

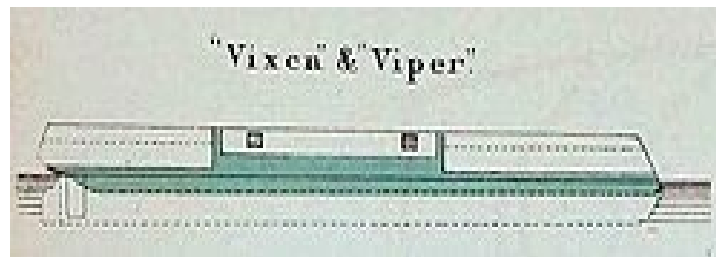
Lore from Bermuda

HMS *Vixen* (1865)



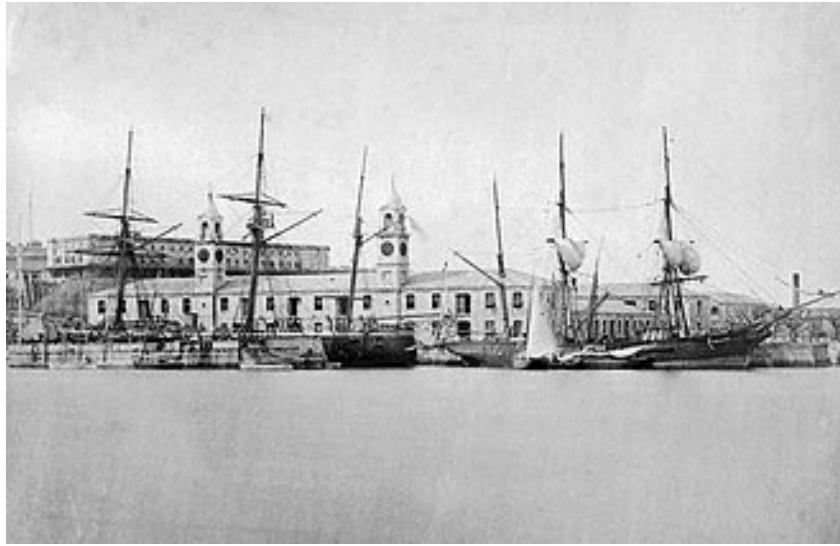
Wreck of the HMS Vixen, Bermuda - Sunk Intentionally to Block Chubb Channel from Enemy Submarines
(<https://www.reddit.com/>)

HMS Vixen was an armoured gunboat. She was an experimental design incorporating revolutionary concepts. She had an armoured citadel which protected her machinery and her ram bow was reinforced by massive ironwork structures. No doubt this is why it still exists - 160 years after she was launched. Her hull was of composite construction, with iron frames and iron bulwarks and an outer cladding of 5.5 inches of teak over the entire hull. She was the first Royal Navy vessel to have twin propellers – massive two-bladed, 9 ft diameter screws. She was built at Deptford and launched in 1865. Total cost was £54,193.



A contemporary cut-away diagram of *Vixen* (Wikipedia)

She was unsuitable for the open sea under steam or sail and was nearly lost in the Irish Channel during a winter gale in 1876. Subsequently, she and her sister ship *Viper* were towed to Bermuda where they operated within the reefline as floating defensive batteries, extending the defenses of the Royal Naval Dockyard. In July 1869, both ships were employed to bring the floating dock *HMS Bermuda* from The Narrows to the dockyard.



Vixen (left) and the barque *Nightwatch* (right) at Bermuda Dockyard between 1867 and 1873

Royal Navy - National Maritime Museum Originally uploaded to EN Wikipedia as en:File: HMS Vixen (1865).jpg by en:User:Shem1805 24 September 2008 (log)
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The Daniel's Head Channel Act 1887 authorised the sinking of a blockship to close Bermuda's western channel. In 1896, Vice-Admiral James Erskine recommended the channel be covered by shore batteries against torpedo boat or submarine attack. In order to make such boats pass close to Daniel's Head, *Vixen* was sunk in the channel.

Once her engines had been removed, she was placed across the Chubb Cut and massive scuttling charges were detonated. Her keel was broken, and she settled in her final resting place in 10m of water just west of Daniel's Head, at the west end of Bermuda. She lies in a narrow gap in the coral reef, with the bow just above water. She is in a marine conservation area and is often visited by glass-bottomed boats as a tourist attraction.



The wreck of HMS *Vixen* as it is today
 Daniel's Head, Bermuda,
 (Wikipedia)