

John Crawford Rodgers

John Rodgers was born in November 1912 in Sunderland, where his father, who had fought in the First World War with the Northumberland Fusiliers, worked as a miner. After John left school, he began work as a butcher's boy. He also joined the Boy Scouts.

In June 1940, John Crawford, who was then serving as a Special Constable, was conscripted into the Army and was posted to the DLI Infantry Training Centre at Brancepeth.

In September 1940, 4463790 Private Crawford was posted to the 9th Battalion DLI then based on the south west coast of England as part of coastal defences. Once the threat of German invasion faded, 9 DLI, as part of the 50th Division, sailed in May 1941 from Glasgow to the Middle East.

Following his pre-war shop experience, John Rodgers was made a storeman in 9 DLI's Headquarters and he served in this capacity in Egypt, Cyprus, Iraq and the Western Desert, seeing action at Gazala, Alamein and Mareth. He also took part in the invasion of Sicily in July 1943.

After the end of the Sicilian campaign, 8 DLI returned to England to prepare for D-Day. John Rodgers landed with his battalion on 6 June 1944 but during the fighting in Normandy he fell ill with malaria and was evacuated to England.

John Rodgers was demobilised from the Army in November 1945 and returned home.

John Rodgers was interviewed for the Imperial War Museum in 1988 at his home in Sunderland.