

Sutton Veny

Roll of Honour



Lest we Forget

World War II



49855 MAJOR

P. G. HOBBS

ROYAL ARTILLERY

27TH MAY, 1942 AGE 31

Peter Graham HOBBS

Peter Graham Hobbs was born on 19th March, 1911 at Hythe, Kent to parents Capt. Reginald Francis Arthur Hobbs and Frances Graham Hobbs (nee Stirling). His birth was registered in the June quarter, 1911 in the district of Elham, Kent. His parents had married on 29th August, 1906 in the district of Sudbury, Essex/Suffolk borders.

The 1911 Census recorded Peter Graham Hobbs, aged under 1 month, with his parents at Sea Cot, Hillcrest Road, Hythe, Kent, in a 9 roomed dwelling. His parents were recorded as Reginald F. A. Hobbs (Capt. Royal Engineers, aged 33, born Manchester, Lancashire) & Frances Graham Hobbs (aged 29, born Woolwich, Kent). Reginald & Frances Hobbs had been married for 4 years with 2 children, none deceased, however, Peter was the only child listed on the Census. Three servants were also listed – Mary Peddir (aged 46, married, monthly nurse), Alice Isabel Halsworth (aged 26, Housemaid) & Lois Jeffery (aged 30, Cook).

Peter Graham Hobbs married Sylvia Helen Wilhelmina Evans in the district of Wokingham, Berkshire. Their marriage was registered in the September quarter, 1938.

The 1939 Kelly's Directory listed Brig.-Gen. Reginald Francis Arthur Hobbs C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O. as a private resident living at Little Newnham, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire.

Peter Graham Hobbs enlisted with the Royal Artillery & was given a service number of 49855. His place of birth was listed as Kent & his residence at the time of enlistment was listed as London SW.

A birth was announced in the newspaper: "*Hobbs – On May 26, 1942, in Cairo, to Sylvia, wife of Major Peter Hobbs, Royal Horse Artillery – a son.*" (1 June, 1942) (Source – Andrews Newspaper Index Cards)

Major Peter Graham Hobbs was killed in action on 27th May, 1942 near Bir Hacheim, Libya, aged 31 years.

Major Peter Graham Hobbs is remembered on the Alamein Memorial – Column 31 as he has no known grave. His death is acknowledged by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

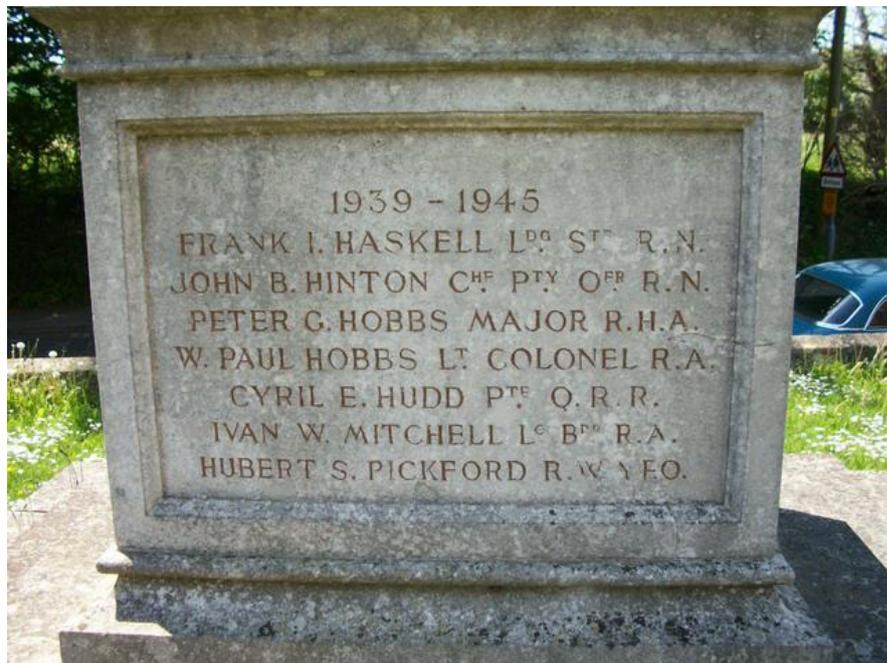
The Commonwealth War Graves Commission & the UK Army Roll of Honour list Major Peter Graham Hobbs, 49855, as being the son of Brigadier-General Reginald Francis Arthur Hobbs C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O and Frances Graham Hobbs (nee Stirling) of Sutton Veny, Wiltshire; husband of Sylvia Hobbs, of Sutton Veny. His brother Lt.-Col. William Paul Hobbs, M.B.E., also died on service. Major Hobbs was attached to H.Q. 7th Armd. Div. Theatre of War – Middle East.

Administration was granted at Birmingham on 30 December, 1942 – "Hobbs, Peter Graham of Little Newnham, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire died 27 May, 1942 on war service. Administration to Sylvia Helen Wilhelmina Hobbs, widow. Effects £763 12s. 7d."

Major Peter G. Hobbs is remembered on the Sutton Veny War Memorial, located in the foreground of St. John the Evangelist Church at Sutton Veny.



Sutton Veny War Memorial (Photos by Andrea Charlesworth 2012)



Peter Graham Hobbs, along with his brother William Paul Hobbs, are both remembered on a Memorial Plaque located inside St. John the Evangelist Church at Sutton Veny.



Proud And

Loving Memory

Peter Graham Hobbs

Royal Horse Artillery Brigade Major

7th Armoured Division Eighth Army

Killed in Action On 27th May 1942

Near Bir Hacheim Libya Aged 31

And His Brother

William Paul Hobbs M.B.E.

Lieut Colonel Commanding 111th Field

Regt Royal Artillery Eighth Army

Killed in Action On 12th May 1943

Near Enfidaville Tunisia Aged 29

They were lovely and pleasant in their lives

Newspaper Notices

- HOBBS – In May, 1942, Killed in action, in Libya, Major Peter Graham Hobbs, Royal Artillery, dearly loved second son of Brigadier-General and Mrs Hobbs, Sutton Veny, Wiltshire, and beloved husband of Sylvia, aged 31. (*The Times* - 9 June, 1942)
- Major Peter Graham Hobbs, R.A., who was in the British Rugby team that toured the Argentine in 1936, is reported killed in action in Libya. (*Edinburgh Evening News* – 10 June, 1942)
- The King has been graciously pleased to approve that the following be Mentioned in recognition of gallant and distinguished services in the Middle East:-

Royal Horse Artillery

Capt. (temp Maj.) P. G.. Hobbs. (49855) (Killed in action)

(*Supplement to London Gazette* – 24 June, 1943)
- HOBBS – In proud and loving memory of Peter and Paul, Eighth Army, killed instantly in action.

Libya, May 27, 1942

Tunisia, May 12, 1943

“Quo fas et gloria ducunt”

(27 May, 1944) (Source – *Andrews Newspaper Index Cards*)
- Sylvia H. W. Hobbs, Springway Cottage, Sutton Veny, Wilts was fined 30s. at Bath magistrates' court on Saturday for obstructing Milsom Street with a car. (*Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette* – 2 April, 1949)

Wellington College, Crowthorne, Berkshire Roll of Honour 1939-1945

Major Peter Graham Hobbs, Royal Artillery, Orange 1924 to 1929, a large, compelling, yet diffident personality who earned the respect of many whose friendship he never sought, was the second of three brothers who were in the Orange, all good footballers. He was Head of the Corps, Master of the Hunt and King's Medallist in 1929 when he went on to Woolwich, where he played in the rugger XV. In March, 1942, he went to Cairo G.H.Q. but two months later he contrived to rejoin the 7th Armoured Division and was killed in action in May. His son was born the day before he died and his own body was discovered by his younger brother, who also did not survive the war.

Alamein Memorial

Alamein is a village, bypassed by the main coast road, approximately 130 kilometres west of Alexandria on the road to Mersa Matruh.

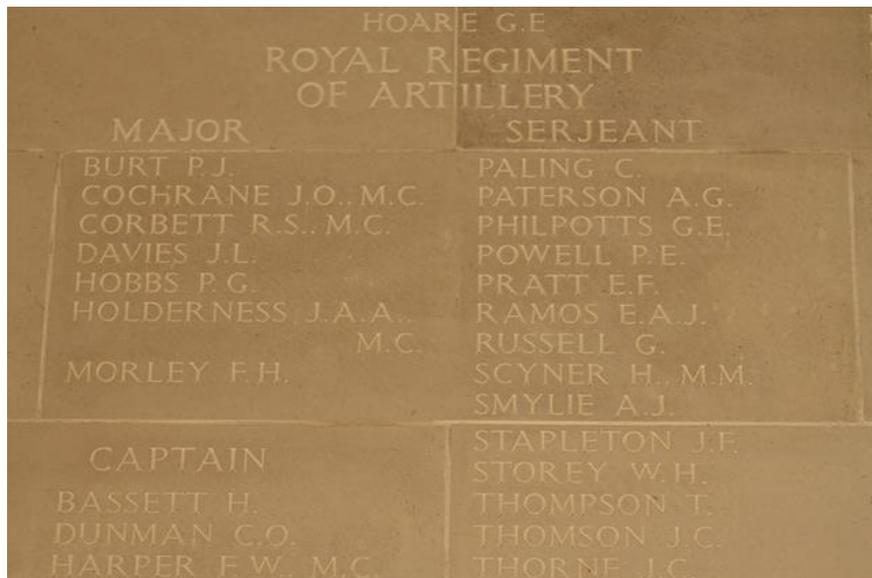
The campaign in the Western Desert was fought between the Commonwealth forces (with, later, the addition of two brigades of Free French and one each of Polish and Greek troops) all based in Egypt, and the Axis forces (German and Italian) based in Libya. The battlefield, across which the fighting surged back and forth between 1940 and 1942, was the 1,000 kilometres of desert between Alexandria in Egypt and Benghazi in Libya. It was a campaign of manoeuvre and movement, the objectives being the control of the Mediterranean, the link with the east through the Suez Canal, the Middle East oil supplies and the supply route to Russia through Persia.

The Alamein Memorial forms the entrance to Alamein War Cemetery. The Land Forces panels commemorate more than 8,500 soldiers of the Commonwealth who died in the campaigns in Egypt and Libya, and in the operations of the Eighth Army in Tunisia up to 19 February 1943, who have no known grave. It also commemorates those who served and died in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Persia.

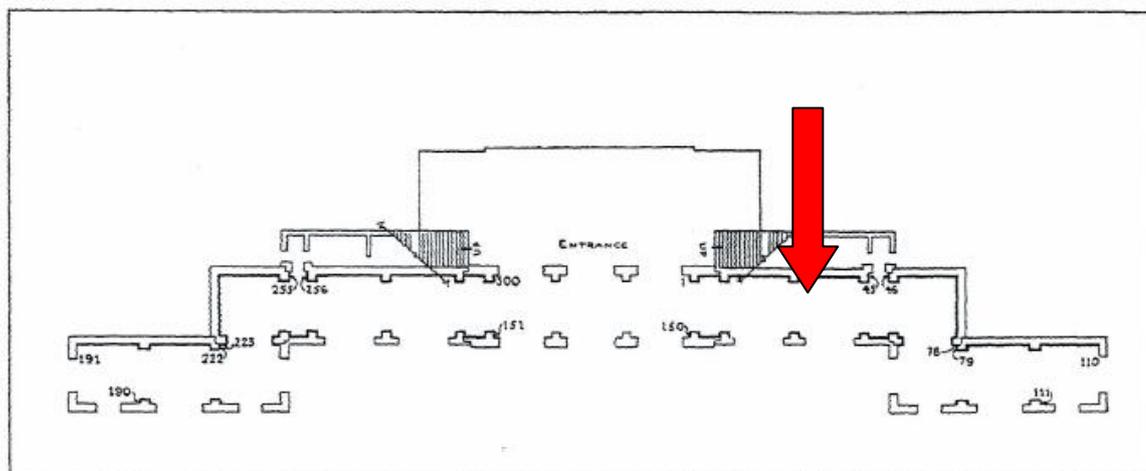


Alamein Memorial (*Photos & Information from CWGC*)





Alamein Memorial – Column 31 (Photo courtesy of David Milborrow)



GROUND PLAN OF THE ALAMEIN MEMORIAL, SHOWING THE NUMBERING OF THE COLUMNS

(Panels 1 – 45 marked by red arrow)

7th Armoured Division

The 7th Armoured Division was a British armoured division that saw service during the Second World War where its exploits made it famous as the Desert Rats.

After the Munich Crisis, the division was formed in Egypt during 1938 as the Mobile Division (Egypt) and its first divisional commander was the acclaimed tank theorist Major-General Sir Percy Hobart. During January 1940, the name of the unit was changed to the 7th Armoured Division. It was during this period that the nickname "Desert Rats" was coined.

The Western Desert Force later became HQ XIII Corps, one of the major parts of Eighth Army. The 7th Armoured Division took part in most of the major battles of the North African Campaign, including both Battles of El Alamein (the First Battle of El Alamein in July 1942, which stopped the Axis advance, and the Second

Battle of El Alamein in October/November 1942). It also participated in the destruction of Axis forces in North Africa in Tunisia in 1943.

The First Assault

On the night of 26 May 1942, Rommel started his attack, taking the initiative. The 15th and 21st Panzer Divisions, the rest of the 90th Motorized Infantry Division, and the Italian 132 Armoured Division Ariete started the large encircling move south of Bir-Hakeim as planned. The British armoured units—taken by surprise—reacted in an improvised and unorganized manner at the attack and took heavy casualties. Learning about the enemy moves, Koenig awoke his men and ordered them to take their battle positions.

(Wikipedia)

On 27 May, the main offensive against the Gazala Line in Libya, which was a mobile tank assault around the southern end of the line, was launched by Axis armor divisions. Several Allied supply bases were overrun, including those guarded by men of the Indian 3rd Motor Brigade, but the French-held fort at Bir Hakeim, Libya would prove to be troublesome for the Axis forces for many days. While the left side of the offensive paused at Bir Hakeim, the right side reached El Adem by mid-morning, capturing the headquarters element of the British 7th Armoured Division, including the commanding officer General Frank Messervy.

(WW2 DB)