

Ernest Harvey

Ernest Harvey was born in August 1923 at Hetton le Hole in County Durham, where his father worked as a coal miner. After he left school, Ernest found work with the local Co-operative Society.

In 1940 Ernest Harvey joined the Home Guard and continued to serve with his local battalion until he was conscripted in June 1942 and sent to the Infantry Training Centre at Brancepeth Camp for his basic training. On completing his training, 4470629 Private Harvey was posted to the recently-formed 70th (Young Soldiers) Battalion at Barnard Castle, where he joined the Signals Section as a wireless operator.

In January 1944, Ernest Harvey was transferred to the 9th Battalion DLI, then training for D-Day. 9 DLI landed in Normandy on 6 June 1944 and Private Harvey fought in all the major actions in Normandy and across France to Gheel in Belgium. After the battle of Gheel in September 1944, Ernest Harvey fell ill and flown back to hospital in England.

After his recovery, Ernest Harvey worked in England in a camp receiving returning British prisoners of war. In May 1946, he was sent to Italy to work as a storeman in a prisoner of war camp.

Ernest Harvey was finally demobilised from the Army in 1947 and returned home.

Ernest Harvey was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1993 at his home in Hetton le Hole.