



DURHAM
AT **WAR**



BRANCEPETH CASTLE

**Transcript of correspondence concerning its use as 7th Durham
Voluntary Aid Detachment Hospital**

Records held by the archives at the Museum of the Order of St John

OSJ 1/1/12/7

August 1914 – February 1915

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28 August 1914

[copy of outgoing letter]

[annotated] Submitted as a hospital on our form 6 October 1914

Estate Office
Brancepeth
Co. Durham

Dear Mr. Parker,
Brancepeth Castle

I have your letter of the 26th. instant and have filled up the enclosed form as desired.
Yours faithfully,
Kenneth Crawley

PS

Question No. 10

His Lordship will be leaving his private motor bus at Brancepeth and there will also be a man here who could drive it. This will be available for any urgent Messages etc. that may be needed. I have not added this to question no. 10 but leave it to you to do so if you think fit.

Question No. 15

If necessary I know His Lordship would be willing to provide the beds.

To the County Director
Voluntary Aid Detachments
Cambridge Hall
Newcastle-on-Tyne

1. Name of house offered: Brancepeth Castle, Co. Durham.
2. Full details of actual accommodation offered: 60 beds for officers or soldiers.
3. Will proprietor provide domestic staff for the house? Yes.



4. To what extent, if at all, will proprietor bear expenses, e.g. wages of domestics, fees of doctors not giving honorary services, feeding of domestics, medical staff and patients.

Owner will pay: Wages of domestics.
Feeding domestics.
Feed medical and nursing staff.

Authorities to pay: Doctors fees.
Patients' food.

5. Please give name and distance from:

- (a) Nearest town or village: Village – Brancepeth; town – Durham. 4½ miles.
- (b) Nearest railway station: Brancepeth. North Eastern Railway. 5 minutes' walk.
- (c) Nearest telegraph office, stating name and distance from residence: Brancepeth. 3 minutes' walk from Castle.
- (d) Is there a telephone installation? If so, name and number: Yes. No. 282 Durham.
- (e) Nearest call office with name and number:

6. Mileage by road from London: 254 Miles.

7. Nearest doctor giving name and address:

Dr Denholm. Meadowfield. Durham.

Dr Wilson. Langley Moor. Durham.

8. Nearest chemist giving name and address:

Messrs. Sanderson and Co. Willington. Durham.

Messrs. Boots. Durham.

9. Distance from provision shops: 2 miles from Meadowfield. 2½ miles from Willington.

10. Is there a daily motor delivery of provisions? No, but this could no doubt be arranged.

11. Can ice be readily obtained locally? If so, name and Address: Durham.

12. Is the sanitation in thoroughly good order? Yes.

(a) Is the water supply good and plentiful? Yes. 2 supplies

Is it hard or soft? Soft. One supply (Brancepeth Reservoir), the other (Waskerley)

(b) Is there hot and cold water throughout the house? Yes.

13. By what medium is the house lit.: Electric light generated at Castle.



14. Is each room provided with a fireplace? Yes

Are there any gas fires in the house? No.

15. All beds must be single 'hospital' size. Could the proprietor provide a certain number - say six spare beds - for use in emergency? If not, will any local firm or local relief fund help in regard to this? Voluntary Aid Organisation will provide 60 single beds for patients, other beds will be provided at Castle.

In reply to question 4. The arrangement at present is that Viscount Boyne provides the household staff, and also undertakes to find and provide accommodation for the nursing staff. He is to receive a sum of money per day for each patient, sanctioned by the DDMS Northern Command.

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**10 December 1914**

[copy of outgoing letter]

Mrs Bean

Brancepeth Castle

Co. Durham

Dear Madam,

We have been informed by Mr. Palmer that you are in charge of Brancepeth Castle Auxiliary Hospital. The Order of St John are prepared, should you require it, to send you a fully trained nurse, salary paid; all you would have to supply would be her board and lodging.

I should be obliged if you would fill in the enclosed form as we are anxious to file it with the other hospitals which are being run by St. John Voluntary Aid Detachments.

Yours truly,

[unsigned]

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25 February 1915
The St John Ambulance Brigade
No. VI (Northern) District
No. 7 Durham VA Hospital
Brancepeth Castle
Durham

Mrs BC Oliver

Dear Madam,

You wrote me on December 10th that , if I required it, the St John's Association were prepared to send me a fully trained nurse, salary paid.

At that time I had two nurses both of whom had given us their services voluntarily. One of these has unfortunately to return to her home and will not be able to come back I'm afraid. I have advertised for another nurse and am in communication with one who seems very promising. She requires a salary however, and I would like to know if your offer still holds good. If so I would very much like to be able to draw the amount of salary allowed (I understand it is a guinea a week) and give the balance to Sister Gallop who has been with me from the start, but is really not in a position to work on indefinitely for nothing. She is very good at her work and I would be sorry to have to part with her for the sake of a few pounds. Last week she had the offer of a paid post for a year, but refused it as she had given her services here.

This hospital is equipped for 60 patients and it is essential to have two trained nurses. I would prefer to get another nurse from near here so that I could have a personal interview. If you preferred it the salaries could be remitted direct to the nurses by you.

Yours faithfully,

JM Bean

Matron

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**27 February 1915**

[copy of outgoing letter]

Dear Madam,

You are entitled to three trained nurses with salaries paid from here, but it is essential that these nurses be on our books, and that the Matron-in-Chief is satisfied as to their capabilities. If, however, Sister Gallop, and the new nurse to whom you refer, like to fill in the enclosed form, and return them with this letter to the Matron-in-Chief here, she could, if she is satisfied with them, place their names on her books, when they will become entitled to salary.

I hope this arrangement may commend itself to you.

Yours truly,

[unsigned]

Staff Officer

Miss Bean

