A tale of two Sister-Principals: Mother Mary Edward (Catherine) McKinley, Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul (Kingston, ON) and Mother Mary of Providence (Catherine) Horan, Sisters of Providence of Holyoke, MA¹

L'histoire de deux Sœurs Principales: Mère Mary Edward (Catherine) McKinley, Sœurs de la Providence de St Vincent de Paul (Kingston, ON) et Mère Mary of Providence (Catherine) Horan, Sœurs de la Providence de Holyoke, MA

La historia de dos hermanas superiores: la Madre Mary Edward (Catherine) McKinley, de la orden Hermanas de la Providencia de San Vicente Paúl (Kingston, Ontario) y la Madre Mary of Providence (Catherine) Horan de la orden de la Hermanas de la Providencia

Elizabeth Smyth

University of Toronto, Canada

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the career of two Sister-Principals who began their religious life in the same Congregation: Mother Mary Edward (Catherine) McKinley (Smyth, 2007) and Mother Mary of Providence (Catherine) Horan. Depending on whose version of history you read, these women were rival religious or virtuous sisters in habit. Drawing on archival sources and their

own writings, the paper analyzes the perceptions, in their own words, of the experiences of Mother Mary Edward McKinley and Mother Mary of Providence Horan as Sister-Principals. It also provides an assessment of the historical significance of their careers as case studies of Sister-Principals. The careers of the two Sister-Principals reveal much: both members of the Sisters of Providence of Vincent de Paul (Kingston), both committed to the social welfare of the poor, both forced unwillingly to be Sister-Principals, both elected as congregational leaders, both memorialized in the public domain as powerful women leaders.

Key Words: religious life; catholic education; women leaders; Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul.

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza la trayectoria de dos hermanas superiores que empezaron su vida religiosa en la misma congregación: la Madre Mary Edward (Catherine) McKinley y la Madre Mary of Providence (Catherine) Horan. Dependiendo de quien escriba determinada versión de la historia, estas mujeres fueron religiosas rivales o hermanas virtuosas en el hábito. En función de las fuentes de archivo y de sus escritos, en este artículo se analiza la percepción, en sus propias palabras, de las experiencias de la Madre Mary Edward McKinley y la Madre Mary of Providence Horan como hermanas superiores. Además, se proporciona una valoración del significado histórico de sus trayectorias como casos de estudio de hermanas superiores. La trayectoria de las dos hermanas superiores pone de relieve mucho: ambas fueron miembros de la Hermanas de la Providencia de San Vicente Paúl (Kingston), ambas estuvieron comprometidas con el bienestar social de los pobres, ambas fueron obligadas a ser hermanas superiores sin que fuera su disposición, ambas fueron elegidas como líderes de sus congregaciones, ambas quedaron en la memoria de dominio público como poderosas mujeres líderes.

Descriptores: vida religiosa; educación católica; mujeres líderes; Hermanas de la Providencia de San Vicente Paúl.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce papier analyse la carrière de deux Sœurs Principales qui ont commencé leur vie religieuse dans la même Congrégation: Mère Mary Edward (Catherine) McKinley et Mère Mary Providence (Catherine) Horan. Selon la version de l'histoire que vous lisez, ces femmes étaient ou religieuses antagonistes ou sœurs vertueuses, en habit. Puisant aux archives, dans leurs propres écrits, et d'après leurs propres paroles, l'article analyse les différentes perceptions de leurs expériences comme Sœurs Principales. L'article fournit aussi une évaluation de l'importance historique de leurs carrières comme étude de cas de Sœurs Principales. Leurs deux carrières sont très révélatrices: Toutes deux étaient membres des Sœurs de la Providence de St-Vincent-de-Paul (de Kingston). Toutes deux étaient engagées au bien-être des pauvres et forcées contre leur gré à devenir Sœurs Principales, Toutes deux ont été élues au leadership de leur Congrégation et mémorialisées dans le domaine public comme de puissants leaders féminins.

Mots clés: la vie religieuse; l'éducation catholique; leaders féminins; Sœurs de la Providence de St Vincent de Paul.

IN THE PERIOD FROM 1860-1960, throughout Europe, North America, and Australia, the administration of elementary schools serving the Roman Catholic population was largely in the hands of Sister-Principals. These women religious were members of religious congregations² whose mandate, either canonically or by episcopal fiat, served in enterprises related to education, social service, and health care. In spite of the fact that they appear as figures of ridicule and humour in popular culture, Sister-Principals represent a largely under-studied cohort of women academic

administrators.³

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent De Paul

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, the religious community of which Catherine McKinley and Catherine Horan were members, was a daughter community of the Sisters of Providence of Montreal. The Sisters of Providence were founded in Montreal in 1844 by Emilie Tavernier Gamelin (1800-1851).⁴ She was educated in the schools of the Congregation de Notre Dame and, in spite of contemplating a call to the vowed life in her youth, she married Jean-Baptiste Gamelin in 1823 and together they had three children – all of whom died in childhood. Widowed in 1827, as a woman of independent means, Gamelin engaged in charitable work with lay confraternities who cared for the poor and the abandoned. She was especially moved by the plight of abandoned women and established a shelter that she both funded and operated. In 1844, under the direction of Bishop Ignace Bourget, she formalized her relationship with the Church, becoming the first of seven members of the religious community that would become the Sisters of Providence of Montreal. The new community based its rule on that of the Daughters of Charity of Emmitsburg, Maryland, a community that Gamelin had visited prior to establishing the Sisters of Providence. The rule was modeled on that of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac, and stated that the purpose of the community was service to the poor and the needy.

In 1858, Quebec native and recently installed Bishop of Kingston Edward Horan visited his Montreal confrere Bishop Ignace Bourget and Mother Philomene Bourbonniere, Superior of the Sisters of Providence of Montreal, to seek their assistance in creating a new women's community to care for orphans and the poor, as well as caring for the sick in their homes and instructing women prisoners (M. M. Antoinette, 1958, p. 243). Bishop Horan asked the Montreal motherhouse to provide him – on temporary loan – a small group of Sisters who would receive postulants and train them in both religious life and social service. He clearly set out the conditions of this temporary arrangement, drafting documents that framed the new Congregation as diocesan – that is, its ecclesiastical superior was to be the local bishop who would also play a key role in determining the works undertaken by the Sisters. It was clearly set out that the Sisters were to be largely economically independent of both the Montreal motherhouse and the Diocese of Kingston. They were instructed to fund their activities through “begging campaigns” – tours of parishes near and far, undertaken by a pair of Sisters whose task it was to solicit funds and other charitable donations. Four Sisters arrived from Montreal on December 13, 1861, to begin their pioneering efforts of establishing an independent English-speaking congregation of women religious in Canada West.⁵ The written terms of agreement stated that while contract would last a maximum of seven years,⁶ they could return or be called back to the Montreal motherhouse at any time. Within three months of the Sisters' arrival, the community received its first postulant: Catherine McKinley.

Catherine McKinley was born in Kingston, Upper Canada, on August 14, 1837, to Sarah McCaffrey and John McKinley, a ship owner. McKinley had a challenging upbringing. Following her mother's death and father's remarriage, she moved to Oswego, New York, to live with her brother and work as a dressmaker (Liptak & Bennett, 1999, p. 13; M. M. Electa, 1961, pp. 142-143), relocating back to Kingston to enter the Sisters of Providence on March 25, 1862. Two years later, she took vows of "chastity, poverty, obedience and of serving the poor" (ASPVD, 1864, April 4) and acquired her name in religion, Sister Mary Edward. Although she entered a community whose stated – and indeed, vowed – mission was service of the poor, her first assignment was as a teacher. Friction between Bishop Horan and members of the pontifical Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (the Loretto Sisters) led them to withdraw from the Catholic school in Belleville, Canada West, in 1865. Bishop Horan needed teachers for this school and thus, requested that the Sisters of Providence of Montreal send him teachers to staff it. The *Annals* of the Sisters of Providence of Kingston, the record of all activities undertaken by the community, report:

The Council of the Mother House [Montreal] M. did not accede to his request [to send teaching sisters to Belleville]; they did not think it prudent to accept the Mission with the resources which Kingston afforded. The Community here also felt a little anxious and it seemed to them a very difficult task to sustain the Institution in Kingston not to speak of dividing their number and opening another house. (ASPVD, 1865, July 25, p. 23)

The *Annals* detail the responses from the Montreal leadership: too few members, too little resources, a task outside the Congregation's stated mission – all sensible arguments, and yet ones which a determined and desperate bishop summarily ignored:

not to be hindered by the lack of co-operation on the part of the Mother House, Montreal; he resolved to send those whom he could spare from Kingston no matter what the consequence. He appointed Sister Mary Edward Officer and Head Mistress of the Select School and Boarders. Sister Mary Edward could not assume the place of Sister Servant being a professed Novice only and therefore could not bear the title in her position for it belongs to Community Sisters only, and otherwise it is absolutely contrary to Rule. [emphasis in original] (ASPVD, 1865, early August, pp. 22-23)

Ecclesiastical fiat and holy obedience were no substitution for adequate teacher preparation. The two newly minted Sisters of Providence assigned by the Bishop to this task did not have a smooth transition to their roles as teachers. While she had gained experience as a seamstress, McKinley lacked the teacher training that would have been part of the novitiate experience of the Loretto order, the community that the Sisters of Providence replaced. This would not have gone unnoticed by either the pupils or their parents. The annalist reported that the challenges experienced by the

inexperienced teachers, including a December visit

from the Rev. Mother Superioress as the state of affairs was very discouraging at Belleville. The Sisters had to brave all the rebukes and criticisms of some of the people who showed themselves their opponents and who complained of the incapacity of the Sisters as teachers.

The annalist quickly added that true to their name and mission, Providence provides: “but this way of procedure did not last long, for God was with them and in a short time all their prejudices vanished and those who heretofore had given the most opposition, became their earnest advocates” (ASPVD, 1965, December, pp. 24-25). However, their time as teachers in the Belleville school was to be short lived. By June, Bishop Horan had changed his mind again. At the end of the year at a prize-giving ceremony, the Bishop

told the audience that having learned of their dissatisfaction he would not longer force the Sisters upon them; that the day’s proceeding events went to prove that the education of their children had not fallen into incompetent hands, but notwithstanding all this he had resolved that the Sisters would return to Kingston. The intelligence fell like a thunderbolt on all. Though Rev. Mother was speaking with the Bishop that afternoon, she received not the slightest intimation of it. His Lordship had opened the mission without the consent of the Foundresses and closed it in the same manner. It seemed an importuned time. Just as they had surmounted the difficulties of the first year, had overcome the prejudices of the people, won the esteem and confidence of the children and seemed in a fair way of succeeding. Yet an all-wise Providence shapes our ends, and we must believe that Divine Wisdom dictated this proceeding of our lawful Superior. (ASPVD, 1866, July 17, p. 26)

This may, in fact, have been the incident that forced the hand of the Montreal leadership to take action against a bishop who did not listen to their advice, for shortly thereafter, the Montreal Sisters were recalled and Bishop Horan appointed Catherine McKinley as the Superior of the Kingston community.

Mother Edward McKinley’s brief career as a Sister-Principal in Belleville was a formative experience, and provided her with the skills and perspectives that would guide her long career as a decision-maker and institutional leader. For almost 40 years, Mother Edward McKinley guided the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul through good times and bad. In 1873, she was one of the members of the community who responded to the invitation of Monseigneur P. J. Harkins to establish a foundation in Holyoke, wherein the Sisters would teach, establish an orphanage, and work with the aged. She presided over many of the triumphs and challenges of the new community, the construction of the Congregation’s buildings that still dot the landscape of Kingston, Ontario, and Holyoke, Massachusetts, and the severing of the Congregation along national lines. Early in the history of the Congregation, Sisters

moved between both coasts of the Great Lakes, travelling on begging tours and responding to invitations on both sides of the Canadian-American borders. With missions in two countries, Sisters were moved on a regular basis both within and across borders. This was not an uncommon experience among communities of women and men religious, nor was what would be the outcome: splitting a congregation to align with political boundaries. Yet, the frequency of occurrence does not reduce the resulting personal (and financial) strains. Separations cause deep ruptures in the historical memory and lead to labels being attributed – visionary leader or dissatisfied follower – and depending on the perspective, either label might fit a congregational leader. From the perspective of the Kingston community, Mother Edward McKinley was the visionary leader; Mother Mary of Providence Horan was the dissatisfied follower.

Mother Mary of Providence (Catherine) Horan and the Sisters of Providence of Holyoke

Catherine Horan – in religion, Mother Mary of Providence Horan, and no relation to Kingston Bishop Edward Horan – was born July 19, 1850. On August 15, 1869, she entered the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in Kingston, Ontario. She died in Holyoke, MA, on January 25, 1943, in her 74th year of religious life. Catherine's blood sister Elizabeth (1844-1927) – in religion, Sister Mary of the Seven Dolors – was also a member of the Kingston community, entering the Sisters of Providence in 1862. Both women were educated in the school of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loretto Sisters). It is noteworthy that it was the departure of the Loretto Sisters from Belleville that necessitated the entry, under ecclesiastical obedience, of the Sisters of Providence of Kingston from an order rooted in social service and health care to one whose members also engaged in teaching. Elizabeth initially entered Loretto, but returned home after two years and later entered the Sisters of Providence in Kingston. Elizabeth's experience was neither unusual nor atypical, for the history of religious orders is populated by stories of individuals who had unsatisfactory experiences with one (or sometimes two) religious communities before settling on one whose mandate and community spirit was in keeping with their own.

Catherine Horan had a distinguished career in teaching, health administration, and congregational leadership. She held numerous offices both within and outside her community, including serving as President of the North East Conference of the Catholic Hospital Association of the United States and Canada. Like Catherine McKinley, she was a builder. Her obituary recorded the following anecdote, a discussion between a priest and a contractor on the site of one of the numerous building projects she supervised:

“She has the mind of a man” said the grizzled old contractor. “You’re wrong Dan” spoke up the clergyman. “I’ve been meeting men all my life and I could count in the fingers of one hand all the men I ever met who could match her.” (ASPH, *File: Catherine Horan*)

Among the many resources Mother Mary of Providence Horan left to her community were two significant pieces of historical writing: a 1935 unpublished manuscript, *History of the Institute of Charity also known as Sisters of Providence of Holyoke 1873-1933*, and her 1936 *Memoir*. While the authorship of the *History of the Institute* was attributed to “a member of the Congregation” (a practice not uncommon among women religious), it is in fact her own work. It resides in her files in the Archives and her handwritten comments attest to its authorship. In both the *Memoir* and the *History of the Institute*, she interprets how she came to – and left – the role of a Sister-Principal.

In her *Memoir*, a document written to be read by her Congregation, Mother Mary of Providence Horan described how she came to be a Sister of Providence: “At an early age of ten or eleven, I had definitely fixed my mind in becoming a nun. Selecting for my future career [I sought] an order devoted to works of Charity in preference to one engaged in teaching” (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 2). Once she entered the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in Kingston, she found that obedience and changing directions within the Congregation led her into work for which she did not assess herself as suitable nor adequately prepared. She wrote:

My assignment to schoolwork was somewhat of a disappointment to me, as I had been wooed to my vocation by a great sympathy for the Poor and an ardent desire to relieve their suffering. Had I wished to teach, I might have entered elsewhere. However I took up the work to the best of my ability – which indeed was very limited... Pen cannot describe my emotions on the opening of school as I viewed the sea of upturned faces... One hundred and twenty five small boys... Gazing at me curiously (and a bit roguishly too). The sight was appalling! But urged on by the sanction of obedience, I faced the situation courageously and spent the first day learning the names of my pupils. (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 16)

Mother Mary of Providence Horan was highly critical of the venture of the Sisters of Providence into teaching, while also engaged in work with orphans and the aged. She reflected:

I had seen that... We're at fault in [many] things: our system was poor... There was no supervision of the classes and the Sisters were left much to themselves to maintain order and advance their pupils. Household duties too interfered in some measure, for those employed in teaching were expected to assist with the care of the orphans and aged persons after school hours... Leaving them very little time to prepare their lessons... Failure was inevitable. (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 17)

Yet, for her, failure was not an option. She continued:

Feeling it my duty to represent here conditions to the Reverend Mother in

Kingston, I did so... Embarrassing encounters with my Superior followed my appointment as Principal of the School, culminating in the query "Who is the superior here, you or I"... This resentment was probably due to... my report... [that] was made to the Reverend Mother John in Kingston. At any rate, the situation was very humiliating to me and one of intense embarrassment rather than of promotion. But young hearts are buoyant and capable of throwing off the smart of unpleasant encounters. Being in that category and robustly healthy, I was able to overcome composedly the obstacles that crossed my path. (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 17)

She devised a plan that she shared with the administration in Kingston. As she wrote in her community history (referring to herself in the third person):

Sister Mary of Providence offered to become responsible for the success of Management provided she were relieved of the responsibility of teaching class and left free to supervise the work, in all divisions... Though her experience was limited, she gave courage and energy to undertake the task. (ASPH, *History of the Institute*, p. 99)

She was highly motivated to ensure that she had the skill set necessary to be a well-prepared teacher. Thus, in order

that I might fulfill my duty as Principal of the school more efficiently, I realized that I must extend knowledge of those subjects in which I was deficient so obtained permission to study after the hour of retiring. A desire for self-improvement and higher and higher education soon began to harass me and disturb my peace of mind. (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 22)

With the acquisition of another Teaching Sister, she had additional support within the staff. She sought further assistance and thus,

After the classes resumed their studies and things were running smoothly, Sister Mary of Providence was permitted to go to New York to visit schools and glean some ideas concerning their management. She profited much by this privilege and no doubt too that it had the beneficial effect of inspiring confidence in the Sisters who were expected to accept her suggestions in the conduct of their classes. (ASPH, *History of the Institute*, p. 99)

While teaching itself was exhausting work, when combined with the enterprises of an orphanage and home for the aged, operational tasks for the community of Sisters just kept mounting. In his history of the Diocese of Holyoke, Father JJ McCoy described Mother Mary of Providence Horan as a woman

of great mental gifts, [with] immediate concerns in the control of the boys'

school, [and] who mixed the feed for the cattle overnight, and in the morning, summer and winter, [she was up] at half-past four, drove [by trap to the farm] fed the cows, and assisted in milking... was back at the House of Providence at six o'clock and after, did her share of community work [and] was ready to teach the highest grade in the school all day. (McCoy, 1900, p. 32)

No wonder she wrote in the Memoir: "some days when returning from school, I was so tired that I used to sneak up to the Dormitory and lie down for a few moments, invariably I fell into a deep sleep and had to struggle to arise" (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 22). As well as the farm duties, other household duties included:

Wash day... Washing was done by hand... Then followed mending – stacked mountain high, in the evening, bread was to be made by hand for all – so each one took her turn for an hour or so kneading away... water for cleansing and bathing purposes was drawn from the Connecticut River in barrels and carried up to the asylum in barrels; the orphans clothes were washed at the river's bank. (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 21)

If pressures of daily life were not exhausting enough, as a Sister-Principal, Mother Mary experienced multiple conflicting lines of reporting within the complex world of a religious community and the Catholic Church. She was especially frustrated in dealing with her local ecclesiastical male superior.

Local priests exerted great power and control over the Sister-Principal of the school. This was not to be unexpected as the parish school was generally attached (figuratively in some cases, literally in others) to a local church. Given the social context of education, the parish priest was often responsible for the discipline in the school, an aspect of administration that Mother Mary would not condone. Writing in her history of the community, she stated that: "The Sister [Mother Mary of Providence] was convinced that the pupils should be brought to know that all authority rested with the Sisters, hence unruly children were referred to the principal and not to the pastor" (ASPH, *History of the Institute*, p. 100).

Sisters frequently felt the wrath of the local priest, especially when the congregational leadership moved the teacher or Sister-Principal, and the priest would have been left to manage the school. Here is how Mother Mary of Providence Horan described one incident:

I was summoned to Kingston, without warning or explanation. Having received the word whilst at Class, I went dutifully to the Pastor to notify him of the news. What a scene! He jumped up, threw a chair across the room, not exactly at me but I dodged lest it might strike me and he strode wildly back and forth. Do not think it was grief at losing me... I tried to calm him urging that nothing personal to himself had prompted the withdrawal ... The good priest meekly yielded, recognized authority, picked up his chair and we parted peacefully. (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 22)

Although Mother Mary of Providence Horan was an unwilling Sister-Principal and undertook that duty solely under obedience, she served in that role for 17 years. Throughout that time, she never lost sight of the fact that in her view of the life and work of a Sister of Providence, education was a core mission. She wrote:

though engaged in schoolwork, I cherished constantly an overwhelming desire to see the attention of the Superiors directed towards hospital progress, but their interest seemed rather to be in teaching and a desire to prepare the Sisters for that service... To me that seemed foreign to the spirit of the Institute. (ASPH, *Memoir*, p. 23)

Mother Mary of Providence Horan's ambitions to return the Congregation to its mission of social service and health care, not teaching, found resonance with the local bishop. The archival evidence suggests that it was the convergence of the ideals of two individuals – namely, the local superior of the Sisters of Providence and the Bishop of the Diocese of Holyoke – that contributed to the congregational split. Mother Mary of Providence Horan wanted to return to a historical mission; the newly appointed Bishop Father Thomas D. Bevan, formerly pastor of Holy Rosary Church and the confessor to the convent, wanted a diocesan congregation he could direct. Thus, a formidable alliance was ensued and both got what they wanted. Shortly thereafter, a new congregation was formed and a new mandate was secured. As Mother Mary of Providence Horan wrote in her history of the community, “the Sisters of Providence would give their service to works of charity, leaving the teaching to the Sisters of St Joseph.” (ASPH, *History of the Institute*, p. 142)

Mother Mary of Providence Horan's experience in the schools as an unqualified teacher, and a woman religious who was subject to the whims of the parish priest, informed her plans for the community's engagement in health care. She was adamant that the Nursing Sisters be well informed, well prepared, and most significantly, be the leaders of the hospitals she was determined to establish. She explained:

Hospitals in Boston, NY, Philadelphia and Baltimore were visited by Mother Superior [Mary of Providence Horan] and her companion... [including hospitals at the] University of Pennsylvania and Johns Hopkins... It was in the mind of the Mother Superior to have the Sisters become efficient in the theories and practice of nursing... so that the Sisters might thereby hold a governing ascendancy in the hospital. And that by the intelligent efficiency, the doctors would ever learn to depend on them rather than upon the lay element such as would be felt if there were employed lay Graduate Nurses for [other] duties. (ASPH, *History of the Institute*, p. 161)

Further,

from observations in her visits to Catholic Hospitals, she [Mother Mary of Providence Horan] had noticed the few Sisters employed therein... so that

the Doctors were apt to rely more upon the lay nurses than upon the Sisters; furthermore that the office of lay superintendent or Directress of Nurses divided in great measure the authority of the Sister Superior. Under the influence of these observations, the Mother Superior was much averse to opening a Training School for lay students until such time as the Sisters would have become so proficient in the service and management of the hospital as to occupy a position that would command the confidence of the Doctors, accustomed them to looking to the Superior as the rightful authority in the Institution, and would give the Sisters a position that would offer them precedence over the Graduate and student nurses. (ASPH, *History of the Institute*, pp. 172-173)

What she learned about power and authority in her role as a Sister-Principal, she transferred to her role in health care. She led the Sisters of Providence of Holyoke to establish one of the most respected and influential networks of hospitals in New England.

Lessons learned: The diverse experiences of the Sister-Principal

Studying the lives of Catherine McKinley and Catherine Horan contributes to the historical understanding of the diverse and complex role of the Sister-Principal. McKinley and Horan's writings further the understanding of how communities of women religious managed schools. Their careers illustrate the power of the local parish priest and the bishop – and the extent to which the congregational superiors and members of the communities were placed in untenable and competing religious and professional positions. On one hand, Sister-Principals had their duties to their ecclesiastical superior: the local bishop. On the other hand, Sister-Principals had their duties to the emerging professions of teaching, nursing, and social work. And when push came to shove, the local ordinary generally won out: he was the one with power in his hands, and could, as a means of punishment, withhold the sacraments from the community.

Yet, McKinley and Horan learned much from their forced careers as Sister-Principals. They learned that time and resources needed to be allocated to ensure that the women undertaking teaching had the appropriate skill sets. The records of McKinley, Horan, and the communities of women religious of which they were members supply historians with critical missing details concerning how professional education in one field was applied to another. In Horan's case, her writings clearly illustrate that her experience of lines of power and authority in schools led her to structure the health care enterprise in Massachusetts in such a way that the women religious, not the lay women, had the power. It was Horan's goal to ensure that it was the Nursing Sisters with whom the doctors would consult.

To study Horan and McKinley is to study how power, authority, and decision-making operated within both closed communities of women religious, the larger diocesan structures of the Roman Catholic Church, and the larger secular community.

Both women have been historically memorialized in their local communities. Buildings have been named for them. They have been celebrated in local histories. They have been represented in works of art. In Kingston, Ontario's, City Hall, Mother Mary Edward McKinley is one of two women whose portraits hang within the Memorial Hall (the other woman is also a woman religious: the founder of the Religious Hospitaliers of St. Joseph, Kingston). In Holyoke, MA, Mother Mary of Providence is memorialized in a recently unveiled statue – with two children, representing her work in social service and, evoking those hundreds of pupils who gazed upon her, recalling that she was their Sister-Principal. The gaze, influence, and impact of these two women was felt far and wide, influencing both the operational direction and future development of the religious congregations they led.

Notes

1. The author thanks the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and the archivists and leadership teams of Sisters of Providence of St Vincent de Paul (Kingston) and the Sisters of Providence of Holyoke, MA, for supporting the research reported here.

2. Although canonically distinct, the terms community, order, and congregation are used synonymously in this paper.

3. For women religious and popular culture, see, for example: Sullivan, R. (2005). *Visual habits: Nuns, feminism and American post-war culture*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press. For studies of women religious as teachers and principals: Magray, M. Peckham. (1998). *The transforming power of the nuns: Women, religion, and cultural change in Ireland, 1750-1900*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press; O'Donoghue, T. (1999). *The Catholic Church and the secondary school curriculum in Ireland, 1922-1962*, *Irish Studies*. New York, NY: Peter Lang; Raftery, D. (2012). The "mission" of nuns in female education in Ireland, c.1850-1950. *Paedagogica Historica*, 48(2), 299-313. DOI: 10.1080/00309230.2011.568624; Butler, A. (2012). *Across God's frontier: Catholic Sisters in the American West 1850-1920*. Greensboro, NC: University of North Carolina Press; and the Canadian scholars represented in the collection by Smyth, E. M. (Ed.). (2007). *Changing habits: Women's religious orders in Canada*. Ottawa, Canada: Novalis; Collins, J. (2013). "To the very antipodes": Nineteenth-century Dominican Sister-Teachers in Ireland and New Zealand. *Paedagogica Historica*, 49(4), 494-512; MacCurtain, M. (1995). "Late in the field: Catholic Sisters in twentieth-century Ireland and the new religious history." *Journal of Women's History*, 6(4), 49-63; Fialka, J. (2003). *Sisters: Catholic nuns and the making of America*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press; Hellinckx, B., Simon, F., & Depaepe, M. (2009). *The forgotten contribution of the Teaching Sisters: A historiographical essay on the educational work of Catholic women religious in the 19th and 20th centuries*. Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press; Mangion, C. (2008). *Contested identities: Catholic women religious in nineteenth century England and Wales*. Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, Bomerang Books; Burley, S. (2012, June). Engagement with empires: Irish Catholic female religious teachers in colonial South Australia, 1868-1901. *Irish Educational*

Studies, 31(2), 175-190; Collins, J. (2013, forthcoming). Creating spaces in a male domain: Sister-Principals in Catholic schools, 1850-1974. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*.

4. See Jean, M. (1985/2003). "Emilie [Amelie] Tavernier Gamelin." *Dictionary of Canadian biography*. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/tavernier_emilie_8E.html

5. Sister Mary of the Blessed Sacrament Roy, a 31-year-old French Canadian, Superior and Mistress of Novices; Sister Mary Anselm McAuley, an Irish 30-year-old, Assistant; and two other sisters, Sister Mary Andrew Lemoine, a 26-year-old French Canadian, and Sister Mary of Mount Carmel Caplis, a 28-year-old native of Ireland (ASPH, *History of the Institute*, p. 253).

6. The following terms were set out:

- "1. The constitutions and customs of the Community must be preserved intact.
2. The Community in Montreal reserves the right to recall or change the subjects [the borrowed Sisters] as need.
3. Each Sister of the foundation, each borrowed Sister, shall have the privilege of returning to Montreal for her annual retreat.
4. The Sisters of Montreal shall have the privilege of visiting their companions at Kingston according to custom.
5. In order that our Sister Foundresses (our religious lent to Kingston for the foundation of a House of Providence) may remain intimately united to the Motherhouse of Montreal, the union established by the present ruling shall be considered irrevocable.

It is agreed that some of the Sisters of Providence of the diocese of Montreal shall be loaned for a period of seven years to the diocese of Kingston." (M. M. Antoinette, *The Institute of Providence*, p. 251)

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