



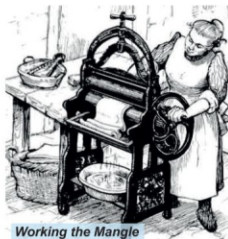
Introducing Alice



Dolly Tub



Washboard



Working the Mangle



Clothes Horse



Flat Irons were heated on the range

There are virtually no records of the servants who worked on the Elvaston estate. When the Earls of Harrington left the estate for Ireland the house records were destroyed. In order to examine the impact of the war on the lives of women in the village communities we have created a fictitious character, Alice. Even though Alice did not exist her story is based on historical information.



Hello, my name is Alice.
I was 18 when the war began and my life changed because of it. You can read my story in the following panels.



SILVER LANE as it is today.
The one up one down labourers cottages were demolished as they were of poor quality and could not be renovated.



Typical cottage range 1914



Outside Privy 1914



Girls and boys playing with hoops and sticks

Alice's childhood

Born in 1896 in a one up one down cottage in Silver Lane, Elvaston, Alice was the oldest girl in a family of 8 children, 6 girls and 2 boys. From a very early age she was expected to help her Mother with household chores and help look after her younger brothers and sisters. The house was cold and damp with no electricity or running water. All of the heating and hot water came from the range which was fuelled by coal or wood.

Wash day was Monday and, with no washing machines it took all day. It was hard physical work. Washing was done in a

dolly tub, using a washboard for very dirty clothing. Carbolic soap had no perfume added. It smelled really strong. The wet clothing was squeezed through a mangle to take out most of the water. Woollen clothes were not washed as they would shrink. If they became wet they would be dried in front of the range on a clothes horse, adding to the unpleasant smells in the house. Those items which needed ironing were ironed with a flat iron which was heated on the range.

How the rural poor lived in 1918

In Alice's cottage there was no inside toilet. The privy in the garden was a seat on an earth bank with newspaper for toilet paper. There was no running water. The privy was freshened with ashes from the range and rainwater.

Alice and her family were poor. Their Father was a builders' labourer who worked for Mr Garratt, Charley's father. His weekly wage was sixteen shillings and nine pence in 1914. The family would grow most of their food. They might rely on the Piggin Fund (a local charity for the poor which still exists today) for expensive items.

Alice attended the Earl of Harrington School at Elvaston till she was 13. There were 90 children in the school. Boys and girls were taught separately, girls

by a woman and boys by a man. They even played separately, the playground being separated by a fence.

Games in the street were skipping, hoop and stick, hop scotch while the boys played cricket or football, marbles or Knock Down Ginger where they knocked on peoples doors then ran away. Elvaston Cricket Club provided entertainment during the Summer months.

Alice attended Sunday school at Elvaston Church and sang in the choir. The vicar, the Reverend Prodders, took the children away for 2 weeks in Mablethorpe each year. This would be the only holiday the children had.

The Earl provided families with meat at Christmas. This was a real treat as very little meat was eaten by the rural poor.



Earl of Harrington School, Elvaston



Inside the school classroom



Elvaston Church auxiliary choir. Charley Garratt sitting front row first left

