



30 BEVERLEY MINSTER FROM THE FRIARY – by Mary Dawson Elwell

Oil on canvas 61.9 x 74.2 cm
 (24½" x 29¼") Signed and dated 1923 (or 8)
 East Riding of Yorkshire Council (Museums)
 Exh. RA 1934

Beverley Minster is shown by Mary in the light of modest houses which surround it from the south-east. The mighty edifice of the Minster appears without pomposity and in harmony with the many small urban gardens.

The church is viewed in its most human aspect, united in mood with the town it serves. Bold accents of colour animate the scene. The serried line of gates leads endearingly towards the hazy slate roof of the church. Reddish shades of old brick resonate against the green of homely garden gates and the colourful patchwork of washing as it freely billows.

The painting is alive with local details of its period. Not least is the evidence of some women taking in washing for other people in the town. Miss Woodmansey managed this business in her wash-house with only a gas ring for heating the water. Washing was hung to dry in her garden every day except Sundays. She and others occupied the three dwellings of the Friary (its gable end visible on the right).