communicate with the author to insure that the conditions for publication are fulfilled. The editors reserve the right to reject articles that, although acceptable in terms of content, will require in their estimation too much revision in order to meet publication deadlines.

Authors whose work has been accepted for publication in *Historical Studies* assign to the Canadian Catholic Historical Association the exclusive copyright for countries as by defined the Copyright Act to the contribution in its published form. The CCHA, in turn, grants the author the right of republication in any book of which the author is the exclusive author or editor, subject only to the author giving proper credit to the original publication in *Historical Studies*.

2. Submission Format

As the journal does not possess a secretarial office, we thank you in advance for meeting the following conditions *exactly* so as to help us reduce printing costs and speed up the publication process. The editors reserve the right to reject manuscripts that stray too far from the following formatting rules.

Reminder: Texts must not exceed 25 pages, notes included.

Texts should be formatted for standard dimensions (8.5 x 11). Long quotations and notes should all be **single-spaced** within the text. The first page of the manuscript should contain the title of the article followed by the author's name.

Text should appear in Times New Roman 12 font, with 9 font in the footnotes.

Titles, Tables, Figures and Illustrations

All tables, graphics, figures and illustrations should be referred to in the body of the text. They should be numbered in Arabic numerals and include an appropriate title or key. Notes on the source, if any, should follow immediately. Maps (vector processing software), graphics (e.g., Lotus and Excel spreadsheets) and tables (spreadsheet or word processing software) must all be submitted in electronic format.

Photographs must be submitted as jpeg files, and include captions, credits and permissions where appropriate.

Capitalization, Parentheses, Abbreviations, Dates and Spacing

Texts should make as little use as possible of capitalization, parentheses and abbreviations.

Centuries should be indicated in written form (i.e. "nineteenth century").

In text references and footnotes, dates should be indicated as follows: day, month, and year (i.e. 1 April 1966).

Paragraphs should be preceded and followed by a 6-point spacing. Make sure to indent the first line of each paragraph. The period ending each sentence should be followed by one space.

Italics

The use of italics should be reserved for foreign-language terms and titles of books and periodicals.

Quotations

Authors should endeavour to avoid excessively lengthy quotations (more than ten lines). Quotations of more than three typed lines should be placed as a separate paragraph with a five-space indent on the left, no indent on the right and without quotation marks. Omissions or cuts within quotations are indicated by suspension points

Notes

Historical Studies employs footnotes for the purpose of referencing. Superscript numbers in-text should be offered sequentially in the paper, and should be placed immediately following punctuation marks. Notes and references should be single-spaced and appear at the bottom of each page.

Bibliographical information should be provided in full when books and articles are first cited. Afterwards, only the name of the author, the first few words of the title and the page number need be mentioned. Do not use *op. cit.* or *ibid.*

Here are some examples:

Books

Robert Choquette, *Language and Religion: A History of French-English Conflict in Ontario* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1975), 161-247.

For subsequent references: Choquette, *Language and Religion*, 9-43.

Edited book

Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (eds.) *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

Article in book

Mark McGowan, "Roman Catholics (Anglophone and Allophone)," in Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (eds.) *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 49-100.

Journal Articles

Elizabeth Smyth, "Congregavit Nos In Unum Christi Amor: The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1851-1920," *Ontario History*, 84, no. 3 (1992): 230-233.

Archival

St. Francis Xavier University Archives (hereafter STFXUA), Extension Department Papers (hereafter EDP), Moses M. Coady to R.J. MacSween, 24 March 1953, RG 30-2/1/2963.

Dissertation

Heidi MacDonald, "The Sisters of St. Martha and Prince Edward Island Social Institutions, 1916-1982," (Ph.D. diss., University of New Brunswick, 2000), 10-12.

Web Site

Author's name, title of publication, date of publication, <url>, and date accessed.

William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers, MG 26J, Series 13, Diary entry for 10 June 1940, <http://king.collectionscanada.ca>, accessed on 20 June 2005.

Spelling

Spelling follows that recommended by the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*. Where this dictionary offers options, the first one is favoured.

