

# Royal Navy 'A' to 'I' class destroyers



## Ian M. Fleming suggests some of the many conversions possible from the Airfix 'Hotspur' kit

The large number of destroyers built during the First World War and retained by the Royal Navy for many years thereafter were in important respects obsolescent by the late 1920s. They were structurally still in good condition; indeed, the 'S', 'V' and 'W' classes, which survived the peacetime scrapping programme, were not discarded until after the Second World War at the worthy age of thirty years, having accepted enormous demands during that conflict. Age was not their shortcoming; but they simply were not the best that could have been produced by 1926.

In that year, two larger experimental destroyers were commissioned: *Amazon* and *Ambuscade*. These were armed, exactly as their predecessors, with four 4.7 inch guns, elevating to 30 degrees, and two sets of three 21 inch torpedo tubes. Their superiority lay in the two systems which determine the effectiveness of a destroyer: greatly improved fire control for the main armament, and more powerful turbines using superheated steam.

Since larger engines require a larger hull, the new ships were safer and less uncomfortable; they were also better able to accept later additions to their equipment and development of their design. Compared with the 'V' and 'W' groups they had a much longer fore-castle and larger bridge to provide more accommodation. This also improved their appearance.

With hindsight, we know that the enemy most often met by fleet destroyers in the Second World War came from the air or from under the sea's surface. In that light the armament of *Amazon* and her successors seems ill-conceived for their purpose. But in 1926 the employment envisaged for destroyers was not what it eventually became, for the traditional destroyer concept was still considered valid: to attack the enemy at high speed with torpedoes, and with gunfire to screen a friendly force from attack by enemy destroyers. Depth-charge throwers and chutes were provided for offensive defence against submarines, where the destroyer's speed — and, when available, Asdic — were a very considerable advantage. But the aircraft could not in 1926 have been reckoned a potential threat of such gravity as it became after another decade's development: hence the apparent supposition that two single 2 pdr

pom-poms were a sufficient AA protection.

*Amazon*, designed and built by Thornycroft, and *Ambuscade*, by Yarrow, being in the first instance experimental designs, were identical neither to each other nor to the nine classes derived from them. Their dimensions were very similar, but their successors differed principally in having eight torpedo tubes, revised boiler and funnel layout, vertical instead of raked stern and angled rather than rounded forefoot. There is a detailed and authoritative plan of *Ambuscade* in March (see references at end).

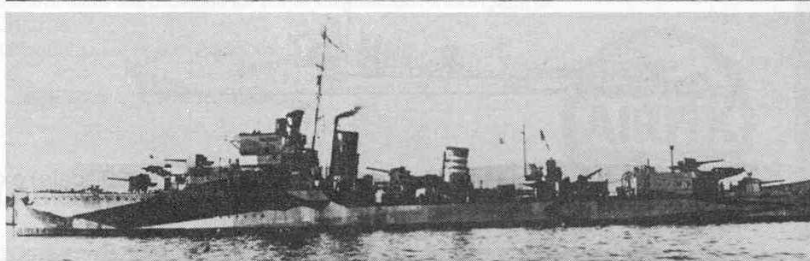
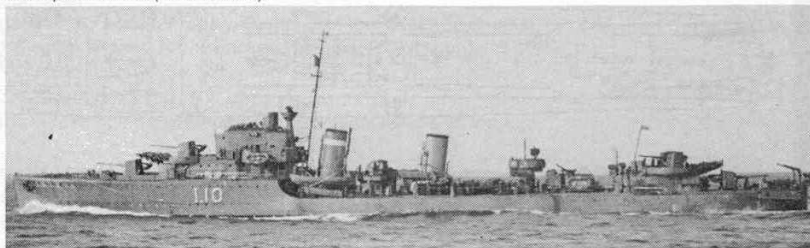
The several classes also differed a great deal among themselves, as may be expected during the course of a ten-year building programme. All ships underwent modification, often quite drastic, especially during the war, resulting in enough variants to fill a substantial book. Those presented in this article are necessarily few. In selecting them I have aimed to give details of one member of each class and a few more, plus two Leaders, with a variety of period and colour scheme. It is

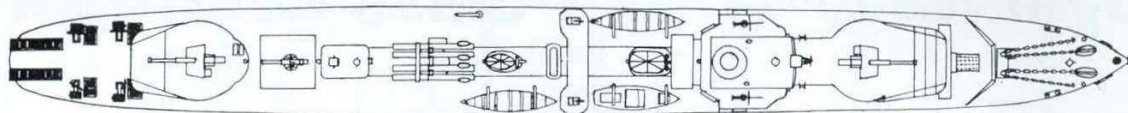
hoped that this will satisfy both the modeller in search of ideas for new projects — some of these are quite suitable for the newcomer to warship modelling — and the wargamer who may well have found, as Lord Mountbatten stated, that 'No Admiral ever had enough destroyers'.

Plan and profile views are given here of three ships at 1:600 scale for use with the Airfix kit representative of this type of destroyer, HMS *Hotspur*. Notwithstanding that this was one of the earliest Airfix ship kits ever made, it is a good and accurate one, apart from two basic deficiencies: lack of detail on bulkheads, an evil inherent in moulding superstructures in one piece; and excessively thick screens, necessitated by the moulding process itself.

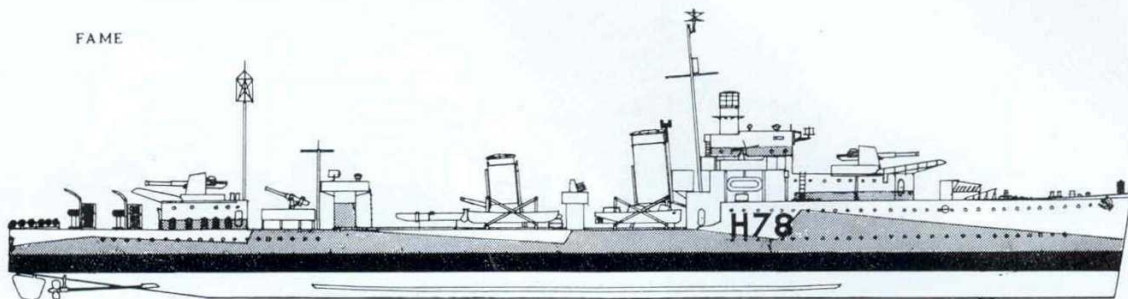
The former can be overcome by making a thin paper or plastic overlay for each bulkhead, which can be detailed with scuttles, ventilators, doors and ladders and painted before assembly more easily than working directly on to the kit parts. Screens on the signal deck (part 18) should be cut off and replaced by thinner plastic card, and further screens 2 mm high added to the AA gundeck

**Heading:** A beautifully sharp view of HMS *Hero* showing the later type bridge/wheelhouse structure and air warning radar on foremast (IWM-A8647). **Below:** HMS *Intrepid* showing TSDS gear aft and 3 inch gun replacing after tubes (IWM-A8214). **Bottom:** HMS *Faulknor* — see camouflage drawing next page and description in text (IWM-A17865).

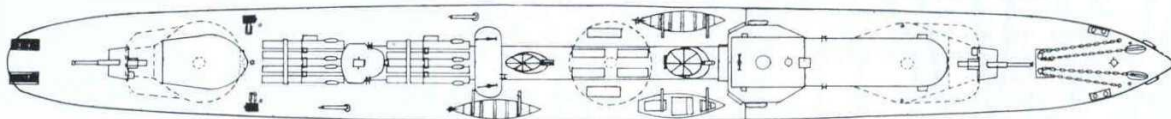
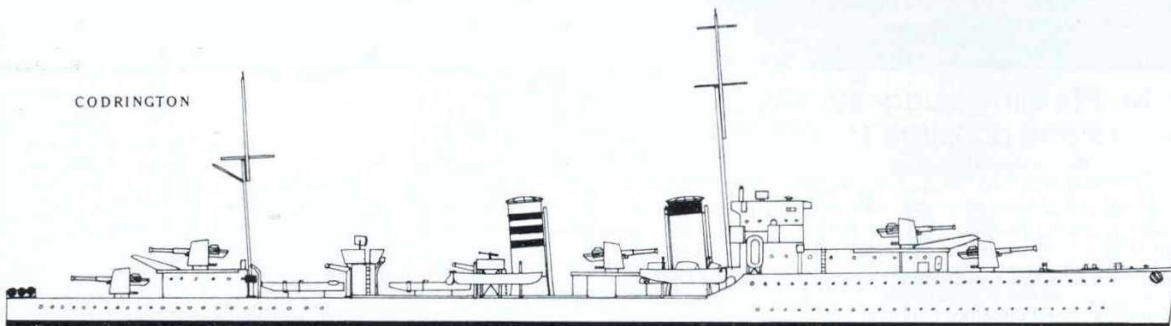




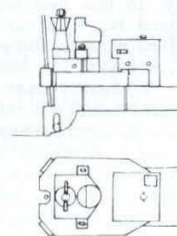
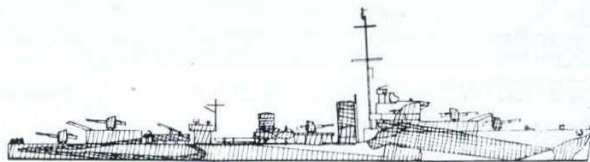
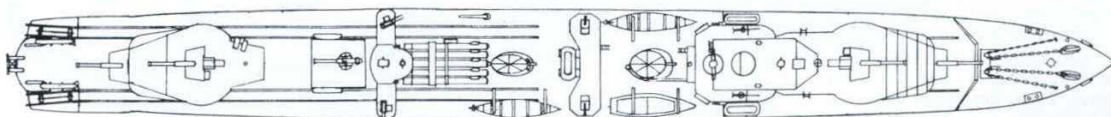
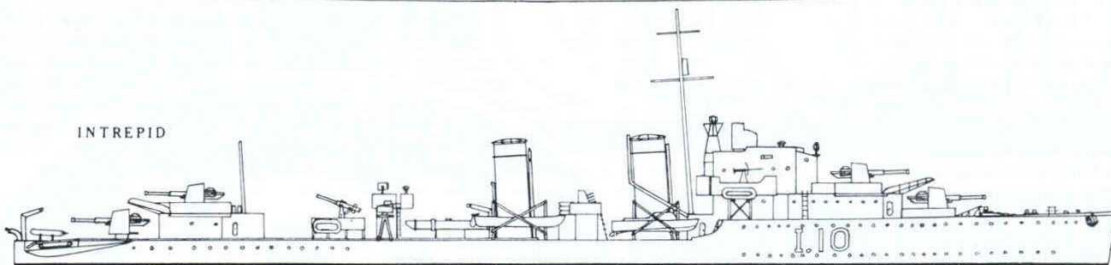
FAME



CODRINGTON

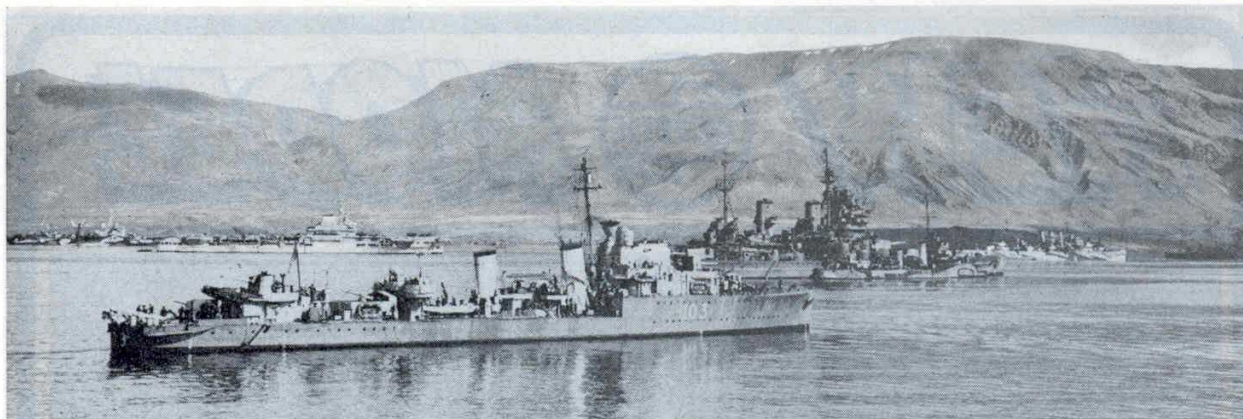


INTREPID



All drawings full-size for Airfix kit conversions (1:600 scale) except camouflage scheme drawing bottom left

Text continues on page 178



(part 20) and searchlight platform (part 21). Part 51 is a mistake for the searchlight, easily replaced with a rod light on a wire bracket.

It is up to the individual to aim at the level of detailing of which he feels capable, referring to photographs and the box artwork. I have always stopped short of trying to make guard-rails in this scale, not seeing any way of representing them which does not look over-scale, spoiling the appearance of the model. Ideas, anyone?

Years ago, Frog produced a 1:500 scale kit of HMS *Hero*. This is still available in the Novo range, and being larger gives more scope for fine detail work; but it is assumed here that the Airfix kit is to be used, and consequently differences from *Hotspur* will be noted in each case.

The first drawing shows HMS *Fame* as she appeared in 1942-43, chosen as displaying the greatest differences from the kit. *Fame* was launched into the Tyne in June 1934, and a few years later took part in the Non-intervention Patrol to prevent the import of arms to Spain during its Civil War. At that time she was in the standard colour scheme for Mediterranean destroyers: very light grey with a light brown Corticine covering on the decks, except the 'iron deck' (from break of foremast to main mast) which would probably be dark grey, and the area from parts 22-23 forward, normally painted dark red. She carried a red, white and blue national marking on the sides and top of 'B' gun shield, red foremost; a 2 ft deep red band 3 ft from the top of the fore funnel to identify her as one of the two divisional leaders of her flotilla, and two red bands on the after funnel denoting the flotilla to which she belonged; and the black pendant number H78 on her sides and stern. Her layout then was exactly as *Hotspur*.

*Fame's* subsequent career was an eventful one. In November 1940 she was steaming at high speed in company with *Ashanti* of the 'Tribal' class when both ran ashore near Sunderland. Repairs to *Ashanti* took nine months, but she fared the better, for *Fame* caught fire and was abandoned. Not until the following year was she salvaged and reconstructed.

By 1941 it was usual for destroyers to have their main masts removed, and WT aerials led to a small spreader on the searchlight platform; the after funnel was reduced in height to facilitate this. It was then possible to fit a 3 inch AA gun in place of the after set of torpedo tubes, without the mast restricting its 'sky-arc': in 1941, AA capability mattered far more than number of torpedoes.

A year later *Fame*, along with her surviving sisters, was reclassified as an Escort Destroyer. Newer destroyers were by then available for Fleet work; out in the North Atlantic the need for fast anti-submarine escorts was

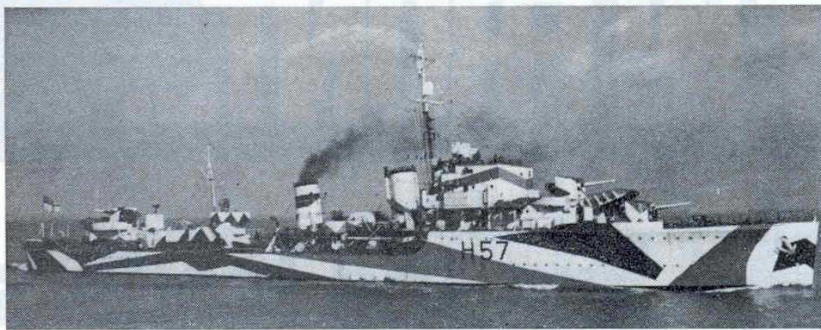
**Above:** An evocative view of HMS *Icarus* coming into Scapa Flow. Note the mining rails aft (IWM-A8954). **Below:** A fine view of *Fame* as a convoy escort with Hedgehog in 'A' position, cut down after funnel and surface warning radar replacing the gun director (IWM-A13375). **Bottom:** HMS *Acasta* shows typical pre-war 'as built' appearance and paint scheme (Abrahams).



desperate. There were corvettes in plenty, but they were slower than a surfaced submarine — indeed, by the end of the war there were submarines able to leave a corvette behind even when running submerged. But elderly destroyers such as *Fame* could call on 36,000 SHP to pounce on a U-boat at 35 knots and chase it to the end — or until contact was lost. *Fame* herself 'bagged' three during 1942-44, when on North Atlantic escort duty. It was a period during which escorts were almost constantly at sea, turning round to cover an outward convoy as soon as a home-ward one was in: a ship was released for refit, and her men went on leave, only when both were worn to their limit. Description of that struggle would be impertinent here; but plenty of first-hand accounts and secondary histories are available to tell the story.

Rearmament accompanied reclassification.

The number of depth charges rose to 70, of which 50 were kept on deck. These are shown on the drawing: six in each of two chutes, four throwers with one each, a rack containing three rows of two by each thrower; the remaining ten are stood on end by the aft deckhouse. (*Fame* also carried one DC right forward, presumably a ruse on the part of her CO). To make space for these, 'Y' gun and TSDS gear were taken out; so was 'A' gun, giving place to another AS weapon, the 'Hedgehog'. This was so called for its 24 spikes, each carrying a bomb which could be thrown ahead of the ship: the advantage being that a submarine could be attacked without passing over it, which usually incurred loss of Asdic contact. When not in use, the 'Hedgehog' was normally covered, the simplest way to model it. On the drawing, the weapon and its frames are shown uncovered.



Top: HMS Hesperus with angled front bridge, extra DCs instead of 'Y' gun, stump main mast, and exhaust on fore funnel (IWM-A7101). Above: HMCS Ottawa represents one of the simplest of adaptations from the basic Airfix kit, with attractive colour scheme in light and dark grey (IWM-CAN164).

Apart from Asdic, *Fame's* advanced detection equipment comprised two direction finding aerials and two radar sets. The medium frequency DF aerial frame appears on a bracket below the chart table, projecting from the bridge front; a much larger high frequency aerial was carried on an abbreviated reinstatement of the main mast. These were of use, for example, in obtaining a bearing on a submarine making its sighting report to colleagues in the 'wolf pack'. An enormous 'lantern', housing Surface Warning Radar Type 271, took the place of the rangefinder and director control tower formerly mounted on the bridge; Air Warning Radar Type 291 had an aerial at the head of the shortened fore mast and an 'office' above the galley. A crow's nest was added to the mast, for the old-fashioned 'early warning set' — a hardy sailor with a pair of binoculars — still had his contribution to make.

*Fame's* original AA armament of two four-barrelled (but not particularly successful) 0.5 inch machine guns, to which the 3 inch gun had already been added, was further augmented by two single 20 mm Oerlikons on the signal bridge, which was extended outwards. Later, Oerlikons replaced the 0.5 inch MGs.

For modelling *Fame* at this period the drawing should be found to make differences from the kit sufficiently clear. Given plastic card, rod, and fine wire, and the usual tools and dexterity, the modeller should have little difficulty in carrying out the required alterations and additions. Unless the model is to be displayed in a 'sea' setting, the Asdic dome and bilge keels must be added as drawn: this applies to all ships of these classes.

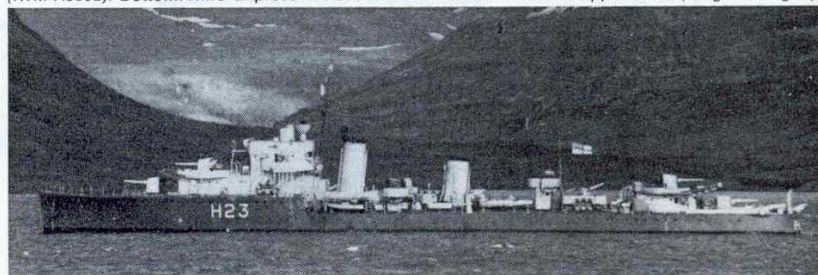
One warning is in order. Because of re-arrangement of propelling machinery the 'C' to 'F' classes were six feet longer than their predecessors and successors: their length of 329 ft overall is 6.58 inches in this scale. Therefore, fo'c's'le length, funnel spacing and position of superstructures on the drawing will not tally exactly with the kit. The drawing is correct, so that those who wish to lengthen the hull and make appropriate adjustments on deck may see precisely what

is wanted.

The camouflage drawn is white and light blue; decks are dark grey (but bridge deck bare wood), pendant number and waterline band black, bottom of hull dark red. The blue band around the bridge continues on its forward face, enclosing the three round windows of the wheelhouse. Camouflage patterns on destroyers were, as a rule, the same on both sides.

After the war, both *Fame* and *Hotspur* were, not scrapped like their surviving sisters, but sold to the Dominican Government. By then *Fame* had regained 'A' gun and acquired Bofors instead of Oerlikon AA guns. She was renamed *Generalisimi*, while *Hotspur* became *Trujillo*. In 1962 their names were again changed, respectively to *Sanchez* and *Duarte*; they served their new master until 1968 and 1972, longer than their RN careers. Details of them during this period may be had from *Jane's Fighting Ships*.

Below: HMS Echo in Hvalfjord, with 3 inch gun replacing after tubes, TSDS aft, and red/yellow life rafts (IWM-A9302). Bottom: HMS Express in December 1934 shows 'as built' appearance (Wright & Logan).



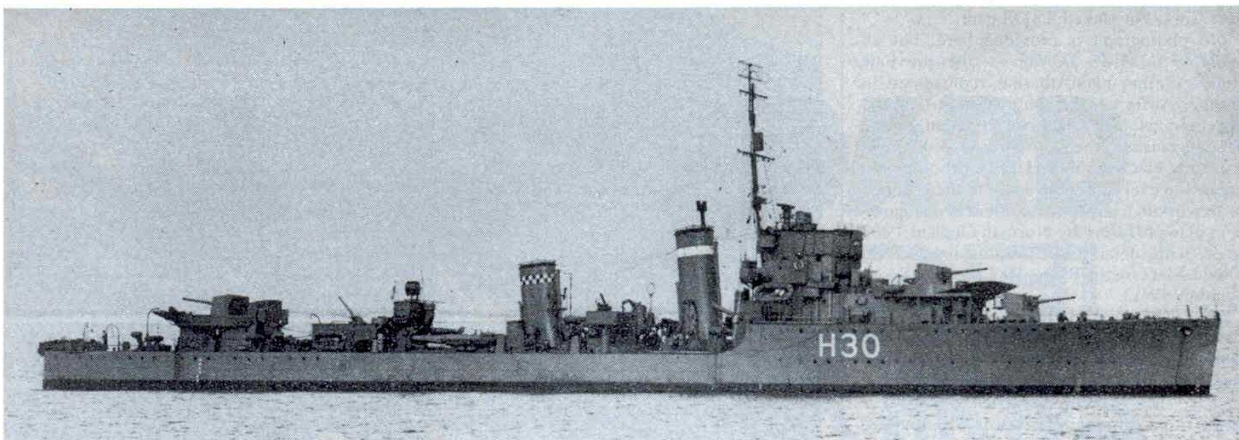
Before the Second World War, destroyers operated in groups of eight, or flotillas. The execution of their functions when so grouped required co-ordination, and to this end each flotilla was accompanied by a Leader. The senior executive officer of the flotilla, Captain (D), and his staff were accommodated on this ship, which consequently was a little larger than an ordinary destroyer. Most used their extra size to carry a fifth 4.7 inch gun between the funnels.

During the war, destroyers became so scattered that the flotilla system could not be maintained; occasionally one would be formed, but from an assortment of classes, and there would not necessarily be a Leader available. Three — *Codrington*, *Exmouth* and *Grenville* — were lost soon after the war began; survivors operated simply as destroyers.

*Codrington* is drawn as she appeared in the mid-1930s, after the addition of a topmast to the main and the enlargement of her signal deck. She had a 4 ft deep black top to her fore funnel to identify her as a Leader, and three red bands on the after funnel denoting her attachment to the 3rd Flotilla (Med), the 'A' class (in the 'A' to 'C' classes, Leaders' names did not have the same initial as the other members).

Her length (346 ft = 6.92 inches) requires an addition to the kit hull of 12 mm, in this case an amount which cannot be ignored. However, it is simply done: cement the hull halves together, and when dry cut vertically through the hull amidships. Either insert a wood block, undercut to allow for the deck; or cement lengths of scrap plastic into both ends, so that the two parts are joined rigidly but spaced 12 mm apart. Now check that the overall length is right and the alignment true, and build up the sides and bottom with plastic card, filing and filling at the bilge as necessary. The fo'c's'le sides and deck must also be extended aft, using plastic card; and it is best to make a new main deck also, as many locations will differ from the kit. Note that the central part of the deck, as in all except the 'I' class, is slightly raised as far as the searchlight platform.

Up to and including the 'D' class, the fore superstructure and bridge were of a different shape, with 'B' gun deck overhanging considerably more than in the kit. On the drawing, the plan view of *Codrington* shows the three gundecks in dotted outline only, in



A fine view of HMS Beagle in Home Fleet dark grey overall, with splinter protection padding around bridge, cut down aft funnel, 'Y' gun removed, extra DC throwers and rails, main mast removed, spreader on searchlight platform, 3 inch gun aft, and air warning radar on foremast. (IWM-A4591).

order to reveal the shape of the superstructure beneath.

In making my own model (of HMS *Boadicea*), I cut off from part 10 the horizontal area before the bridge base, including the blast screen at its forward end, and discarded the remainder. The underside of this deck was thinned by filing, and plastic card used to build the rest of the structure, including the bridge and signal deck, around it, incorporating the tight turn under the blast screen. This procedure enabled me to make the sharp edges and thin screens which matter to the model's character and realism; and of course I took the opportunity to drill scuttles and add doors on the bulkheads and web stiffeners across the blast screen.

*Codrington* requires this treatment, and the addition of the circular gundeck and its six rectangular supports between the funnels. The extra gun can be made, or a spare used from another kit converted to one of the examples with only two or three 4.7 inch guns. The drawing should suffice to describe other features of this Leader. Her colouring followed the standard Mediterranean scheme described for the early *Fame*, but without pendant numbers — these were not painted on Leaders.

The third 1:600 scale drawing shows one of the last of these destroyers, HMS *Intrepid* of the 'I' class. This class dispensed with the raised area along the deck over the boilers, which therefore needs to be filed off from the kit deck; they had increased torpedo armament, with a ten-tube arrangement first tried in *Glowworm*; wheelhouse resited before the bridge, originally adopted for a special reason in *Hereward*; and the addition of a breakwater on the fo'c's'le deck. Destroyers were not intended for sunshine cruising, and in rough seas often pitched to the extent of showing 80 ft of keel, or submerging as much of the deck. Sometimes a destroyer's fo'c's'le was stove in by heavy seas — *Fortune* suffered this misfortune twice in a few weeks. Even so, a breakwater was found to have some effect, and was fitted retrospectively to a few earlier ships such as *Fame*.

*Intrepid* is shown after conversion to a minelayer. This facility had been built in to *Esk* and *Express* of the 'E' class and was subsequently adopted for the 'I' class. Initially they were fitted 'for but not with' minelaying gear, which could however be installed at short notice; this involved fitting rails along the deck, sponsons at the quarters to carry the rails clear of the hull, and a motor and chain drive under the deck aft. These are shown in the drawing, except the motor which was internal.

Four of the class, including *Intrepid*, were converted to minelayers in 1939-40. When mines were actually carried (see *Express*), the torpedo tubes, TSDS gear and 'Y' gun — and presumably the starboard whaler — were removed, being unworkable. 'A' gun usually went too, to reduce top-weight further. Apart from such occasions, however, these ships served as destroyers and retained most of their normal outfit, as drawn.

*Intrepid* had an improved AA armament of one 3 inch gun on a low platform replacing the after tubes, and two single and two twin 20 mm Oerlikons in addition to the original two quad 0.5 inch MGs. She was mid-grey overall — probably including decks — with white pendant number I.10 on her sides and stern.

This drawing is the only one to show TSDS gear, which was a standard fitment throughout the nine classes in the first instance. The acronym stands for Two-speed Destroyer Sweep — that is, minesweeping gear capable of use at low or high speeds. It consists of a winch (parts 60, 67), two heavy davits (parts 58, 59), otter-boards — insignificant in this scale — and paravanes, which must be made as the kit does not supply them. Unless otherwise stated or apparent from the photographs, it may be taken that ships described here carried this equipment.

Further ships of the 'A' to 'I' groups are shown in accompanying photographs, to which the following notes largely refer.

*Acasta* is shown in the mid-1930s, in the Mediterranean scheme with three red bands on the after funnel and the black pendant number H09 in three positions. Close study of the photograph should reveal necessary modifications to the *Hotspur* kit: in particular, the fore superstructure as *Codrington*, steam pipes on after funnel, Carley rafts below the signal deck. The main yard acts as a spreader for WT aerial wires leading from the fore topyard, and is in fact suspended on these forward of the main topmast; it is not attached to the mast itself. The AA guns between the funnels are, as on *Codrington*, single 2 pdr pom-poms. Identical at this time were *Active* (H14), *Antelope* (H36, top bar of 3 being flat), *Anthony* (H40; no main topmast). These four, with or without their Leader *Codrington*, could constitute a Division for wargaming purposes.

*Acasta* was commissioned at the end of 1929. At the time of the Norwegian campaign in 1940 she and her sister *Ardent* were escorting the aircraft carrier *Glorious* when all were sunk by the German capital ships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*.

The 'B' class is represented by HMS

*Beagle*, photographed early in 1942 after 'Y' gun and the main mast had been removed, the after funnel reduced, and a crow's nest, 3 inch gun, extra depth charges and Type 286 radar fitted. Later, she lost 'A' gun and was given a 'Hedgehog' and radar 271 as *Fame*. Points to note from the photograph are: splinter mattresses on bridge; depth charge arrangements as *Fame*; WT aerial spreader on searchlight platform; appearance of 286 aerial frame on topmast and its 'office' at the fo'c's'le break; 2 pdrs on platform between funnels, and MF/DF aerial on a pole before that platform.

*Beagle* was coloured as *Intrepid*, and had a white band on her fore funnel and a black and white chequered band on the after funnel. Those checks are half-millimetre squares in 1:600 scale. *Boadicea* had them too, and I achieved the effect by first painting the entire funnel in its camouflage colour, then masking all but the band which was painted white. When that was completely dry, I masked off the upper half of the band and applied the lower row of black squares, very carefully, with a lightly-laden fine brush; with this method, only their vertical edges require concentration as the top and bottom are masked. Later the process was repeated for the upper row with the lower half masked. Finally, all masking was removed and the funnel installed. *Beagle* was launched at John Brown's yard in September 1930, destroyed a U-boat in 1944, and was sent for scrapping two years later.

The order for the following class was cut from eight to four destroyers and one Leader; in 1937-38 they were all transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy and renamed. HMCS *Ottawa*, shown in a photograph about 1941, was formerly HMS *Crusader*. These ships had a different form of bridge, shown in a separate drawing; improved fire control, manifest externally by a larger control tower; and more powerful machinery, requiring an increase in length from 323 to 329 ft. *Ottawa* retained all four 4.7 inch guns and eight torpedo tubes; her hull and decks were dark grey, superstructure light grey, pendant number white.

In the 'D' class, a further modified bridge was introduced, arranged as that in *Hotspur*. The forward end of the superstructure below 'B' gun remained rounded. On each side of the signal deck (also similar to *Hotspur*) a single 2 pdr was carried, as the space between the funnels was given to a 3 inch AA gun on a circular platform rather smaller than that in *Codrington*. This feature was not adopted in subsequent classes, as the funnels too greatly restricted the sky-arc of the gun. Otherwise, the 'D' class resembled their immediate pre-

decessors, but lacked TSDS gear.

No photograph is provided here, but an example is HMS *Daring* — the previous bearer of that name to that represented in another Airfix kit. On completion in 1932 she appeared as just described, painted in the Mediterranean scheme with one red funnel band and black number H16. For those wishing to add every possible detail to their model, or to work in a larger scale, there is a magnificent plan of *Daring* by Norman Ough at 1:192 scale with details at 1:96, available from David MacGregor Plans, 99 Lonsdale Road, London SW13.

*Echo*, shown in Hvalfjord, Iceland, represents the 'E' class destroyers. These re-introduced TSDS and the athwartships platform between the funnels, where for the first time 0.5 inch MGs were carried in place of 2 pdrs. From this group onwards, the forward superstructure was as in the kit. The photograph should be found to be self-explanatory; masthead radar is probably Type 291 as in *Fame*. *Echo* is in two greys with white pendant number; rafts, sited below the signal deck, beside the 3 inch gun, and in a pile before the after funnel, are striped red and yellow; the lowest mast is black.

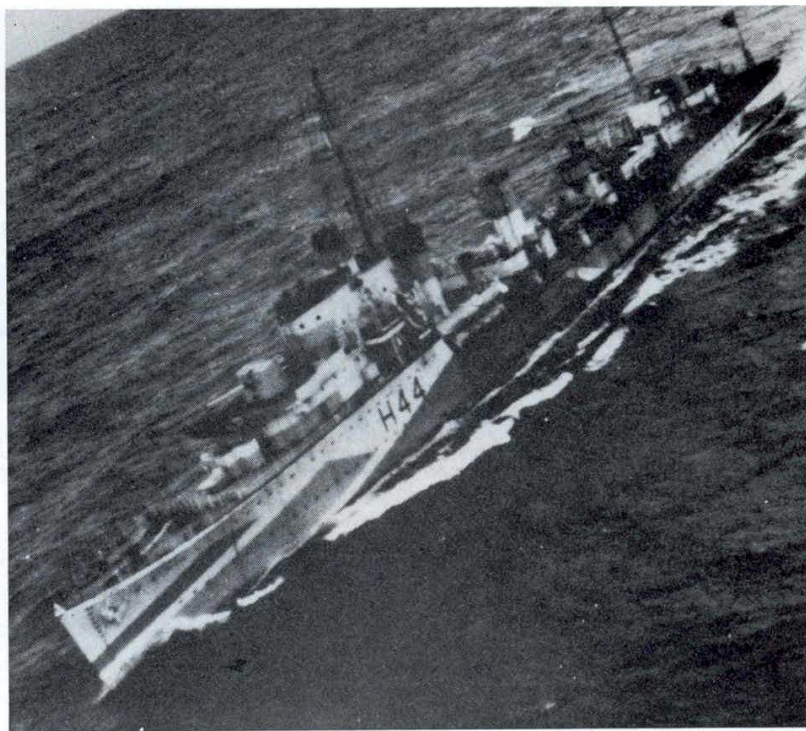
*Esk* and *Express* of this class were convertible to minelayers. *Express* is shown in that role in a 1934 photograph, with a full load of 30 mines each side. Rails and sponsons were as drawn for *Intrepid*. Note that, on both sides, the whalers had to be stowed on the fo'c's'le deck, being displaced by the mine rails; this deck extended beyond the fo'c's'le break to provide room for them. The ship is painted in the dark grey used on Home Fleet destroyers at that time, with one white funnel band. Mines carried were Mark XIVA with sinker, chain-driven along rails of 4 inch channel-bar. Each mine was 3 ft in diameter and slightly longer; it rested, tilted forward 53 degrees from vertical, on a wheeled rectangular sinker 3 ft square and 26 inch high.

Both ships were in company with the four 'I' class minelayers one night in August 1940 when, ironically, the whole flotilla ran into a minefield. Three escaped; but *Esk* and *Ivanhoe* were lost, and the fore part of *Express* as far as the bridge was blown off. The damage was repaired, and later in the war *Express* was transferred to Canada as HMCS *Gatineau*; she was scrapped in 1955.

The 'F' class were repeats of the 'E' class, and already have a representative in *Fame*. A photograph shows the Leader of this class, HMS *Faulknor*, probably early in 1942.

Leaders evolved parallel to but separately from the destroyers of their flotillas. *Faulknor* was a repeat of *Exmouth*, the previous Leader, whose design was developed directly from *Codrington* rather than from intervening Leaders. The major alteration made was the elimination of the pom-pom platform behind the after funnel, which allowed the torpedo tubes and searchlight to be moved forward to make space for a longer after deckhouse. The pom-poms were resited on the signal deck, below which the whalers were stowed.

Since the definition of tones on the photograph is likely to have become obscured by the reproduction process, I have drawn the camouflage scheme for *Faulknor* separately. This sketch, which is not to scale, shows the disposition of the three shades of blue used: dark blue is represented by cross-hatching, mid-blue by single hatching and the very pale lightest shade left white. From both sketch and photograph, note: shortened after funnel; no main mast; WT aerial spreader on searchlight platform; six-pronged Type 285 radar in place of rangefinder; 3 inch gun replacing after tubes; longer bridge as on *Hotspur*.



Aerial view of HMS Highlander as a convoy escort shows later type angled front bridge, Hedgehog ATW, and surface warning radar on bridge (IWM-A30692).

Since *Faulknor* was 343 ft long, the kit must be lengthened by 10 mm; compare this with the 329 ft length of the destroyer flotilla of which *Faulknor* was Leader.

Some economy in machinery layout made possible a reduction to 323 ft in the 'G' class; and since their design was repeated for the 'H' class there are no alterations required in the kit apart from such detailing as is desired. From this group onwards, tripod main masts were fitted. In the mid-1930s the 'G' class served in the Mediterranean, wearing the appropriate light grey scheme with the flotilla identification of one red band on the after funnel; *Grafton* was so painted and had the black pendant number H89.

It would hardly be right to pass this class by without mention of the illustrious *Glowworm*. In April 1940 she was one of a number of destroyers escorting the battle-cruiser *Renown* on a mission in the Norwegian Sea. Early on April 8 *Glowworm* was detached from the force, and shortly reported being in action with an enemy destroyer, then another, and finally the heavy cruiser *Hipper*. Constantly under fire, the little ship closed with her opponent and fired five torpedoes, turned, and fired the remaining five. These missed; and although hit and losing power she went in again, this time to ram. The impact did considerable damage to the cruiser, but the smashed and burning destroyer went down with most of her crew. The Victoria Cross was awarded, alas posthumously, to her commanding officer.

As mentioned, *Glowworm* had ten torpedoes, for she was fitted with the prototypes of the quintuple tubes destined for the 'I' class; these are drawn on *Intrepid*. Dated before the war as described for her sisters, her pendant number was H92.

The 'H' class and their Leader *Hardy* were quite well covered in the June 1968 issue of *Airfix Magazine*. One of this group, *Hereward*, carried an experimental twin 4.7 inch mounting in 'B' position, of the type later fitted to the 'Tribal' and following classes. To

give the helmsman a clear view over this, the wheelhouse was moved from under the bridge to forward of it, in an angular housing. The bridge and signal deck were consequently reduced a little in height. This layout was felt to be an improvement, and was adopted for *Hero* and all fleet destroyers from the 'I' class to the *Darings*. It is shown on the drawing of *Intrepid*.

A photograph shows *Hero* (not, of course, the frigate of that name invented by the BBC) with this arrangement. Note also the large air warning radar frame at the topmast head, WT aerial spreader and ensign staff on the searchlight platform, and abaft that a 3 inch AA gun with a simple shield. With her sharp, white and blue (or grey) colour scheme — is it really camouflage? — this ship would be a simple but very striking version.

In the 1930s, as at present, Great Britain had a substantial share of the world's warship export market. A number of destroyers broadly similar to *Hero*, under construction for foreign navies at the outbreak of war, were compulsorily purchased by the British Government and speedily completed. Thus, six destroyers ordered by Brazil became additional units of the 'H' class (they are sometimes referred to as the *Havant* class), while two more, ex-Turkish, became HMS *Inconstant* and *Ithuriel*. These had extra depth charge stowage in place of 'Y' gun and TSDS gear; later, *Highlander* at least was given a 'Hedgehog' in 'A' position. Four were delivered in May 1940; within days, *Havant* was sunk at Dunkirk.

A *Warship Profile* exists covering HMS *Hesperus* of this group with all the completeness and authority that is usual for that series. *Hesperus* was painted to a three-tone pattern with an emphasis on sharp angles and contrast which would look well on a model. Photographs of *Hurricane* (Blundell, pages 69 and 79) and of *Harvester* (March, page 308) show a very similar scheme; that on *Highlander* (IWM-A30692, an aerial view not quite clear

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## Destroyers from page 183

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enough to reproduce here) was a different application of the same idea: to break up the visual impression of the ship. *Havant* (photo in *Warship 1*, page 23) was light grey with black number H32, while *Inconstant* was painted much like *Fame* (March, page 318).

For those in search of ideas beyond those given here, which are necessarily only a selection (out of 87 ships!), there is a large number of photographs of these classes in the Imperial War Museum, London. They may be viewed by appointment, and prints can be supplied. Among the best are: A7543 (*Anthony* in camouflage similar to *Fame*); A27126 (*Brilliant* as an escort destroyer); A18777 (*Foxhound* in light grey, blue below main deck); A5857 (*Foresight* in two greys, with extra AA guns); A8934 (*Icarus*, minelayer similar to *Intrepid*, at anchor with Far East Fleet).

The great encyclopaedic work of Edgar J. March, *British Destroyers* (Seeley Service, 1966) is well worth asking for at your local public library. It is a thorough technical history, with a number of photographs, and tracings of Admiralty plans. (Cited above as March.)

W. D. G. Blundell's *Royal Navy Warships 1939-45* (Almark, 1971) is worth buying for the many photographs and class lists it contains, but no reliance should be placed on its rather crude miniature drawings.

In the superb journal *Warship* (Conway Maritime Press, Greenwich), a two-part article 'British destroyer appearance in World War 2' by Alan Raven deals with wartime modifications made to destroyers, and is illustrated with numerous detailed profile drawings and a few photographs: *Faulknor*, *Icarus*, *Ithuriel*, *Havant* and HMCS *Fraser* are treated in Part 1 (*Warship 1*, January 1977, pp 13-23); *Active*, *Arrow* and *Bulldog* in Part 2 (*Warship 2*, April 1977, pp 20-26), along with destroyers of other classes; but drawings do not show colour schemes.

As mentioned above, a number of accounts of individual ships' careers are to be found. An example is Peter C. Smith, *Destroyer Leader* (Kimber, 1968) concerning HMS *Faulknor*.