



A History of Catholic Education and Schooling in Scotland

New Perspectives

Edited by
Stephen J. McKinney
Raymond McCluskey

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“The Education (Scotland) Act of 1918 has long suffered from undeserved neglect in the historical literature. Its centenary has now at length prompted fresh evaluation of this significant legislation in its broader social, religious and political context. In this new collection of essays, a wide array of perspectives are brought to bear, not only on the Act itself but also on its origins, implications and longer-term effects. This history has been largely hidden from view partly because of the dominance of the English tradition south of the border, but also because of the nature of religious conflict within Scotland. In this volume, the Catholic tradition in Scottish education is effectively unearthed and exhibited in full public view.”

—Professor Gary McCulloch, *Brian Simon Chair of History of Education, IOE, University College London, UK*

“Current issues in Catholic education cannot be properly understood without an appreciation of the history behind them. This book admirably provides a scholarly analysis of the key agents, contextual factors and principles at work in Scotland before, during and after the 1918 Education Act. Unlike many other studies, it weaves together legal, historical, social, educational and religious angles of approach, offers fascinating, thought-provoking and sometimes surprising insights and draws attention to neglected features of the history of Catholic education in Scotland.”

—Professor Emeritus John Sullivan, *Liverpool Hope University, UK*

“This collection casts fresh and sober light on the historical roots and legacy of a topic that is too often the subject of over-heated and uninformed contemporary debate. It is a contribution as much to the social and cultural history of modern Scotland, generally, as it is to that of Scottish Catholic education and features the most mature twenty-first century commentary and analysis finely nuanced by the archives. This book is one that has appeared not before time.”

—Professor Gerard Carruthers, *Francis Hutcheson Professor of Scottish Literature, University of Glasgow, UK*

“As the field of Catholic Education Studies develops internationally it needs as an academic foundation scholarly studies of the historical beginnings of Catholic schooling in every nation. The book provides an excellent model for such studies, written in a scholarly, accessible, interesting and comprehensive way. It is to be hoped that researchers and scholars in other nations will seek to emulate this fine example.”

—Professor Gerald Grace, *Editor of International Studies in Catholic Education*

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Stephen J. McKinney

*This book is dedicated to my children Stephen Conor (aged 26) and Lucy
(aged 19)*

Raymond McCluskey

This book is dedicated to the memory of my late father, Hugh

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1

Introduction

Stephen J. McKinney and Raymond McCluskey

The first part of the title of this book, *A History of Catholic Education and Schooling in Scotland*, has been chosen very carefully to reflect the historical importance of Catholic schools for the Catholic community in Scotland and also to acknowledge the breadth of scope of Catholic education that extended beyond the schools. The editors wanted to add that the book will provide *New Perspectives* on this history to enhance and extend the scholarship in this field. The rationale for this book, essentially a collection of essays occasioned by the centenary of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, is to provide a series of scholarly responses to the historical context of the Act.

This book is concerned primarily with Catholic schools, but we argue that the history within its pages belongs to Scotland, not just the Catholic community, because its study helps us to understand the background to

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the evolution of state-funded schooling. The role of the different Christian churches in providing school education was of fundamental importance in this evolution.¹ The Church of Scotland and the Free Church were major providers of schooling prior to the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872. The schools of the Episcopal Church were less numerous, though still influential, and the number of Catholic schools grew exponentially between 1872 and 1918. The responses of the Catholic Church and the Episcopal Church to the 1872 Act and the accommodations of section 18 of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, highlights the importance of these Churches in the provision of school education in Scotland and the recognition of this importance by the state in its negotiations with the Churches (especially the Catholic Church).

The centenary in 2018 of the passing of the Education (Scotland) Act of 1918 has provided an opportunity for scholars to revisit the historical context which produced this landmark piece of legislation. This book is itself a response to the stimulus of the anniversary. It seeks ultimately, however, to open up new lines of enquiry for the next hundred years. The historical narrative which any community inherits is often closely tied to that community's shared sense of identity. The story of Catholic schools in Scotland has in the past served to underline the resilience, ambition and fortitude of an originally poor, unskilled community which, through its schools, has over the decades been transformed in terms of entry to the professions, the arts, the sciences and so many other important aspects of life. Now, one hundred years on from the 1918 Act, the time is right to ask new questions of the historical testimony of the generations which prepared for the Act, saw it come to fruition and then implemented it. This is a scholarly project for a new generation of historians, Catholic or otherwise. So much remains to be done, not least incorporating the insights of new evidence as increasing amounts of material become readily accessible by means of online repositories. It is the most ardent wish of the editors that the publication of this present volume of *New Perspectives* provides a catalyst for many subsequent new research projects.

The aim of this introduction is to provide an overview of the contents of this book which is focused primarily on the development of Catholic school education in Scotland in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The two influential Acts, the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872, and the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, dominate academic discussion of this period because

they are key points in the progress towards state funding for Catholic schools. While these two Acts feature prominently in contributions to this book, the purpose of the book is to deepen our historical knowledge and understanding of some of the key people and events that supported the growth and development of Catholic school education. An emphasis on people is highly appropriate—to focus on those who founded, developed, led and taught in Catholic schools.² Similarly events, or series of events, were to prove crucial in the growth and development of Catholic schooling and the integration of Catholic schooling into the state sector. There were two series of events post-1918, for example, that would be highly significant in the gradual journey to state-funded schooling for Catholic schools. These were the discussion and debate that unfolded concerning the expansion of St Mary's, Whifflet, and the construction of a new Catholic school in Bonnybridge (these are highlighted in a number of chapters in this book). These were to be very influential as they tested the relationship between local Catholic schools and the local educational authorities. The 'Bonnybridge case' tested sub-sections (7) and (8) of section 18 of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918. In the end there was a positive outcome for the local Catholic schools in Whifflet and Bonnybridge and, in the case of Bonnybridge, an important precedent was set. The book also provides insights into the impact of Catholic schooling on the Catholic community in Scotland, on Scottish education, and on the wider Scottish community, including some of the other Christian denominations.

Five Key Themes

There are many important themes that recur throughout the book, and the individual chapters provide very helpful insights into these themes. We would like to provide an overview of five of these themes. The themes are the impact of poverty and child poverty on Catholic schooling, the role of the religious and lay female teachers, the training of Catholic teachers, the identity of the Scottish Catholic community, and sectarianism.

One prevailing theme is the poverty of the Catholic community. This theme features in Chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9. The poverty of Catholic families affected the lives and educational prospects of the children. This had a particularly serious impact on the school education of children in

a number of ways. First, there was an impact on attendance at school as a result of the personal circumstances of the family. The school fees that were required to be paid were small, but parents of large families struggled to pay these fees. Many children were required to work from an early age to contribute to the family income, or they were needed to care for siblings. Some children did not have adequate clothing for the winter months and could not attend school. The Saint Vincent De Paul Society was established in Glasgow in the mid-1800s and provided much needed relief to the children in the Catholic schools of the East End of Glasgow in the form of coats, shoes, school materials and free school meals.³

Second, there was an impact on the quality of the school environment as a result of the lack of financial resource within the Catholic community. The Catholic Church decided that Catholic schools would not be transferred at the time of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872. This meant that Catholic schools had to continue to be funded, for the main part, by the Catholic Church which relied heavily on fundraising and donations. Catholic schools were often in poorly appointed buildings and, crucially, given the budgetary restraints on teacher salaries and equipment, children were taught in large numbers, in overcrowded classrooms and with inadequate resources.

There is considerable attention in this book to the importance of the male and female religious orders and congregations in Scotland. This is discussed in Chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9. The roles of both religious and lay women in Catholic schools are recognized as being of paramount importance to early Catholic schools and their subsequent development. The Ursulines of Jesus arrived from France and were the first religious congregation to introduce convent life to Post-Reformation Scotland. The Ursulines arrived in Edinburgh in 1834 and opened a school. They also established a convent in Perth in 1865 and taught in the Catholic schools in the city.⁴ The contribution of female religious such as the Sisters of Mercy, the Franciscans of the Immaculate Conception, the Sacred Heart Sisters, the Faithful Companions of Jesus, the Sisters of the Cross and Passion and the Notre Dame Sisters to Catholic school education was critical in terms of the quality of provision of Catholic schools and the education of young women at the secondary level of schooling.

The female religious teachers were often highly qualified, and some of those who had travelled from Europe were well informed about the latest international ideas, developments and movements in school education. Later, a number of them were also pioneers in their field. Sister Monica Taylor SND was widely recognized as an innovative teacher and researcher in science at Notre Dame Training College in Glasgow.⁵ She was awarded an honorary LLD by the University of Glasgow in 1953 in recognition of her achievements. Sister Marie Hilda SND was instrumental in the conception, establishment and operation of the Child Guidance Clinic in the West End of Glasgow in 1931.⁶ The Clinic from the onset was free and acquired an international reputation. Although the majority of children referred to the Clinic were Catholic, the Clinic attended to the needs of children of all denominations (and none).

Various chapters in this book highlight the issue of gender in the staffing of many Catholic schools. There are probing questions raised in the book about the position and role of the lay women teacher in the schools. Many of the lay women teachers were uncertificated or were pupil teachers. They were often poorly paid in Catholic schools and paid less than the male teachers who were in equivalent teaching roles.

The training of Catholic teachers is addressed by many of the contributors to this book (in Chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9). There were opportunities for uncertificated teaching but the move in Scotland and England and Wales was inexorably directed towards qualified teachers who would be equipped to meet the increasing demands of the rise in educational standards.⁷ There were opportunities for Catholic students to be trained in England. The male students could be trained in Hammersmith and the female students in Mount Pleasant College in Liverpool and in Wandsworth. Formal Catholic teacher training was introduced in Scotland with the opening of Notre Dame Training College in Glasgow in 1895. This is widely acknowledged as a major advance for Catholic teachers and Catholic schooling and was to be key in the increase in the quality and expertise of female Catholic teachers. The other major advance is also identified: the opening of St Margaret's College in Craiglockhart in Edinburgh in 1920. St Margaret's College was founded by the Society of the Sacred Heart to provide female Catholic teachers for the Catholic schools in the east of Scotland.⁸ The provision for male

teachers was sometimes less satisfactory. The training programme of St Kentigern's Hostel for male teachers offered an interesting blend of a Catholic teacher formation and attendance at one of the provincial training centres. This arrangement was short-lived and, apart from this programme, the male teachers were unable to experience an integrated Catholic teacher education in Scotland comparable to the education of female teachers until they were admitted to Notre Dame in 1967.⁹

The next theme is that of Catholic identity which is examined primarily in Chaps. 3 and 7. This is possibly the most complex theme as it is influenced by internal and external pressures, perspectives, manoeuvring and even manipulation. There were tensions in the conflation of religious and national identities and the understanding of an 'Irish', 'Scottish' or a 'British' Catholic identity. The promotion of ultramontanism in the Scottish Catholic Church by the clergy in the late nineteenth century moved towards a British identity rather than an Irish identity and steered Catholics in Scotland towards a particular ecclesial identity. Nevertheless, a strong sense of an Irish identity prevailed among Catholics in parts of Scotland. There are also critical observations in the book on how Catholics understood their identity in relation to the wider world and their relation to traditional sciences and the emerging social sciences.

The last theme is sectarianism which appears in Chaps. 2, 6, and 8. Sectarianism in this context refers to interdenominational division and hostility between Catholics and Protestants that led to discrimination and at times even violence.¹⁰ Sectarianism is a term that incorporates anti-Catholicism and anti-Protestantism yet remains an elusive concept when exploring the historical attitudes and manifestations of this social evil in Scotland. Part of the difficulty lies with the complexity of the enmity directed towards the Catholic community at different stages of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Sometimes it was rooted in a Protestant Calvinism that had a vehement opposition to Roman Catholicism. Sometimes this was conflated with anti-migrant xenophobia and sometimes conflated with anti-Irish racism or conflated with both anti-migrant and anti-Irish attitudes. This latter conflation was particularly marked in the arrival of large numbers of Irish Roman Catholics fleeing the series of famines in the mid-nineteenth century and in the injudicious and ill-fated campaign on Irish immigration conducted by some factions in the Church of Scotland that commenced in 1923.

Outline of the Chapters

Chapter 2 provides the context for the book and discusses many of the key themes of this period of history and offers a detailed examination of the two Acts. This chapter will discuss the early Post-Reformation Catholic schools, particularly the school founded in Paisley in 1816 and the schools that were established by the Catholic Schools Society from its inception in 1817. This will be followed by a focus on the events leading up to the Royal Commission led by George Douglas Campbell, the Eighth Duke of Argyll, and the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872. The major points of the 1872 Act will be outlined as will the response of the Catholic Church to this Act. The Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, will be subjected to close scrutiny, especially section 18. The final sections will explore the response of the Catholic Church to this Act and the slow process of the integration of Catholic schools into the state-funded school sector.

Geraldine Vaughan examines the distinctiveness of Catholic schooling before the 1918 Education Act. Vaughan provides very valuable insights into some of the early practices including the relation in certain places between the Catholic school and the religious instruction delivered in parishes on Saturdays and Sundays. She discusses the unevenness of the experience of children in Catholic communities, pointing out that some Catholic children attended non-Catholic schools. She also points out that there were problems with attendance at school and there were challenges in remaining as voluntary schools in the post-1872 era. One of the key features of this chapter is that it raises the question of the Irish identity of Catholic schools and proposes that the influence of ultramontanism was strong within Scottish Catholicism.

S. Karly Kehoe argues that there is a need to ensure that race, class and gender are used to interrogate the historical legacy of education. Kehoe examines the importance of the role of the female religious in Scotland, especially after 1850. She argues that historical narratives have been slow to acknowledge their contribution to Catholic schooling, especially elementary schooling, and to teacher training for women. She highlights some of the major barriers that the Catholic community faced in engaging with Catholic schooling. Many of the families experienced great poverty

and the children had to work or care for siblings. This resulted in irregular attendance at school. She also explains that the women religious helped to create a culture of education within the Catholic community.

Tom O'Donoghue focuses on the role of the male religious orders in Scotland in the period leading up to the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918. He provides a concise but very useful context of the origins and development of religious life from the ascetics in the desert to the present day. He then explains the importance of the contribution of religious teaching orders as the Catholic Church responded to the perceived threats of pluralism and rationalism. O'Donoghue examines the variety of male religious orders that established schools across the country thus avoiding the danger of concentrating on the Central Belt of Scotland.

Jane McDermid explores the role of lay female teachers in Catholic schools and provides an important account of the challenges faced by these teachers. There were issues in salary differentials between men and women and Catholic schools, struggling to meet the rising costs of maintaining schools, found female teachers to be a cheap labour source. There was also an over-reliance at times on female uncertificated teachers and pupil teachers. McDermid underlines the importance of the establishment of Notre Dame College and the impact that the foundation of this ambitious teacher-training centre had on the quality of female teachers and also on the widening of the curriculum.

Raymond McCluskey contributes a chapter on 'non-formal' learning and the scope of public lectures in the late nineteenth century. He draws from the Catholic weekly, the *Glasgow Observer*, and offers two snapshots: the discussion of the Roman Question and the engagement with scientific questions and developments of the day. The Roman Question was focused on the debates around the fall of the Papal States and the emerging tensions between ultramontaniam and Gallicanism. McCluskey expounds on the contribution of the inveterate peripatetic lecturer, the Rev. John Stewart McCorry. The second snapshot reveals surprising engagement with some of the major scientific issues of the day: light, respiration and Darwin.

Stephen McKinney addresses an under-researched area: the response of the Church of Scotland to the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918, and to the perceived advantages gained by the Roman Catholic Church in denominational schooling. This chapter traces the key points of the anti-

1918 campaign through the Church of Scotland Assembly documents and some later comments from more contemporary historians. McKinney argues that the campaign against the 1918 Act was disaggregated from the anti-Irish campaign at an early stage and dropped the racial rhetoric. His analysis proposes that the campaign was used as a vehicle to reclaim and recover the influence (or some of the influence) of the Church of Scotland in schooling and to consolidate the position of religious instruction in public schools.

Mary McHugh provides an explanation of some of the key events that occurred after the Education (Scotland) Act, 1918. These include the outcomes of the cases focused on the projected new Catholic school buildings in St Mary's, Whifflet, and in Bonnybridge. McHugh demonstrates that the transfer of the Catholic schools was a slower process than is often understood and the representatives of the Catholic Church were often cautious and guarded in their relationships with local authorities. The author also provides a very useful outline of the progress and development of Catholic schools and explains that there were persistent challenges in recruiting a sufficient number of Catholic teachers for the schools.

Acknowledgements The editors would like to offer heartfelt thanks to the academics who have kindly contributed to this book: Geraldine Vaughan, Karly Kehoe, Tom O'Donoghue, Jane McDermid and Mary McHugh. The original aim of this volume was to invite some of the leading academics in the field who have researched and published on the topic of the history of Catholic schools in Scotland. This aim was ambitious and we were delighted that our invitations were so generously accepted and that the chapters were so carefully and skilfully written. Despite the evident high level of scholarship, the chapters are all very readable and we expect that this book will enjoy a wide readership.

As we have undertaken the research for this book, we have presented our research and our ideas at national and international conferences. We owe a debt of gratitude to academic colleagues from Scotland and in other parts of the world who have listened to our papers and have offered critical and scholarly advice. We thank the following: Scottish Catholic Historical Association, Scottish Educational Research Association, Network for Researchers in Catholic Education, Nordic Educational Research Association and History of Education Society. The work for the book has also resulted in a number of spin-off publications for magazines and

newspapers and we have published articles in *Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)*, *Scottish Catholic Observer*, *Flourish*, *The Pastoral Review* and *Open House*. We are grateful to the respective editors for their willingness to allow us to present our work in their publications.

We also offer our deep thanks to the staff at Palgrave. Their continued support and encouragement have been greatly appreciated. They were committed to this project from the very beginning and considered this book to be an important contribution to the research on the history of Catholic schools in Scotland. In particular we thank Eleanor Christie, senior editor, who has advised and guided us and always with great patience and courtesy. We are also very grateful to Becky Wyde, senior editorial assistant, for her attention to detail and perseverance.

It is very interesting to note that one of the legacies of the religious orders and congregations is that a number of their members researched the history of Catholic education and Catholic schooling in Scotland. Some of their works are considered to be seminal and we acknowledge in particular the contributions of James Handley (Brother Clare FMS), Dom Mark Dilworth OSB and Brother Kenneth FMS. Similarly, academic staff in Notre Dame College, Glasgow; St Margaret's College, Craiglockhart; and, latterly, St Andrew's College in Bearsden (Glasgow) also contributed to the field of the history of Catholic education and schooling. We acknowledge in particular the contribution to this field by Dr Tom FitzPatrick, Sister Martha Skinnider SND and Teresa Gourley. This academic endeavour has continued in the School (formerly Faculty) of Education in the University of Glasgow in the work of Professor James Conroy, Professor Bob Davis and Dr Frank O'Hagan. We note the many seminars and discussions in the Faculty and School of Education that have been influential on our thinking and have helped to generate this project. We have greatly valued the work of Dr Frank O'Hagan on the religious orders and congregations in Glasgow. We thank the members of our previous Research and Teaching Group—*Creativity, Culture and Faith* (2010–2017)—and those in our current Research and Teaching Group, *Pedagogy, Praxis and Faith* (2017–present), for their unfailing help and assistance. They provided us with opportunities to test our ideas in staff seminars and provided excellent feedback. Finally, we thank Dr Roisin Coll, Fr Stephen Reilly, Dr Leonardo Franchi, Mary Lappin, Clare Fodey, Professor Margery McMahon, Dr Robert Doherty, Dr Maureen Farrell, Catherine O'Hare and Julie Robinson of the St Andrew's Foundation for Catholic Teacher Education for their great interest and enthusiasm for this project.

Notes

1. This history is being recovered in ‘mainstream’ history of education. Miller provides a very interesting discussion of the role of the Churches in the evolution of state-funded schooling in various parts of the English-speaking world. See P. Miller, “Historiography of compulsory schooling: what is the problem?”, in R. Lowe (ed.), *History of Education. Major Themes. Volume II: Education in its Social Context* (London: Routledge, 2000), 156–183, especially 173–175.
2. For a useful explanation of why the focus on people is important in the history of the Catholic Church, see N. Tanner, *New Short History of the Catholic Church* (London: Burns & Oates, 2011), 237. Tanner argues that ‘the Church means the people of God’ and all of the challenges and successes they experience as they strive to live a Christian life.
3. S. J. McKinney, “Catholic schools in Glasgow and caring for the needs of those who are poor”, in S. Whittle (ed.), *Vatican II and New Thinking about Catholic Education* (London: Routledge, 2017), 96–112. This book chapter provides a more detailed account of the relentless struggle to counter the effects of poverty in the early post-Reformation Catholic community and the concomitant effects on the attempts to provide Catholic schooling for children.
4. S. K. Kehoe, *Creating a Scottish Church: Catholicism, Gender and Ethnicity in Nineteenth-Century Scotland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 55–57.
5. There is a very helpful summary of Sister Monica Taylor SND’s life and achievements in F. J. O’Hagan, *The Contribution of the Religious Orders to Education in Glasgow During the Period 1847–1918* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 241–242.
6. The first Catholic Clinic for Child Guidance was established in Edinburgh in 1931. The Glasgow Clinic was to become more well-known and more successful. See J. Stewart, “An ‘enigma to their parents’: the founding and aims of the Notre Dame Child Guidance Clinic, Glasgow”, *The Innes Review*, 57(1), 2006, 54–76.
7. T. A. FitzPatrick, *No Mean Service. Scottish Catholic Teacher Education 1895–1995* (Glasgow: St Andrew’s College, 1995), 25.
8. *Ibid.*, 59–63.
9. *Ibid.*, 208.

10. S. J. McKinney, "The historical and contemporary debate about the relation of Catholic schools in Scotland and the social problem of sectarianism", *Ricerche di Pedagogia e Didattica – Journal of Theories and Research in Education*, 10(1), 2015, 13–45. See also S. J. McKinney and J. C. Conroy, "The continued existence of state-funded Catholic schools in Scotland", *Comparative Education*, 51(1), 2015, 105–117; G. P. T. Finn, "Sectarianism", in T. G. K. Bryce & W. M. Humes (eds.), *Scottish Education* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 869–879.