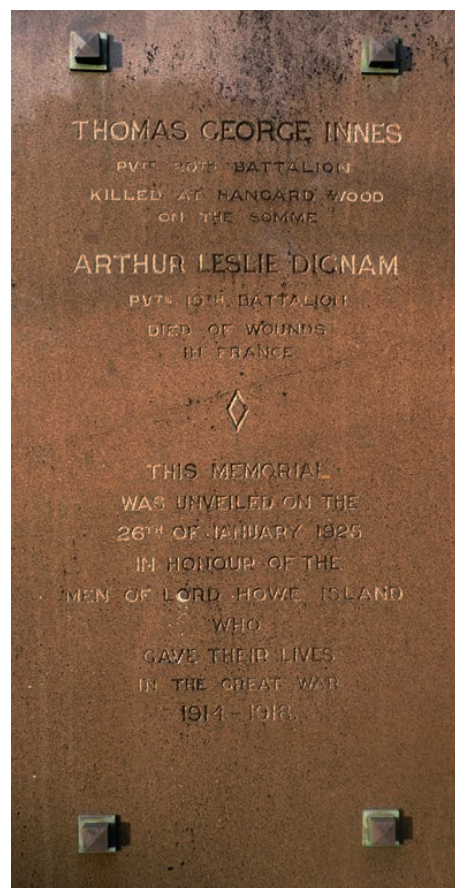


DIGNAM, Arthur Leslie



St Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen
Photograph © John Knight 15 November 2016



WWI Monument. Lord how Island
Photograph © Heather Saunders

<https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/people/military/display/21937-thomas-innes-and-arthur-dignam>

Arthur Leslie Dignam was born at Goulburn, NSW in 1890. He was the youngest of nine children (5 boys and 4 girls) born to William John and Harriet Elizabeth Dignam between 1872 and 1890. Harriet died in 1891, and William remarried, Lena and became a Captain working from Lord Howe Island.

Arthur spent his early years at Lord Howe Island, and after working to save enough money to cover his tuition, he entered HAC, aged 18, in July 1908 to undertake Practical courses, and finished fifth in the class.

After College, Arthur went to work at the Bathurst Experiment Farm, staying about nine months, then worked on a wheat farm at Germanton (now Holbrook), NSW. By 1913, Arthur was mixed farming (chiefly wheat and lucerne) 300 acres at Melrose, near Mudgee, NSW.

Arthur enlisted on 9 July 1915, in the 19th Battalion, 5th Reinforcement, A.I.F. He embarked on 5 October 1915 from Sydney, NSW aboard HMAT A32 Themistocles.

According to the Mudgee Guardian, Arthur '...was first sent to Egypt where for some months he with his battalion, did guard duty on the Canal, trench digging in the sand with very little food and water... In January of this year [1916] they were moved on to France, and straight to the trenches, where they have been gallantly fighting ever since.

Private Dignam took part in the heavy fighting round Armentieres, the taking of

Poizieres, and the victory on the Somme in September, and had some most miraculous escapes. He was recently transferred to the machine gun section, and kept steadily on till he received his death blow...It was his strong sense of duty and honour that decided him to enlist, and his dream, in part fulfilled, is left to others to complete. Only those who really knew him can realise how great a sacrifice he made, or the loss sustained by the friends among whom he lived. To use his own words, he did his bit, "that's all."

Mudgee Guardian and North-Western Representative, 21 December 1916 p.17

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/156895899?searchTerm=private%20%20arthur%20leslie%20dignam&searchLimits>

Arthur received gunshot wounds at Flers (in the Somme valley, France) on 14 November 1916, from which he died, aged 25, on 19 November while at the 29th Ambulance Train. Arthur is buried in the Saint Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, France. Fellow HAC Old Boys, Joseph Bertie Atkinson and Henry Erasmus Wren are also buried at St. Sever, Rouen. Wren was buried just four days earlier.