

In Memory of
Warrant Officer Class III (Platoon Sergeant Major)
2610868 RAYMOND JOHN HICKS
3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards
who died, age 34, on 21 May 1940
Son of John Evan and Eliza Hicks,
of Great Coxwell, Berkshire; husband of Olive Dora Hicks
of Faringdon Berkshire.
Remembered with honour
Faringdon War Memorial and
ESQUELMES WAR CEMETERY



DEATH OF
SGT.-MAJ. RAYMOND HICKS

An official notification from the War Office was received on Monday by Mrs. R. Hicks, of Bromsgrove Place, Faringdon, that her husband, Platoon Sgt. Major Raymond Hicks, of the Grenadier Guards, was killed in action on May 21st.

Sgt. Major Hicks was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. John Hicks, of Great Coxwell, and had served in the army for 12 years, two of which had been spent in Egypt. He was married in 1935 at Great Coxwell Parish Church to Miss Dora Belcher, of Great Coxwell. He leaves a widow and a daughter 18 months old.

Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The British Expeditionary Force was involved in the later stages of the defence of Belgium following the German invasion in May 1940, and suffered many casualties in covering the withdrawal to Dunkirk. Those buried in Esquelles War Cemetery died in defending the line of the River Scheldt; the Germans attempted to cross the river near Esquelles during the morning of 21 May, but were repulsed after heavy fighting. They eventually crossed on 23 May, when the British Expeditionary Force withdrew to the Gort Line. Casualties buried in various places in the neighbourhood were brought to Esquelles by the Belgian authorities in September 1940. The cemetery contains 233 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War, 32 of them unidentified. Ten soldiers of the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, all killed on 21 May, are buried here including Lt. Henry George Alan, 9th Duke of Northumberland.

Raymond's inscription reads: *In proud, everloving memory of dear Ray, devoted son, daddy and husband. R.I.P*

Raymond left a daughter, Judith; his widow, Olive Dora, married Cyril Edward Hill and they had a son, Geoffrey, born 1942; but there was more tragedy to follow. (See <http://www.faringdon.org/ww2-memorials.html>)