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plete change. (And you're setting up for different widths and thicknesses of steel?) Yeah, the poundage. See, the 135-pound rails or 150-pound rails, or, if it was mine arches, you stripped it right down from the bottom. It was a different set of rolls altogether that went in for mine arches. It wasn't really till almost a year that I began to realize how responsible the job was. Because the novelty was so different to anything I had ever done. I had been a clerk in a store. And it gradually sank in. I found men more careless than women, while I was on the plant. They have steps for you to go up, especially in the plate mill--you'd go up the steps and then go down, like that. The men wouldn't bother about the steps. They'd jump on the plates with the rollers moving and the plates moving, and they would jump off. You never saw a woman do it. She's too careful of her limbs to take any chances, stupid things that some of the men used to do. Another thing: I used to carry steel on a magnet. Well, a magnet--you can't depend on it any time because it's only on an electric wire. And some of the fellows used to walk underneath that, no matter how much I banged that bell, the smart alecks would run underneath the loads. And if that electricity had ever given way, they'd have been killed. But you never saw a woman. If you rang the bell, a woman stayed where she was supposed to stay till you passed with the load. I had no trouble. Never. I was just one of the men. There was a Frenchman there--he was foreman on the shift--he had been there for years. He was like Maynard, he was there for about 35 years. He used to give me the signals. And he'd say to me, "Take it up." Well, that meant just touch the lever. And he'd holler, "Blue hair." Well, that meant you just blew on the lever, because that's how much difference it would make in the steel. But he used to swear and curse at the men all the time. Oh, and he'd get vicious if you took it up a little bit too much, and you'd have to put it back down again. So anyhow, this day, the superintendent came in. And he said to me, "How are you two getting along?" I said, "Well, I'll tell you the truth. He curses and swears at me the same as he does the men." "Well," he said, "don't let it worry you, because if he couldn't swear, he couldn't talk." After that, I didn't mind him swearing at me. Half of the time it was in French, I didn't understand it anyway. (Not only were you well trained, you felt like you were one of the men, you really had a position there. Weren't you angry about losing your job?) Well, I knew it was only temporary, we all knew that when we went to the plant. Only till the boys came back. It was only a temporary measure. (Did you desire to stay on?) Well, not really. No, I was willing enough for Roy to come back and for him to do the work. No, I didn't feel bad about it. I went on in October of '42, and it was January of '45. (No regrets?) None. I never felt any resentment or anything like that, because we all knew when we went there, we were only taking the places of the men till the men came back. And they were starting to come back by then. (In your heart, though, did anything change about the kind of jobs that women should do?) No. I don't think it's a place for a woman, really. I really don't. It's so dirty. Everybody there, their lungs are full of the smoke and the oil. All that, you get it right in the face all the time when you're working. When my husband



died, they did an autopsy on him, and his heart was encrusted. And it was nothing else but all the oil. Of course, he used to drink, too, and he smoked • so between it all.... And Maynard was never without a cough, nev? er. Of course, he used to smoke, too. But all that had to get into your lungs. (And you feel it was too dirty for a woman?) Yeah. Well, it's too dirty for a man, too, physically. But it had to be done. (So you didn't have regrets when it was o- ver?) No. Perhaps it was because Roy was going to take back his job, perhaps that was the reason why I had no regrets. I don't know. (Did you love him already?) Oh, yeah. He went in April, he went into the army, and he came back in June, and we were married. (So you had already kind of got that started before he went into the army.) That's right. I remember when he went to get the marriage slip. He went to a man to look for the license. And the fel? low said to him, "What do you do? What's your occupation?" He said, "I'm a crane-man." He said, "And your bride-to-be?" He said, "Craneman." He said, "I mean your bride-to-be." "Well," he said, "craneman!" He said, "My God, man, I can't put that on the certificate. I'll have to put 'crane- woman.'" So he put "cranewoman" on the slip. We used to laugh about that. / r/j (20) ATLANTIC SPRING & MACHINE CO.. LTD. 564-5559 - 40 Kings Road, Sydney - 564-5550 General Machine Shop & Forge, Mining Equipment, Mar? ine Repairs, Welders, Automotive Springs, Fasteners