Twitter Thread by john woolfenden



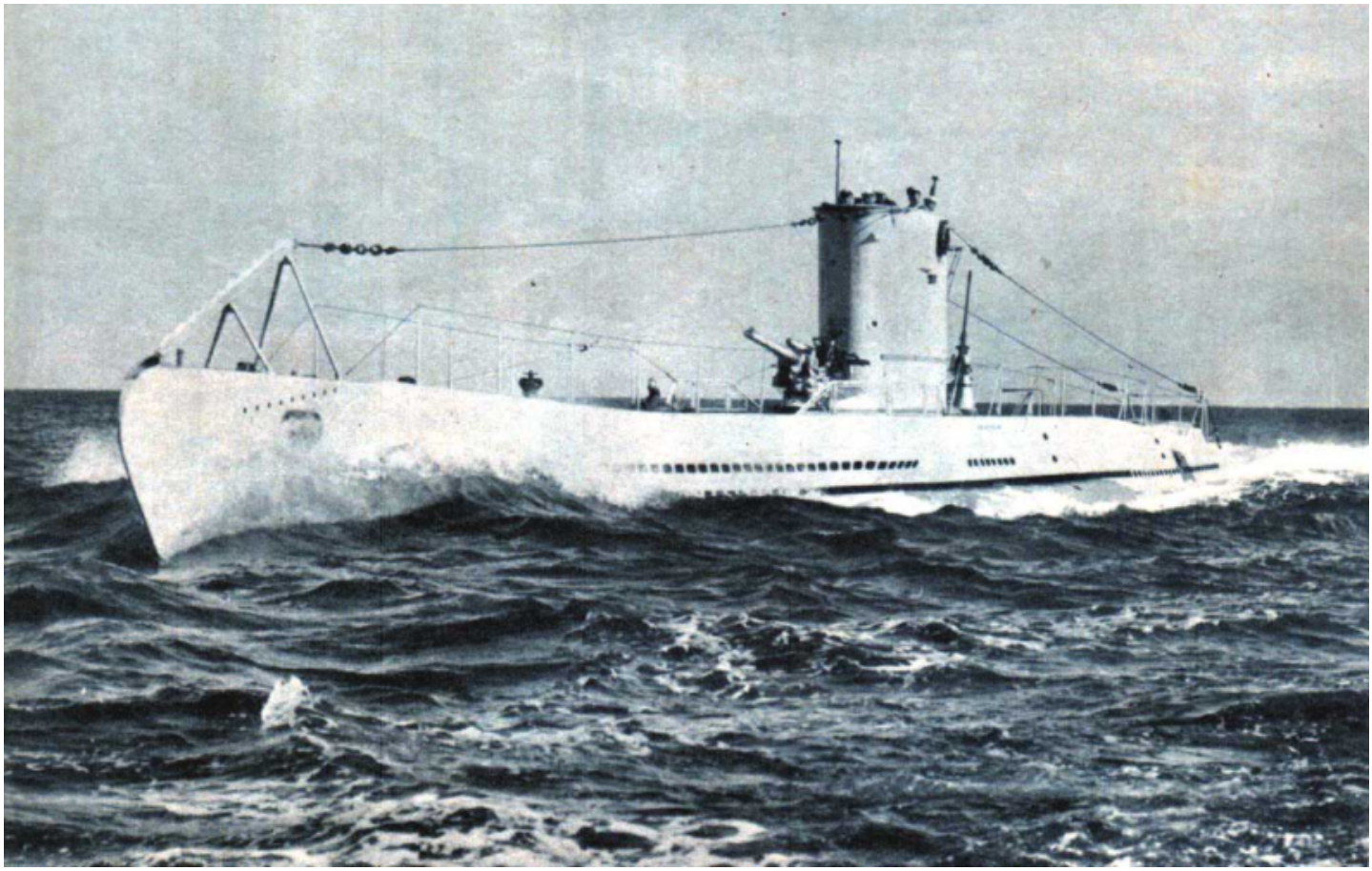
john woolfenden
@TheWulfster

1/10 So have I ever told you about my great grandad Frederick "Fred" Woolfenden? He was born near Oldham in 1901. I don't know much about his early life, but I know when he met my great gran he was a boxer, streetfighter and one of those fairground fighters who you take on for ££

2/10 My great gran, who herself was a game old bird, described him as a proper tough bast*rd, Anyway, as if being punched in the beak for a living wasn't enough. He and my gran decided to move to Fleetwood and Fred decided to try his luck at sea.

3/10 For most of his time at sea he was either a fireman or deckhand on "coal burners" fishing Iceland & the North Atlantic. An immensely tough job and life. When the second world war started in 1939 being a fisherman was a reserved occupation.

4/10 They continued fishing despite the risk of mines and U-boats. In Sept of 1939 Fred was part of the crew of the "Arlita" (FD188) fishing near St Kilda. All of a sudden this bugger popped up.



5/10 The sub rounded up two other trawlers put all the crews on one and sank the other two. Fred made it through the war, despite another submarine incident and continued to go to sea. In 1947 he was part of the crew of the trawler Dhoon.

6/10 I've always though that the name "Dhoon" was very spooky. The Dhoon got itself in trouble in a storm off the Westfjords of Iceland. The boat crashed into rocks at the summit of sheer cliffs.



7/10 Things on the Dhoon got so desperate that the crew lashed their arms to the guard rails of the trawler as not to get washed overboard. Unfortunately where Fred, the skipper and mate lashed themselves to, got blown away by waves and

wind. Fred was never seen again.

8/10 But the tale does not end there. There were still 12 crew onboard battling for their lives. Their salvation came in the form of a group of Icelandic farmers for whom the word "brave" does not even begin to describe them.

9/10 In a gale force storm these rescuers using ropes and scaling the cliffs rescued the rest of the crew. I personally know people who would not be here if it wasn't for the actions of those farmers.

10/10 There is a memorial to the rescue and every so often the farmers that live in the area light three candles there (Not four candles ■) and one of them is for Fred. So cheers @thisisiceland and here's to you Great grandad Fred! @UKinIceland

