

**A SECOND WAR M.M. GROUP AWARDED TO A SERGEANT OF THE 2ND ROYAL FUSILIERS WITH A FINE IMMEDIATE RECOMMENDATION FOR HIS GALLANTRY DURING THE BATTLE OF MONTE SCALARI, JULY 1944, WHEN THE PLATOON HE COMMANDED WAS CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF HIS COMPANY AND SURROUNDED BEAT BACK SEVERAL ATTACKS, BEFORE WITHDRAWING UNDER HEAVY FIRE, INFLECTING CASUALTIES ON THE ENEMY. HIS BATTALION HAD TWO MONTHS EARLIER BEEN INVOLVED IN THE HEAVY FIGHTING AT MONTE CASSINO, A PATROL FROM THE BATTALION CLAIMING TO BE THE FIRST ALLIED TROOPS TO ENTER THE SHATTERED MONASTERY.**



MILITARY MEDAL, G.V.I.R. '6465264 A. SGT. F.C. HODGES. R.FUS.' 1939-45 STAR, AFRICA STAR, ITALY STAR, DEFENCE AND WAR MEDALS 1939-45

M.M. *London Gazette* 8 February 1945

The recommendation for an immediate award dated 17 August 1944:

*"Sgt Hodges was in command of 14 PL "Y" Coy. On 27 July 44 "Y" Coy captured Hill 507, 856546 and the following morning the enemy succeeded in setting fire to the thick undergrowth with which the hill was covered. The fire spread rapidly, cutting off No 14 Pl from Coy HQ and at the same time the enemy succeed in infiltrating round the PL's flanks. Although under constant fire from enemy snipers and LMGs from both flanks, Sgt Hodges unconcernedly walked about from one section to another and by his splendid example and forceful personality so imbued his platoon with the fighting spirit that although they were surrounded and the situation was critical, they beat off several determined attacks. When ordered to withdraw, Sgt Hodges never lost control of his men. They withdrew in good order and with perfect discipline, inflicting casualties on the enemy. It was due to Sgt Hodges inspiring leadership and powers of command, his complete disregard for danger and his refusal to acknowledge the seriousness of his position that he succeeded in extricating his whole platoon with all their weapons and equipment from what in fact was an extremely critical situation."*

6465264 Acting Sergeant Frederick Charteris Hodges served in 'Y' Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment), which formed part of the 12 Infantry Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> British Division, along with the 6<sup>th</sup> Black Watch and 1<sup>st</sup> Royal West Kent's. The Battalion saw action in the battle of France and evacuation from Dunkirk in 1940, prior to a period of rest and refit back in the UK.

They saw action in North Africa during the Tunisian campaign, 17 November 1942 – 13 May 1943 before being heavily involved in the Salerno landings during the invasion of Italy. Later seeing heavy fighting during the Fourth Battle of Monte Cassino in May 1944, their Division being one of the two assault Divisions, a patrol from the battalion claiming to be the first allied troops to enter the shattered monastery.

It was later during the advance through Tuscany towards Florence and the battle for Monte Scalari; specifically the capture and withdrawal from Bosco di Fuoco Ridge, 27-28 July 1944, that Sergeant Hodges was recommended for the M.M.

See: <https://ambodach.com/author/ambodach/>

Also see the following to one of the other two Battalions in 12<sup>th</sup> Brigade, the movements of which will be pretty much the same as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fusiliers:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/04/a8676804.shtml>

Taking part in fighting on the Gothic Line between August 1944 and March 1945. They were afterwards airlifted to Greece to support the British and American backed government during the Greek Civil War.

### **Battle of Monte Scalari**

*“The 4th British Infantry Division . . . fighting its way through Tuscany towards Florence, had reached the foothills of the Chianti Mountains where German Panzer Grenadiers were entrenched by late July 1944.*

*From Monte Scalari the Germans rained down heavy artillery fire on the British troops. The mountain peak had to be taken. The task was given to 12th Brigade, consisting of the Royal Fusiliers, the Royal West Kents and the Black Watch. The way to the mountain top was through thick vegetation strewn with rocks and mines. An attempt was made to bring up two tanks to help the infantry while the Bofors guns of the 91st Light/Anti-Tank Regiment knocked out the key German observation points.*

*The Royal West Kents made several attempts on the Monte Scalari summit but were driven back with heavy casualties. The Royal Fusiliers attacked a German position on Bosco di Fuoco Ridge but the Germans set fire to the forest and the Fusiliers withdrew. Divisional Commander General Dudley Ward ordered the Black Watch to take Monte Scalari at any cost. The 6th Black Watch were a former territorial battalion, a family unit, who had just lost their commanding officer, Col. Peter Madden, and the officer in charge of the attack was the Lord Douglas Gordon. Support came from Churchill tanks of the 142nd RAC.*

*The weary Scots who had had no food or water for 24 hours, drove the Germans off the summit. The German Grenadiers came charging up the mountain in one last charge, but the Black Watch held them and on August the 1st the way to Florence was opened up. Two days later Florence was liberated. The people of Tuscany have always appreciated the part the 4th British Division played in their liberation, and there are monuments to the men of the Black Watch and 4th Division at Sant Andrea, in Monte San Sevino and in Greve in Chianti.*

*Losses suffered by the Division were more than 60 per cent.”*



Condition generally VF, some scratching wear to obverse of medals. Sold with copy recommendation and LG. A fine recommendation to an NCO who showed great coolness and gallantry during an extremely critical situation faced by his platoon.