

**St. Patrick's College (Ottawa)
(1929-1979)**

**Ethnicity and the Liberal Arts
in Catholic Education**

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The present monograph was completed at the request of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association for presentation at its annual meeting in June 1982. The author regrets that constraints of space made it necessary to exclude the names of many who contributed significantly to the development of St. Patrick's College.

St. Patrick's College was born out of the bitter and protracted conflict that so divided English and French Ontario Catholics during the first two decades of the present century. In the field of education the battle was waged primarily on the language issue; but at a deeper level it involved a rivalry between two Catholic ethnic groups, one burdened by a tradition which had emerged from a theocratic political system in the Province of Quebec, the other deeply scarred by memories of centuries of official oppression in an Irish homeland.

For most of the period, Ottawa was in the centre of the bilingual controversy. A substantial increase in French-Canadian migration to the Ottawa area, beginning in the latter part of the previous century, had resulted in English Catholics being pushed into a minority position. (By 1913, according to a parochial census, there were c. 26,000 French and c. 14,000 English Catholics in Ottawa, out of a total population of 100,000.)¹ Irish Catholic leaders feared that the altered composition of the Catholic community, not only in Ottawa but also in other parts of Ontario, posed a threat to the quality of education and hence to the

¹ See F.A. Walker, *Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario* (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964), p. 285.

existence of a separate school system which was regarded as essentially English; more generally, they grew concerned about the continued development of a vital English Catholic community. French-Canadian leaders, on their part, argued that their claim to French language education stemmed justly from both constitutional guarantees and natural rights.

The debate was fiercest in Ottawa, but it quickly became a provincial and eventually a national issue. To Franco-Ontarians, it appeared for a time that Irish-Catholics had joined in a conspiracy with Orange Ontario to snuff out their French culture. The pervasive religious dogmatism which characterized both minority communities made certain that there would be no easy compromise.

The University of Ottawa, St. Pat's reluctant parent, was immersed in the cultural storm from the beginning. To understand the College one must see it within the context of the history of the University, a history that reaches back to pre-Confederation days. In 1848, Bruno Guigues, Canadian Provincial of the Oblate religious order and the first Bishop of Bytown, established as the College of Bytown. In 1866, it became the University of Ottawa with a civil university charter granted by the Parliament of the Province of Canada. In 1889, it was granted a pontifical charter by Pope Leo XIII.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate had been established in France in 1826. By the 1840s, the order had expanded to England and drew into its ranks a considerable number of Irish members. The 1840s also witnessed a substantial movement of Oblate missionaries to Canada, including both French and Anglo-Irish Clerics. From the beginning, both linguistic groups were represented in the University of Ottawa, an institution owned and administered by the Oblate order centred in Montreal. It was founded to cater to the needs of both English and French. Fr. Tabaret, a dominant figure at the University from 1853 until his death in 1886 and generally regarded as its true founder, anticipated a place where the study of both English and French would, "lessen those grievous prejudices that separate these two peoples who are so well calculated to have a high regard for one another."²

To maintain two linguistic streams in a struggling institution

² Cited in Gaston Carriere, "Tabaret, Joseph Henri," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, p. 868.

was to prove extraordinarily difficult. By 1872, we find Fr. Tabaret writing that “the Oblate Fathers at the University wanted to adopt English as the only teaching language.”³ Members from France, it appeared, favoured a unilingual-English policy whilst those of French-Canadian origin favoured bilingualism.⁴ In 1874, English became the official language of the University and was to remain so until 1901.

By the turn of the century, the ethnic issue had erupted at the University. In 1898, Fr. Constantineau, a French-Canadian, replaced the Irish-born Fr. McGuckin as Rector. Constantineau, with the strong support of J.T. Duhamel, Archbishop of Ottawa, was committed to the restoration of the ascendancy of French at the University. He dealt effectively with the English opposition by having removed from the office of Vice-Rector, the dynamic and controversial Anglo-Irish leader Michael Francis Fallon.

Fallon, from his nearby post as pastor of St. Joseph’s Parish, remained involved in university politics and continued to lead a strong opposition to the new pro-French policy. Even after his removal in 1901 to another pastoral office in Buffalo, New York – a move which he saw as the product of one more French-Canadian conspiracy – his Ottawa supporters continued to urge his return as University Rector. The editor of a newly established English Catholic paper, *The Union*, lamented that “the University of Ottawa has continually and systematically been denuded of its best and most capable talent in English-speaking priests...”⁵

In the meantime, the language issue had spilled over into the broader educational community and severely divided the Ottawa and then other Ontario separate school boards. Fallon re-entered the fray with a vengeance in 1909 when he was appointed Bishop of London. From his new position he waged an unrelenting fight against bilingual education. “We are in an English-speaking Province,” he thundered in 1910, “on an English-speaking continent where the boys and girls going out to fight the battle of

³ Robert Choquette, *Language and Religion* (University of Ottawa Press, 1975) p. 11.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 11.

⁵ Cited in J.K.A. Farrell, “Michael Francis Fallon,” *Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report*, 1968, p. 89.

life must be equipped, first with English, that at all hazards; if on top of that they are able to speak French or Italian or Polish or any other language, all well and good, but the grounding in English is absolutely essential.”⁶ To Franco-Ontarians, his position appeared hardly different from that put forth by representatives from the loyal Orange across Ontario.

On April 13, 1912, French Canadian hopes for appropriate French language education received a cruel set-back when the Department of Education, following a policy laid down by Premier Whitney, issued the notorious Instruction 17. This famous regulation limited French as the language of instruction to the first few years of elementary school and specified a one hour daily limit for instruction in French as a distinct subject. Regulation 17, as it came to be called, stood as a burning irritant to French Canadians everywhere until it effectively disappeared in 1927. Especially during the World War I years, French-Canadians in the Ottawa area tended to see themselves as victims of an unparalleled provincial tyranny abetted by Irish Catholics.

By the end of 1916 there were signs that the storm over bilingual education was beginning to abate. Both sides of the bitterly divided Catholic hierarchy had appealed their case to Rome and on September 8, 1916, received an answer urging moderation and respect for differences. Gradually, the perception grew that institutional separation offered the best chance for peace. The 1920s represent a period of separation and reconciliation.

In the history of the University of Ottawa, an important point was reached on March 11, 1925, when the General Administration of the Oblate Order in Rome set up a commission to study its Canadian organization. It recommended a re-organization along linguistic lines. Accordingly, in 1926 a distinct unit was established to include only English-speaking Canadian Oblates – St. Peter's Province was born. High on the agenda of the new Province was the establishment of an educational institution to care for the secondary and post-secondary needs of English-speaking Catholics in the Ottawa area. The end appeared to be near for the Irish Connection with the University of Ottawa.

On May 20, 1929, a public announcement was finally made of the imminent opening of a new English-language educational

⁶ Cited in Walker, p. 224.

institution. The first proposed name was Little Flower University to mark the recent canonization of St. Therese of Lisieux. But sober Irish reflection prevailed and the new French saint gave way to the longer established and more manly St. Patrick.

It was clear from the very beginning that the relationship of the new St. Patrick's to the University of Ottawa was critical. Was it to be a totally autonomous institution leading in time to a full-scale University or was it to be a College under the jurisdiction of the existing University? The public and private confusion and tension on the issue is reflected in the newspaper accounts of the day. "New institution to be independent of Ottawa University," headlined the *Ottawa Journal's* initial announcement.⁷ Contradictory press reports led Fr. Robert, Rector of the University of Ottawa, and Fr. Finnegan, English Oblate Superior, to issue a joint statement affirming that the new English College was to be "distinct from Ottawa University"; nonetheless, the statement concluded that "There has been no question of a new University."⁸ Simultaneously, another explanatory statement was issued by an unnamed associate of the College stating, "The facts are that the new College is completely independent of the University of Ottawa as to finances and administration. As to the degrees that may be obtained through it, these may be acquired either through Toronto, Ottawa, or any existing university with which the new college may choose to become affiliated."⁹ The issue of independence versus affiliation was to be finally resolved by a Roman decree dated October 26, 1932, from the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and University Studies affirming that there should be two divisions of the Faculty of Arts of the University, one being the new English-language institution henceforth to be known as St. Patrick's College of the University of Ottawa.

The College opened on September 5, 1929, in temporary quarters by St. Joseph's Church on Laurier Avenue. It began with an enrolment of 135 boys in first year High School. In the meantime, plans went on apace for the development of a magnificent complex of buildings located on a site known as Patterson Field, on Echo Drive overlooking the Rideau Canal. "There is sufficient space on

⁷ 23 May 1929.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

the campus,” boasted the first Prospectus, “for two football fields, three baseball diamonds, besides tennis courts and handball alleys.” It went on to announce that an academic program would be offered beginning with high school, continuing with undergraduate B.A. and B.Sc. programs, and including graduate studies leading to the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. University of Ottawa authorities must have wondered at this audacity but they maintained a discreet public silence.

The first wing of the new College was duly completed by September 1930 at a cost of over \$500,000. A second addition was completed for September 1931 at an additional cost of \$150,000. A final expenditure of \$1,500,000 was planned for the construction of an auditorium, a chapel, a science building, and a sports complex including a gymnasium and a swimming pool.¹⁰ The final phase was never to be released – the advancing economic depression took care of that. The financial institution providing the capital funding accepted the future of the English Oblate Order as collateral. The burden of the debt left the owners of the new enterprise teetering on the verge of bankruptcy for almost the entire history of the College. In November 1930, the first of several fundraising campaigns was announced under the chairmanship of T. D’Arcy McGee, K.C.

In reviewing the academic program offered students, one finds a mix of traditional liberal arts with the natural and social sciences. The desire to give the program a practical bent is illustrated by a note added to the description for courses of 1931-32.

Credit courses in Economics will not be offered for the session 1931-32. However, since it is deemed essential that young men before they enter their professional duties, should acquire a practical knowledge of business relations and commercial customs, arrangements have been made for a special lecture course in Business Practice and Commercial Law. This course may be taken by all Upper School and Art Students.

In all programs, whether in Arts, Social Science or Natural Science, a common core of courses was compulsory. Of the normal sixteen courses required for any degree, three courses in each of philosophy and religion, and one course in English literature and an additional language were compulsory. Thus any substantial

¹⁰ *Ottawa Citizen*, 19 September 1935.

specialization was discouraged. Throughout its history, teaching and the development of community took precedence over research and publication. The lack of emphasis on specialized scholarship, while unexceptional in traditional institutions, guaranteed that the College remained out of step with contemporary university developments elsewhere, including those with the non-sectarian university with which it was later to become affiliated.

With varied success, attempts were made to relate the academic program to the professions. Pre-dental and pre-medical studies were advertised for 1933-34. A B.Sc. with engineering was announced for the same year but lack of students led to its disappearance. Beginning with 1936-37, programs leading to Bachelor degrees in Social Science and Commerce were presented. They were to continue until 1967.

In philosophy, only Thomistic thought and its variant were well represented, emphasizing the exclusive position Aquinas had come to occupy in official Catholic thinking following the Thomistic revival in the latter half of the 19th century. The post-Kantian philosophical revolution which so influenced modern man was regarded at best as an aberration which might be ignored. Religion courses were saved from the rigid dogmatism which pervaded Catholic theology in the post-modernist period up until Vatican Council II by the peculiar interests of a gentle, reflective professor of religion, Geoffrey Dowsett, who accented the mystical and communal over the dogmatic elements of Catholicism.

A distinctive feature of College activity that did not harmonize easily with the liberal arts was an active concern with community issues. It was no doubt such concern that led the young professor of economics, J.W. MacLennan, in 1935 to offer a course on the principles of Social Credit and their practical application in Canada. His efforts were rewarded by a notoriety of sorts when Dr. Hewlett Johnson, the famous Dean of Canterbury, in his pre-socialist phase, in the course of a lecture at the Chateau Laurier commented, "You ought to be mighty proud of St. Patrick's College and Professor MacLennan, who is a bright young man, for starting this Social Credit Course, which I understand is the first such course in your Dominion."¹¹

However, it was largely under the influence of L.K. Poupore, at

¹¹ *Ottawa Citizen*, 19 September 1925.

various times librarian, professor of economics, High School Principal, Dean, Rector, and Oblate Provincial, that concrete community projects were initiated. Poupore, of Ottawa Valley origins, had a solidly pragmatic rather than a reflective mind. Deeply convinced that the papal social encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) held the key to lasting social reform, he encouraged attempts to put Catholic social doctrine into practice. His work culminated in the formation of an Institute for Social Action.

It informally began in September 1949 when he invited Fr. F.A. Marocco, at the time Director of the Canadian Catholic Conference, to offer lectures at the College on Social Action. The Institute was formally established in September 1951, with Poupore as Director. The aims of the Institute were stated with confident simplicity in its first Calendar (1951):

The primary purpose of the Institute is the presentation of the social teachings of the Church in application to present-day problems. The Church has answers to these problems, and they have been outlined in the Pope's social encyclicals.

The first venture of the new Institute was the promotion of a cooperative housing program. Two special College publications resulted offering direction for planning: 'Guide to Cooperative Housing' (1961) edited by G.E. Clarke of the Economics department, and 'Cooperative Housing Administrative Manual' (1962), edited by Clarke and J.D. Moorman. By 1965, some 750 houses were built cooperatively following the plan of the Institute. Courses leading to a certificate in Credit Union Administration were developed in 1961. Study sessions were organized on the development of labour unions and in 1954, an adult educational manual on trade unions appeared. A homemakers' course and a Marriage Preparation program were developed, the latter drawing 2,500 participants by 1965.

The interest in direct social action carried over to the students and was especially evident in the 1960s. A city-wide canned food drive, begun in 1961, continued as an annual event for the students and saw an average of 40,000 cans each Spring collected for distribution to the needy of Ottawa. Another student organization, 'The Group,' numbered some 70 students who travelled to the Rideau Regional Hospital in Smiths Falls each Sunday to work with

and be companions to retarded children. Another student group volunteered its services each week to Rideau Correctional Centre in Burritts Rapids to participate in a rehabilitation program with the residents of the centre.

The initial staffing of the College presented its own peculiar problems. English Oblates had disappeared from the University of Ottawa and a new faculty had to be located. Four young Canadian priests who had just returned from studying abroad – Lawrence Poupore, Dillon Cahill, Leo Devine from Ireland, and Edgar Watson from Rome – formed a nucleus. Additions came from Oblates in Western Canada and United States. In 1932-33, of a staff of 35, 15 were laymen, most taught High School subjects. In succeeding years the ever-present financial crisis progressively reduced the proportion of laymen in favour of non-salaried Oblates.

The urgent need for additional qualified staff prompted an appeal for help to the Oblate General Administration in Rome. The outcome was the arrival in Ottawa, in February 1933, of two young priests, Farrell Banim and Leo Cormican, men who were destined to have the profoundest influence on the shaping of the College. Both men were born in Ireland, and they had studied together at the national University in Dublin. They went on to the Angelicum University in Rome for theological studies and then to Cambridge in England, where Banim completed an M.A. in Biology and Cormican an M.A. in English literature. Initially sent to teach High School in Ceylon they were suddenly ordered to report to Ottawa to help develop a new academic institution. Within two years Banim became Dean of the College, an office he held for twenty-seven years, and he remained an active member until his sudden death in the Spring of 1979. Cormican was Rector of the institution from 1935 until 1944 and continued as professor of English until the College closed in 1979.

The influence of Cambridge carried over into their work at the College. Banim's interest in biology broadened to embrace physical anthropology. His active imaginative mind provoked a multitude of students to reflect more deeply about the universe. Long before Teilhard de Chardin had become a cult figure for progressive Christians, Banim lectured his sometimes bemused students on the tantalizing complexities of the Teilhardian synthesis. A man of incredible energy and enthusiasm for life, the slightest spark carried his imagination to lofty heights. Who but Banim, at a time when the College was faced with extinction, could rhapsodize to the

Canadian Catholic Historical Association on the resources available to it: "The College has at its disposal the rich fund of contributions made by the missionaries of the past century to the sciences of economics, sociology, ethnology, anthropology, cartography, and the natural sciences."

"Here," he grandly concluded, "is a promising field for research in Canadian Catholic History,"¹² His challenge, to my knowledge, has never been taken up.

Though quieter and in a way more scholarly, Cormican exercised an influence equally great. A deep awareness of literature and a conviction of its paramount importance for humane living was his hallmark. At Cambridge he had come under the influence of the great literary critic F. R. Leavis, and a strong mutual friendship ensued. Like Leavis, Cormican felt deeply that literary criticism had far more to do with life than with mere analysis of print, and his seriousness was transmitted to his students. Many graduates to this day recall their first encounter with Cormican as a memorable experience.

At the end of 1935, another teacher destined to have a considerable influence on the development of the College arrived from England, J.J. Kelly. A special interest in French culture, developed during his student days in an Oblate school in Belgium, led him to the completion of an M.A. in French from the University of Toronto and a Doctorate from the University of Paris. A man of refinement and discrimination, he played an important role in maintaining a broadness of vision in the College community. As Rector during the critical years leading to amalgamation with Carleton University, his sensitivity and talent for compromise were used to good effect.

If one accepts Newman's definition of a university as a place of teaching universal knowledge with an object that is intellectual and not moral, then the universalist stance of leaders like Banim, Cormican, and Kelly legitimized St. Patrick's College's claim to the status of a genuine liberal arts college. Their work represents a deliberate effort to create not only an Irish Catholic College but also a liberal one and in that double focus were located the potential stains and successes of the College.

¹² "The Centenary of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate," *Canadian Catholic Historical Report*, 1941-42, p. 33.

Throughout most of its history a peculiar informality marked the administrative and academic life of the College. Though the College was officially an integral part of the University of Ottawa, communication was in the main carried on only at the top. The Council of Administration, the central governing board of the University, had no College representation. The Rector of the University was, in most instances, informed of new faculty additions and programs, but not new courses. The University routinely ratified St. Pat's degree candidates. The past had taught both sides to maintain an appropriate distance. This left the College free to exercise a highly informal type of administration. A good illustration of this is Fr. Banim's account of his own appointment as Dean. The incumbent Dean, Lawrence Poupore, was leaving for a year's study leave in Toronto. On the day of his departure he casually remarked to Banim, "Oh, would you look after the Dean's office while I'm away."¹³ Poupore returned the next year to another task and Banim remained on as Acting-Dean for another twenty-six years. This sort of informality worked relatively well, somewhat as it does in a family, only because of the close bonds that linked all members of the College – administrators, faculty, students – into a single identifiable community.

In spite of great dedication and considerable originality on the part of its organizers, student enrolment at the College remained discouragingly low until the end of World War II, ranging from thirty-five to forty five students each year. The reasons were complex. The depression years were ones of severe hardship for most Catholic families and the cost of university education put it beyond their reach. Again, a competing English-language stream at the University of Ottawa divided the constituency from which the College initially hoped to draw its students. The need of some greater form of integration and planning with the University to eliminate unnecessary duplication was variously recognized but, given the practical separation that had inevitably occurred, the problem could never be resolved. Finally, female students were effectively discouraged from enrolling at the College. In 1932, Notre Dame College was established by the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame as an affiliate of the University of Ottawa. It was expected that female students would enrol at the new

¹³ Conversation with F.E. Banim recorded by J.T. Manique, 27 June 1973.

Ladies' College. It was not until Notre Dame College closed in 1959 that the number of female students at St. Patrick's began to dramatically increase. By the late 1960s they were to form a majority. (In 1960, the first full-time female faculty member, Odette Condemine, was appointed to the Department of French. Within the next ten years, an additional twelve were named out of a total faculty of fifty.)

The early war years brought another sort of crisis to the College which for a time threatened its existence. In 1940-41, the Department of National Defence, requiring additional space for its military establishment, turned its eyes to the St. Patrick's complex on Echo Drive. It was well known that the English Oblates were having difficulties meeting the payments on their long-standing debt. The military representative made overtures to the anxious creditors offering to pay off the debt immediately with a suitable recompense to the Oblate owners. While military personnel, to the distress of the St. Pat's teaching staff, were busily measuring rooms for anticipated renovations, the Acting Provincial of the Oblates, J.R. Birch, intervened. On the counsel of Angus L. MacDonald, Minister of Naval Affairs, and his executive assistant, John Connolly, both strong supporters of the College, he consulted with Archbishop Vachon, who cooperated in the presentation of a strong protest to Mackenzie King. The Prime Minister supported the continuation of the College. In the words of Birch, "The Archbishop was assured he need have no fear of the transaction being carried out. No further word was heard of the matter."¹⁴

Having barely survived the bad days of the 1930s and 40s, the College in the post-war years saw a distinct improvement in its prospects. Returning veterans increased enrolment and their greater maturity improved the quality of College life. By 1967, enrolment reached a total of 827 full-time and 413 part-time students.

At the same time, beginning in 1951-52, the financial burden carried by the College was significantly eased when the Federal Government, through the medium of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, began providing a grant for which denominational colleges were eligible. Much needed expenditures on additional staff and accommodations could now be contemplated.

¹⁴ Letter of J.R. Birch to the author, 1 May 1982.

The 1950s also witnessed the rapid development of the newly established School of Social Welfare at St. Patrick's College under the dynamic and brilliant leadership of Swithun Bowers. Begun in June 1949, as a graduate school of the University of Ottawa, it offered a program leading to a Master's degree. It quickly gained a national reputation.¹⁵

St. Pat's moved into the 1960s with high enthusiasm. Its future never seemed as bright. In 1965 construction began of a much needed library building and new accommodation for the flourishing School of Social Welfare. In 1967, the high school, in a joint venture with Notre Dame High School, moved into a new complex in Ottawa South, leaving the vacated space available for College use.

In the meantime, relations with the University of Ottawa had considerably improved. The Rector of the University, H.F. Legare (1958-64) and the Rector of the College, J.J. Kelly (1960-67) had studied together in Paris and were good friends. They were anxious to work out more satisfactory arrangements between their separated institutions. Before they could set to work, however, each was faced with agonizing decisions that would radically affect the future of his own institution.

The decision of the University of Ottawa in 1965 to change its status to a public institution in order to qualify for adequate provincial support of its now rapidly developing faculties left the College uncertain as to its future. Since the University was to be granted a new charter (the old charter was to be continued in St. Paul's University for its theological and related faculties) the College faced the task of working out a new agreement. The options open to it, according to the new University of Ottawa Act, were federation, affiliation or integration, with the specific object carefully noted "of ensuring the preservation and development on the present campus of St. Patrick's College and of the presently established sections of the Faculty of Arts and of the School of Social Welfare."

The University agreed to continue for a time the old affiliation in order to give College authorities time to work out a mutually satisfactory arrangement. Throughout the latter half of 1965 and the spring and summer of 1966 meetings were held with the

¹⁵ The history of the School of Social Welfare demands a separate monograph.

University and with the Ministry of Education on the future of the College. The need for an early resolution became pressingly urgent when on October 24, 1966 the Prime Minister announced that the Federal Government grant would no longer be administered from Ottawa. Rather, it would be turned over to the provinces for distribution. Given Ontario policy of limiting aid to non-denominational post-secondary schools it appeared for a time that St. Pat's had suddenly lost approximately one-third of its income.

It was not until June 15, 1967 that the Province finally committed itself to continue grants to existing denominational institutions to an amount roughly equivalent to that formerly provided by the Federal Government. The net result was that a college such as St. Pat's would continue to receive about half the public funding available to nondenominational institutions. With growing financial demands due to expansion of facilities and an increase in the fully-salaried lay staff the uncertain financial base of the College grew more apparent.

The winter and spring of 1966-67 was an extraordinarily trying period for St. Pat's administrators. A proposal that the College might solve its difficulties by becoming a public institution with its own charter, received no support from Education Minister William Davis or his associates.

A new affiliation agreement with the now public University of Ottawa seemed the obvious answer, but there were problems. St. Pat's now represented a significant academic entity with a rapidly increasing student population and a corresponding growth in faculty. The University, committed to the development of a unified bilingual institution, might be justly concerned at the prospect of bringing into a more integrated relationship a highly self-conscious English-speaking academic entity. The St. Pat's community, as in the past, had its own peculiar anxieties about its identity. Meetings followed meetings, Oblate authorities in Rome were consulted, but no final resolution was forthcoming. The academic year 1967-68 (with increased financial burdens and unresolved academic status) drew ominously near.

In the meantime, the possibility of an integration with the other university in the capital – Carleton – was raised in late 1966. Rector Kelly discussed the question with leading Catholic laymen such as John Turner, John Connolly, and the President of the Alumni Association, Glen Kealey.

The idea was judged worth pursuing. The good offices of Dr. G. Andrew, Executive Director of the A.U.C.C., were sought and he agreed to raise the question of affiliation with Davidson Dunton, the highly regarded President of Carleton (1958-1972). Dunton expressed some interest. He met with Kelly on January 6, 1967, and following further discussion with his Carleton associates he reported progress. On January 24, Kelly met with Roger Guindon, Rector of the University of Ottawa (1964-). Guindon responded in a positive way, acknowledging the College's freedom to decide what affiliation served best the interests of the College.

Through intense work accompanied by goodwill and cooperation on all sides, including the University of Ottawa and the Ministry of Education, an agreement was worked out with Carleton and a formal contract signed on July 12, 1967. The College was given the status of a faculty, offering undergraduate instruction in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The College Rector became Dean of the new College. The program offered by the School of Social Welfare, along with its staff, was to be transferred to Carleton to become its newly created School of Social Work.

Carleton supported the new integration for a range of reasons. It was itself in the process of a remarkable expansion. Begun in 1942 as a non-sectarian part-time institution, by 1966 it had 3,724 full-time students, 2,800 part-time and a full-time faculty of 232. The idea of developing a new College was not entirely foreign to its thinking, for even before the St. Pat's integration proposal arose, consideration had been given to expansion in a new form. Both Mr. Dunton and the Dean of Arts D.M.L. Fan, as well as the Associate Dean of the Social Science division G.C. Merrill, were men deeply committed to liberal arts education and had a basic sympathy for the work and predicament of the College. Again, the addition of a well-developed School of Social Work could be seen as a gain for Carleton.

The lack of tension or animosity accompanying the departure of St. Pat's from its parent institution indicates a growing maturity (or perhaps an inevitable secularization) of the two ethnic communities once characterized by intense rivalry. Mighty events in the preceding years – World War II, Vatican Council II, and the Quiet Revolution in Quebec – had profoundly affected how each community viewed its own reality. In the case of St. Pat's, its supporters came to see that it had more in common with what hitherto some had regarded as the godless campus on the Rideau

than with the older institution from which it had been generated.

The early period of integration were halcyon days at St. Pat's. An apparently booming provincial and national economy was reflected in the generous financing of Ontario universities. Financial stringency which had so bedevilled College efforts in the past seemed gone forever.

Student enrolment was holding at a good level. Much needed faculty additions were made in all major disciplines and especially in the humanities. College administrators enjoyed participating for the first time in every aspect of University life. New hope and new promise was evident. The future of St. Pat's never seemed so secure. No one, in any area of society, could foresee how dismal the prospects for the university and liberal arts were to become in the 1970s.

The early years of the new decade saw the departure from administration of the three key figures in the determination of St. Pat's new status – President Dunton and Deans Fan and Kelly. The new administration under President Michael Oliver (1972-79) was soon to be confronted with unexpected problems. One of the earliest decisions of the new administration was to provide what it felt was more appropriate space and a new location for the College enterprise. Plans were drawn up for a new \$2,500,000 college building to accommodate 800 students on the Rideau River Campus. The old complex was transferred to Algonquin Community College. Despite some initial student hostility to the decision, the move to new quarters was effected smoothly on August 20, 1973. At the official opening of the new St. Patrick's College on October 14, 1973, the keynote speaker was Dr. John Grace, a former graduate, and at that time editor of the *Ottawa Journal*. He gently chided the universities for their shortcomings. Neither he, nor the present writer who introduced him, foresaw that both the *Ottawa Journal* and the College were destined to shut down within a decade.

New efficient quarters notwithstanding there were dark clouds on the horizon. Two months before the College moved to its new site both St. Patrick's and Notre Dame High Schools, important feeders for the College, were unceremoniously forced to shut down on account of severe financial pressures. "After 40 years St. Patrick's College will close its doors" headlined the *Ottawa*

*Journal*¹⁶ and in its wrong labelling unwittingly increased the persistent public misunderstanding about the continued viability of the College.

Within the College itself, dissensions arose over a proposed restructuring in view of its move to the main university campus. Closer integration with central departments and a greater interchange with faculty were suggested in a preliminary working paper prepared by the new Dean, Derek Sida. Students in general and many faculty members reacted negatively to what they interpreted as a threat to College identity. A storm ensued leading to the resignation of the Dean on March 30, 1973. The present writer assumed the office of Dean for a three-year period.

It was clear that the post-Dunton administration was not happy with the organization of St. Pat's. Enrolment had dropped in 1973-74 to under 600, representing a general North American trend that affected acutely most traditional programs. The new administration at Carleton felt that greater rationalization of the entire university enterprise was called for.

At the end of 1973, a Senate Advisory Committee, chaired by the Dean of St. Pat's was established to come up with a new plan for the College. As it pursued its work in public sessions it grew evident that its final recommendations would not substantially change the nature or organization of the College. The President, in particular, had expected something more radical.

Before the Senate Committee had issued its final report a new crisis hit the College. The Ontario Government announced in November 1974, that the increase in the Basic Income Unit that determined the government grant to Ontario universities for the forthcoming year, would be held to a 7.4 percent increase. The financial crisis which is now so familiar throughout the university system had arrived.

The President decided that the belt-tightening process now called for, must begin with serious consideration being given to the shutting down of the College and the integration of its entire faculty, support staff and students into appropriate parts of the University. He presented his proposal to a meeting of the entire St. Pat's community on Nov. 27, 1974. Rational discussion in such a forum was not easy. No! No! No! was the almost universal

¹⁶ 27 April 1973.

response.

A vigorous student, alumni, political protest was launched. The proposal to close the College gradually gave way to recommendations for continued rationalization involving a more efficient use of teaching staff and a radical reduction in library services located at the College. *The Ottawa Journal* was able to headline on December 12, 1974, "Uproar works, St. Pat's won't get the axe."

Following the crisis year of 1974, St. Pat's appeared to move into a period of relative calm. The Senate Committee on the College duly completed its report in the Spring of 1975 and in its recommendations strove to straddle two conflicting educational philosophies – the demands of traditional liberal arts and those of a more practical oriented education. Apart from its recommendations to further develop an imaginative program in Criminology and Corrections and an undergraduate program in Canadian Studies – both duly implemented and continuing today under University – auspices – its proposals were coolly received.

A new Dean, John T. O'Manique, took office for 1976-77. It seemed that the storms were left behind though enrolment continued to drop – to an alarming 376 by 1979. The calm was deceptive. As the national economic crisis deepened, universities were pushed harder to economize. A new space allocation proposal led to the re-assignment of considerable areas in the St. Pat's building to other divisions of the university. It was an ominous sign. In the spring of 1978, Dean O'Manique resigned to work with Vice-President John Porter in over-all university program development. An anxious College faculty board debated a motion proposed by two of its own members that the College should close. A solid student opposition vote made certain that the motion was roundly defeated but the discouragement of many of the faculty was evident.

Within months the University initiated steps to close the College. On January 31, 1979, the Board of Governors officially announced that the College would cease to exist at the end of the academic year. There would be a transfer of all faculty and support staff to appropriate parts of the University.

It fell to G.E. Clarke, the last Dean of St. Pat's and its longest serving full-time lay member, to lead the College during its final difficult year. What now remains of the College is a unit housing the School of Social Work and the School of Journalism and bearing

the official name of St. Patrick's building.

In seeking reasons for the demise of the College one might too readily concentrate on the financial instability that was a constant throughout its history. More important, however, was that changing nature of the community from which it drew its principal support, the Irish Catholics of the Ottawa Valley. Factors such as the closing of a significant number of Catholic high schools, the increasing demand for more specialized or more career oriented academic programs, the growing attraction of non-sectarian institutions, when related to the current economic decline in Ontario suggests that even a Newman would have been hard pressed to provide a rationale convincing enough to keep the College afloat.

In its problem ridden fifty years' history, the achievements of St. Pat's were by no means insignificant. Relying essentially on the dedication of non-salaried faculty, it offered the opportunity of pursuing post-secondary education to a significant number of youth who otherwise would have found the university world inaccessible. While founded as an Irish Catholic institution of learning, with imaginative leadership it soon left behind a narrowly sectarian perspective. It was George Bernard Shaw who cleverly labelled a Catholic university as a contradiction in terms. The restrictive dogmatism implied by the Shavian dictum was never characteristic of the intellectual life of the College as many of its graduates will attest. Again, there were always members of the College who demonstrated concretely a concern about broad community issues, a concern that influenced students and directed many of them in their choice of career.

Finally, what St. Patrick's College achieved to quite a remarkable degree was a high sense of community, a spirit which drew together in almost a sensible way students, faculty, and support staff. It was this indefinable sense of fellowship which left a deep impression on all who shared in the life of the College and to them remains, perhaps, its most memorable feature.

Documentary Sources

The principal primary materials for the history of the College are located in the archives, Carleton University Library, and Deschatelets Archives, St. Paul's University.