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tion. Maybe it took you 10 hours to build it. And then you went back to work that night. You put in the whole foundation before you left, by hand.... Come and help you build it and everything. It was family. The steel plant was family. All family. And it didn't make a difference if you were black, white, or what it was, if you were building a house. We had an old coloured fellow down there--he was putting a foundation under it. So we'd go down there and we'd dig it out, and we'd put in his cribwork for him and all his forms--bunch of men. And our electricians went down and did the wiring--fellows that were electricians on the steel plant--they went down and did the wiring. Everybody helped everybody. But the sad part of the whole thing was-- and I hate to say this--when we became unionized, there was something about it that dropped off. Because, you were guaranteed 5 days or 6 days a week. Now, when I went in there, for instance, if the mill was going down half time, we didn't lay anybody off like they do today. We would split the shifts. A married man worked 4, and a single man would take 3. And nobody was laid off. We all got a share. But once the union came in and demanded you get 6 days a week, well, that went out the window. That was sometime in the '40s, during the war. But in the early years of my time, from '34 to '40, we wired houses for fellows. We even took a bunch of electricians out, when they built St. Augustine's Church out there on Grand Lake Road, and wired it for the priests down there. It was all steel company. You were a good friend of him up there, he'd pour you a brass hot-water front for your stove--one that would last a lifetime. And if I ask him for 5 of them in 5 days, 5 weeks, I got 5 brass hot water fronts. And if you wanted a poker made, or a set of tongs to take the clinkers out of your furnace, you'd go out there. And the next thing you know, they're laying there. No one sees it, but they're laying there. You don't know who put it there, but you know where it came from. No one would come down and present it to you. For instance, like, now, when a foundry car would be coming down, he would call me and say, "Now, look at Number 2 box there." So I'd go over to Number 2 box and scrape the sand away, and the front would be buried on the car. Well, he never gave it to me. I found it on the car. I don't know who made it. I never saw it being made. But it was there. (How would you get things like that out of the plant?) Oh, it took a little bit of conniving to get it out. If you had a friend that had a car in there. And if you were--like, the superintendent--if I went to the superintendent and said, "Look, I got an iron front made," he'd give me a (And would people also make things on the plant that could be used in their homes?) Well, outside of pokers and--it was all coal stoves then. They'd make pokers, and they'd make grates for their stoves. The foundry had all the patterns for practically every stove. If I wanted a grate, we'd say, for an Enterprise, if I'd go up and I'd see the foreman in the foundry. And on the back-shift they'd pour you--they'd make a grate for you or they'd make a damper for you. If you'd want something done, they'd do it. And if you knew him, or if Home of the PEERLESS SHOWPLACE 'VACT/Le5 ???' A Division of // t' ProvindaLFloorina Ltd. > ProvindaLFlooring Ltd. 400 GEORGE ST., p. O. Box 1660, Sydney, N. S. B1P



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