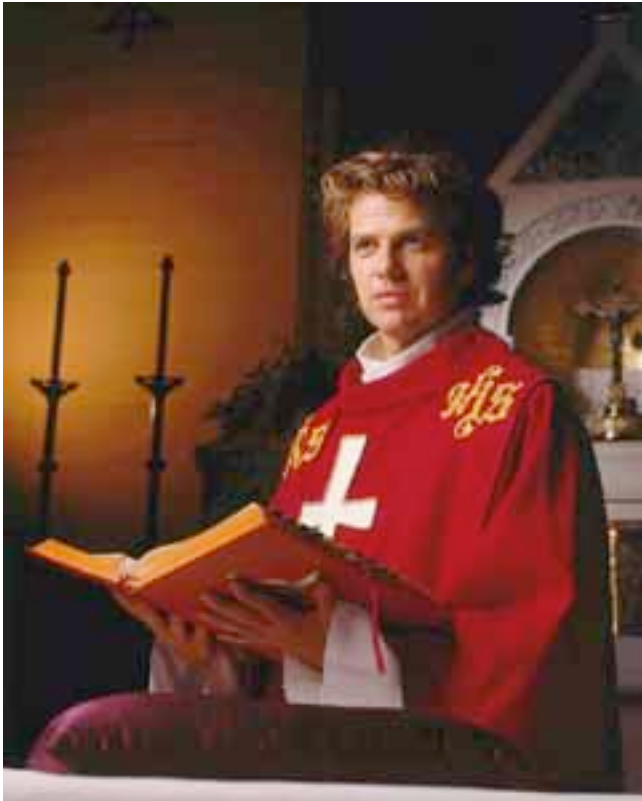


Father Patrick (Padraic) Seamus Flanagan *Deadlands Campaign*

Padraic -- now spelled Patrick -- was born to a large, poor family in Ireland, the youngest of four sons and three daughters. His parents and several other families in the region pooled their money and emigrated to the U.S. when



he was two, seeking new opportunities. They joined the large, still-poor Irish community of New York.

Patrick grew up as an Irish-American, confined primarily to the Irish neighborhoods of New York. Like his brothers and sisters, he had little formal education, going to work as soon as he could get a job. He worked odd jobs doing cleaning, carrying, and delivery from age ten to thirteen, when he finally acknowledged that he'd felt a call.

The entire family was Roman Catholic, of course, and Patrick had grown up in a community that was actively religious. When, at thirteen, he began to consider

a future in the church, the family wasn't terribly surprised. He had two cousins back in Ireland who were clergymen, and an aunt who was a nun. As the youngest child, his calling wouldn't affect the family fortune in any negative way, and in fact stood to enhance it both financially and spiritually. As a result, Patrick began to study with the neighborhood priest after his day's work was through, learning how to read and write more fluently and preparing for seminary.

Patrick's years in seminary were fairly unremarkable; he was a C and B student, an average athlete, but popular with his classmates due to his open and easy-going nature. Almost inevitably, he was dubbed "Red" by the other young men. When he graduated and took his vows as a subdeacon, he was tapped for a position in a strongly Irish-dominated church in Boston more for his personality than for his likelihood to advance very high in the church hierarchy.

Patrick's superiors in Boston were Father Edwin "Ned" O'Reiley, a white-haired old priest, and Father Michael McGuinness, a middle-aged priest. Both wanted a young man to take over the community relations duties of the church; Father O'Reiley was spending more and more of his time studying obscure religious traditions and Father McGuinness was active in the city government, a

politician through and through. As a result, Patrick spent most of his day cleaning the church, and visiting churchgoers and potential contributors -- the elderly and the ill on the one hand, and the wealthy and indolent on the other. Over the years, he became a regular feature in the neighborhood, known by name to most of the locals, even those who didn't attend church. His youth, good looks and amiable personality made him popular with the ladies of the church, and he spent more time than he likes to remember taking tea with the garden society and other ladies' clubs. Women found him sweet, men found him unthreatening, and children found him willing to join in a quick game or lend a solemn ear to their woes. Over the years, Patrick took his vows as a deacon and then as an ordained priest, at which time he began officiating at the least-popular masses (early morning, late night). He was content to stay in his church rather than seek a congregation of his own, knowing that in time Father O'Reiley would pass on and Father McGuinness would be promoted to bigger and better things, and the senior position would be likely to pass on to him. Patrick was in no rush for power, and had no reason to abandon the congregation he'd grown to love.

When Father O'Reiley's studies led him to decide to take a trip to Providence, New England, he asked Patrick to accompany him, since Father McGuinness was perpetually busy. Patrick was happy to get to know Father O'Reiley better, and cheerfully joined the elderly priest on his fact-finding mission, toting the old man's bags and providing a willing ear as the priest spun theories and talked about his work.

Unfortunately, Father O'Reiley didn't know what he was getting into. When he decided to investigate the Starry Wisdom Church, he discovered that it was a terrible cult devoted neither to God nor to Satan, but rather to some pagan sea-god destined to rise again and destroy the world. Father O'Reiley and Patrick were attacked by the misshapen, inbred group who lived by the dock and belonged to the church. During the skirmish, something caught fire, and within a few minutes both the cultists and the two priests were fleeing from the house they'd been at odds in.

Father O'Reiley and Patrick escaped back to Boston, where the elderly priest sent word to the Providence police requesting that the cult be investigated. In time he learned that there was no sign left of the cult or cultists, and with that he had to remain content, although he did begin to turn his studies more toward the foreign cult as a result.

The event left a lasting impression on Patrick, too. Suddenly he realized there was far more to the world than prayer in the morning and cake and tea with the ladies in the afternoon. As if his eyes had been opened, he began to read strange news items tucked in the back of the Boston newspapers. He prowled through bookstores for more information and ran across a series of dreadful dime novels that described horrible things going on the South and in the West.

He began to feel a tug to leave Boston and head somewhere where he could make a difference.

He resisted it at first, being innately conservative and little given to snap decisions or foolhardy heroics. Eventually, however, the tug grew stronger, and after a year he finally sighed and accepted it as a new calling. He applied to the church hierarchy for permission to go West.

The cardinal in Boston called him in and questioned him closely about what he knew and why he wanted to leave. At last, deciding that Patrick's call was real, the cardinal pulled a box from under his desk and laid it on the table. As Patrick watched curiously, the cardinal pulled out a .45 with small silver crosses embedded in its grips, and a box of ammunition.

"Learn to shoot," the cardinal advised him, before congratulating him and telling him he'd receive permission to leave in three months.

Patrick spent most of that three months in the gun range, bemused but dutiful.

FAMILY: Patrick has four older brothers and three older sisters: Sean, Connal, Charles, Ian, Mary, Elsepeth, and Brigit. His father is dead; his mother, Mary, is still alive. He writes to the family when he gets a chance. To the best of his knowledge, they're all in New York.

PERSONALITY & MANNERISMS: Patrick is young, idealistic, and very much of a fish out of water in the West (although he's gradually acclimating). By nature conservative -- even a bit timid -- it is his idealism and deep sense of religious calling that has driven him to combat evil. As a young priest still, Patrick holds himself and everyone else up to high standards, and is disappointed when others fail to live up to them (thus far he hasn't had to face a great moral failure of his own). However, he's a gentle man, and prefers to chide and forgive rather than to write anybody off as irredeemable.

Patrick's greatest weakness is probably his lack of life experience; he has yet to face the worst disappointments, failures, and temptations that test a priest's faith. However, ever since coming to the West, he's started to grasp his own limits and realize that there's more evil in the world than he ever imagined. He's very glad to have fallen in with the group he's currently travelling with, feeling that they can teach him a great deal about surviving in the West while he protects their souls and keeps them on the spiritual straight and narrow.

Patrick likes a good Irish whiskey when he can get it, although he doesn't drink to excess. He also prefers to be clean, although he doesn't get the opportunity to wash nearly often enough now that he's out West. He is an avid newspaper reader, and has a bad habit of tsking and muttering and sighing out loud as he reads through the news.

Patrick prays regularly mornings and evenings, over each meal, and also whenever the situation calls for it. He shuns meat on Friday, preaches on Sundays (keeping careful track of the days in his almanac) and keeps the holy days as best as he can on the road. He takes confession from anyone who wants to confess to him. He confesses his own sins whenever he's in an area where there's a Roman Catholic priest, and otherwise he just tries to remember it all until the next time.

DESCRIPTION: Patrick is currently 33 years old, five-foot eight, and has the classic Irish features: slightly curly dark red hair and deep blue eyes, and pale skin that burns easily and tends to freckle if he's in the sun too much.

Out West, Patrick wears traditional black Roman Catholic priest's garb and collar, a cross, black riding boots and a black church-issue gun belt and holster with a small cross on the holster, in which he keeps his .45. He almost

invariably wears a low-brimmed black hat to keep the sun out of his eyes and off his face, since he burns so easily. After his first few adventures, he's now taken to keeping a Bowie knife sheathed in one boot. When it's cool out he wears a long black coat, gloves, and muffler (and long underwear if it's really cold -- he's learned his lesson!).

He travels with a large black carpetbag that contains most of his day-to-day possessions, including his Bible (which he also sometimes carries in his hand or slips into a coat pocket) and one tightly folded, rather wrinkled set of formal ritual vestments. He also has a bedroll and packs the rest of his "camping" items into his saddlebags (food, lantern, etc.)

All of this black does absolutely nothing to make him look threatening, at least on second glance. His face is far too open, and his religious symbols too obvious, to strike fear into anybody's heart.

WORST NIGHTMARE: Patrick's greatest fears are more moral than physical -- he fears failure as a priest in any of the many roles he must play in people's lives and in God's service. He's particularly afraid that someday he'll be tempted by a woman and fail; he's young and he doesn't have any experience in that department and he half wonders what he's missed. Moral failures with women figure into his nightmares a lot, and thus into his confessions, as well. (His confessors have been more amused than shocked, although Patrick has done many, many "Hail Marys" in shamed penance.) However, as embarrassing as those dreams are, they haven't been the worst. Patrick's worst nightmare is that he enters a church, his church somehow, and finds that it's been desecrated: blood on the altar, the cross torn from the wall, candlesticks overturned and windows broken. In his dream he panics and tries desperately to clean the altar, to set things aright, but it's too late. His congregation is running into the church, shouting for help, for sanctuary, but there's no way that he can resanctify the ground in time. There's no way he can make his church a haven for them. He runs to the church door as his congregation pushes past him and tries to push it shut, but the monster, the devil, whatever the dark beast is outside, throws the door open just as he approaches, and everyone inside the church screams.