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The Sinking of the 'Caribou' Ferry Mrs. Thomas Pearcey, North Sydney: In the morning when I went out to the clothes line everybody kept looking at me, looking at me. And I figured it was because I had been so sick. I had had meningitis and I had just got...well, I guess it was the first time I ever got outdoors afterwards. There was a haze. It was something like when the sun is going in eclipse • that greeny haze • like when it*s hot and it*s hazy • well that's how it was. And I wonder if it was the day, the kind of a day it was • it was in October • or if it was because so many lives had been lost. Who knows? My son was very young. He was only 16. And he was working at the Marine Railway • it was called The Slip then. And he came home to dinner at 12 o'clock and he said, "Maw** • nobody had told me before • and he says, "Maw" he says • and he started to cry. • • Did you hear the Caribou was lost?" And I said, • • No. I don't believe it." And he said, "I don*t believe it but everybody downtown says it*s true." And I said, "I'm not going to believe it.*" And that evening I went outside and saw old Captain Critchell • he*s dead now. And I said, • • Is it true, Mr. Critchell, that the Caribou is lost?" And he said, "Yes, my dear." And I said, • • I heard it, you know, but I would not believe it." Well, then you know anxious moments and anxious moments • and about 8 o'clock my husband came home. He came in the house first. And it was my son I was thinking of. So young. And I said, ' • Where's Billy?*** And I think I died a thousand deaths in that minute. You know, he came in without him. He said, • 'He just stopped off at a neighbor's to tell the woman that her brother was still living." So he came in then. And the house was full of people. Mrs. Thomas Pearcey Jack Hatcher Thomas Pearcey Jack Hatcher, Neil's Harbour: Oh, they got some lies • lies that they put out about the Caribou • but I'll tell you the truth. When the steamer leave North Sydney to go across • you know where the Farewell Bouy is to? Hie Farewell Bouy up off Low Point- she's there. When he'd go to Newfoundland he had to stop there • the war was on • he had to get his course from the Navy at Sydney before he could go across. He couldn't steer where he wanted to steer. He'd get his course, and then he'd go below • stay there till about 4 o'clock in the morning, before he'd come on deck. The captain. He'd go to bed. I know this is true because I had a friend, he was at the wheel, was steering. When he was to leave and go below, the captain said to his men: "This is the night we're gonna get it." He said that, then he went below and went to bed. And he's up • every five and ten minutes he was up. In the wheelhouse that night, could not rest. He steered across what orders he had. Thomas Pearcey, North Sydney: The Captain had a hunch, but he couldn*t say for sure. He had a hunch she was going to be torpedoed all right but he didn't know if it was that night or some other night. I was up in his room at 3 o'clock in the morning and he wasn't in bed. He always used to go to bed after we*d leave North Sydney. He was up. I asked him, • • What's the trouble?" He said, '*Aw, I've got an imeasy mind. I think we're going to get hit tonight." That's the words he said to me. I didn't expect that from him. And he had two sons, they were lost that night. Chief steward, second steward, steerage steward, stewardess, three mates • all them fellows were gone.



And all the engineers. 31 of the crew was lost. Cape Breton's Magazine/23