

**PATRICK POWER of MOBILE and his HOUSE:  
A brief discourse on time passed**



Patty Power's house, 2013

by Tor Fosnæs; livyer on Power Land since 1977

## INTRODUCTION

Patrick Power (*Patty Pooer* in the local vernacular) b. 1876 d. 1967, in 1964 had surveyed and registered nine and a half acres of land on the northwest side of Cod Seine Cove Road in Mobile. It was bounded on the northeast by a right of way which extended across Cod Seine Cove Road and down to the sea shore. Patrick's land, Will Hutchings of Mobile once said, was "the first piece of land ever surveyed in Mobile".

Patrick was born in Mobile to Joseph Powers [a common spelling] and Catherine Nolan or Nowlan, who may have been from the North side of Mobile Bay where a cleared area there is still called Nolan's meadow. One other Power family lived in Mobile in 1921, Philip b. 1851 (Joseph's brother) and his wife Annie b.1861.

It is generally held Patrick was born in the house bearing his name but it is more likely the Joseph Power family lived further down Cod Seine Cove Road, nearer the shore, and Patrick built the house for himself about 1900. He married Mary J. Molloy, b. 1874 in Aquaforte, in New York in 1904, when he was 28 and she 30. Patrick's sister Catherine, b. 1889, and 13 years his junior, married James Hayes b.1877 of Brigus South; they lived in Brigus South, where Beatrix, their first child, was born in 1909.

Patrick and Mary, with Josephine and Andrew, moved back to Mobile about 1910 and their son Philip was born there in 1911 followed by Mary C. in 1913.

In the early 1990's, after purchasing Patrick's house, I started a search for a picture of Patrick. I came close in 2006 when an old friend's mother, Mary Jane "Jessie" (Hayes) Smeaton b. 1916 in Brigus South, the fifth of 10 children, was revealed to be Patrick's niece, his sister's Catherine' daughter. The Smeaton family has a picture of Catherine but none of Patrick.

Andrew Power, son of John T. Power of the Cribbies in Tors Cove and no direct relation of Patrick's, by chance mentioned my interest to Marie (Hayes) Hawkins (Catherine's granddaughter) of Brigus South and she provided the six photographs of Patrick shown below.

Andrew has a number of Patrick Power stories and confirms that he dealt in horses, operated as a blacksmith, and travelled a lot. Andrew does a good imitation of Patrick's speaking style, a sort of slow deep voice with an acerbic and humorous wit. Jim Smeaton remembers his great uncle Patrick's visits to MacKay Street in St. John's; he chewed tobacco and carried a can for spitting, Jim remembers.

Andrew says Patrick once told John Kennedy of Mobile that when he discovered his wife dead in bed upstairs he brought her down and sat her at the table before sending for the priest.

Gerry O'Brien, remembers Patrick coming to his house in Witless Bay, perhaps dealing in or with horses in the 1950's, he remembers being picked up by him. Andrew served overseas in the Forestry Unit and married Hannah O'Neill of Witless Bay (she was 41 and he was 46) 1955; Hannah appears in the 1921 census with her mother and father but the name is spelled Neill; they had no children; she is mostly remembered by her maiden name. The O'Neill house was just behind Con O'Brien's house where Gerry grew up. Andrew lived with her in her family house; Patrick lived with them during his final illness. Hannah died in 1982 (at 68); Andrew in 1998 (at 89).

Andrew Power recalls that nearing death Patrick turned on his son Philip b. 1911 who apparently went to New York with his sister Josephine about 1930, calling him an "impostor" from his sick bed; Philip

apparently returned to Newfoundland to see his father at the end but there was obviously some bad blood between them.

## **LAND and HOUSE**

The Abstract of Title shows ownership of Patrick's land and house as:

**Patrick Power 1886-1966**

(he was 10 in 1886; many young men started early to build a life with a "grade 3" education; or his father set him up)

**Andrew Power 1966-1969**

(Patrick's son b.1909 was 57 when his father died in the home he shared with Hannah O'Neill in Witless Bay)

**Thomas Healey 1969-1970**

**Helen Myrtle Critch 1970-1972**

**Effie Gladys Critch 1973-1976**

(the details of who and why these people owned Patrick's house and land is unknown; the two Critch women were sisters or sisters-in-law and may have been related to Healey)

**Ian Bell and Faye Bell 1976-1981**

(Bell sold 4 acres to Fosnaes in 1977 and an acre to Husk with Patrick's house in 1981)

**Gordon Husk and Rebecca Husk 1981-1987**

(by this time the house was no longer suited to year-round family living, especially one with a small child; Husk renovated outside and planted a Willow Tree on the southeast side; but septic system and well troubles plagued him and they moved away after the first winter and rented the house)

**William Frizzell and Margaret Frizzell 1987-1999**

(Frizzell bought it to use as a summer house; he raised the second floor, put a new story on the linhay, remodelled the interior, added electric heat, re-wired and re-plumbed, dug a new well and refinished the outside. He was affected by a stroke about 1990 and rented the house)

**Genevieve Gallant and Tor Fosnaes 1999-present**

(operate it as a summer rental cottage to tourists)

## **THE NEIGHBOURS**

From 1977 enquiries about Patrick Power made of Mobilites elicited a few stock responses: he travelled a lot, to the States (since proven to be New York), and to St. John's; he was a man of the land who dealt in (and bred) horses; he was rough mannered and frightened children; he was aloof; he was noted for always wearing a shirt and tie and a Stetson (very American); the house was "further up the garden" and was moved by Andrew down to Cod Seine Cove Road about 1964; they kept chickens and pigs.

By all accounts Patrick was smart but either had little or no formal education or was trained in equine management during his early years in New York; he was never a fisherman. His brother Richard (Dick) was a blacksmith and farrier in Bay Bulls.



From left to right: Frankie Endres, Josephine's grandson by her daughter Martha, Hanna (O'Neill) Power, wife of Andrew, Patrick, and Josephine. Patrick was 90 and Josephine 59, taken at Brigus South in 1966.

Hannah was noted for always wearing socks and carrying a handbag as she is here. Josephine was apparently visiting Patrick who was living with Andrew and Hannah at the time; he died in February 1967. Patrick looks drawn, his mustache is trimmed and he has no hat or tie. Frankie appears to be about 11 or 12.



Josephine and Patrick in Brooklyn, NY, Christmas 1964.

Patrick spent a lot of time in New York. His wife's family (Molloy) was probably still there and Josephine and Philip had lived there for many years.



Patrick Power's house, 1928.

The woman in the doorway is probably Mary J., Patrick's wife, she would be 54 at the time of this picture. The picture is of poor quality and her features are hard to make out.



Andrew (left) and Patrick in his trademark Stetson and tie, taken at Mobile 1957.

Patrick dealt in horses which might explain this fine animal. The small building is a shed in the garden at Mobile which, with the fences, was all gone by 1976. In the late 1970's there were several old building spots, and hen and pig pens left.



The same horse, Andrew, and Frankie Endres (about three or four), taken at Mobile 1957.

Same horse, if the man is Andrew he has on different clothes. The barn looks like the one that stood on Cod Seine Cove Road until the late 1980's. The barn may have been moved down the hill along with the house as there is now a concrete block foundation where the barn was; a similar concrete block foundation lies under the linhay built on after the house was moved, about 1964.

The barn was taken down by Husk. Its removal released a flood of homeless rats that plagued the area for a year or more.

The barn was used to stable a horse by the Bells and was still set up as a stable when they took possession in 1976.



Josephine (Hayes) Walsh in great uncle Patrick's arms with Patrick's sister Catherine, her grandmother. Patrick was 82, Catherine 71. Taken at the Long Run, Cape Broyle, 1960.



McCormack family photo showing Patrick's house, barn (left background) and henhouse (left foreground); center background with red gable is Jim Harding's house. Note the linhay at back and porch built around front door; also the central chimney can be seen over roof, 1975.



Patrick's House in 1999 after Frizzell modifications and improvements; Husk's willow tree to left.



Willow House in 2007.



Patrick's 1964 (white outline) survey showing current ownership and Patrick's house locations. The area was de-forested up to the 1950's and contains several rock piles where pastures were cleared. There are two distinct cart paths from the old house site toward the upper reaches. The barn was just in front of the house near Cod Seine Cove Road.

The corner lot was already owned by Healey at this time and was later sold to McCormack, Patrick may have sold the corner to Healey and then Andrew sold the remaining land to Healey in 1969.

Healey flipped it within the year to Critch.

### **PATRICK POWER HOUSE**

Outside measurements (original house) 24' by 16'; linhay 24' x 12'. Sticks on rocks foundation; linhay on concrete blocks; flattened sticks for studs, 14' long; double sheathed (inside and outside) with 1" spruce; the upper floor had a 6' ceiling, downstairs a little less than 8'. The linhay has standard 2 x 6 floor joists and 2 x 4 wall studs.

Patrick's original house is now classified as a third generation settler house (or a modified salt box house) by it's size, ceiling heights, floor layout and date (these houses were commonly built between 1885 and 1930). It varied from tradition by having a shed style, flat, roof and the stairway was against the middle of the back wall running behind the chimney.

A 2006 guest was so impressed with Patrick's house and land she was inspired to this poem.

### **Song of Paddy Power** by Christine Welldon

See my hands  
Seamed and cracked.  
Earth-stained lines cry  
a lifetime of toil for me.

Look at my rock face, craggy,  
hard under thin flesh,  
(what's under will up)  
and my will be done.

Shift the hard stones under thin soil,  
what's under must up.

Hopes plummet rock-heavy  
then rise to tremble on a gull's wing,  
enduring as the whale's song,  
abiding as prayer.

## Power families of Ferryland District, 1921

The 1921 nominal census of Newfoundland has 133 Powers (in 9 communities between Bay Bulls and Renewes) in 27 families. Tors Cove has 80 in 16 families; Ferryland has 16 in two families. There were five widows acting as heads of households, one each in Bay Bulls, Witless Bay and Ferryland with two in Tors Cove. Mobile had one Patrick Power; Tors Cove had three. Four children, five wives and one husband were not born in their listed family home community.

<p><b>Bay Bulls - 5</b>            Clara 1858 widow            Philip 1899            Angela 1902            Leo 1906            John Joe 1902 adopted</p> <p><b>Witless Bay - 5</b>            Mary 1869 widow            Thomas 1887            Michael 1896            Jenney 1897            Florence 1905</p> <p><b>Mobile - 8</b>            Patrick 1876            Mary J 1874            Josephine 1907 Brooklyn, NY            Andrew 1909 Brooklyn, NY            Philip F 1911            Mary C 1913</p> <p>Philip 1851            Annie 1861</p> <p><b>Tors Cove - 80</b>            John 1879            Margaret 1889 Fortune Hr.            Ellen 1907            Peter 1912            Laurie 1916            Catherine 1919</p> <p>Anne 1852 Bay Bulls widow</p> <p>Patrick J 1876            Bridget 1874            Mary 1907            Leo 1909            Lucy 1911            John W 1914</p>	<p><b>Tors Cove (cont.)</b>            Michael 1892            Ellen 1891            Madonna 1920 St. John's</p> <p>Alphonsus 1896            Mary M 1897            Ellen 1841 grandmother            Gerard 1921</p> <p>Patrick 1874            Mary 1877            Annie 1902            Margaret 1903            Cornelius 1904            Philomena 1908            John 1911</p> <p>Michael 1846            James 1879 son            Margaret 1909 grand dr.            Michael 1912 grand son            Freda 1915 grand dr.            John H 1919 grandson</p> <p>Michael A 1863            Margaret 1874            Florence 1903            James 1905            Isabella 1908            Bartholomew 1910            Margaret A 1913</p> <p>Cornelius 1864            Mary 1863 Trepassey            Gordon 1900</p> <p>Michael 1846            James 1879 son            Margaret 1909 grand dr.            Michael 1912 grand son            Freda 1915 grand dr.            John H 1919 grandson</p>	<p><b>Tors Cove (cont.)</b>            William 1874            Catherine 1882            James 1907            Alice 1909            Frances 1912            Albert 1915            Angela 1918            Madonna 1920</p> <p>Patrick J 1882            Estelle 1899            Charles 1920</p> <p>James 1876            Catherine 1888            Mary 1913            Gerald 1914            Josephine 1917            Mildred 1920</p> <p>Martin 1866            Margaret 1881            Bernard 1911</p> <p>Michael 1882            Mary 1888            Ambrose 1919            Pauline 1921            John T 1905 stepson            John 1884 brother in law</p> <p>Mary J 1851 widow            Edward 1891            Alexander 1910</p> <p>David 1844            Stephen 1887 nephew</p>	<p><b>Burnt Cove -9</b>            James 1874            Mary 1880 Petty Hr.            Martin 1910            Philip 1911            James 1913            William 1913            John 1916            Mary M 1916            Hannah 1921</p> <p><b>Calvert - 3</b>            John 1863 Cape Broyle            Theresa 1864 Cape Broyle            Mary 1915</p> <p><b>Ferryland - 16</b>            Annie 1866 widow            Arthur 1893            Agnes 1898            Tomas 1901            Josephine 1906            Edward 1909            Joseph 1910            Stephen 1912</p> <p>James 1873            Mathilda 1881            Martin 1903            Margaret 1910            Francis 1911            Alice 1913            William 1915            Lucy 1918</p> <p><b>Fermeuse - 2</b>            Thomas 1856            Annie 1859</p> <p><b>Renews - 5</b>            Edward 1872            Mary 1877            Ellen 1908            Lawrence 1910            Edward 1916</p>
--	---	--	--

E.R. Seary in Family Names of the Island of Newfoundland 1973 has Power appearing in the area in the early 1800's first at Witless Bay and Ferryland but noted the Powers of Conception Bay, those on the Great Northern Peninsula and elsewhere, predate this by nearly a century. In the table the first name of a family group is always listed as the "head of household".

Now the second most common names in the area, after Walsh, there weren't any Powers listed for Trepassey, Cappahayden, Cape Broyle Harbour, or Brigus South in 1921.

There is an Effie Gladys Critch b. 1916 in New Melbourne, Trinity Bay; if this is the same person she would have been 57 when she owned Patrick's house. Another record shows Effie Gladys Critch, a domestic from Hants Harbour, marrying George Critch, a clerk from St. John's, in Topsail in 1938. No records were found for Helen Myrtle Critch, which may have been her married family name. Effie and Helen may have been sisters-in-law.