

## Private Phillip Markham Duggan

**Born:** 25 August 1886, Woodstock, Tasmania.

**Died:** 12 August 1918, Proyart, France.

**School:** Pelverata State School, Tasmania.

**Occupation:** Farmer.

**Age at Embarkation:** 29

**Embarkation:** HMAT *Seang Choon* 23/09/1916, from Melbourne, Victoria.

**Next of kin:** Mrs Angelina H Duggan (wife), Pelverata, Tasmania.

**Enlistment date:** 24 February 1916.

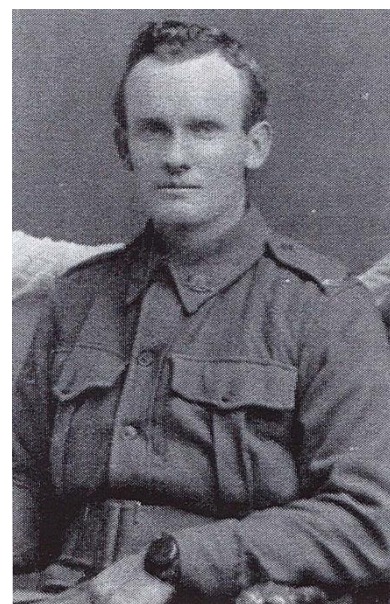
**Regimental Number:** 2073

**Unit:** 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Reinforcement, Australian Infantry Forces.

**Fate:** Killed in action in the battle of Hamel.

**Place of Burial:** Plot X, F 9, Villers-Bretoneux Military Cemetery, France.

**Original Place of Burial:** Lamotte En Santerre Cemetery, France.



### Life in Lovett, Tasmania

Phillip Duggan was born to a family that, to this day remains one of the most well-known and widespread families in the Huon Valley. He was a third generation son descended from Jeremiah Duggan, who came to Australia as one of three brothers, together with their father Timothy Duggan, from Kanturk in County Cork, Ireland convicted of sheep stealing and sentenced to seven years in Australia. Phillip's father, John, was Jeremiah's third son, and fourth child of a family of nine children. John married Lily Markham in Victoria Settlement, now known as Ranelagh, and Phillip was their first son and inherited his middle name from his mother's maiden name. He was to have four more brothers (John Francis "Jack" Duggan, Jeremiah Joseph "Joe" Duggan, Charles Hilary Duggan and Horace James Duggan) and three sisters (Myra Bridget Duggan, Eileen Winifred Duggan and Nellie May Duggan). His youngest brother, Horace, was just twelve when he enlisted to serve in the war.



Phillip grew up in the Port Cygnet district around the township of Lovett, which was renamed to Cygnet in mid-1915. His family were farmers, and lived outside of the town itself, within the Port Cygnet Municipality near the village of Woodstock, where Phillip was born. Phillip attended school at Pelverata State School and was known in the area as "a noted rower, also an axeman", both popular pastimes in the area, give the nearby Huon River and the number of orchards in the area.

**Upper Right:** Phillip Duggan

**Lower:** Jack, Joe and Phil Duggan

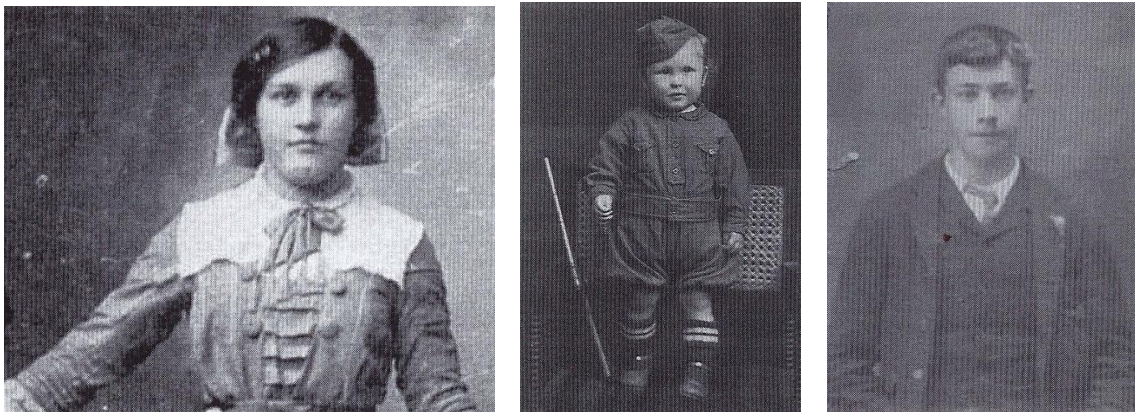
The district held regular competitions for axemen every year, which Phillip and other locals participated in each year. He also participated in the St Patrick's Day sports events held on the recreation grounds each year in the township itself, though there are no records of him being awarded prizes, he seems to have participated more for the fun of the event than have had any outstanding talent, other than as a rower.

## Enlistment and Claremont Camp, Tasmania

Phillip enlisted on 24 February 1916, over the protests of his then fiancée, "Angela" at Claremont Camp in Tasmania. Angela, whose proper name was Ellen Holland, but was known as "Angela" or "Angelina", begged Phillip not to enlist and begged him to stay in Tasmania, but he refused, insisting that if he did so, he would "die in shame". Two days after he enlisted, Phillip and Angela were married.

Of his brothers, both John Francis "Jack" Duggan, named for his father, and Jeremiah Joseph "Joe" Duggan, named for his grandfather, were to also enlist for military service. In addition, Phillip's cousins, Frank Lawrence Duggan and Thomas Patrick Joseph Duggan also enlisted. In all, according to records compiled by Dr Wade in 1919, across the municipality of Port Cygnet 262 men enlisted in the war and 52 of them died on active service. The municipality had a population at the time of 2,800, meaning that 9.4% of the population enlisted, and 19.8% of those enlisted died on active service, a significant impact on such a small community.

On the 4 June 1916, Angela Duggan gave birth to Phillip's son, Phillip Markham Duggan Jr. Almost four months later, after completing his training at Claremont Camp, Phillip embarked for England on the 23 September 1916 on the HMAT *Seang Choon*. Phillip was part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reinforcement of the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion headed ultimately for France. First, however, he was headed for England and the coldest weather he had ever encountered.



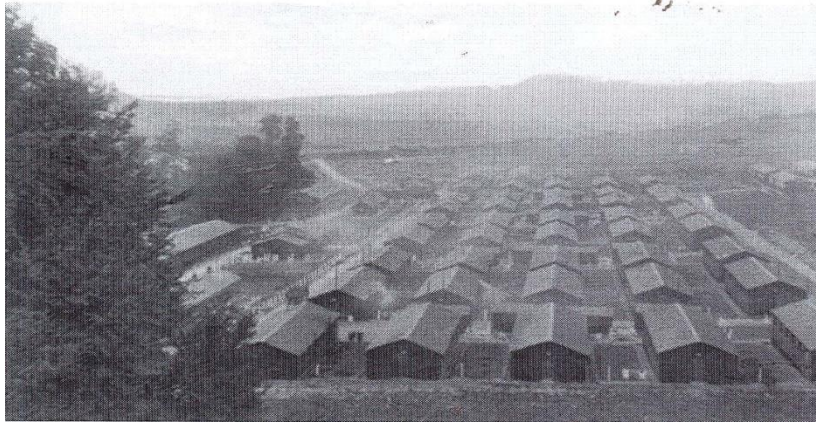
## Life in England

In contrast to the soldiers sent to Gallipoli and the Somme, who spent several months in Egypt prior to actively taking part in the war, those shipped from Australia in the latter part of 1916 instead arrived at a harbour in England. Instead of being struck by the heat and dryness of Egypt that the earlier diggers had noted, the Tasmanians shipped to England universally noted on thing, the icy cold of the England winter, where they would spend between three and six months before shipping out to the front. The military camps that they were stationed at were located on Salisbury Plain, at Lark Hill, Durrington, Sutton Veny, Codford, Rollestone and Tidworth. During the winter of 1917, England experienced what *The Times* reported on the 31 January as "The Cold Wave", with temperatures being recorded as low as -11°C in some districts.

**Left:** Angela Duggan.

**Centre:** Phillip Duggan Jr.

**Right:** Frank Duggan.



Phillip arrived in Plymouth on the 9 December 1916, and officially transferred into the 10<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion on the 10 December 1916. He was granted leave in London until the 18 December, and picked up a postcard from Windsor Castle and wrote to his brother Jack, *“Just a postcard to let you know I’m all right hopping you’re the same they gave us four days leave so I am in London at present we had a good trip over but this is the coldest place I was ever in talk about snow and rain it’s rotten I suppose it’s quite hot over there now I wish I was home again for Xmas well goodbye and best love from your loving brother Phil”*. The cold affected Phillip badly, as it did so many other Australian soldiers, and he was admitted to King’s Cross hospital on the 23 December 1916.



He was to spend Christmas in hospital recovering from influenza, along with many other Tasmanian troops. On 7 January 1917, he was moved to Fargo Military hospital at Lark Hill, still recovering from influenza, where he stayed until the 4 February 1917. Unfortunately, this date did not mark a recovery for Phillip, but simply another transfer, to the Military Hospital at Sutton Veny, where he remained, recovering, until the 18 February 1917. On that date, he was finally discharged from hospital and returned to the training unit at Sutton Veny for three months of training. On the 3 May 1917, he was finally processed for transfer overseas to France, the day after his brother, Jack, arrived from Devonport. According to a card written by Jack to his father on 3 June 1917, *“Dear Father, just a few lines hoping you are well as this leaves me at present I saw Philip and Frank hear before they went away to France they went the night we arrived hear it was hard luck we didnt have longer with him he looks well and so does Frank I have not heard from Joe yet well I must close. I remain you ever loving son Jack Duggan.”* The Frank referred to in this message was Phillip’s cousin, Frank Duggan.

**Top:** Codford Camp, England.

**Bottom:** Postcard from Phillip Duggan to his brother Jack on arrival in London.

## Life in France

Phillip arrived in France on the 8 May 1917, and was marched out to his unit on 11 May and taken on strength from reinforcements. This began six months of further training in the field in France in preparation for moving to the front lines. For the most part, this was largely uneventful for Phillip, until mid-November, when he suffered a series of minor injuries involving sprains to his right ankle from 10 November on and off until the 2 February 1918, when he was sent to England on leave, with intermittent recoveries. While on leave, Phillip went to Ireland, and sent a postcard to his mother from Dublin, *"My Dear Mother, Just a P.C. to let you know I am all right and having a good time I am in Dublin staying here for nine days it's the best place I've been in since I left home I am having some fun here I will write and tell you more soon I hope you and all are well I will say good bye for this time I remain your loving son Phil Duggan. I saw Joe before I came away on leave and Jack also they are looking well."*

## The Great Offensive

At the end of March, Phillip and the rest of the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion were moved up to the road linking Amiens and Albert, because of orders to take the high ground to the west of Morlancourt on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 1918. Between the 28 and 30 March, the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion suffered 44 fatalities and 169 casualties due to artillery and machine-gun fire. However, they succeeded in advancing one kilometre into German territory and stopping the advance of the Germans on Amiens. Over the course of the three days, four men from the Cygnet area, all known to Phillip, were wounded: Denis Dwyer, Stan Turnbull, Martin Scanlon and Bertie Dance and, though none of the injuries was severe, three were evacuated to England to recover.

Phillip and the rest of the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion continued their advance throughout April and, by the end of April, had reached Ribemont, near the Somme border, near Saint-Quentin. Further casualties continued to be suffered, but none from the Cygnet area until the end of April, when another Cygnet resident, Walter Heeney, suffered a minor injury. By the 5 May, the 40<sup>th</sup> relieved the 38<sup>th</sup> at Ribemont, when another Cygnet man, Tom Strong, suffered a minor shell wound to the face and was eventually returned to Australia. There were no further Cygnet casualties from the 40<sup>th</sup> until mid-July, by which time they were in the trenches near Hamel and Joshua Bone suffered a thigh wound from shellfire. The next Cygnet casualty from the 40<sup>th</sup> was, once again, Bertie Dance, who suffered a wound to his arm in the trenches near Hamel and was evacuated to England to recover.

## The Battle of Amiens

The most significant engagement of Phillip's war service was the Battle of Amiens, which ultimately cost him his life. On 8 August 1918, Australian and Canadian troops aided the French and English armies in attacking the Germans east of Amiens and advanced 11 kilometres into enemy territory, beginning the Battle of Amiens and the Hundred Day Offensive and, ultimately, the beginning of the end of the war. From the records available, the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> was extremely misty, resulting in poor visibility on both sides, no doubt increasing the casualties for both forces. The advance continued on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, with no Cygnet casualties in the 40<sup>th</sup> being recorded on either day, and the war diary for the battalion recording no killed or wounded on the 9<sup>th</sup> at all, and only three wounded on the 10<sup>th</sup>. On the 11<sup>th</sup>, the 40<sup>th</sup> was less lucky, and suffered six wounded, among them Arthur Smith from Cygnet, who died from his wounds four days later.

On the 12 August, the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion came under heavy artillery fire from 11am until 3pm, and suffered a total of twenty wounded and one killed in action that day. According to the Battalion war

diary, "At 6am Companies reported that the enemy was holding his line very weakly, this was communicated to Brigade and instructions were received for the whole line to advance preceded by patrols, the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion objective was the Valley from R.21.d.5.2. to the road – Railway crossing at R.21.a.8.5. inclusive." This was to prove fateful for Private Phillip Duggan, who was part of one of the patrols advancing before the Battalion.

The diary goes on to state, "Patrols of 1 Officers and 10 other ranks were sent out from C and A Company, these came at once under shell fire and gas, and machine guns opened on them from R.21.b. and R 22.c. The C Company patrol under Lieut. C.W. ROCK reached the stables at R.27.a.4.9. at 8.30am and from there worked forward about 100 yards in some old elements of trenches. Machine guns and snipers were very active. The forward slope of the hill was found to be devoid of cover." The diary goes on to describe that, at 11am, the enemy putting down "heavy artillery fire on the patrols position and the valley in front and kept this up until 3pm".

It soon became clear that the defence of the Germans was stronger than suggested by the initial reports of the line being held "very weakly" by the enemy. The patrols from A Company, under the command of Lieutenant Parry, according to the war diary, "made its way very slowly along the railway until it was held up at R.21.a.4.2. by two nests of machine guns, one at R.21.b.1.6. and the other further back along the road towards CHUIGNOLLES." Further support was brought up, keeping machine gun fire down via organised Lewis Gun fire, allowing a slow advance into the Valley by the 40<sup>th</sup> and on to their objective, the partly dug trenches through the South-Western corner of R.21.b.

The diary then notes, "[t]he remainder of A, C and D Companies were then gradually moved up towards the line at 4pm, but the movement was brought down by heavy machine gun fire and had to be stopped. With the fire of Lewis Guns A Company were worked forward into the front line trench, C Company remained unable to cross the valley until their men were worked round the left flank by the railway into the Valley and then to their position, this move was completed by 8.50pm." The diary also notes that, at this point, the advance of the 37<sup>th</sup> Battalion had been stopped by machine gun fire on the Chuignolles-Proyart Road.

Up until this point, the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion war diary records that it had suffered no fatalities in their casualties for the day. The diary, after noting the predicament of the 37<sup>th</sup> goes on to describe the actions of one Sergeant Percy Clyde Statton who, with the aid of Corporal Upchurch and Privates Styles and Beard, took on two machine gun nests and wiped them out, earning himself the Victoria Cross. Private Styles was killed, and is recorded in the Battalion's war diary as the sole member killed in action that day. However, records from the Red Cross record two witnesses from the 40<sup>th</sup> noting another fatality from the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion that day, Private Phillip Duggan, whose service records also note that he was killed in action at the railway station of Proyart on 12 August 1918.

According to one witness, Private Selwyn Cross, "I knew him from being in the Company. He was about 24 years old [sic], shortish and thickset, a very quiet chap. I think he came from South Tasmania and had to do with fruit farming. About the 12<sup>th</sup> August we were at Proyart going into the line. Four or five of us, including Duggan and myself, were going up about 5 in the evening, when Fritz spotted us and opened with a Machine Gun. Duggan was hit in the head and killed at once." At the time he was killed, Phillip was 31 years old.

The second witness, Private Henry Duke, confirmed the report of Private Cross, stating *“On the 12<sup>th</sup> August, the Battalion was advancing under fire through Proyart. We had just reached the Railway Station when Duggan was hit by a machine-gun bullet. We had all dropped to avoid the enemy fire and it was only when we got the order to advance we found Duggan was hit. He was quite dead – hit through the neck by a bullet.”* Phillip was initially buried in Lamotte En Santerre Cemetery in the village of Lamotte-Warfusée, and later moved to the Australian War Memorial Cemetery at Villers-Bretonneux.

## After His Death

Phillip left behind four brothers, one of whom (Jack Duggan) was awarded a Military Medal, a mother and father, widow and a two-year-old son who had never met his father. On 16 June 1919, almost a year after her husband’s death, Angela Duggan wrote to the authorities regarding her husband’s personal effects, *“Dear Sir, My husband, P.M. Duggan, has been killed in action nearly ten months ago and so far I have not received any of his personal belongings or even a word about them. As I think it is time I received them, considering my husband has been killed so long. It is all a person has to look forward to, is the few little treasures of their dear ones, killed on the battlefield. I for one think it is a shame the way such things are neglected.”* In ordinary circumstances, she would have received her husband’s belonging long before she wrote her letter, given that a parcel with his effects had been received in London in October of 1918 containing two wallets, letters, photos, cards, a coin, a brooch, a silver wrist watch, religious emblems, a religious book and a comb.



In 1920, Angela Duggan remarried, marrying Leonard Grace, a Cygnet local who had been known to Phillip when they were growing up and went on to have nine more children with him, eight of whom survived. However, not satisfied with only receiving her husband’s personal effects and nothing more, she once again wrote to the authorities to assert her rights as his widow. On 26 June 1924, she wrote, *“Dear Sir, In reply to your letter, I desire you to forward my medals to the address I will give underneath. I have remarried, but I want the medal as I cherish anything in connection with my late husband. I have a little boy of the late P.M. Duggan’s and I am sure he will cherish those medals in years to come. So at any time I will be very pleased to receive anything in honour of my late husband.”* In July of that year, she received Phillip’s British War Medal.

*Mr. Duggan  
Capt. Macintosh  
please NO. 10/17*

Ivanora

Cygnets, Devon  
Dec. 15 1922.

Capt. Macintosh  
Officer, i/c. Base Records.  
Melbourne

*M: Grant  
22/12*

*Plaque under  
22/12*

Dear Sir.

In referance to your letter of  
Dec 5<sup>th</sup> inst.

I would be very pleased to  
have the Plaque as it is. I would be  
very thankful if you would send it  
along.

There is a mistake in one letter  
but I consider that woud ~~not~~ make  
difference to the Plaque. So therefore  
I am quite satisfied to accept it as  
it is.

*M: Grant  
22/12*

DEFUSED  
SECTION  
DEC 21 1922  
RECEIVED

Would you kindly forward  
it to Mr. S. H. Duggan.

C/o Mrs D. Holland.

Ivanora

Cygnets, Dev.

Thanking you for your kindness.  
Yours faithfully  
Mrs S. H. Duggan

*C/A noted  
22/12*

DEC 21 1922  
RECEIVED

Centre: Letter from Angela Duggan regarding the Plaque honouring Phillip Duggan, which contained an incorrect spelling of his name.

Pelverata.  
Hon. Gen.  
June 16<sup>th</sup> 1919

Manager  
Record Office.

DECEASED  
SECTION  
JUN 26 1919  
RECEIVED

Dear Sir.

My husband, Pte. P. M. Duggan,  
has been killed in action nearly ten months  
ago, and so far I have not received any of  
his personal belongings, or even a word  
about them. I would be very grateful to you  
if you will try and find out what has  
become of them. As I think it is time I  
received them, considering my husband has  
been killed so long. It is all a person has to  
look forward to, is the few little treasures  
of their dear ones, killed on the battle field.  
I for one, think it is a shame the way such  
things are neglected. Hoping you will give  
this matter your immediate attention.


I am,

Yours truly,  
(M<sup>rs</sup>) P. M. Duggan





**Australian Imperial Force.**



A.I.F. KIT STORE  
110, GREYHOUND ROAD.  
HAMMERSMITH.  
LONDON, W. 6.

Inventory of Effects of - 2073 Duggan, P.M.      40th Bn. A.I.F.

Forwarded to - To Secretary,  
Department of Defence,  
Melbourne.

Will with:-  
General Store Keeper,  
Port Cygnet,  
Tasmania.

N.O.K. Wife,  
A.M. Duggan,  
Pelvorata,  
Via Woodstock,  
Huan,  
Tasmania.

Effects received from the field (S/8005) 19/10/18.  
1 parcel (sealed) containing:-

2 Wallets, Letters, Photos, Cards, Coin, Brooch, Silver  
Wrist Watch, Religious Emblems, Religious Book, Comb.

*B. ram. Baker*

No. of Package      b/s.      46474      Checked by

*Ahucena.  
Oyster Cove.  
Chapman.  
June 26 54.*

*Captain W. Macintosh  
Officer in Charge.  
Base Records.  
Melbourne.*

Dear Sir.

*In reply to your letter, I desire you  
to forward my medals to the address I will  
give underneath. I have remarried but I  
won't the medal, as I cherish anything in  
connection with my late husband. I have a  
little boy, of the name P. M. Duggan's, & I am  
sure he will cherish those medals in years  
to come. So at any time I will be very pleased  
to receive anything in honour of my late  
husband.*

*Thanking you.  
And remain  
Yours sincerely  
Mrs Leonard Grace.*

*Formally Mrs P. M. Duggan*

*Ahucena.  
Oyster Cove  
Tasmania.*

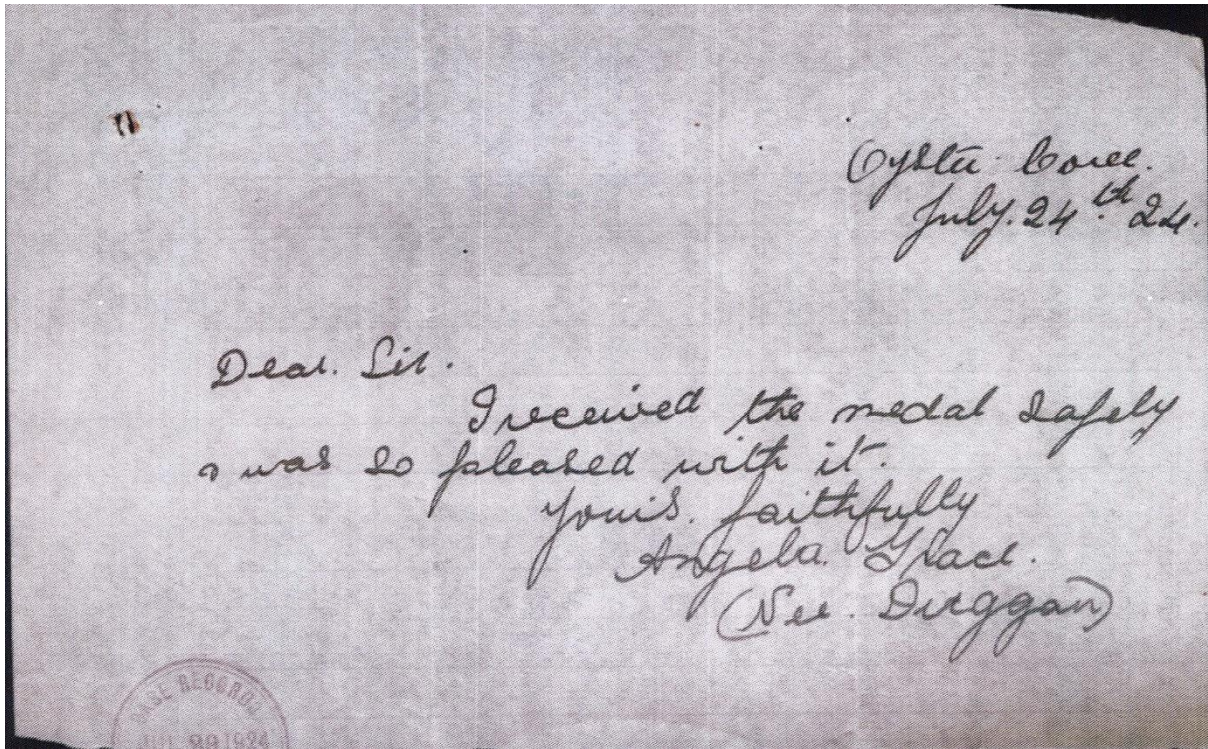
*Mrs Leonard Grace*

*377*

DECEASED SECTION  
JUL 3 1954  
RECEIVED  
P.S. Adyell.

**Top:** Inventory of Phillip Duggan's personal effects.

**Bottom:** Letter from Angela Duggan requesting Phillip's medals be forwarded to her and informing that she has remarried.



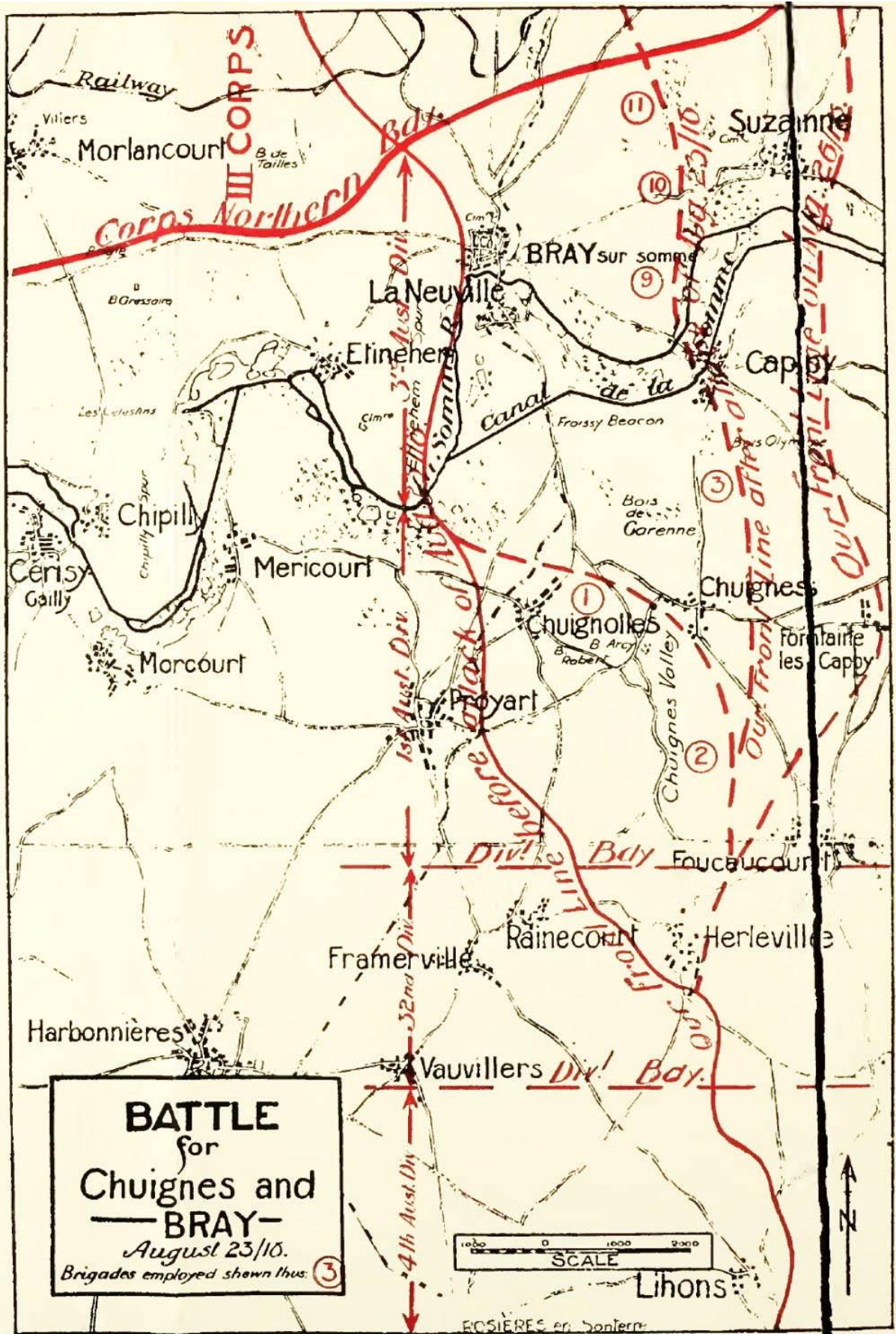
Angela also published two *In Memoriam* entries in *The Mercury* newspaper in memory of Phillip's death on anniversaries of his death which showed both her dedication to him, and explained her initial pleading with him to stay and his insistence on going to war. The first was published in her name on the first anniversary of his death, on the 12 August 1919. The second was published in the name of Phillip's now 8-year old "loving little son, Phil" on 12 August 1924.

***In Memoriam – 12 August 1919***

*Friends may think I have forgotten  
When they see me smile,  
But they little know the sorrow  
That smile holds all the while.  
I tried my best to keep him  
I pleaded with him to remain:  
But he said my Country is calling  
Let me go, or I die in shame.*

***In Memoriam – 12 August 1924***

*Ever remembered.*



MAP D



L to R Phillip Markham Duggan Junior, his mother Angela Grace (nee HOLLAND), Terry Grace his stepbrother. Front Len GRACE his Stepfather 1939 – 1945

Research by Alex Dick