

Joseph Weddle

Joseph Weddle was born in April 1921 in Gateshead, where his father worked as a tram cleaner. After Joseph left school, he first found work in a butcher's shop before moving to a rubber factory.

Joseph Weddle joined his local Territorial Army unit, the 9th Battalion DLI, at Burt Terrace in Gateshead in April 1939. When the Second World War began, 4454382 Private Weddle was transferred to the newly-formed 12th Battalion DLI, which in February 1940 was renamed the 1st Battalion Tyneside Scottish.

In April 1940, the Tyneside Scottish was sent to France but because of a lack of training and equipment it was put to work building air strips near Abbeville. However, when the Germans invaded Belgium and France in May 1940, the Tyneside Scottish was thrown into action and suffered many casualties. During the confused fighting near Arras, Joseph Weddle was taken prisoner. He spent the next five years in prisoner of war and work camps in Poland.

In early 1945, as the Russian forces advanced, the prisoners were marched westwards, until Joseph Weddle was freed by advancing US forces and sent home to England.

Joseph Weddle was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1998 but his interview was unfinished because of his poor health.