

My life as a woman in WW1

My name is Gloria and I'm married to Chad, who is fighting with the 1st battalion of the Norfolk Regiment. I know they are somewhere in the western front, but I don't exactly where as they are not allowed to tell us. The last card I received was after Christmas when Chad talked about all the lads playing football with each other. They swapped gifts, he said he gave one of the socks that I knitted. He was given a bar of chocolate although he said it didn't taste as good as the Caley's chocolate they made in Norwich.

Because so many men have had to go to war, lots of us have now had to take up jobs and that's on top of all the work we have to do at home. My job is in a local munition factory.

Since David Lloyd decided that they need more women working, I have been making arms and explosives in the factory. It is quite nice earning money of my own -and fun working with lots of other girls from Heigham Street. We are becoming quite independent and there's lots of talk about us fighting to get the vote after the war. The best bit though is that we feel as if we are doing something to help our boys. To begin with I wasn't used to a lot of the heavy lifting we had to do. The best bit about it is I learnt new skills, but the worst bit is that we have to work with horrible chemicals like cordite. They give us overalls to protect our clothes and protective masks but still lots of the girls are getting very ill from breathing in the fumes. One poor girl died of toxic jaundice last week.

After everything is done in the factory, I come back home at 11:30pm and feed my children meat and pig trotters but some don't like it. After they have eaten, they go outside and nodles until its bed time (20:00) which I go to bed as well after praying for my husband to be safe.