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Cap Cowley's Story continued from page 14 The Salvage of the Leicester (Where do you first hear about the Leicester?) We were in North Sydney. I just got called to the telephone in the ship chandler's office there. And I spoke to Halifax. And they told me the last known position of the Leicester was so-and-so. And to leave North Sydney and get out and look for her. (What were you doing when you got that phone call? Did you have other plans?) No, no, no. That's what they call "laying on station." And it's a fairly boring procedure, because you can't go very far. Even if I went to the movies in the evening, I had to tell the quartermaster left on the ship where I was, so he could call the movie house. And then I used to have a thing later--in the movies, I told them, "Any time we get a call," I said, "you put this slide on, recalling the crew immediately." Because we were supposed to get out in less than half an hour--and we always did. (Your crew could be anywhere then.) Yeah. So we used to have a signal to recall the crew: three long blasts on our whistle. We had a very loud whistle on that ship--like a liner.... We even had a Newfoundland dog on board that was given to me as a present-- from a salvage job I did up in the north end of Newfoundland--given to me as a puppy. And this dog was on board the ship. And that dog knew the signal as well as anybody. And boy, when they gave her the three blasts, he used to come belting back to the ship! We always had a full stock of provisions and a full stock of fuel and a full stock of water, ready for going. That ship--we had enough bunkers to go around the world a couple of times, at the regular speed. So, we went out--left North Sydney and went out. I think it was about 6 days we had to steam. It was nice weather then, when we'd left North Sydney. But, we'd only been out for a day. Then we had this signal from the weather people saying that there was a hurricane coming up the coast. Then I had a message from the Foundation to try and avoid the hurricane, but, at the same time, to proceed to the position of the Leicester at all speed, because there's a Dutch tug called the Swarters also looking for it. And they didn't want the Dutch tug to get the job. So here was me--I had to dodge the hurricane, which meant I really had to go miles and miles out of the way. And probably let the other tug get the bloody ship. So I decided to face the hurricane and go through it. And we did. We had to ease down, but we got through the hurricane all right. (You see this hurricane coming?) You see big black clouds in front of you, which they call a hurricane bar. When you first see this, there's not that much wind blowing. But as you approach it, the wind is increasing, then you can see a big swell coming, then the waves start. And the next thing you know, it's blowing like the devil. And if you understand hurricanes, you know which direction it's travelling on, from the way the wind's blowing. And you know how far you're going to be to one side of the centre of the hurricane, or the other. Well, in this case, we passed right through the centre of the hurricane. So you get calm for a little while, and then after that you get into the other section of the hurricane, where the wind comes round and sweeps you from the other direction, with just as much force. But this wasn't a really bad one, like we got afterwards. I think it was only around 95, 100 miles an hour. Bad enough,



but it's.... (You just rode through that.) Oh, (the Josephine) was a lovely seaboat. She was made for that kind of work.... That was the beauty of the Josephine, see, she had the two engines, so if one motor conked out, you always had the other one. That was a great thing. They were both connected to one shaft--you only had one propeller. You always had driving power. (So you go through this hurricane, looking for a ship that you don't know if she's go- 70 I