

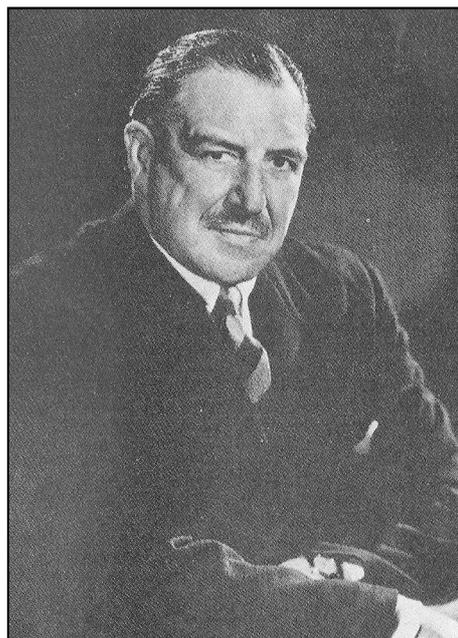
**BRIGADIER HUGH LLEWELLYN GLYN HUGHES (1892-1973). C.B.E.,
D.S.O**, M.C., Q.H.P., R.A.M.C., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. (Eng.), F.R.C.G.P.**

**The First Allied Medical Officer to enter the Belsen Concentration Camp after the
Second World War.**

"On four separate days he showed an utter contempt for danger when collecting and tending the wounded under heavy shell fire."

The Times (1944).

'Hughie' Glyn Hughes (1892-1973) [Epsom College 1903-1910] was born in Swansea, South Wales, the son of Dr H. G. Hughes, but spent the first two years of his life in Ventersburg, South Africa, after his father emigrated to take up a medical post. He had an illustrious career at Epsom College where he was head prefect, Captain of the Rugby XV, the Shooting VIII and the Gymnastics VIII; and Winner of the Harvey, Wakley, Brande Good Conduct, Elocution and Brande English Prizes. Apart from these honours he won both the Ann Hood and Carr Exhibitions and then an Entrance Scholarship to University College Hospital, where he won the Fellowe's Medal for Clinical Medicine. During the First World War he served as medical officer with the 1st Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment, and later with the Grenadier Guards. In 1916 he was awarded the *D.S.O.*, his citation reading: "For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during operations. He went out in broad daylight, under heavy fire, and bandaged seven wounded men in the open, lying out in an exposed spot for one and a half hours. At nightfall he led a party through a heavy barrage and brought the seven men back." Within four months he was awarded a Bar to his *D.S.O.* Hughes was heavily decorated during the First World War, and before its end he was awarded the Military Cross, the *Croix de Guerre avec palme*, and was several times mentioned in dispatches. After the war he returned to work as a general practitioner in Chagford, Devon.



During the Second World War Brigadier Hughes became Deputy Director of Medical services to the Eighth Corps and the Second Army, and became the Chief Medical Officer in the advance. On 15th of April, 1945, while attached to the 11th Armoured division he became the first Allied Medical Officer to enter the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. As *The Lancet* recorded: 'His striking appearance – a piercing eye amid strong features – and his capacity for quick and confident decision made him a natural leader, commanding loyalty and respect from subordinates...He loved action, and if it didn't come to him he sought it.' Hughes took control of the camp and immediately set about controlling the two main issues that faced him – the control of disease, after an outbreak of typhus, and the distribution of food. He also took control of the local hospital, removing the German patients to treat his new charges. In September 1945, Brigadier Hughes was one of the main witnesses for the prosecution in the Belsen Trial. For his actions at Belsen, he received the Order of St John of Jerusalem and the *Legion d'Honneur*. He also received a second Bar to his *D.S.O.*, for actions during the attempted relief of Arnhem from the South, earlier in the campaign, where as the most senior surviving officer, he took command of the tanks. In 1945 he was awarded a *C.B.E.* At the end of the Second World War Hughes was appointed Commandant of the R.A.M.C. Depot at Crookham, with his final military post being Inspector of Training.



After leaving the forces in 1947 Hughes took up the first of his senior medical administrative posts, when he became the Senior Medical Officer of the South East Metropolitan Hospital Board. In this position he played a prominent role in the administration of the newly created National Health Service, and again in 1952 with the formation of the Royal College of General Practitioners. He held several titles before his retirement, including Honorary Physician to H.M. the Queen, President of the Harveian Society and Medical Officer to the British Red

Cross Society.

Outside his professional career, Hughes was a very keen sportsman, with his main interest being rugby football. At Epsom College he was captain of the Rugby XV and he later played for Blackheath RFC. In 1913 he was selected to play for the Barbarians against Cardiff and Swansea. He played a total of 20 games for the Barbarians over nine tours, scoring a try against Newport in 1925, and captaining the team for three matches in 1919-1920. *The Official History of the Barbarian Football Club*, written by Nigel Starmer-Smith, a former master at Epsom College (1967-1971), noted that 'Hughie' Glyn Hughes, as President: 'remained an avuncular figure, not averse to the high jinks on a Saturday night that he himself had enjoyed in his playing days, but insistent on a certain discipline, imparted with a curt word or a piercing look, that made his feelings quite clear. One knew what was expected, and if as a player, one stepped beyond the bounds, one made sure that Hughie didn't find out.' Apart from the Barbarians, Hughes was Captain of the United Hospitals XV, and a member of several county sides, notably Devon, Middlesex, and London Counties. In 1927, he was selected to act as referee in the Great Britain tour of Argentina. In 1955 he was elected Secretary of the Barbarians Club and held the post when the Barbarians famously beat the 1973 touring All Blacks at Cardiff Arms Park. He died in Edinburgh just three days after he had watched the international game between Scotland and Argentina.