

= HM Armed Smack Inverlyon =

His Majesty 's or HM Armed Smack Inverlyon was a fishing smack that was converted to a Q @-@ ship during the First World War . Q @-@ ships served as decoys to lure German submarines near enough so that concealed weapons could be brought to bear and sink the submarines . On 15 August 1915 , Inverlyon succeeded in luring German submarine UB @-@ 4 within range and sinking her with nine shots from her gun . The Royal Navy Gunner in command of the vessel , Ernest Martin Jehan , received the Distinguished Service Cross and members of Inverlyon 's crew shared the bounty offered for German submarines . After Inverlyon 's Q @-@ ship career ended , she returned to fishing , but was sunk by U @-@ 55 on 1 February 1917 .

= = Career = =

Inverlyon was a fishing smack of 59 tons burthen that was a part of the fishing fleet at Lowestoft on the Suffolk coast . The wooden boat had a flush deck , two masts , and no engine . Inverlyon 's sails were fore @-@ and @-@ aft rigged and may have been red ochre in colour , the traditional sail colour for British smacks .

In February 1915 , Germany began its first submarine offensive of the First World War . During this campaign , enemy vessels in the German @-@ defined war zone ( German : Kriegsgebiet ) , which encompassed all waters around the United Kingdom , were to be sunk , and the British fishing fleet was not exempt . In mid @-@ June , for example , the German submarine UB @-@ 2 had sunk six smacks off Lowestoft in a two @-@ day period .

One method devised to deal with U @-@ boat attacks was the decoy or Q @-@ ship , designed to lure submarines that were targeting merchant shipping close enough so that concealed guns or other weapons could sink them . Inverlyon was selected to become a Q @-@ ship , was outfitted with either a 3 @-@ pounder ( 47 mm ) or a 6 @-@ pounder ( 57 mm ) gun , and entered the service of the Royal Navy on 2 August 1915 . Inverlyon 's fishing crew and skipper were all temporarily inducted into the Trawler section of the Royal Naval Reserve . Regular Royal Navy Gunner Ernest Martin Jehan and three other gunners from HMS Dryad ? a former torpedo boat operating as a minesweeper out of Lowestoft ? were assigned to Inverlyon , with Jehan in command .

On 14 August , the 59 @-@ ton smack Bona Fide was stopped by a U @-@ boat , boarded , and sunk with explosives 35 nautical miles ( 65 km ) east @-@ northeast from Lowestoft . This attack was likely by UB @-@ 4 , because she was operating in that area on her fourteenth patrol . Regardless of the identity of Bona Fide 's attacker , UB @-@ 4 did approach a group of smacks in the vicinity the next day . Unbeknown to UB @-@ 4 's commander , Oberleutnant zur See Karl Gross , one of the fishing vessels was the disguised Inverlyon .

Around 20 : 20 , UB @-@ 4 surfaced near Inverlyon , and Gross , on the conning tower of UB @-@ 4 , began shouting out commands to Inverlyon 's crew in German . Jehan , after waiting until UB @-@ 4 closed to within 30 yards ( 27 m ) of Inverlyon , ordered the White Ensign raised and gave the command to open fire . A burst of three rounds from the Inverlyon 's weapon scored hits on the conning tower , the second shot destroying part of the bridge and sending Gross into the water . UB @-@ 4 , with no one at the helm , drifted behind Inverlyon , and when clear , Inverlyon 's gunner unleashed another six shots into the hull of UB @-@ 4 at point @-@ blank range . All the while , small arms fire from Inverlyon 's crew peppered the submarine . The U @-@ boat began going down by the bow , becoming nearly vertical before disappearing below the surface . Inverlyon 's fishing skipper , a man named Phillips , dived in to attempt the rescue of a crewman from UB @-@ 4 . Phillips was unable to reach him before the crewman went under and met same fate as Gross and UB @-@ 4 's twelve other crewmen .

As UB @-@ 4 went down she fouled Inverlyon 's nets ? which had been deployed to keep up the appearance of a real fishing boat ? essentially anchoring Inverlyon in place . The Q @-@ ship 's crew , not having a wireless set on board , sent word of the encounter with another smack . This was followed up by releasing messenger pigeons the following morning , requesting instructions on

what to do with UB @-@ 4 . The thought of salvaging the snagged U @-@ boat was rejected , so the nets were cut , freeing UB @-@ 4 to sink to the bottom . UB @-@ 4 's wreck lies at position 52 ° 43 ? N 2 ° 18 ? E. On 19 November 1915 Jehan was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross ( DSC ) for the sinking of UB @-@ 4 , and the crewmen of Inverlyon split the submarine bounty paid by the Admiralty .

About three weeks after she sank UB @-@ 4 , Inverlyon had the opportunity to sink another U @-@ boat , but was unsuccessful . The U @-@ boat encountered may have been either UB @-@ 2 or UB @-@ 16 , which both sank fishing vessels in the area on 7 and 8 September . By 1916 , Inverlyon had ended her short @-@ lived Q @-@ ship career and returned to being a fishing boat . Jehan , in addition to his DSC , was subsequently specially promoted to lieutenant on 4 January 1916 for his war service ; he retired from the Royal Navy on 29 October 1920 .

On 1 February 1917 , the German submarine U @-@ 55 shelled and sank Inverlyon 15 nautical miles ( 28 km ) from Trevose Head at position 50 ° 47 ? N 5 ° 5 ? W ; there were no reported casualties .