# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements xii

Preface: Professional Nursing in America before the Nightingale Model xiii

Introduction: Something Different 1

Chapter 1: A Healing Heritage of Holistic Nursing Care 11
  The Spirit of the Company 14
    Holy Practices—Humility, Simplicity, and Charity 15
    Poverty and Obedience 18
    Common Rules 21
  Migration of the Vincentian-Louisian Nursing Tradition to America 25
    “That the Sick Poor May Not Be Kept Waiting” 30

Chapter 2: Holistic Education of the Sister of Charity Nurse 35
  Contemplation in Action 37
    Sister Mary Xavier Clark on the “Blessed Art” 42
  Gathering Nursing Knowledge in Public 49
    The First Hospital Mission at the Baltimore Infirmary 53
    Learning from Doctors and Disease 60
      Cholera Victims and Victors 64
    Called to Nurse the Insane 67
      Sister Matilda Coskery, 1828–1833 69
      Serving the Insane at the Maryland Hospital, 1833–1838 75
      Sister Servant in Richmond, Virginia, 1838–1840 80

Chapter 3: Sister Matilda—Moral Entrepreneur 83
  Foundational Faith in Mission and Business 86
    Leadership, Vision, and Hope 90
    Moral Therapy and Social Justice 93
    Striking a Balance between Freedom and Restraint 102
    A Healing Environment 105
  The Charity of Nurse Sectarians 111
    Limits to Charity 115
    Charity Begins at Home 118
  Expanding the Reach of Intercession and Inspiration 124
Table of Contents

Chapter 4: The Doctor-Nurse Game: To Play or Not to Play 133
   The Game 135
      “Best” Practice and Professional Culture Clash 138
      Sister Matilda’s Middle Years, 1849–1855 148
      A Historical Privilege 156

Chapter 5: Sister Matilda Coskery’s Advices Concerning the Sick 161
   The Voice of an “Oracle” 164
      Judicious Nurses Know the Curative Point (Advices, Pages 1–7) 172
         Recipes for Healing 177
      Life and Death in the Hands of Nurses (Pages 7–16) 191
         Emetics 192
         Blistering 194
         Mustard Plasters 197
         Teas, Tonics &c. 198
         Foot-Baths 199
         Injections 201
         Opiates 202
         Cleanliness 203
         General Remarks 204
      “Simple” Advice, Titration, and Regulation (Pages 16–27) 206
         Mania a Potu or Delirium Tremens 211
         Cupping 223
      Kindness, the Remedy of Remedies (Pages 28–44) 226
         A Few Remarks on Insanity 228
         Of Measurement 243
   Nursing Science in the Mid-Nineteenth Century (Pages 45–46) 246
      A Professional’s Exceptions 249
   Sickroom Management (Pages 47–61) 252
      Of the Faithful Administration of Medicines 255
      Of Giving Drinks and Nourishments 256
      Of Cleanliness in the Sick Room 257
      Of Quiet in the Sick Room 259
      Of Ventilating the Sick Room 261
      Regulating the Warmth of the Patient 262
      Examination & Preservation of the Excretions 263
# Table of Contents

- Of the Patient’s Sitting Up .................................................. 264
- Making the Bed of the Sick ............................................... 265
- Of Dressing Blisters .......................................................... 267
- Of Relapse ........................................................................... 271
- Fever ................................................................................... 273
- Nurses’ Scope of Practice .................................................... 280

**Chapter 6: Revising the Legend and Repealing the Myth** ........................................ 283
- Later Years of Compassionate Care, 1855–1870 ........................................ 284
- Civil War, Nursing Both Sides ................................................ 286
- No Fear in Death ................................................................... 290
- Thank God ............................................................................ 293
- End of an Era ......................................................................... 296

- Secularization of Nursing .................................................... 300
- The Myth About Early Nurses ................................................ 303
- Scotoma and Professional Identity .......................................... 304
- Constructing an American Legend ......................................... 310
- Lost in Transition .................................................................. 319
- Trading Autonomy for Alignment ........................................... 324

**Epilogue: Enlightened Reform and Esprit de Corps** .............................................. 329

**Appendices** .............................................................................. 337
- A Maryland Hospital Rules and Regulations ................................ 337
- B Advices Concerning the Sick (Full Text) ............................... 344
- C Louise de Marillac’s Schedule for Hospital Nurses .................. 394
- D Missions of Sister Matilda Coskery and Highlights of Antebellum American History ........................................... 398
- E Suggestions for Teaching Early American Nursing History ...... 401

**Endnotes** .................................................................................. 408

**Bibliography** .............................................................................. 463

**Index** ........................................................................................ 489

**About the Authors** ................................................................... 503