

# 'Pauper' leaves £100,000 unclaimed

**A wartime resistance hero who died in poverty in a house fire 30 years ago has been found to have left nearly £100,000 which has not been claimed.**

Attempts are being made to trace surviving relatives of Mary Lorraine who was killed when a candle fire spread through her flat in Sussex Square in Brighton.

When she died aged 59, Ms Lorraine was in arrears with her rent as she owed £55 and was hours away from being evicted.

But three decades later it has been discovered Ms Lorraine had assets worth £100,000 after government stocks bought by her mother matured after 50 years.

## **Captured and tortured**

There are no available pictures of Ms Lorraine but images of her parents, Mabel Love and Robert Lorraine, who were both famous actors, have been uncovered.

Peter Birchwood, professional genealogist, who works for Celtic Research which is helping to try and settle the estate, said: "Mary herself led a very interesting and somewhat chaotic life.

"She was on the stage in London when she was 13 years old from then she lived a somewhat mysterious life until the turn of the war."

Ms Lorraine was then recruited for special operations behind enemy lines but Mr Birchwood said she was captured and tortured by the Gestapo.

He said: "All of that must have had such an affect on her that when she came back to England in 1945 her life ran steadily down hill."

Before her death as a supposed pauper said Ms Lorraine was a recluse and suffered from mental health problems, Mr Birchwood said.

Mr Birchwood said the search for the relatives had spread across Europe and America but no-one had so far been found.

**Story from BBC NEWS:**

**[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/england/southern\\_counties/3136422.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/england/southern_counties/3136422.stm)**

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