



THESE DRAMATIC RESCUE scenes were captured by the camera immediately after surface vessels had reached seaplanes which previously had snatched shipwrecked Coast Guardsmen from shark-infested waters. Left: Pain distorts the face of Frank Ebert, SC1c, as he is given first-aid by W. W. McCreedy, BM1c.

Center: Lt. B. B. Ballance helps lower Bernard Sternsher, S2c, from the wing of a seaplane to a surface craft. Right: Rescued Guardsmen tell Yeoman Preston Hawks of their bitter fight for survival. The survivors are Chris Driscoll, Bob Farmer and Duane Benavides.

**A** DRIFT IN shark-infested waters off the Virginia coast for 58 hours, 19 weary survivors of the 125-foot Coast Guard cutter *Jackson*, lost in the hurricane which battered the East Coast are recovering in a Norfolk, Va., hospital after their dramatic rescue by Coast Guard air and sea units.

Recuperating in the same hospital were 12 survivors of the Coast Guard cutter *Bedloe* which, like its sister ship, was sunk by successive waves which seemed as if they were breaking more than 100 feet high during the height of the hurricane. Spotted by a patrol plane, they were picked up an hour later and brought to Norfolk aboard a Navy minesweeper.

The captain of the *Bedloe*, Lieut. (j.g.) August S. Hess, of Lohrville, Wis., was among those rescued.

## The Loss of the BEDLOE AND JACKSON

Three Coast Guard Kingfisher planes from the Elizabeth City, N. C., Air Station, spotted the *Jackson* survivors Saturday morning and, after radioing for aid, landed in the swells, a plane next to each liferaft. Badly battered and suffering from shock, the men were lifted to the wings of the tossing planes, where first aid was administered.

Guided by PBMs and Navy blimps, a 36-foot rescue launch put out from the Coast

Guard Oregon Inlet Station 15 miles away, and the survivors were carried aboard. The men later were transferred aboard a Navy ship near shore, where they were treated by a physician until Coast Guard PBMs from Elizabeth City landed and flew them to Norfolk.

Survivors said 37 officers and men originally clung to the three rafts, but 17 died during the second night from exposure and exhaustion. Added to the torment of parched throats, crowded rafts and heavy seas during their 58-hour vigil where sharks and "Portuguese men-of-war," multi-tailed marine pests whose stingers continually lashed the bodies of the storm-tossed men.

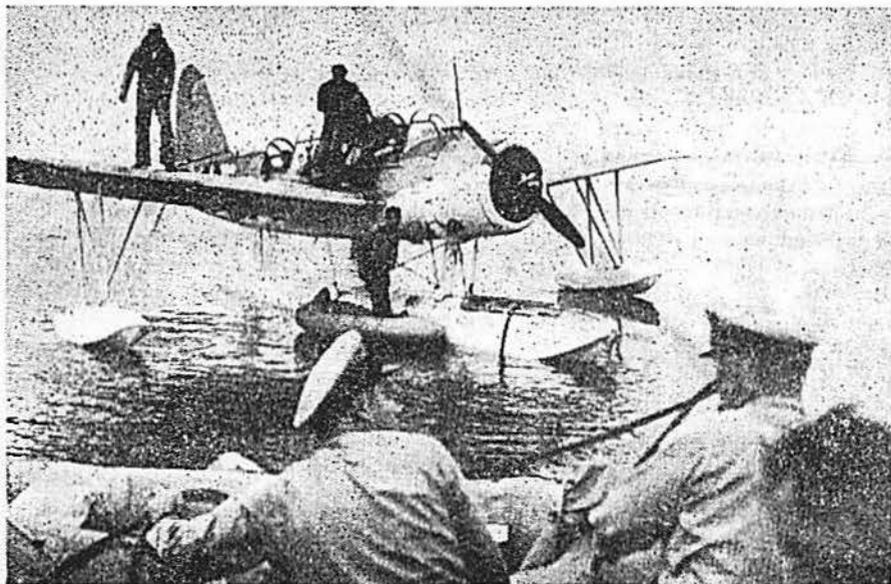
### UNAWARE OF DOOM

Ironically, crew members of each vessel pinned their hopes on rescue by the other, unaware of the like doom of each ship.

Lieutenant Hess said his crew hoped for rescue because, as he explained: "Skippers often think alike. I was trying to work my way out to sea a bit to avoid the heavy swell hitting near the shore and I figured the *Jackson* was doing likewise and would be somewhere in the vicinity."

Struck four times by the towering waves, the *Bedloe* tossed like a matchstick in the ocean before going down, survivors said. All crew members safely abandoned the ship and at least 30 were able to obtain a hold on the liferaft.

(Please turn to Page 16)



A COAST GUARD SEAPLANE disembarks some of the survivors of the ill-fated cutter *Jackson*, transferring them to a Coast Guard rescue vessel.

However, the strain of fighting the hurricane aboard the 125-foot cutter, plus the ordeal of hanging to life rafts for more than 50 hours, proved too much for most of the waterlogged men and only 12 were able to hang on until rescued. One man slid under the water only minutes before the rescue craft came into sight.

Percy P. Poole, Chief Radioman, of 29 Cherry street, Lakewood, N. J., one of the last to leave the sinking ship, was in the water for 24 hours without a lifejacket before he obtained one from a man who had died during the night. He lost his, it was disclosed, helping shipmates climb out of hatches into the open.

The crew had been fighting the seas since 4 A. M. Thursday before the ship went under about 1 P. M. that day. The barometer had dropped below 28.8 during that period. After 51 hours in the sea, the survivors were discovered by the patrol plane at 4:30 P. M. Saturday and picked up an hour later.

#### THE JACKSON

The demise of the *Jackson*, which formerly operated on the Great Lakes, occurred as follows, according to survivors:

Borne to the top of a huge swell, the ship was struck by two other swells and rolled over until the mast dipped water. As the swell subsided, the ship righted and was hit by another high sea and turned on her side a second time. Struggling out of that, the vessel was carried high by a third sea. It seemed then, survivors said, that she hung in mid-air for seconds; then the wind seized her, turned her on the side and completely over, and she disappeared under a huge wave.

The survivors first were spotted about 7 A. M. Saturday by Coast Guard aviators, who radioed the position to the base. The pilots were instructed to land on the sea, render first aid and stand by until surface craft arrived. First to land was Aviation Pilot First Class Roy H. Weber, who lashed his plane to a raft holding three men. He and Radioman Third Class Philip Pincus shed their clothes and dove into the water to drag the men onto the plane.

#### SET PLANES DOWN

Chief Aviation Pilot Carl F. Krogmann, former warrant officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force, and Radioman Third Class Edward Guinan, landed next and lashed their plane to a raft bearing 12 men. Five miles away Aviation Pilot First Class Donald Cobaugh and Radioman Third Class Chester E. Hagg set their plane down beside the third raft, which held five men.

A Navy blimp dropped emergency supplies while the Coast Guard rescue vessel, commanded by Lieut. Bernie B. Ballance, of Rodanthe, N. C., rushed to the scene. William W. McCreedy, Coast Guard boatswain's mate first class, of Pontiac, Mich., who assisted in the rescue, said the first thing he saw was a man doubled up in a small raft,



IN A DRAMATIC plane-to-ship transfer ten miles off the Virginia coast, survivors of the cutter *Jackson* are placed aboard a Coast Guard rescue craft. The men clung to life rafts in shark-infested waters for fifty-eight hours before they were sighted by patrolling planes from C. G. Air Station at Elizabeth City, N. C. The planes landed in the water to render emergency treatment while awaiting the surface craft.

his eyes resembling "a couple of blue dots in a beefsteak."

"He flashed a beautiful smile that couldn't be missed," McCreedy continued. "I felt I had looked at something a man sees once in a lifetime—sort of thought I had come to the edge of heaven. Then, as though his last will to fight had been lost when he saw us, he slumped into the water.

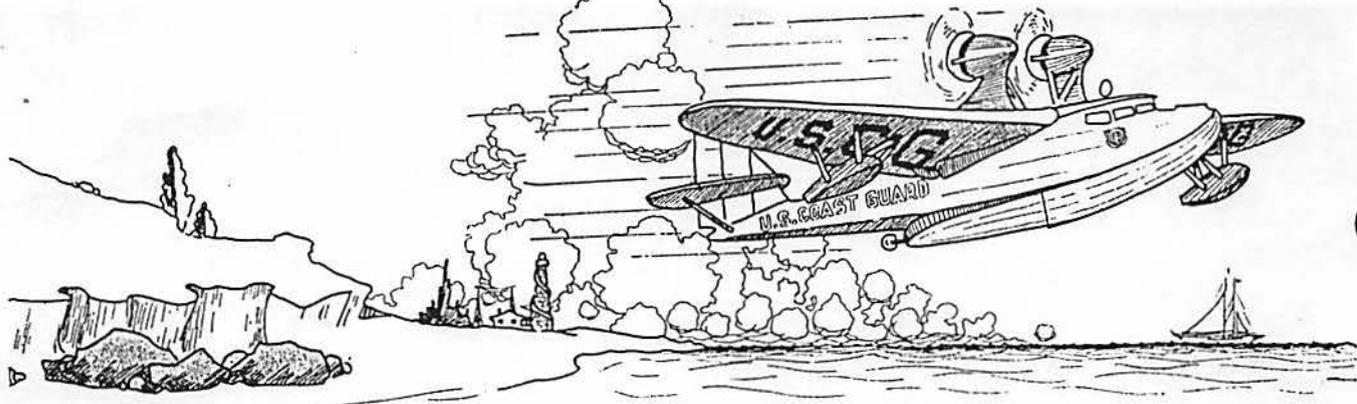
"The radioman (Guinan) grabbed him and held him in the raft. I went overboard to help and the three of us dragged the raft down. The unconscious man's foot was twisted in the lines, but I cut him free and we put him in the boat."

Just before reaching shore, the severely injured man reached up, stroked McCreedy's face and mumbled, "We made it," then died.

Two of the survivors on Friday had tried to swim to shore, which they thought was

about 10 miles away. They were Stanley M. Lencewicz, ship's cook first class, 64 Gate street, South Boston, Mass., and Joseph Brouillard, seaman first class, 36 Rivers avenue, Williamsett, Mass. After swimming about three hours, they realized they were making little headway and decided to return. Turning back, Lencewicz saw a shark about 30 feet away, heading for Brouillard. The shark was longer than the six-foot Brouillard, he said, but passed by him without harm.

The two officers rescued, Lieut. (j.g.) F. K. Merrick, executive officer, of Meridian, N. Y., and Ensign R. F. Hainge, communications officer, of 28 Mitchell Place, White Plains, N. Y., would not accept a drink of water until certain all the men had been cared for. Then they took one sip.



## The Coast Guard FLIES to the Rescue

### Coast Guard Air Force Teams With Floating Units to Rescue Storm Survivors off Carolina Coast, Giving a Preview of Future Air-Sea Rescue Work.

"WE HAVE located 20 survivors on life rafts. Can you send a boat?" The radio message was directed to Coast Guardsmen of the Oregon Inlet Life Boat Station in North Carolina.

"Certainly we'll send a boat. Get their position," said Lieut. Bernie R. Ballance, and within five minutes a rescue boat was headed out to sea.

Two days before this call came in, a mid-September hurricane had ripped the east coast. The gale and tides played havoc with Hatteras Banks—a narrow strip of land flanking Virginia and North Carolina on the east. At land and sea survivors were awaiting help.

For men of the U. S. Coast Guard the work after a storm is an old story. Seafaring men hate Cape Hatteras and her Diamond Shoals, and after each storm Coast Guardsmen fight the mad sea for hours to take unfortunate sailors from turbulent waters, while their ships go down.

Now, as in the wakes of other hurricanes, reports came in that ships were lost and later survivors were located. But unlike other missions of early day rescue parties, this hurricane brought to light the operations of Coast Guard Air-Sea Rescue—a new wrinkle in an old face—which will soon be developed to the perfection point.

#### RADIO GOES OUT

Wherever ships operated in the path of the hurricane, land stations were keeping contact by radio. When radios went out, it was warning that disaster was imminent.

When it became evident that ships had been lost in the storm and survivors might live to tell the tale, planes were dispatched from all air stations.

In the calm that followed this September gale, airplanes filled the sky off Hatteras Banks. For hours they searched back and forth, up and down, along Hatteras. Then three Coast Guard Kingfisher pilots announced they had spotted life rafts.

To take 20 men into land on the small planes would be an impossibility, but along the Banks, from every ten to fifteen miles, is a lifeboat station. Here boats are standing ready for rescue work.

From Oregon Inlet Lieut. Ballance and his crew set out to pick up survivors, who also were Coast Guardsmen from the cutter Jackson.

No sooner had the craft reached the open sea than a PBM zoomed low and indicated the general direction of survivors, who by this time were hovering under the wings of the Kingfishers which had landed.

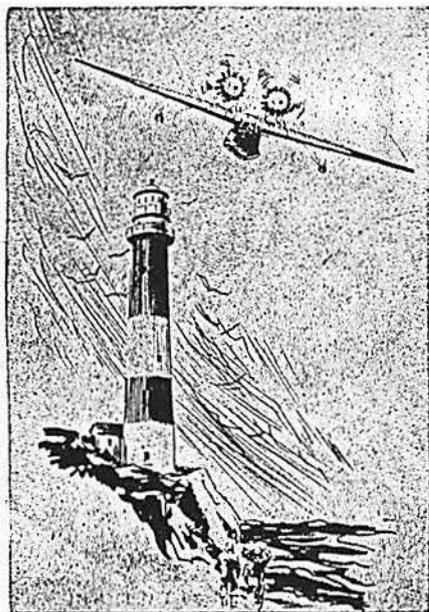
For 35 miles at 20 knots, airplanes and blimps came in to give directions. Not once was the small rescue craft out of sight of a plane or blimp. Aircraft fairly filled the horizon where the survivors waited. Even smoke flares marked the spot. There was no chance to lose sight of the tired and sunburned survivors now. Planes would keep a constant vigil.

#### FIRST AID

No doctor nor medical attendant was on the rescue craft. So it was up to Lieutenant Ballance to make a quick survey and summon aid if life appeared short in the bodies of the weakened men.

Some were carried aboard the little craft. Others, with the help of crewmen, managed to walk to a resting place. The night their ship went down they had clung to a life raft.

"As I looked up from the raft the waves seemed to reach the skies," one 18-year-old seaman recalled. Physically he was better off than any other men on the rafts. He was an athlete, and at times he swam behind the raft to keep up circulation, he said. Nature had been cruel to the survivors. They were bruised, bones had been broken, from crashing against the raft. The waves ruled their destiny that night. Finally when the sea calmed the sun parched them. They were hungry, thirsty and in shock.



By REX WOODS

A Coast Guard Correspondent

their condition. While the rescue craft carried the survivors back to land, a PBM, with doctor and pharmacist's mates, came out to meet them.

The big plane "set" down in the sea which was unusually calm. The worst cases were taken aboard and rushed to a hospital. Despite these efforts one man died before the PBM arrived.

This rescue mission was only part of the work that confronted Coast Guardsmen along the Banks after the hurricane. Lieutenant Ballance's command reached from Oregon Inlet to Hatteras. Along this sand island, bounded on the west by Pamlico Sound and on the east by the Atlantic, live the fishermen of the Banks.

Their homes are in small villages or scattered along the sand dunes. In some places the Banks are two miles wide. In others a mere quarter of a mile. Along the beaches are the wrecked hulls of old schooners which were driven ashore in previous storms. Some have been there thirty years.

#### CLOSE ASSOCIATION

The villagers know the men of the life-boat stations as the Coast Guardsmen know the folks of the Banks. Many of the old-timers in the Service were born in that area. Their fathers grew up in the Banks area and they, too, were surfmen. It comes natural for the Coast Guardsmen to help when their people are in trouble.

Before the hurricane had struck along Hatteras Banks crews from the stations were bringing the residents into the safety of Coast Guard houses. Some sought refuge there without being evacuated.

Just ten miles north of Cape Hatteras Station lies the town of Avon, N. C., population 550. When the storm struck Avon in all its fury it carried the tide in from sea. Then the wind reversed and the water swept in from the sound.

Of the 125 houses in the village less than a score withstood the tide. Some homes were a mile from foundations. In one place five buildings had rubbed eaves, then stopped.

#### HOUSE AFLOAT

Four families gathered in a two-story home which they thought would be safe. "We saw a house go by and thought it was our neighbor's," the lady of the house said. "But instead we were floating away."

She pointed to the ninth step on her stairway. "The water came to here." Her furniture, including a new piano, was ruined. The tide came in so fast there was not time to move the household goods upstairs.

When Lieutenant Ballance surveyed the damage he shook his head. "Another job for the Coast Guard," was his sole remark.

Freight and fishing boats left high and dry on land a mile from the docks had to be moved. Houses would be restored to original sites. Cars left overturned or in deep water holes would be righted. Only



HAULED TO SAFETY aboard a Coast Guard rescue ship after spending fifty-eight hours adrift in the waters off Virginia, Clayton Bybee, RM3c, is revived by stimulants administered by W. W. McCreedy, BM1c.

the Coast Guard had equipment and men to do the job.

Despite emergency assistance there was still the need for food and water. Food supplies were gone or depleted and water was contaminated. In this instance the Coast Guard could bring a limited supply of water from its life boat stations, but food was not available along the Banks.

#### RED CROSS ON JOB

The Red Cross was ready to step in except for transportation. Only jeeps, command cars, and vehicles with large balloon tires can move along the Banks. There is no road, and transportation moves along the beaches—the tide willing.

The Coast Guard did bring the Red Cross into the Banks, however. From a North Carolina inter-coastal city the cutter *Pamlico* carried two Red Cross representatives to a point off Hatteras. Here they were carried by small boat and command car to Avon. When supplies arrived by the *Pamlico*, an

amphibious duck, part of Cape Hatteras equipment, took the food to the hungry, weather-beaten villagers.

The tearing tides of the hurricane completely remodeled the beach of the Banks, but this did not deter the traffic system from station to station.

#### HITCH RIDES

As Coast Guard command cars, trucks and jeeps roll along the beach, villagers ask for a ride to the next station or to a house a "way down the road." They always get the ride.

When Lieutenant Ballance drove his jeep away from Avon on his way to survey more wreckage along Hatteras Banks, he spotted a passenger care in the sand.

Pulling alongside he queried, "What's the matter, Bill?"

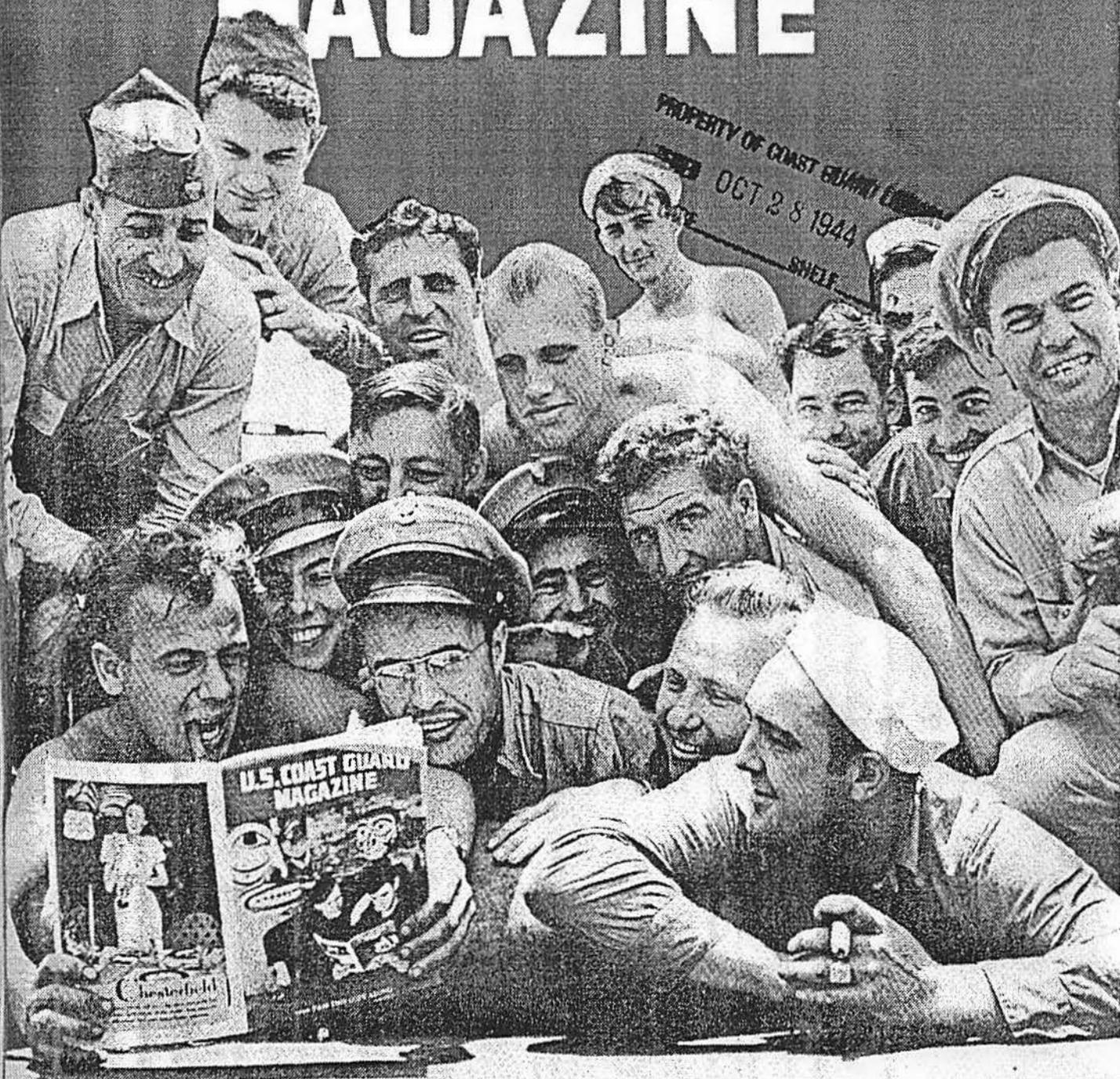
"Nothing, Bernie, just eating a sandwich."

The Coast Guardsmen know all the people along the Banks.



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# U.S. COAST GUARD MAGAZINE



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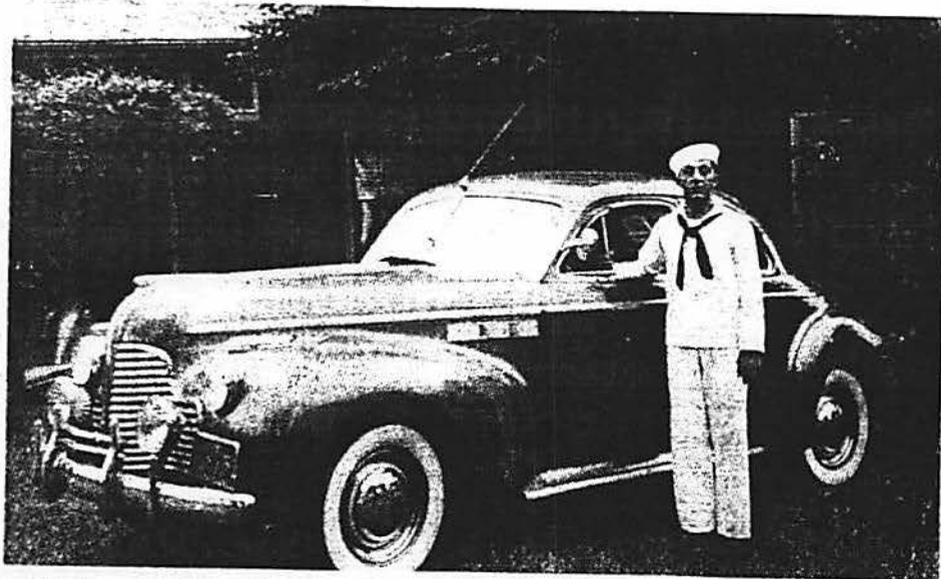
25 Cents

*By the Author*  
Loss of the JACKSON and BEDLOE

Air-Rescue Agency Organized

Transferring the Sick at Sea

Flying the Windmills



## Ship Survives Blast, Storm

Washington, Sept. 25 (AP)—A medium-sized American merchant vessel survived first a torpedoing off the North Carolina coast and then the recent hurricane and reached Norfolk, Va., safely, the navy disclosed today.

After the ship was hit by a torpedo from an enemy submarine, a tug and the Coast Guard cutters Jackson and Bedloe took the vessel under escort.

When the hurricane struck, the tow line parted, the cutters capsized and the navy sent out additional tugs to resume the rescue.

None of the crew of the merchant ship was injured.

William H. Mothershead, Chief Boatswain's Mate of St. Michaels, received his honorable discharge from the United States Coast Guard on September 4, 1945, after serving three years, four months and four days in active service. It will be remembered that Chief Mothershead is a survivor of the Coast Guard Cutter U. S. S. Jackson, which went down in the hurricane September 14, 1944, with the loss of twenty-two men. Mr. and Mrs. Mothershead have a son, Pvt. Robert Frederick Mothershead, who is in training in the Army Air Force at Boeing Field, Seattle, Wash., who writes as follows:

## Thirty-One Men Saved As Storm Wrecks 2 Ships

(Continued from Page 1)

The Bedloe, survivors said, was struck four times by mountainous waves before going down. All crewmen abandoned ship safely and at least 50 caught hold of rafts. However, the strain of fighting the hurricane aboard the cutter plus the effort of hanging on to the rafts proved too much for some of the men and only 12 were able to keep their holds until help arrived. One man slid under the water just a few minutes before the rescue craft arrived.

### In Water 24 Hours

Percy P. Poole, chief radioman, Lakewood, N. J., was one of the last to leave the Bedloe. He was in the water for 24 hours without a life jacket, but finally took one from a man who died. The crew had been fighting heavy seas from 4 a. m. Thursday until 1 p. m. when the ship went down. They were found by the patrol plane at 4:30 p. m. Saturday.

Survivors told the following story of the loss of the Jackson: Borne to the top of a towering swell, the ship was struck by two other swells and rolled over until the mast dipped water. As the swell subsided the ship righted and was hit by another high sea and turned on her side again . . . a third sea caught her, the wind seized her, she turned on her side, then went completely over.

The Jackson survivors were spotted Saturday at 7 a. m. Aviation Pilot, First Class Weber, Chicago, was the first rescuer to land. He and Radioman, Third Class Philip Pincus, New York, shed their clothes and dove into the water to drag the men into the plane. The two other planes landed beside the other two rafts. A Navy blimp dropped emergency supplies while the rescue ship, commanded by Lieut. Bernice Ballance, Rodanthe, N. C., rushed to their aid.

### Dies With Rescue at Hand

William W. McCredy, boatswain's mate first class, Pontiac, Mich., who assisted in the rescue, said the first thing he saw when the rafts were spotted was a man doubled up on a small raft, his eyes like "a couple of blue dots in a beefsteak. He flashed a beautiful smile that couldn't be missed . . . then, as though his last will to fight had been lost when he saw us, he slumped into the water. The radioman (Edward Guinan, Pittsfield, Mass.) grabbed him and held him in the raft. I went overboard to help and the three of us dragged the raft down. The unconscious man's foot was twisted in the lines, but I cut him free and we put him in the boat." Just before they reached shore the wounded man mumbled "We made it," then died.

### Two Try Swimming In

Two of the survivors, Stanley M. Lenczewicz, ship's cook first class, Boston, Mass., and Joseph [name obscured], seaman first class, Wil-