Joseph Wear

Joseph Wear was born in July 1919 in Blaydon, near Gateshead. Joseph never knew his father, who had left home before he was born, and his mother worked as a cleaner to survive. When Joseph was 14 years old, he left school and began work as a grocery boy. He later worked as a general labourer in a chemical works.

Joseph Wear was conscripted into the Army in February 1940 and went to the DLI's Depot at Brancepeth Castle, outside Durham City. After finishing his basic training, 4459754 Private Wear was posted to `B' Company, 6th Battalion DLI at Chipping Norton, where the battalion was rebuilding after returning after Dunkirk. He was then trained as a signaller.

In May 1941, 6 DLI sailed for the Middle East and saw service in Cyprus and Iraq, the Western Desert and Sicily.

When 6 DLI returned home from Sicily to prepare for D-Day, Joseph Wear was promoted to Lance Corporal and landed in Normandy on 6 June 1944. Three days later, during a clash with a German Panzer Division, Joseph Wear was awarded the Military Medal for his bravery.

After Normandy, Joseph Wear remained with 6 DLI throughout its long advance across France and Belgium and into Holland, seeing action at Gheel and the Albert Canal crossing on the way. In November 1944, he returned to England with 6 DLI and was based at Skipton until the battalion was stood down.

Joseph Wear was demobilised from the Army in March 1946 and returned to his pre-war job.

Joseph Wear was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1994 at his home in Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne.