

## FOREWOMAN NELLIE CONNOR DIED HEROINE OF GREAT BINGHAMTON FIRE

By Mary Boyle O'Reilly.  
Binghamton, N. Y., July 29.—  
"Greater love than this no man hath  
—that he giveth his life for his  
friend!"

By that final test Nellie Connor, the heroine of the great Binghamton factory fire, where scores of girls perished in the flames, proved, beyond all doubt, her long, long affection for "her girls."

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For thirty years Nellie Connor acted as forewoman in the Binghamton Clothing Company, balancing the "rights" of one hundred needle workers with the best interests of the firm.

As time is measured, she lived fifty-odd years, but Nellie Connor never grew old. A tiny little woman, hardly larger than a well-grown child of twelve, she unconsciously set fine standards for ten generations of operators.

"Her girls" honored her power to control, rejoiced in her merry kindness, "loved" the unvarying dauntiness of her working gown and the way in which she dressed her beautiful blonde hair.

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As the years grew more lonely Nellie Connor gave more and more of her leisure to church work and to reading books of the big, bright world she should never see. But always her deepest interest lay with "her girls," THEIR lives, THEIR problems, THEIR hopes.

"I cannot think what I should do without them—how I shall ever leave them," she would say, smiling.

\* \* \*

Without warning the summons came on clanging gongs. From their posts of vantage by the open doors the forewoman and her deputy saw that this alarm meant FIRE!

"Girls, go out quietly," called Nellie Connor, standing alert and im-



Nellie Connor.

movable at the second-story stair-head to guide and guard the file.

"Miss Connor, come . . . Nellie, dear, COME!" cried her deputy as the last of the terrified workers in the lower room fled to safety.

The cheery answer pierced a wind-like roar.

"Nonsense," called the little forewoman.

"I am going upstairs. . . . I must see that EVERYONE is safe!"

A momentary sight of the brave, small figure climbing the stair, a glimpse through the smoke-fog of the bright head passing a wind-swept doorway and Nellie Connor disappeared into the upper workroom where a hundred women still fought with death!

For her there was never a chance,