

Lost War Diary Unearthed by Fraser and Fraser Reveals Remarkable Life of London Mother During the Blitz.

As the nation prepares to mark Remembrance Day, a newly uncovered wartime diary is shedding light on the extraordinary courage of ordinary civilians who lived through the Blitz.

The diary, written by Marion Marden, a mother from East London, was discovered by leading probate and genealogy firm Fraser and Fraser during their investigation into an unclaimed estate.

The London-based firm specialises in tracing missing heirs, identifying rightful beneficiaries and reconnecting unclaimed estates with family members. Beyond offering fascinating insights into life during the Second World War, the diary's discovery also enabled surviving relatives to be traced, revealing previously unknown family connections.

Ben Cornish, a Case Manager at Fraser and Fraser, said: "When we began this case, we expected a routine investigation into an unclaimed estate.

"What we found instead was a personal record of the Blitz from the perspective of an ordinary London family. It is a rare and valuable insight into civilian life during the war."

The diary offers a vivid and deeply personal account of wartime life on the home front. Spanning 1941 to 1944, Marion's writing captures the daily realities of raising a young family under the constant threat of bombing.

"I wish this war was over," she wrote in one entry. "We lost 28 planes with men. The children full of Vim. Frank has a very bad cold. Did my washing."

Her words reveal the ordinary human side of the war that official records rarely capture. She describes sleepless nights in air raid shelters, the struggle to find food during rationing, and the devastating bombing of a dance hall in Palmer's Green that killed 43 people.

The diary was uncovered while Fraser and Fraser researchers were tracing the heirs of Myrta Marden, Marion's daughter, who died in 2019 with no known relatives.

Through detailed genealogical work, the team identified living beneficiaries across the UK, France and Australia. During their research, they discovered references to Marion's wartime writing, which had survived in archival collections and online through excerpts shared by a war diary enthusiast.

Isha Adams, Research Manager at Fraser and Fraser, said: "Personal accounts like Marion's remind us that history is not only written in official records.

"Her diary captures the endurance of those who held families and communities together in extraordinary circumstances."

Valerie Smith, a war diary collector who has studied hundreds of wartime journals, said: "Marion's writing reflects what many people experienced but few recorded.

"It is both matter of fact and emotional. Her words show the balance between ordinary domestic life and the constant awareness of danger."

As Remembrance Day approaches, the rediscovery of Marion's diary serves as an important tribute to the millions who endured the war from their homes, often without recognition.

“Documents like this remind us why what we do matters,” Isha added. “Our work is about reconnecting families, but it’s also about preserving memories. Stories like Marion’s ensure that ordinary people are remembered for the extraordinary things they lived through.”

The story will also feature in an upcoming episode of *Lineage*, airing on 6 November, which follows Fraser and Fraser’s work uncovering remarkable personal histories.

Fraser and Fraser regularly undertakes similar genealogical and historical research on a pro bono basis. This includes their work featured in *The Fallen Soldier*, which explored the story of a Second World War serviceman.

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About Fraser and Fraser:

- Originally founded in 1923, Fraser and Fraser is one of the largest and oldest probate research firms in the UK
- Based in Hatton Garden, London
- Specialising in international genealogy tracing, as well as public sector and individual cases.
- ‘Probate Research Firm of the Year’ – British Wills and Probate Awards, 2025

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