

Wilfred Scott White

Wilfred White was born in January 1920 at Philadelphia in County Durham, where his father worked on the local colliery railway. After Wilfred left Houghton le Spring Grammar School, he went to King's College Newcastle to study zoology and gained his degree in 1941.

In late 1941, Wilfred White joined an Officer Cadet Training Unit at Heysham and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Border Regiment in June 1942 and sailed for Egypt.

Wilfred White joined the 9th Battalion DLI in August 1942 in the Alamein Line and was posted to 'B' Company. In November 1942 during the Battle of El Alamein, Lieutenant White was wounded by shell fire and was evacuated to hospital. After his recovery, he rejoined his battalion in time for the attack on the Mareth Line in March 1943. Wounded at Mareth, Wilfred White was taken prisoner and sent to a camp in Italy.

In September 1943, after the surrender of Italy, Wilfred White escaped from the prisoner of war camp before German guards could arrive. After three months marching south through the mountains, Wilfred White and a small group of other ex-prisoners reached the Allied lines and freedom.

Back home in England, Wilfred White was promoted to Captain and sent to the School of Infantry at Barnard Castle, where he remained until he was demobilised from the Army on March 1946. Wilfred White died in January 1997.

Wilfred White was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1996 at his home in North Shields.