

# News story: Can you help trace the family of a missing World War 2 soldier?

A British soldier was killed in action in October 1944 and for just over 70 years he lay where he fell until his remains were uncovered in 2015. Several years' worth of research has produced a short list of potential candidates that may help uncover the identity of this brave man.

The MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) is searching for male family members of 2 of the potential candidates who were from Manchester. DNA samples have been taken from the remains and JCCC want to try and confirm the identity by comparing this sample with a member of each of the families of the 2 potential candidates.

Both soldiers served with the 2nd Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers and were killed during the Allied Gothic Line Offensive in Italy on 23 October 1944, during the battle to capture Monte Spaduro.

The 2nd Bn Lancashire Fusiliers in Italy during 1944, Crown copyright, All rights reserved

## **Fusilier Joseph Frank Faulkner**

Joseph Frank Faulkner was the son of Joseph Faulkner and Mary Isabel Plant. He was born in October 1921 in Dartington, Cheshire. His last known address was Worthington Avenue, Partington in Trafford. Joseph had 5 brothers: Kenneth, George, Cyril, Harry and Jack and 1 sister, Mary. JCCC's initial family research suggests that some of the descendants from these siblings could still be living in the Manchester area.

## **Fusilier Walter Vickers**

Walter Vickers was the son of Walter Vickers and Maggie Straker. He was born in April 1921 in Rusholme, Manchester. His last known address was listed as Boynton Road, Rusholme. We believe from our initial research that Walter had 3 brothers and 3 sisters: Bernard, James, Geoffrey, Nita, Lorna and Elva. Once again, the JCCC believe that the descendants of these siblings could still be living in the Manchester area.

Artefacts found with the remains, Crown copyright, All rights reserved

Now an appeal has been launched by the MOD's JCCC to track down either of these men's surviving male relatives so that they can be invited to undertake a DNA test to prove whether the remains are theirs. If positive identifications can be made, they will be given a full military burial in Italy with a named headstone.

Artefacts found with the remains, Crown copyright, All rights reserved

Nicola Nash from the JCCC said:

I am really hoping that family members of these 2 brave men will see this appeal and agree to help us. If anyone thinks they may have some information, then please get in contact so that we can try and identify this soldier that has been found.

If you can help, please call Nicola on 01452 712612 ext. 6063 (office hours) / 07773 187075 or email her via ,[Nicola.nash101@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.nash101@mod.gov.uk).