

John Rodgers

Arrival at Brancepeth

There was a lovely fine day and we all congregated around Brancepeth Castle. It was a lovely little billet and a great big oak tree and all the men were coming in from different parts and we were just sitting on there waiting to be collected. We went by train, which you could do in those days, from Sunderland right to Brancepeth, and they had a nice little station there at Brancepeth. And then come the sergeant and he collected us altogether. Some men were married, not many, and most of them single. And he said "Well, from now on you're leaving home and you're leaving your mother. From now on", he said "I'm going to be your mother and father and everything for the rest of your Army life". And he just fell us into some kind of order and marched us across the road into Brancepeth Castle, and we spent a full day there getting issued with our kit.