

## **David Greenwell Ridley**

David Ridley was born in October 1919 in Pelton Fell, near Chester le Street, County Durham, where his father worked on the railways. After he left school, David went to work at the local colliery but he also found time to join the Boy Scouts. In 1937, David Ridley moved to the Royal Ordnance Factory at Birtley.

When the Second World War began David Ridley was conscripted into the Army and joined the DLI at Brancepeth Castle. After completing his basic training at Willington, 4459243 Ridley was posted to the DLI's Depot as an Instructor.

In late 1942, Sergeant Ridley was posted to the 17<sup>th</sup> Battalion DLI, then at Folkestone in Kent. When 17 DLI was broken up in 1943, David Ridley was sent to North Africa and then on to Italy, where he joined the Sherwood Foresters. During the fighting in Italy, Sergeant Ridley was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for rescuing two wounded men from a minefield.

In 1944, David Ridley was posted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion DLI and he served with this battalion in Greece and Italy until the end of the war.

In 1946, Company Sergeant Major Ridley was demobilised from the Army and returned to work at Birtley. However, when the Territorial Army was revived, he joined the 8<sup>th</sup> Battalion DLI and served until 1965, when he joined the Durham Army Cadet Force, finally retiring in 1978. David Ridley died in December 2001.

*David Ridley was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1996-97 at his home in Great Lumley, Chester le Street.*