

**Anne Josephine Coleman
(1847-1913)**

By Andrew Patterson

In the first half of the nineteenth century the whaling industry flourished in Gaspé. Whaling expeditions often involved sailing to the North Atlantic with frequent stopovers in Newfoundland for fresh water and supplies. On one of these voyages, in the small coastal village of Trinity Bay, George Patterson met Anne Coleman. They married in 1867, loaded her meagre belongings onto the whaling ship, and returned with her husband to start a new life in Sunny Bank. Anne was a rugged and very capable lady, the eldest in a large Newfoundland family.

Besides keeping house and raising a family, Anne, the seamstress, made the clothing for the family, and Anne, the carpenter, made furniture for the house. Evidently, she was quite strong-willed, as her husband became known as the white slave of Sunny Bank, because she made his clothes from flour bags. Shortly after arriving, Anne was regarded as the village nurse, attending to anyone who became ill, and a mid-wife, delivering babies for other women in the community. Additionally, she was the undertaker, laying out the bodies of those who passed away. Despite the fact that she had only three children, the descendants of Anne Coleman and George Patterson are currently spread throughout North America. Clearly, Anne was a great asset to Sunny Bank.