

## My life as a woman in WW1 by Tyrnan Batch

My name is Alex; my husband has gone to war (he is probably dead by now – I haven't heard from him in one year). His name's Jeff and he is 41, I am 43. We have 11 kids, my oldest is at war (I hope he is reunited with his father). My second eldest is just 2 years younger (he is called Tony).

My 10 children, who are still at home, get looked after by Mrs Stark and Mrs Banner. Sometimes, I have to look after all of the children – it's hard looking after all of them (it's almost as hard as hard as a normal day at work). Also, it's hard remembering all the names, all mine are called John, Tony, Bruce, Peter, Bertie, Barry, Alan, Mark, George, Chad and Patrick.

My job is being a police officer but I don't get paid because I'm a volunteer. Even if I was paid, I wouldn't get paid very much because I only mostly look through files and cook at the police station. Occasionally, I get to take pictures of the prisoners before they go to prison. But there was this one time where I got to chase down this one person when I caught them. It turned out that it was my mother's uncle's sister-in-law.



I get to work on a tram, but I have to work from 4am to 3pm, so I'm happy that I get home early but not so happy that I have to get up at 2am. Because I have to get up at 2am to be ready at 3:30am, I have to go to sleep at 7pm. It sometimes gets lonely, but 3 days a week (out of the 4 I work) a girl called Harriet comes and works with me. I love seeing other girls work with me, it's really changed the Heigham area when war broke out. I think all the girls like there work, but I really do – it's got me out of the house. But it is dangerous, because I could get shot while I am working. At the end of the day, I am exhausted, because of the patrol and training.

After I've been to work, I still have things to do. The first thing I have to, is the laundry – it is really hard work. I don't have one of the washing machines in the work house, so I do it by hand. First, I have to tip some water into a barrel, get my dolly and clothes and turn and turn until they are clean, then repeat this 10 times, that takes 4-6 hours. Every now and

then, I have to mend clothes – that is hard. Afterwards, I have to cook tea, I am really lucky to have as good children as I do because they keep the stove fire going all day.

I would like to carry on work after the war, because it is really good fun (most of the time).

