

**Patrick Egan
Bowden: Eden:
and the
Tyneside Irish**



A Short Family History
by
Kevin Egan

I come from a family of Miners. I knew my Grandfather was a miner who then became a footballer in Scotland with Hibernian in the 1930's. He was born in Omoa Square, Cleland in Lanarkshire in 1905. Cleland is a small village that developed and grew up with the Omoa Iron Works and local coal mines. My great, grandfather James and his father Andrew were also miners in the same village.

I've always been interested in finding out more about the family history and following up on stories and memories passed down. We knew that the family originally came from Ireland and that Andrew had come over in the late 1850's. The Egan family had been living in the Crettyard/ Doonane area of Queens County, now called County Laois.

This area was part of the Leinster coalfields that stretched from County Kilkenny to County Laois and into County Carlow. A new seam was discovered in around 1740 called the Jarrow seam. The coal itself was of high quality anthracite. The name Jarrow came from the miners that had been imported from Durham. There had been constant movement for years with miners in these coalfields travelling between Ireland and Scotland and England. There were regular coal mining agents getting miners and their families to relocate.

The working conditions were very harsh and with a background of industrial unrest against the mine owners and famine the number of Irish grew in the Scottish and North East of England coal fields.

My late father was passionate about researching the family history and had started with getting copies of census returns in Scotland which provided a good starting point to delve further. Between my cousin in America and I we have kept going.

We noticed in the 1881 census for Shotts, Lanarkshire and apart from the birthplaces of Ireland and Scotland there were three children listed as born in England. They were Elizabeth, Ellen and Patrick. My father had always said that the family had connections with Leadgate and Consett. With help from the Leadgate Community History Club and Richard Judd I started to make headway last year.



In the 1871 census I found Andrew Egan with his wife Ann living at Bowden Close, Helmington Row. At the time of the census they had one child Ellen born in Crook in 1869. Patrick was then born in 1874 and Elizabeth in 1877. Andrew worked in the Bowden Close Colliery after bringing the family down from Scotland. The Bowden Close Colliery was opened in 1845 and closed in 1930. The family then returned to Cleland in Lanarkshire. Patrick was still in Cleland according to the 1891 census in Cleland. He was listed as 16 years old and already a coal miner alongside Andrew.

Coke Ovens, Bowden Close Colliery. Sketch by me from an image shared by Jim Tuck 2020

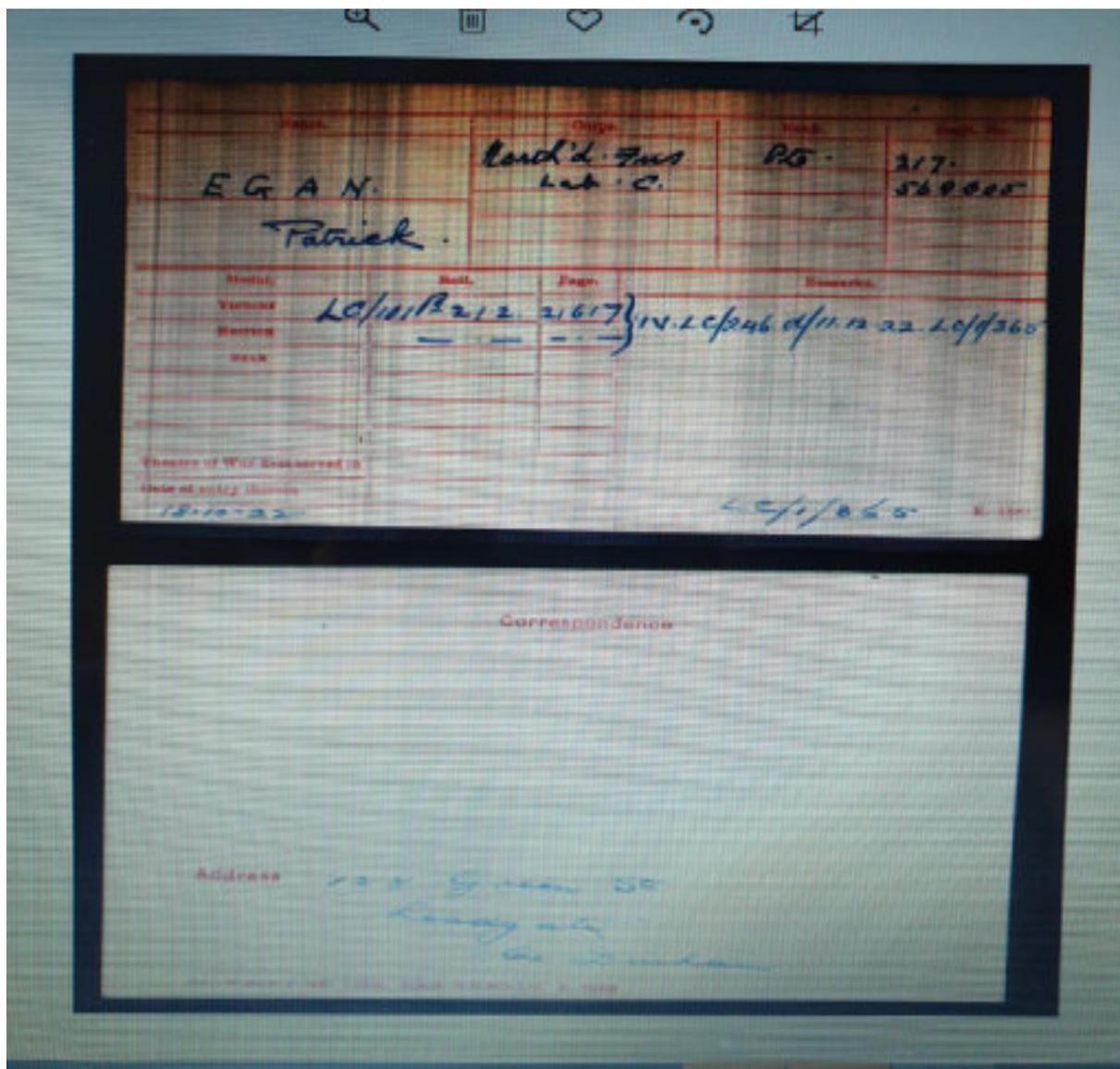
The next we find of Patrick is living in Leadgate at 55 Plantation Street as a coal miner in the Eden Colliery. The marriage register dated 14th November 1898 is to a Maggie McGuire who was living at 98 Nelson Street. She is listed as an assistant in a knitting factory. They were married in the St. Cuthbert's Chapel. 1911 comes along and the family are now living at 241 Nelson Street. Children listed as Margaret, Mary, Andrew and Ellen. Patrick's wife and children are all listed as born in Leadgate.

World War One. Patrick signed up to the Tyneside Irish Regiment. This regiment also a part of the overall war effort to look at recruiting and using the different diasporas to enlist en-mass as part of pal's battalions to boost the numbers of recruits. The recruiting offices were in Newcastle. John Sheen wrote an excellent book called the Tyneside Irish and it's definitely a recommended read. Off to France Patrick went with a black shamrock on his shoulder noting the 27th Northumberland Fusiliers, 4th Tyneside Irish leaving 146 Nelson Street.



My own re-struck copy above of the Tyneside Irish badge that I got last year. This was worn on the collar rather than thought of as a cap badge. There is a new Tyneside memories group for the Tyneside Irish linked with the Tyneside Irish Centre in Newcastle. It is carrying out research on those who served and are looking to launch an exhibition detailing the lives of those in the regiment as part of a living history.

Patrick then was transferred to the Labour Corps. The Labour Corps were comprised of many with mining experience. The work of the Labour Corps was dangerous, their role was to clear the Battlefields including finding the dead, making safe munitions, and filling in the trenches. For this duty the men were paid extra, what we would call today, Danger Money.



Patrick's service ended in 18th of October 1922. He returned to Leadgate as a miner. He passed away on the 25th of October 1959 at 15 West Street, Leadgate. His occupation was listed as a retired colliery datal hand (A datal hand was a "shift worker", who was hired on a "as required basis, and was paid "shift-wark"), His daughter Mary Connell of 9 Sevington Street, Paddington, London was present.

Patrick's son Andrew married an Ann Ferguson in 1931 and they had a son Vincent in 1932 living in Dipton, County Durham. Andrew's family moved to Coventry with Andrew employed as a miner in the Binley Colliery. He passed away in 1975, his son Vincent passing away in 2019.

Again thank you to the group and Richard for all the help. Hopefully I will get over soon and see Crook, Leadgate, Helmington Row and where the Eden stood.

Kevin Egan
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