

News from Chipping Camp, 1897 – 1898



The noise and excitement of the Army camp and training ground, established in 1892 in the foothills of Parlick and Saddle Fell, had become summer routine in Chipping. Many hundreds of soldiers, both regulars and volunteers, came in successive contingents from May to September, marching to Chipping from Longridge railway station.

The local people seem to have loyally accepted the disturbance caused by the military. Britain was preoccupied with foreign wars, especially in the Sudan.

In 1898 part of the Lancashire Fusiliers Regiment was on active service in Egypt, while other sections of the same regiment were training at Chipping. On May 2nd, it must have been a stirring sight as over 400 men of the 2nd Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers marched through Longridge and Chipping village on their way to the camp. They were headed by their fine regimental band, playing "lively airs".

Soon after their arrival bad weather set in, with gales and torrential rain which damaged the tents. It was not surprising that after being stationed in Chipping for two months, this group of soldiers on marching back to Longridge Station, "seemed to be in high spirits at leaving". Presumably they preferred the prospect of better conditions in Egypt.

By midsummer 1898, the 3rd Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers were training at the shooting ranges at Chipping, shortly before leaving for Malta and Egypt. Then, in August, two train-loads of the Liverpool Militia arrived. They marched from Longridge, headed by drums and fifes.

All this activity had to be supplied by hundreds of cartloads of equipment and food. Furthermore, extra traffic was caused by sightseers. The roads in the Chipping district, normally in a very bad state, became in places almost impassable. In Spring 1897, the military authorities sent a letter to the Clitheroe Rural District Council asking for urgent repairs to be done, since the troops would be using the camp earlier in the season than in previous years. Chipping road repairs were causing the Council much trouble. Each Chipping resident was responsible for repairing, or paying for the Council to repair, the section of road adjoining his property, but some residents were not co-operating. The Council observed, with some satisfaction, that one of the occupiers responsible was the War Office itself for allowing water to pour off the camp ground and damage the nearby public road.

At the end of 1898, one Rural District Councillor asking about road repairs at Whalley, said he never saw the Council's road roller there. The Surveyor pointed out that the roller was in Chipping, and had been nowhere else for 12 months!

Compiled from reports in the Clitheroe Times and the Preston Guardian.



CYCLING TIPS

A HANDY DRINKING CUP.

Choose a moderate-sized bell for your machine, and keep the inside free from oil. Unscrew the top and use it as a drinking cup when on the road.

FOR LADY CYCLISTS.

Over night, when intending to ride far next day, damp your hair with the following: One lump of sugar dissolved in a table-spoonful of cold tea. Wear a fringe net, and your hair will be kept in perfect order.

From "Lancashire Cycle Rides", undated, but probably early 1920s.

