

Cassell Discovery Books
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THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE

Strange things happen near Bermuda.
Ships vanish, time seems to stop, planes go missing.
No one can explain why...

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The Bermuda Triangle

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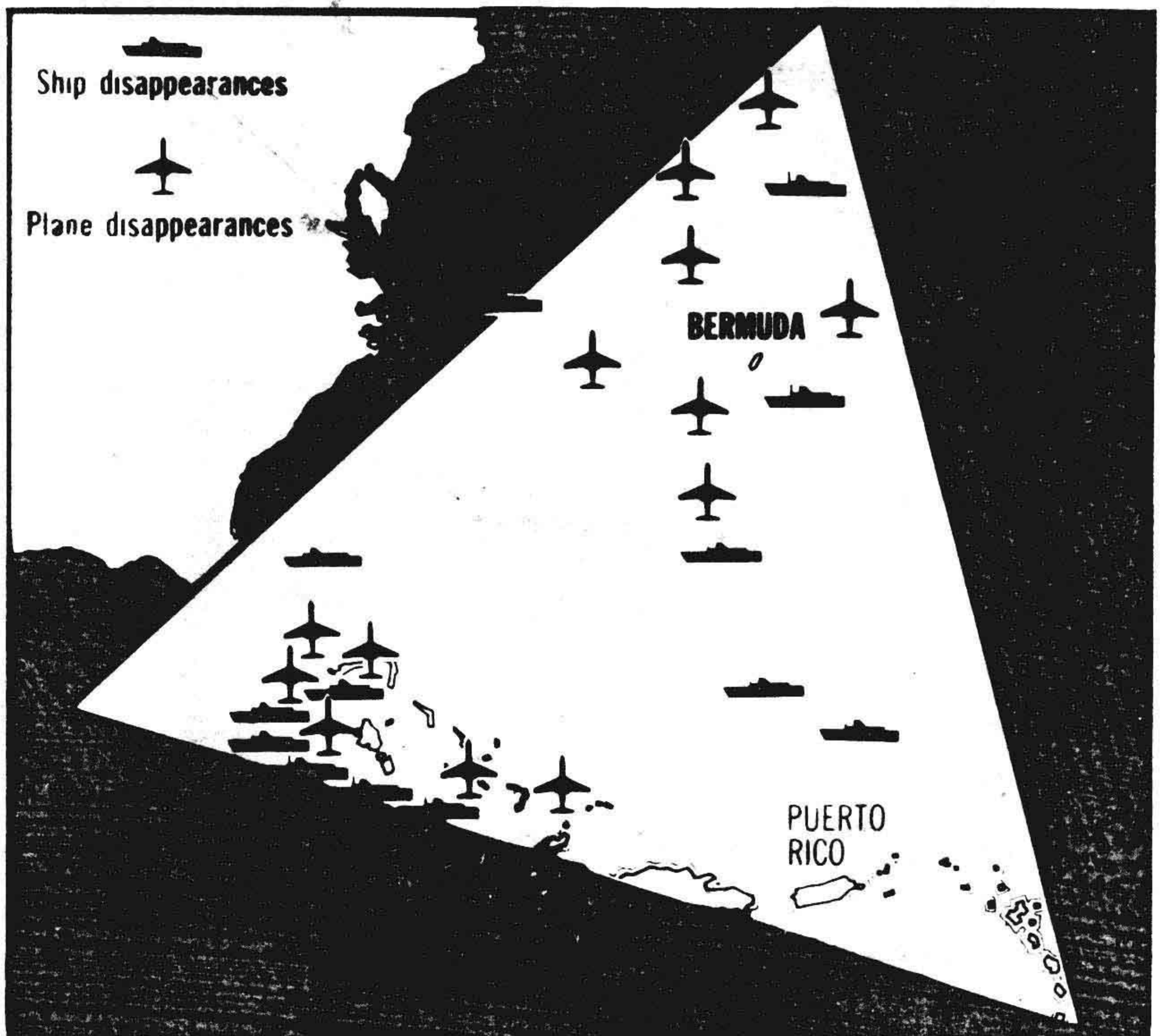
Illustrations by Daniel Wood

The Bermuda Triangle

Sometimes ships are lost at sea, or planes crash.

When this happens, a search is made. Signs of the wreck are found or a slick of oil is seen. People are rescued and bits of wood and metal are washed ashore. Then a reason for the accident is found.

There may have been a storm, the captain may have lost his way, or the plane may have run out of fuel.



This is what usually happens, but not always. In one area, many ships and planes have been lost without trace. Some of the missing ships were large. Several had crews of over 300 men. Even ships being towed have been lost.

One minute the ship was there, and the next minute it was gone. Some ships have been seen going into a patch of fog, but they have never been seen again. No people have been rescued, and no bodies have been washed ashore.

In this area planes have vanished too. It has always happened quickly. The pilots have not sent out distress signals. People have even seen planes crashing into the sea. But then nobody has found the wreck.

Nobody knows what has happened to these ships and planes. They almost all disappeared in good weather. There was no storm and nothing seemed wrong.

The area where these strange things happen is called the Bermuda Triangle. It is off the south-east coast of the United States. (The map shows where it is.) In this area hundreds of planes have vanished without trace and thousands of people have been lost. Yet not a single body or piece of wreck has ever been found, and it is still happening. Experts say that one plane vanishes every two weeks and a ship is lost almost every week.

The five bombers

Ships have been lost in the Bermuda Triangle for hundreds of years. But it was not given its name until 1945. Then on 5 December, six naval planes and their crews were lost. This made people notice this strange area.

Five bombers set off from Florida at 2 pm. The sun was shining and there were only a few clouds. It was perfect flying weather and there was no reason to expect any problems. But something did go wrong. At 3.30 pm the flight leader called his base.

“We seem to be off course,” he said. “We cannot see land. We seem to be lost.”

He was told to fly to the west.

“We don’t know which way is west,” he replied. “Everything is wrong and strange. Even the sea doesn’t look as it should.”

His calls became harder to hear and the base could not make contact with any of the planes.

A flying boat with a crew of thirteen was sent to search for the bombers. A few minutes after takeoff, the captain spoke to base. He said there were strong winds in the area. That was the last message received from the rescue plane. It vanished as well. six naval planes had disappeared on the same day.

A great air and sea search took place. Over 300 planes and hundreds of ships searched the area for days. The beaches were checked for wreckage.

Nothing was found. All the planes carried life rafts, and the crews were trained to survive, but none of the men was found.

Not one of the planes sent a distress signal. The last message heard was very strange. The flight leader said, "Don't come after me..."

Nobody has been able to explain what happened. The six planes and their crews just vanished. No trace of them has ever been found.



The *Star Ariel*

Almost a year later, another plane was lost. This time it was the *Star Ariel*. She was owned by the same firm as the *Star Tiger*.

The *Star Ariel* vanished on a flight from Bermuda. It was on 17 January, 1949. She was carrying a crew of 7 and 13 passengers. The sea was calm and the weather was good. An hour after takeoff the captain reported back to Bermuda: "Fair weather. Expected time of arrival as planned." There were no more messages from the *Star Ariel*.





Many ships searched the area. They all were asked to look for wreckage from the plane. Seventy-two search planes flew over the area as well. But nothing was seen. Not a single piece of the plane has ever been found.

The *Star Tiger* and the *Star Ariel* were owned by the same firm. They both vanished within a year. They were both last heard of in the same area. Nobody knows why either plane was lost.

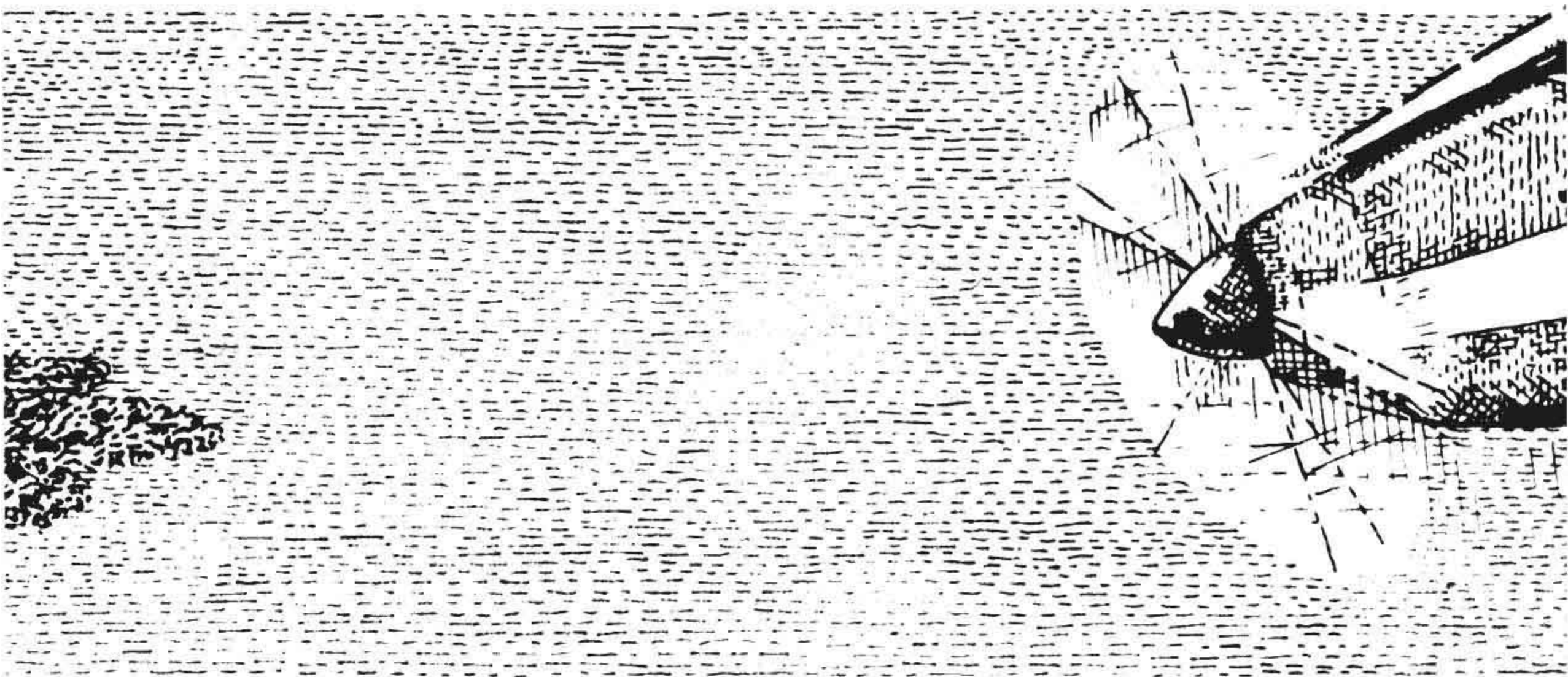
The missing island

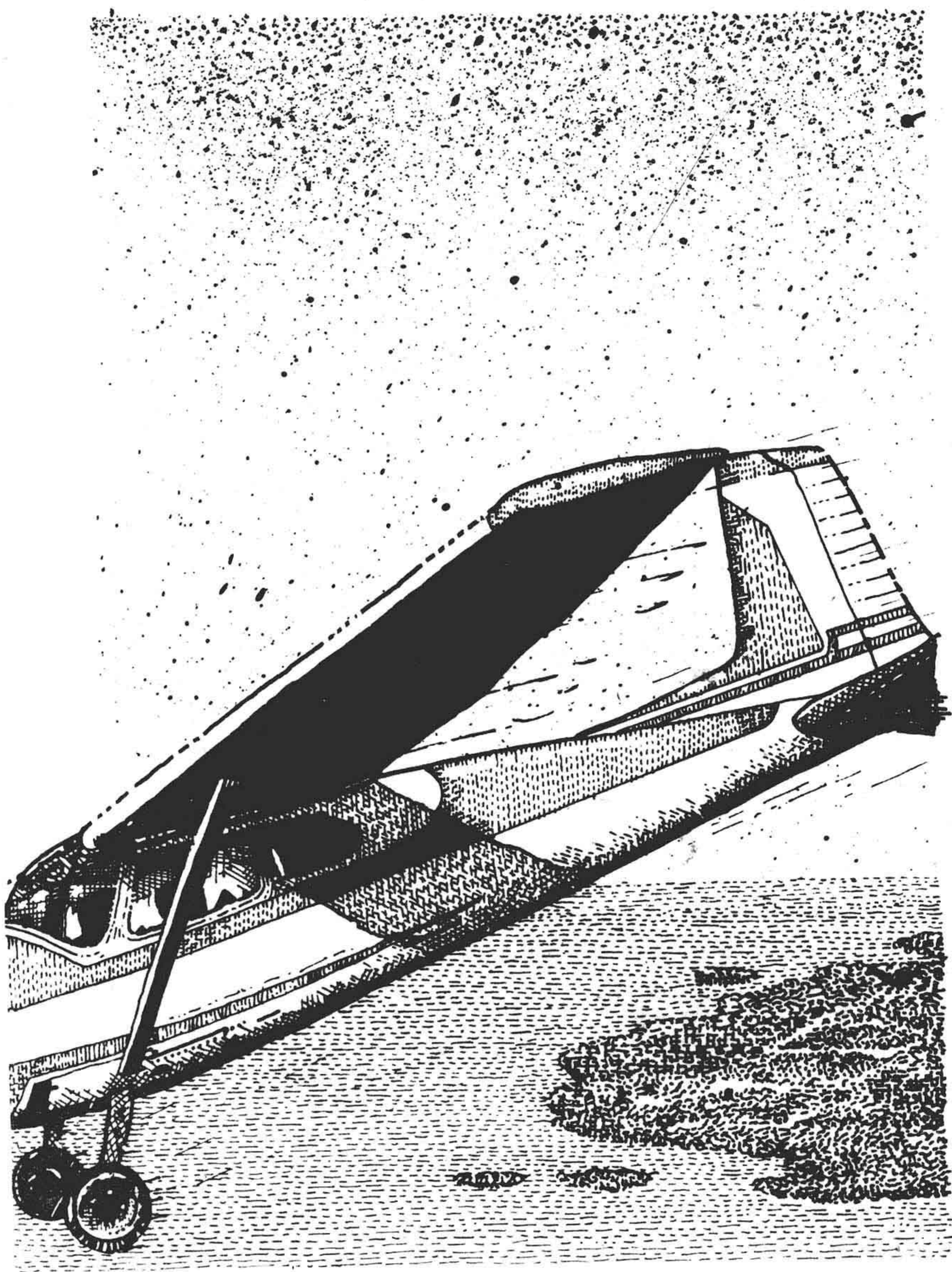
Since 1946 hundreds of planes have vanished in the Bermuda Triangle. The pattern is usually the same. Everything is normal, then there is nothing. No wreckage, oil, crew, or even hungry sharks are seen.

On 7 June, 1964, a light plane vanished in a strange way. The pilot, Carolyn Cascio, was flying to Grand Turk Island. With her there was one passenger. The pilot reached the place where she thought Grand Turk should be but she could not work out where she was, so she sent this message: "Nothing is down there," she said. "Is there any way out of this?"

The base replied, but she could not hear them.

At the time, people on Grand Turk saw a light plane flying round the island. It did that for half an hour, and then it vanished. It seemed that people could see the plane, but the pilot could not see the island. No trace of the plane was ever found.





The strange cloud

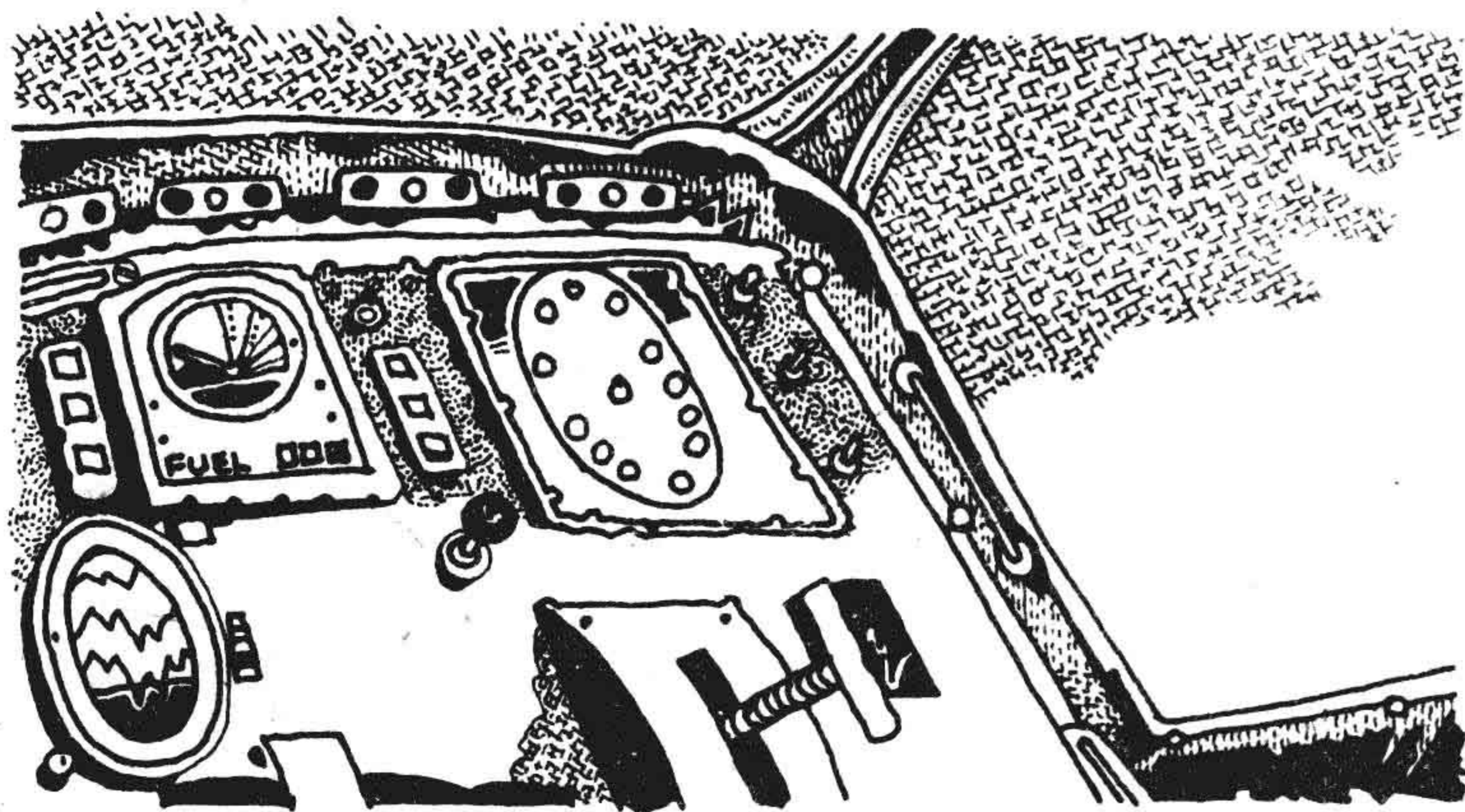
A strange thing happened to Bruce Gernon in the Bermuda Triangle, but he lived to tell the tale.

On 4 December, 1970, he was flying to Palm Beach. In front of him, he saw a large cloud. He began to fly over it, but the cloud rose as his plane did. It seemed to follow him.

Gernon made up his mind to turn back. Then he saw a hole in the cloud. As he flew into it, the hole closed in. It was just as if he was flying through a tunnel. For the last 20 seconds the wing tips were touching the clouds on both sides.

When he came out of the tunnel, it was hazy and he could not see anything. At last the haze went and Gernon was able to land at Palm Beach.

The flight had taken 30 minutes less than usual. The plane had used 10 gallons of fuel less than normal. But he had flown an extra 50 miles!

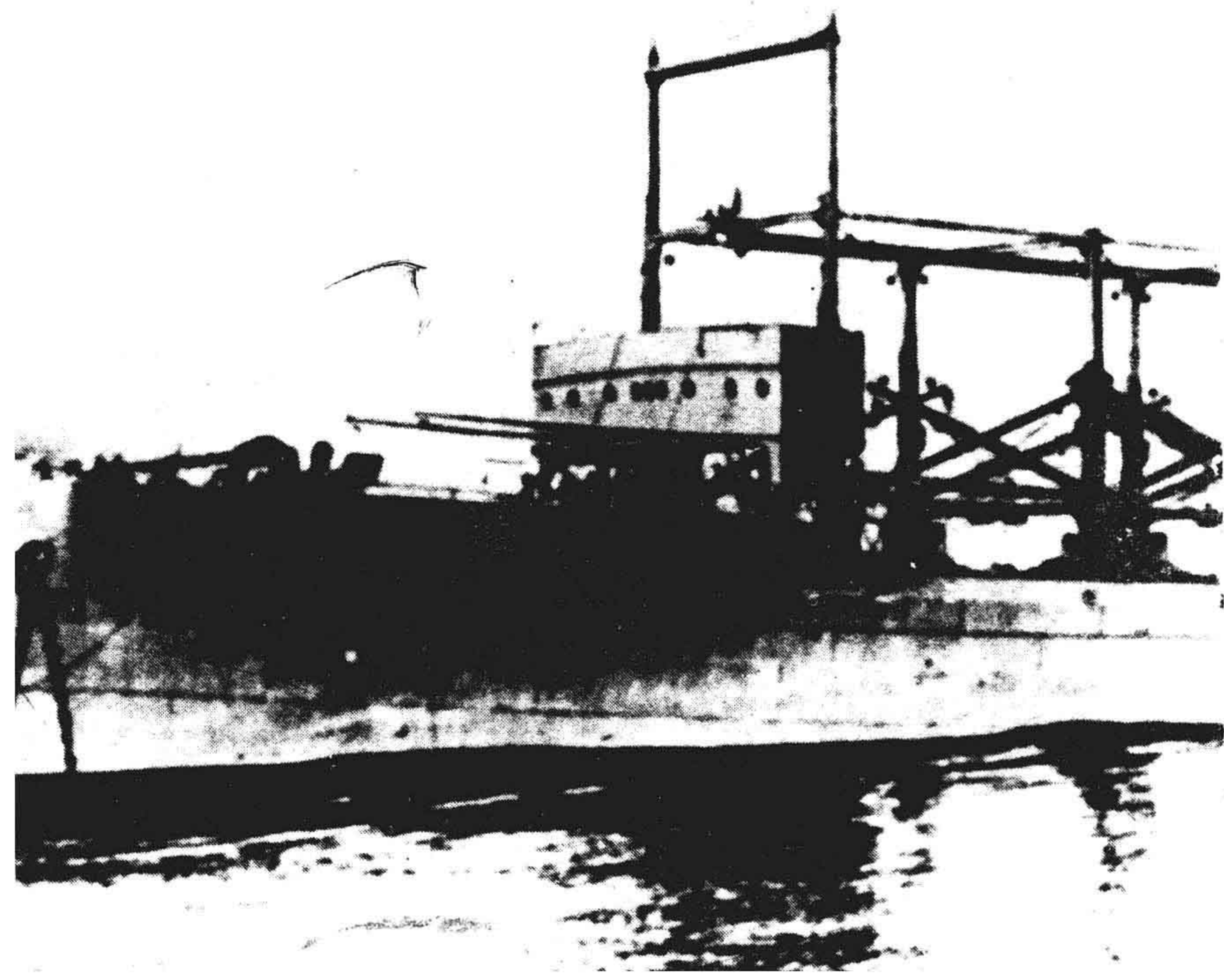




Ships that vanished

Ghost ships have been seen too in the Bermuda Triangle. They come out of nowhere, and then they vanish. Some look like old sailing ships, other are like floating hotels. Some people say that they are the ghosts of lost ships.

One of the biggest ships that have vanished was the U.S.S. *Cyclops*. This was a supply ship. It was lost during the first World War, on 4 March, 1918, with 309 people on board.



At first people thought the ship had hit a mine. But no trace of the ship has ever been seen and the wreck has never been found.

On 3 October, 1951, the *Sao Paulo* vanished while it was being towed by tow tugs. During the night the cables broke. Next day there was an air and sea search. Strange lights were seen, but there was no sign of the *Sao Paulo*. It had vanished with its crew of eight.



The *Wild Goose*

Other boats have been lost while being towed. The crews have vanished too. But one man lived to tell his tale.

Joe Talley owned the *Wild Goose*. It was being towed over very deep water. The weather was windy but good. The sun had just set, and Talley was asleep in his bunk. He was woken up by water pouring over him. He grabbed a life jacket and pushed his way through an open porthole. The boat was deep under water, but he swam to the surface. The *Wild Goose* had sunk.

There was no sign of the towboat. For half an hour, Talley swam around; alone in the water.

At last the towboat returned and Talley was taken on board. The crew told him what had happened. The *Wild Goose* had been pulled under the water. It had gone straight down. They cut the line because they were afraid that their own boat would be sucked down too.





The *Good News*

In 1966 another towboat had a lucky escape. The tug was the *Good News* and it was towing a barge.

The tug was near where the *Wild Goose* had been lost. It was afternoon. The weather was good and the sky was clear. The Captain, Dan Henry, was in his cabin. Suddenly he heard some shouting, so Captain Henry went onto the bridge. The compass was spinning. The sea was strange and they could not see where they were. The engines had lost power. It felt as if something was trying to pull the tug back, but the tug just keep going.

