

George Henry Self

George Self was born in 1920 in Bridlington. In 1937 George went to the Recruiting Office in Hull and joined the Army Reserve. He was then sent for training to the DLI's Depot at Fenham Barracks in Newcastle upon Tyne. After training, George Self decided to join the Regular Army and in February 1938 4452660 Private Self was posted to the 2nd Battalion DLI, then at Inkerman Barracks in Woking.

In March 1939, after being promoted to Lance Corporal, George Self was sent to the DLI's Depot as an instructor and he remained an instructor until he was sent to France to join 'C' Company 8th Battalion DLI in February 1940.

In May 1940, 8 DLI fought to halt the German advance at Arras. Back in England after Dunkirk, 8 DLI reformed and re-equipped whilst on defence duty on the south coast. In May 1941, after the threat of German invasion had faded, 8 DLI as part of the 50th Division was sent to the Middle East. Whilst on Cyprus in late 1941, George Self was wounded in a grenade accident and sent to a hospital in Palestine. After being downgraded medically, he was posted to run an officer's mess in Cairo and later the VIP's mess at 8th Army Headquarters.

In July 1943, following the successful invasion of Sicily, George Self was sent to the island. There he was re-graded and posted back to 8 DLI. Back in England in late 1943, 8 DLI began to train for D-Day. Sergeant Self landed on 6 June 1944 with his battalion. He then fought throughout the Normandy campaign and across France and into Belgium. During the crossing of the Albert Canal at Gheel in September 1944, George Self was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his leadership and bravery.

In December 1944, George Self returned to England and was finally demobilised from the Army in May 1946. After the war, he worked as a maintenance engineer in a colliery and later was appointed the Sergeant Major Instructor to the Durham School Junior Training Corps. George Self died in Durham in May 1994.

George Self was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1988.