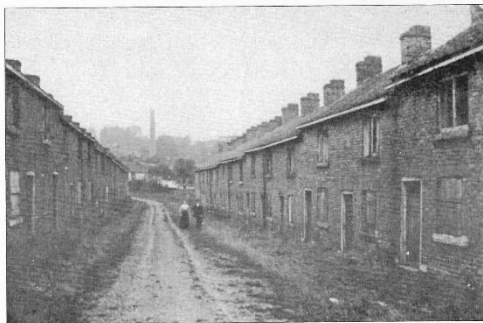


My childhood in Havannah Village

I was born in 1 Old Street Havannah Village this was a semi-detached cottage with a beautiful rose garden in the front and the back was a mix of Dads vegetables and all the animals we had acquired Chickens, Rabbits, Guinea pigs, Tortoises, many more including all the injured wild animals we tried to save it was like 'Animal Hospital'. We also had a dog and many cats

. We didn't have a bathroom this was a tin bath which hung up on the outside of the shed, also the toilet was outside. Every Sunday we all lined up for our weekly bath and then daily it was a strip wash at the kitchen sink!



Havannah village before the First World War
The deserted village

Just before 1st World War



August 2021

Our lives in Havannah were idyllic the river was our central hub. My Father was bailiff of that stretch of the Dane. There was an abundance of fish to name some Trout, Pike, Perch, and Roach some we caught and ate. I remember we used to go in search for Crayfish, Bull knobs, Lampries and Minnows to name but a few. All the children learnt to swim in the Dane it was very clean then. We swam under the waterfall it was so much fun then used to sunbathe on the rocks. We made rafts or used old tractor tyres to travel down the river. I also remember that there were lots of islands, where we set up picnics and pools which are no longer there.

Havannah belonged to The Colonel Antrobus estate being part of Eaton. We along with the farms were his tenants. I have many happy memories of Albert Gallimore who farmed the fields in Havannah his cows kept the pastures mown I can still remember the cows names! we would help him bring them back up for milking. Also, we would help at haymaking time, potato picking time and also collect eggs. In the early days he would bring our milk down to the village in big milk churns.

There were three factories producing fabrics, clothing, ties etc. I remember Mr Vickerstaff owned two of the factories he loved Havannah and made a beautiful garden at the side of his factory along the side of the river with seating which we could all enjoy. There was a boiler man keeping the very large chimney stoked for energy, this chimney was later demolished by Blaster Bates, a very exciting day as the BBC came to film!!!



Havannah industrial village in the 1930s
A view from the bridge over the River Dane



Mill complex, Havannah 1950s

We also played in the fields and woods. We used to make rope swings so we could swing across the river. I have such vivid memories of even where each flower grew and where the various wild animal habited. There is a cave in the wood which it was said came out in Eaton church yard. I think our imaginations went away with us as we believed there were human remains in there as well.

At the top of New Street (which is still there) we even had a shop. Mrs Cook ran this she was about 80 and she sold cigarettes and sweets. The workmen used the shop. I remember lovely Mrs Cook so kind had not got a lot of money and she would often give us some treats.

As children in the village, we never really ventured out only to the farm at the top of the road or to Church or Eaton school which is now a house. We had enough gone on to occupy ourselves in our little piece of heaven. I had to most wonderful happy childhood we were very privileged to have lived in such a wonderful village and this certainly gave me the priorities in life I needed to go forward. Very happy memories.



The author in her younger days!!!