

Letter from Niamh McKenna,

My great Grandad was a British Army Sergeant in the full war 1939-1945. He was a tank sergeant.

I never met him as he died before I was born but I asked my dad about him. He told me that he went to England with his brother and joined the army in 1922. He joined because he needed work and wanted to travel the world and this was really his only opportunity to do so. He left in 1938 and came back to Ireland but when war began in 1939 he was immediately called up and made a sergeant with Enniskillen Rifles which was his regiment. He fought in North Africa and then went to Italy to fight. After the war, service men were prioritised work and he became a postman.

Also, something that's interesting is that he was an Irish Catholic and lived in a very republican area during The Troubles. It would have been extremely risky for people to know he was ever a British soldier so war was never talked about and my dad's family were told to never mention his position to anyone during these horrible times. My dad's memories of his grandad are that he was a very serious man who kept his head down and talked very little.

