

This is a Story from 'A Few Forgotten Women'



Alma



This is Alma and her photograph was discovered in a charity shop in East Wittering, West Sussex. The photograph was taken by F.W. Clark

who practised in Forest Gate, which comes under the Borough of Newham, East London.

Alma had friends/relatives name Ern and Francis (spelt with an i rather than an e).

Why did this photograph of a beautiful young woman end up in a charity shop?

Using the clues from the photograph it has a form of a Carte de Visite but it is larger than the nineteenth century versions. The edges are bevelled with a neutral background with silver lettering, without adornment, on the front. The reverse is plain, containing the message;

“With love from Alma
To Ern and Francis
Wishing you a Happy Xmas”
There is also a pencil number 19441 which could have been entered for a number of reasons.

Alma looks about 18 years of age, was the photograph taken to celebrate her birthday, even though coming of age was 21? As it is a portrait there is not a great deal of detail to provide more evidence, for example a complete costume. The hair and neck line of the blouse indicates a date of around 1910. If a young lady could afford a portrait then she would probably have dressed in the current fashion. If she was about 18 in 1910 she would have been born around 1892.

It is possible that the reason she was found in a charity shop - along with house clearance belongings, was that she was found in the paraphernalia of Erin and Francis and the people who had to deal with them did not know who Alma was? Consequently she was bundled with all the other household goods and sold. It is such a shame for such a beautiful young lady to be abandoned and forgotten.

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