

Patrick M. Bourke: A Genealogical Narrative

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The history of North Bay is filled with important events and accomplishments that continue to be recognized by the local community and abroad. North Bay's history is also filled with many colourful and important people that contributed to the growth and prosperity of the city. This essay will discuss Patrick Bourke one of many important founding figures in North Bay's history using census material, newspaper documents, land records, and wills, among other sources..

Patrick's father was Thomas Bourke, born on June 24, 1821 in Barony of Erris, Ireland.¹ Erris is found in Mayo County, on the North Western coast of Ireland.² Erris is now known for its tourism and natural beauty,

Thomas was married twice, the first time to Elizabeth Burrows date unknown.³ Elizabeth was born sometime in 1818, in Maraharafeld, in Dublin County, Ireland.⁴ Thomas and Elizabeth had three children: John, Elisabeth, and James. Elizabeth Burrows died at the early age of thirty-six on May 18, 1854. Though there is no documentation supporting it, Elizabeth Burrows may of died of birth complications during the birth of their third child James, born eight days previous to her death. By this time Elizabeth and Thomas were already in Ontario Canada when she died.

Thomas' second marriage, introduces us to the life of Patrick M. Bourke. Mary Laffin was Thomas' second wife .⁵ Mary Laffin was born 26 December, 1836, in County Wexford, Ireland. Once again, marriage information is very limited, and it is unknown where or when exactly probably before 1858 when their first child was born. 1858.

1 My Family.com Inc. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from <http://www.rootsweb.com>

2 Ballina Tourist Information. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from <http://www.irelandwest.ie/content.asp?id=484>.

3 Rootsweb.

4 Ibid

5 Ibid.

Mary Laffin and Thomas Bourke had several children. The oldest Myles Bourke was born November 24, 1958 in Smith Falls, Ontario. ⁶He married Catherine Leonard on November 11, 1886.⁷ The only other piece of information that could be recovered is Myles died in New York in 1936.⁸

Patrick's oldest sister, Mary Ann Bourke was born September 17, 1,860 also in Smith Falls.⁹ She married Dan O'Connor in May of 1892, and died November 16, 1940, in Connaught Station, Ontario.¹⁰

Patrick's brother Joseph was born two years later on June 6, 1862 in Smith Falls, Ontario. ¹¹He married Margaret Goghlan on April 27, 1884.¹² It is known that Joseph worked in Chicago as a "Superior-Wise." ¹³ Information about his death is not known.

Mary and Thomas' fourth child was Patrick Bourke, born on May 8, 1964, also in Smith Falls but an overview of his siblings will be given before depicting Patrick's life.

Margaret was born April, 1866 in Smith Falls Ontario. ¹⁴She never married, but it is known that she worked in Ottawa as a milliner, and she took care of her mother in Ottawa before Mary's death. ¹⁵ It is unknown when Margaret died, but she was buried in North Bay.¹⁶

6 Ibid

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid

10 Ibid

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 North Bay,(1923, February 27). Obituary. Daily Nugget, p.6.

16 Rootsweb.

Alice Bourke was born in Smith Falls, Ont., January 18, 1868.¹⁷ She married Maurice Wells Flannery May 10, 1893., and they had four children; Daniel, Myles, William and Marion. Alice died in North Bay and was buried in St. Mary's Catholic cemetery.¹⁸

Patrick's youngest sister Hannah was born May 15, 1870, in Brockville, Ontario.¹⁹ She married James Jones in Ottawa, date unavailable. They moved to California where she lived until her death November 26, 1940.²⁰ Sometime between Patrick's ages of four to six the family moved from Smith Falls to Brockville.

Finally, Patrick's youngest sibling, William Edward was born December 12, 1874 in Brockville, Ontario²¹ and unfortunately died February 10, 1882, at age eight in an accidental shooting.²²

Patrick at age 23 married Elizabeth Mooney age 22, October 11, 1887, in Leeds county.²³ Elizabeth was born May 15, 1865, in Johnstown, Ontario.²⁴ The marriage certificate states Patrick was living in North Bay and worked as a machinist at C.P.R.

Patrick and Elizabeths' first child was a girl named, Mary Theresa, born July 22, 1888.²⁵ She was listed by her nick-name "Mammie" on several documents such as the 1911 census.²⁶ Mary Theresa was the only child born outside of North Bay, in Ottawa. At age thirty-two, Mary married another

17 Ibid

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

23 Nipissing District. (1887). E'vtraction of a Marriage Registration. Patrick Bourke, Elizabeth Mooney: Author. (see Appendix 4)

24 Nipissing District. (1925) Extraction of a Death Regis,traction. Elizabeth Bourke: Author. (see Appendix 3b)

25 1901 Canadian Census.

26 Rootsweb.

Bourke, James Bourke age 40, the son of John Bourke (first North Bay Mayor).

The marriage took place in North Bay on January 19, 1921. Mary Theresa died sometime in 1952.²⁷

Their second child, Anna Mabel was born in North Bay, sometime in February, 1890.²⁸ She was listed as "Annie" in both the 1891 and 1901 census.²⁹ At age twenty-six, Anna married Alonze T. Smith (age 30) in North Bay, on September 2, 1914. Alonze and Anna had eight children. Anna died sometime in 1959.³⁰

Patrick and Elizabeth's third child was Francis John Bourke. A late birth registration states he was born June 25, 1892 in North Bay.³¹ It is on this certificate, Patrick's middle name is revealed to be Michael. "Mary verified that Francis was indeed born June 25, 1892 as the certificate was issued in 1933.. From the census material, it is known that Francis went on with his education focusing on drugs, which probably meant he became a pharmacist.³² On Dec. 26, 1917 (age 25), he married Helena MacDonnell (age 24).³³ Francis and Helen moved to the Lakehead where they lived with their two children. The death and burial of Francis is unknown.

Patrick and Elizabeth's youngest daughter, Elizabeth Marion, was born in North Bay, in May 1898.³⁴ Nothing is known about Elizabeth's life except her marriage to Fredrick Devine (year, place, unknown).³⁵ Her death also is unknown, but from census material two pieces of information were discovered about Elizabeth. Firstly, that her

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Government of Canada. (1911). 1911 Canadian Census. Canada: Author. (see Appendix 2d

²⁹ 1891 Canadian Census, 1901 Canadian Census.

³⁰ Rootsweb.

³¹ Nipissing District. (1933). Extraction of a Birth Registration. Francis Bourke: Author. (see Appendix S

³² 401911 Canadian Census.

³³ Rootsweb

³⁴ 1911 Canadian Census

³⁵ Rootsweb

nick-name was Bessie and ³⁶ secondly Elizabeth was an intelligent child, as she was recognized in the Daily Nugget on July 26, 1906, for receiving honours in lower school.³⁷

Gerald Mooney Bourke was Patrick and Elizabeth's second youngest child, born February 2, 1902, in North Bay.³⁸ All that is known of Gerald's life is that he married Anna Margaret MacDonnell who was the same age as himself, they had two children, and that he died at age fifty-five, in 1957.³⁹

The youngest child of Patrick's and Elizabeth's, Norbert Patrick Bourke was not recorded on the 1911 census even though he was born on September 11, 1904.⁴⁰ It can be assumed Norbert died shortly after child birth, or at least before the 1911 census .

Patrick's occupations and hobbies are able to show what kind of life he lived. His first job was actually not in North Bay or even Canada. The American 1880 census tells us that Patrick was working at a Packing House in Chicago, Illinois.⁴¹ It is possible that Patrick went to Chicago to stay with his older brother Joseph who was already living in Chicago. After marrying Elizabeth in 1887, Patrick was employed as a machinist on the CPR in North Bay .⁴² His income was approximately \$660 annually. Patrick opened the Grand Union Hotel sometime between 1901, and 1911.⁴³

(see Appendix 1 a) Finding information of Patrick Bourke's hotel was especially

36 1901 Canadian Census, 1911 Canadian Census

37 North Bay.(1906 July26)Honours. The Daily Nugget, p. 9.

38 1911 Canadian Census

39 Rootsweb.

40 Rootsweb.

41 1881 Canadian Census

42 1901 Canadian Census

43 1911 Canadian Census

difficult because it was listed on the census material as being "Hotel 52,". Eventually the land deed for Patrick's hotel was found, but his personal home land deeds were lost in a sea of land documentation. The deed states Patrick bought lots 110 and 111 from James Devine in 1903 for seven thousand, two-hundred and fifty dollars.⁴⁴ This is a significant amount of money to pay for any property in 1903, but apparently Patrick was able to afford it. The only comment on the hotel was in "Gateway to Silverland," which said, "Of the Grand Union is said `This house is situated on the outskirts of town, at the West end.' As it is now away down town the growth of North Bay may be seen."⁴⁵ The hotel was built by John Flannigan, but the actual date is not given.⁴⁶ The hotel was located at "h w s Foran, 1 Klock Avenue," but unfortunately without the land deed from when the property was sold by Patrick (or Elizabeth), it is unknown how much the property was worth, and what exactly happened to the property after Patrick's and Elizabeth's deaths. The little information known about the hotel, is that later St. Joseph's Academy would be built on the property.⁴⁷ Also, it should be mentioned that Patrick Bourke was head volunteer fire chief for North Bay.⁴⁸ The only piece of information that depicted this role of Patrick's was a photograph. so there is no information on what role Patrick actually played in the fire department, or how long he was the fire chief or a volunteer.

The Vernon's Directories only gives addresses for 1916 and 1918, and because Patrick died in 1913, it is assumed that his widowed wife Elizabeth may have moved into a more suitable home for herself. It is known that Elizabeth kept the hotel but not for

⁴⁴ Newsome & Gilbert Law Stationers. (1903). Deed of Land. Patrick Bourke: Author. (see Appendix 9b)

⁴⁵ Gard, Anson A. (1909). Gateway to Silverland. Toronto: The Emerson Press, p. 15.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ North Bay. (1925, July 28). Obituary. Daily Nugget, p. 9.

⁴⁸ Patrick Bourke. Retrieved March 1, 2007, From <http://www.northbayhistory.homestead.com>. (see Appendix 1a)

how long.⁴⁹ Elizabeth was listed in 1918 at “2 Main Street West. .”⁵⁰ probably close to the hotel.

Patrick loved horses. On page seven of the 1906, July 26 North Bay Times, an illustration of Patrick's horse hobby was given. It stated, "At Montreal last Friday in the free-for-all trotting race at Delormier Park, Mr. Patrick Bourke's speedy mare, Gracie Pointer, took second money. Major Brino finished first after a very exciting race. Some of the best horses in Canada were in the race and we congratulate Mr. Bourke on the fine showing made by his mare."⁵¹ These were not the only comments made about Patrick's hobby. July 2, 1909 the paper stated his horse Gracie Pointer came in second. However his luck was not always good. August 17, 1909, the North Bay Times mentioned: “K. Farah of New Liskeard, “Big Pete” was in town this week and while here annexed P. Bourke’s three Shetland ponies and driving outfits.”

Patrick Bourke died at age 49, on May 24, 1913.⁵² His death certificate indicates an unpleasant last few years of life as he struggled with Hepatic Sarrhosis and died from Cholema in his last few days.⁵³ He spent his last days in St. Michael's hospital in York region, where Dr. Keheela Sinpillt did what he could to save Patrick. Unfortunately, his will was not available in the registry, so we can only assume his widow Elizabeth received his property.

Elizabeth was 60 years old when she died July 28, 1925 in North Bay of Chronic Myocarditis.⁵⁴ Elizabeth's will was retrieved from the registry. In it she gave the sum of three-hundred dollars per year to Patrick's mother Mary Laffin, who had

49 North Bay. (1916). Vernons Directories 1916. North Bay: Author. (see Appendix 8)

50 North Bay. (1918). Vernons Directories 1918. North Bay: Author. (see Appendix 8)

51 North Bay. (1906, July 26). Patrick Bourke. Daily Nugget, p. 7.

52 Nipissing District. (1913) Lvracton of a Death Registration. Patrick M. Bourke: Author

53 Ibid

54 Ibid.

died less than two years previous.⁵⁵ Elizabeth also gave Bishop Scollard two-hundred dollars for the "repose of [her] soul."⁵⁶ Both Bessie (Elizabeth) and Gerald were given a sum of one-thousand dollars immediately after her death.⁵⁷ On top of the initial thousand dollars given to Bessie and Gerald, all five children, Francis, Bessie, Gerald, Mary and Anna, were given the remainder of the estate to equally divide between them.⁵⁸ This information in the will solidifies the fact that Norbert Patrick was not alive. Elizabeth's obituary stated,

Another break in the ranks of old-time residents of North Bay was made this morning when Mrs. P. M. Bourke passed away at her home on Foran Street. The late Mrs. Bourke had been in failing health for the past few years, but her death was quite unexpected as yesterday she had been around and outside as usual. The late Mrs. Bourke was formally Elizabeth Mooney of Johnstown, Ontario, and was born in 1864. In 1887 the deceased came to North Bay with her husband the late Patrick M. Bourke, who was proprietor of the old Grand Union Hotel on the present site of St. Joseph's academy. Mrs. Bourke, who is the last member of the Mooney family, was well known in North Bay for her splendid and untiring efforts in aid of the church and charity. She was a special friend of those in the local hospital. Deceased was also a member of the Catholic Women's League. The late Mrs. Bourke survived by three daughters, Mrs. James Bourke, Mrs. A. T. Smith and Bessie Bourke, all of North Bay, and two sons, F. J. and Gerald, of Fort William. Definite arrangements for the funeral have not yet been made.⁵⁹

It is obvious from this obituary that Elizabeth was well respected and well liked within the North Bay community, and a great loss was felt with her passing.

It is also important to note the death of Mrs. Thomas Bourke (Mary Laffin) who died on February 25, 1923.⁶⁰ Her obituary read,

⁵⁵ Province of Ontario. (1925). Last Will and Testament :Elizabeth Bourke. Canada: Author . (see Appendix 10)

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ North Bay. (1925, July 28). Obituary. Daily Nugget, p. 9.

⁶⁰ North Bay. (1923, February 27). Obituary. Daily Nugget, p. 6.

The death occurred in Ottawa on Sunday morning, February 25 of Mrs. Thomas Bourke, for a number of years a resident of North Bay and a mother of Mrs. M. Flannery, 257 McIntyre Street West. Deceased was 87 years of age. In her early married life she lived in Smith Falls. Later the family moved Brockville and after the death of her husband, Mrs. Bourke came to North Bay

Recently she has resided with her daughter in Ottawa. One son, Myles Bourke of Cobalt and three daughters, Mrs. P. Jones of Los Angeles, Mrs. M. Flannery of North Bay, and Mrs. Margaret Bourke of Ottawa survive. The funeral took place at Brockville this morning.

As young person Patrick moved to North Bay when the railway came, looking for work. He married, had a family, and gradually with hard work. built a life for himself, and a reputation within the community and also a little piece of the community of North Bay. The Grand Union hotel is now gone, but one can wonder what visitors stayed there, and who interacted with Patrick and his family Patrick M. Bourke may not have been the first mayor, he may not have been a contributor to local monuments or groups, and he may not have played a major role in anyone's life but members of his family. Patrick's life reflects the complexities of community history and is a representation of personal history, and accomplishment. North Bay is blessed to have had such colourful and important figures within its history.

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