***‘The dining room is of a fairly large suburban house’***

Suburbs became popular in the early 1900s, as developments in transportation and infrastructure made it easier for people to live further from their workplace. Over time, suburban living became associated with a higher quality of life due to its perceived safety and better living conditions.

***‘a fairly prosperous manufacturer’***

Bradford was known as the ‘Wool Capital of the World’ during the early 1900s and its success was largely driven by the wealth and influence of industrialists like Birling.

***‘Edna, a neatly dressed parlourmaid’***

Many wealthy families employed parlourmaids to run household operations. They were responsible for maintaining the formal areas of the home, and typically served meals and attended to guests.

***‘Port glasses are already on the table’***

After a formal dinner, men would traditionally go to a separate room to drink port, smoke cigars and discuss politics or business, whilst women engaged in their own conversations elsewhere. This ritual helped to reinforce gender roles of the time and the exclusivity of upper-class social circles.

***‘rather provincial in his speech’***

To be ‘rather provincial’ in your speech means that your way of speaking reflects a local or rural area, rather than the ‘norms’ typically associated with urban or elite circles. It implies that your speech might seem less sophisticated to those outside your region and it is sometimes looked down upon.

***‘her husband’s social superior’***

The aristocracy in early 1900s Britain was the highest social class, traditionally made up of wealthy landowners and individuals who held hereditary titles. These families had significant influence over British society, although their power was beginning to fade due to social and economic changes.

***‘rather too manly to be a dandy’***

A ‘dandy’ was a man who placed great emphasis on his appearance and style, often aspiring to an air of sophistication and elegance. This preoccupation with appearance contrasted with ideals of ‘heroic masculinity’ and the ‘hard-working man’ that valued practicality and strength over aesthetics.