

What does this extract reveal about the character of Vera Brittain?

Vera Brittain writes from her own first person narrative, we deal with only her views and concerns. She writes in such a way that we create our own perspective on her character and begin to understand things about her day-to-day life from this inside view of the hospital treatment in WW1.

She uses phrases such as "Poor things" when talking about the men in the hospital. She is clearly a caring character and wants to do her best to nurse the men back to health. She is definitely a hard worker, she lists jobs she had completed the night before "I have stoked the fire all night..." and we know that she is a very self-motivated person. This is supported by the quote "

She is an experienced character, we know this from when she talks about her experiences "last year". However, she doesn't realize she is helping and making a difference, she underestimates her own efforts and ability. This can be seen when she says "except that one or two are still alive that might otherwise have been dead".

From the language and vocabulary that she uses we realize she has once been privileged, "never in my life have I been so absolutely filthy". Also, her vocabulary helps us notice that she is horrified and disgusted by the conditions in the hospital that she works in "coloured blisters". Does she use this vocabulary to describe the patients due to her disgust, or because such vivid injuries come through the ward often that she doesn't see it as something to be hidden?