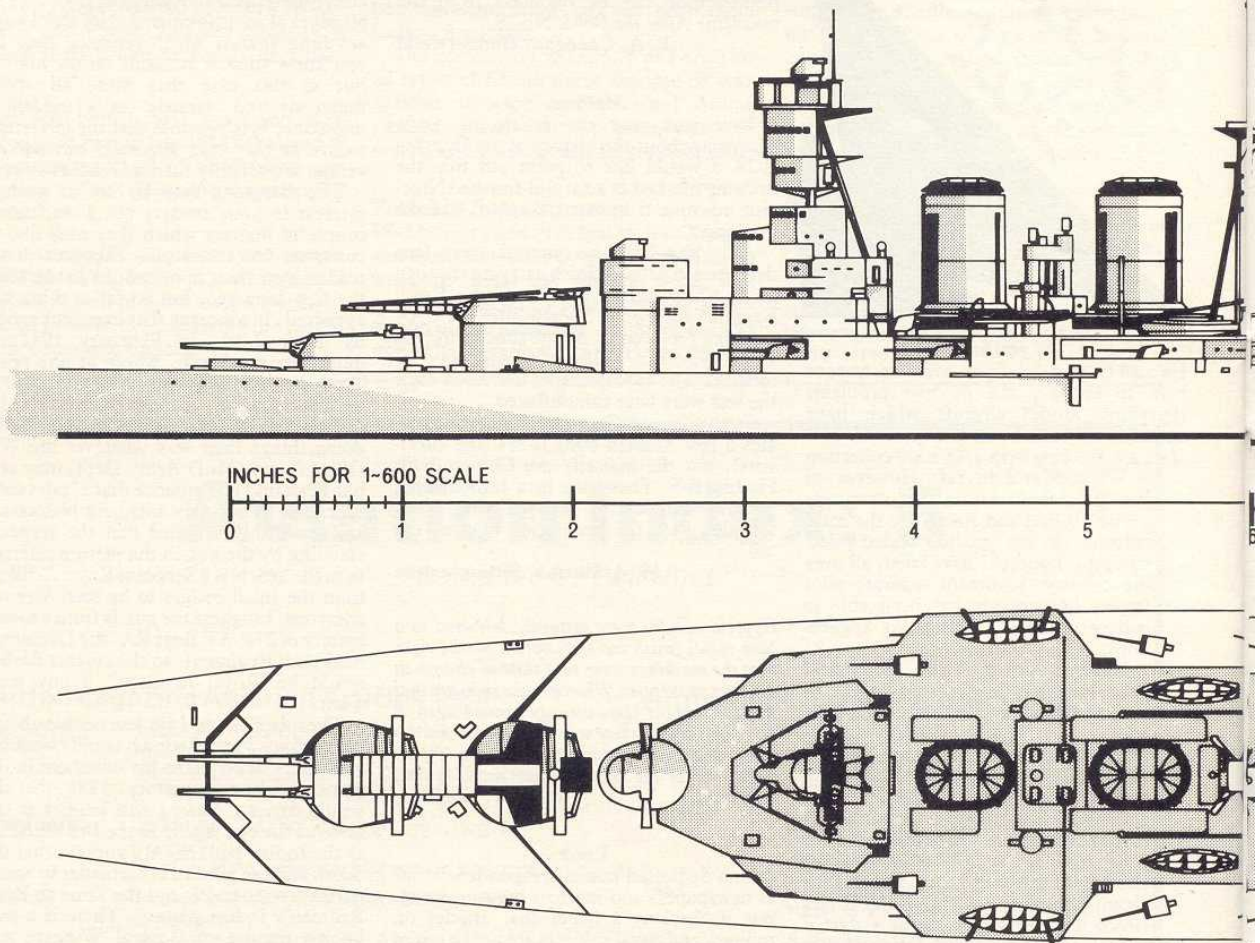


THE ADMIRAL CLASS ~1919



Illustrated by the author

Introduction

My series on the changing appearance of HMS *Hood* is meant to end with a coverage of her proposed 1942-45 massive reconstruction. This project will however, require the extensive use of features and structures to be present in the new Airfix 1:600 scale *King George V*, the planned release of which has been delayed, due to the recent change in the ownership of Airfix, with the resulting disruptive effect on their 1981 new releases programme.

While awaiting the arrival of the *KGV*, to complement my 1945 *Hood* and therefore my series, I have taken the opportunity to again look back into the *Hood's* long history and to come up with a subject that will provide a very interesting companion to this series on the *Hood*, by modelling an example of her cancelled near sister ships of the 'Admiral' class.

The Admirals

The four ships of the 'Admiral' class were to be the *Hood*, *Anson*, *Rodney* and *Howe*, they were all laid down in 1916, to counter the latest generation of German battlecruisers of the 'Mackensen' class, then under construction. It was intended that by 1919

the four 'Admirals' would provide the Royal Navy with the world's strongest class of fast, heavily armed and well protected capital ships. But as the war progressed it became known that work on the German ships had ceased in favour of U-Boat and small craft construction. Therefore the need to complete the four 'Admirals' became less important, as the Royal Navy already enjoyed a comfortable numerical superiority over the existing German battlecruiser squadron.

One unit, the *Hood*, was to be proceeded with, primarily to produce a new ship of this type incorporating all the battle and war experience gained by the fleet. But the other three units were deemed to be surplus to fleet requirements and work on them gradually took a lower and lower priority, until it ceased altogether in March 1917. It was not until February 1919, however, that it was finally decided to cancel them, and their hulls were subsequently broken up on the stocks.

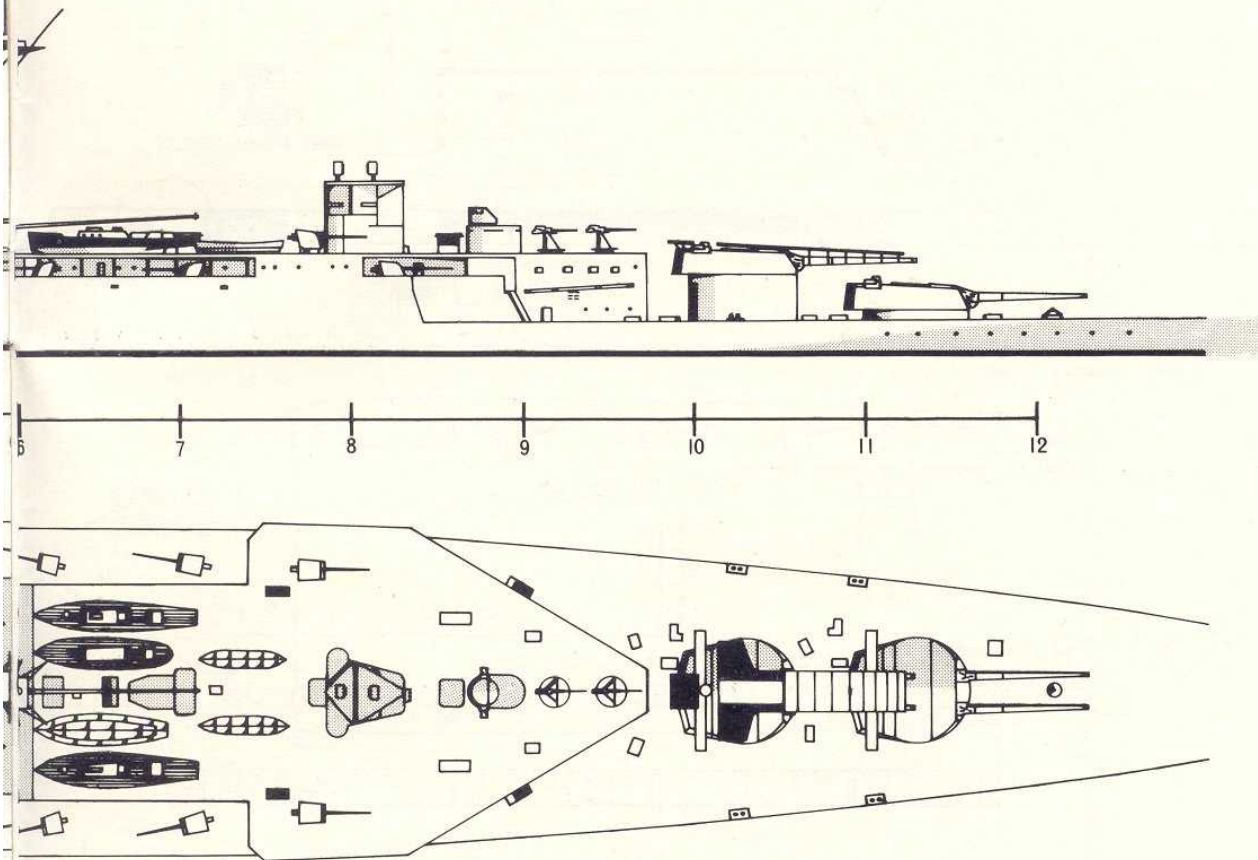
This is a very brief summary of their short uneventful history, but my reading into the 'Admirals' early design describes an appearance markedly different from any *Hood* layout. In fact the *Howe*, *Anson* and *Rodney*, would have had a sufficient num-

ber of alterations to make them virtually a separate class from the *Hood*, if they had been completed.

The main new features were a slightly lower (by 6 feet) but larger and more enclosed bridge structure. Their twin funnels were also to have been closer together, with the mainmast and derrick just behind them, pointing aft thus concentrating all the highest structures forward, into a compact arrangement very different from the *Hood's*. All the above water torpedo tubes were to have been suppressed in the 'Admirals', with only two underwater tubes retained. Therefore the eight open and plated over installations represented on the *Hood's* hull should be removed. The secondary armament of all four ships was originally intended to have been sixteen open 5.5 inch mounts; the aftermost set of four, were eventually omitted from the *Hood's* design before her completion, but I have decided to retain them here for the 'Admirals' to emphasize the difference between the final *Hood* layout and her original class design.

The modelling of all these features will result in an interesting representation of either the *Anson*, *Howe* or *Rodney*, and of how they might have looked, upon comple-

by M.W. Williams.



tion in 1919. At the same time it can produce a rather unusual companion to my series on the *Mighty Hood*.

The conversion

Readers who have been following my *Hood* articles, will by now be familiar with my conversion approach, relying as I do mainly on my artwork to convey the extent of the work in the project, while using the text to detail and outline the procedure involved.

Some points to note before I deal with the main conversion are that, while the three 'Admirals' had a slightly altered underwater bulge form and an increase to the flare of the bows, I have not attempted any modifications to the hull, except for the already mentioned torpedo tubes, as any changes in this area would hardly be noticed in this scale. The main armament is also left as modelled with only the addition of blast bags and the two flying off platforms. Finally the arrangement of the ships' boats is the same as in my 1920 *Hood* article.

The main sections of the Admiral's conversion are as follows:

- (a) The sections to be removed from the forecastle deck, parts 3, 5 and 6.
- (b) Outlines the new screens of 40 thou

The Admirals	Builders	Ordered	Laid down	All Suspended	All Cancelled
Howe	Cammell Laird	13 Apr 16	16 Oct 16	9 Mar 17	17 Mar 19
Rodney	Fairfield	13 Apr 16	9 Oct 16		
Anson	Armstrong	13 Jun 16	9 Nov 16		

860ft overall, 104ft beam, 29ft draught at 36,300 tons displacement. With an armament of eight 15in, sixteen 5.5in; two 4in guns and two 21in TT. Protected by 12in max on armour belt, 3in on the deck. With machinery for 144,000SHP = 32 knots.

All names were subsequently given to battleships of the 'Nelson' and 'KGV' classes.

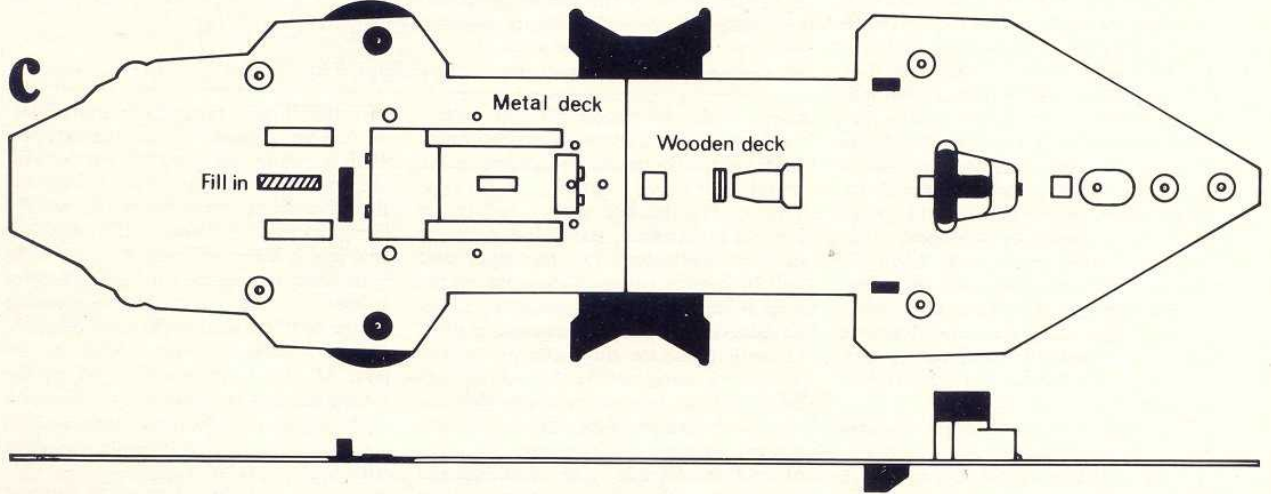
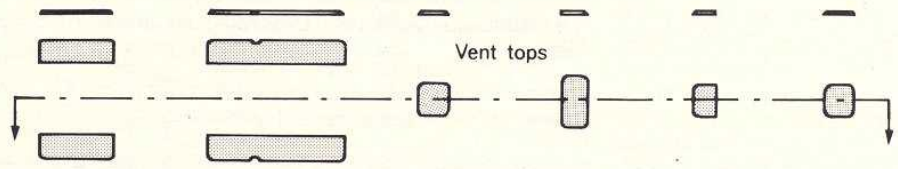
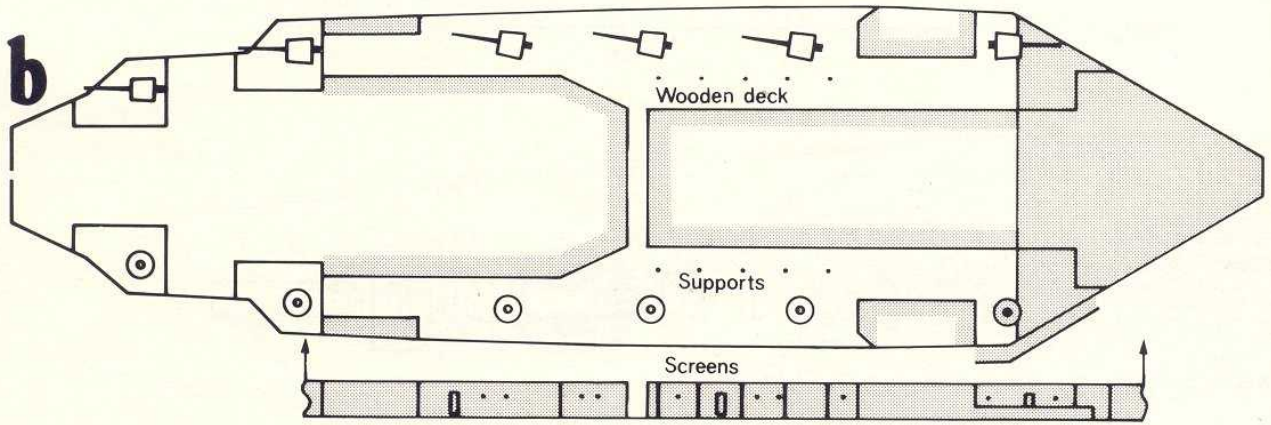
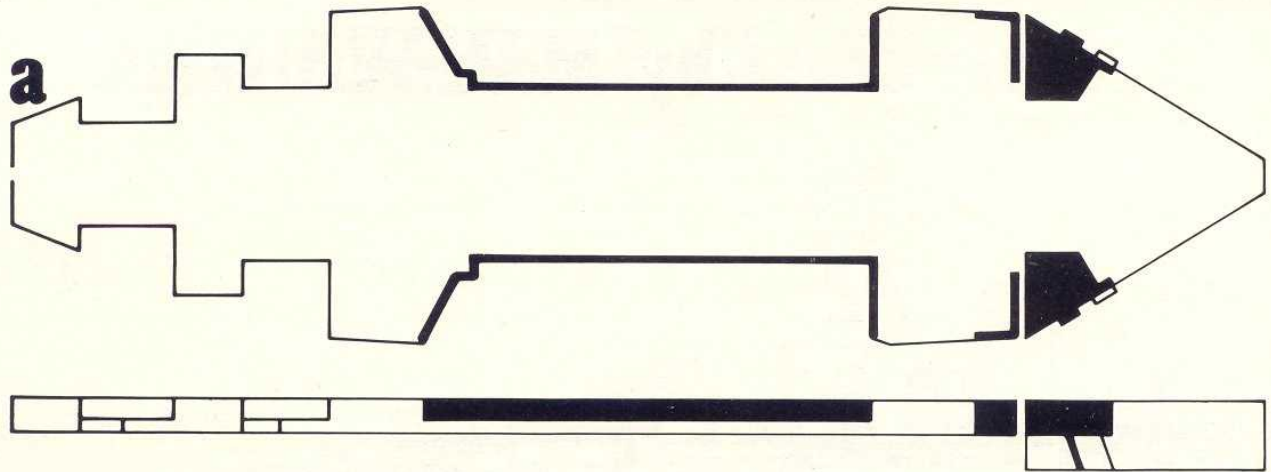
plastic card, with the extension aft receiving bases for two spare (or scratch-built) 5.5in guns, and ten deck supports in the waist.

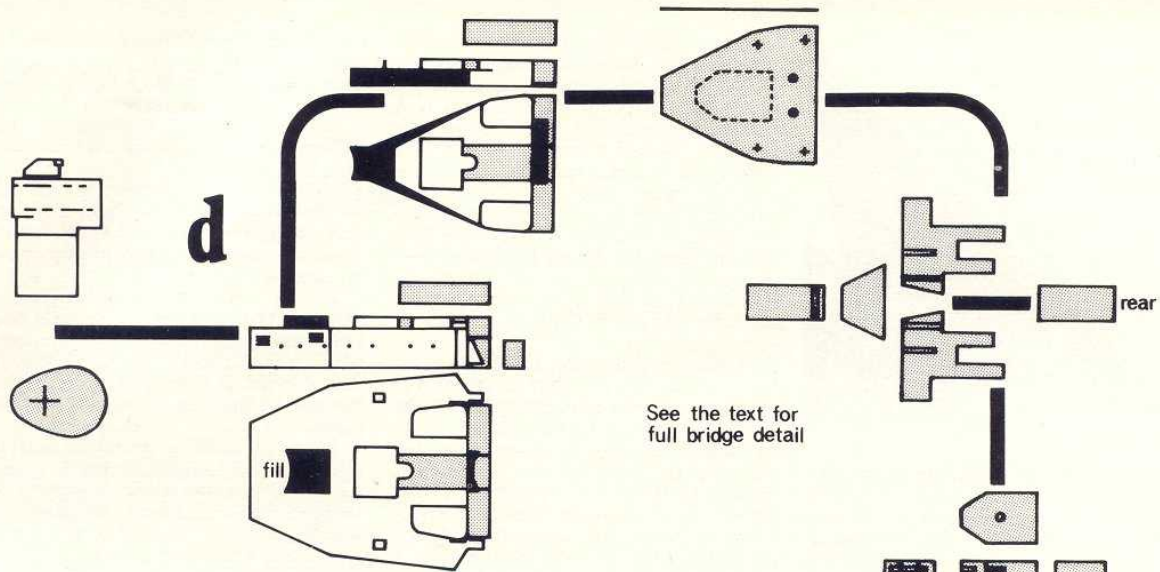
(c) Part 17, the half metal, half wood covered shelter deck, is detailed with a set of overhanging tops for the engine and boiler room ventilators. Also shown are the areas to be removed; note that at this stage, all redundant locating holes should be filled in, with those for the mainmast moved forward. Finally, remove the locating lugs from the fore funnel parts 34 and 35, prior to moving it aft to touch the searchlight tower.

(d) Will involve a lot of new building and remodelling. The conning tower has parts 88 and 94 omitted, and the new top will

have the 30 foot rangefinder moved forward. The Admiral's signal platform, part 91, is cut down and fitted with sections for the extended bridge. The extensively altered conning tower platform part 97 forms the base upon which the completely new fore bridge and bridge face are to be built upon, so note here the positioning of at least four 24in searchlights. Above this are the new 36in searchlight and Admiral's/Captain's platform, built around the tripod. All this is then topped off by the altered spotting top parts 109 to 113, which now carries two 9ft rangefinders. This superstructure scratch-building was done with 30 thou plastic card.


Drawings on next spread
Text continued on page 358

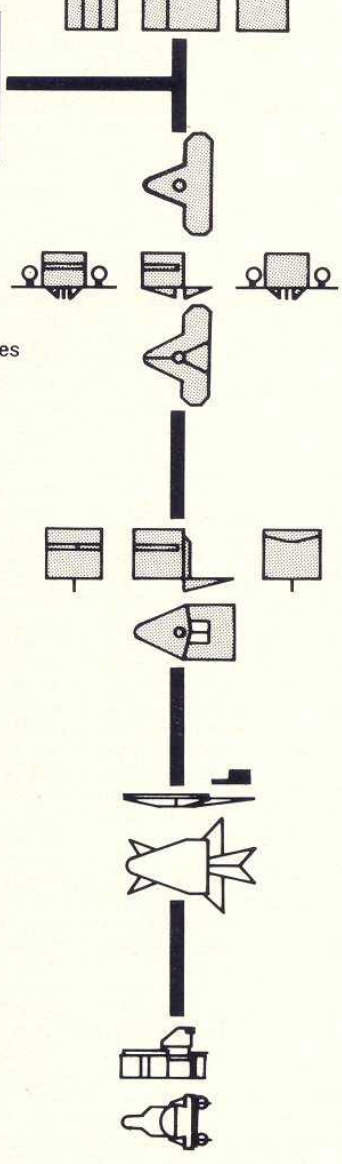
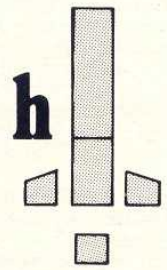
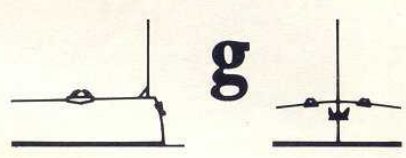
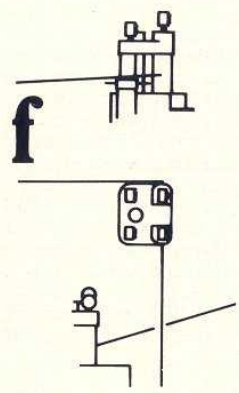
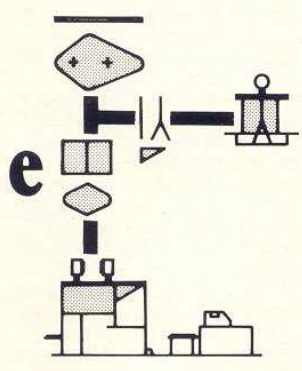
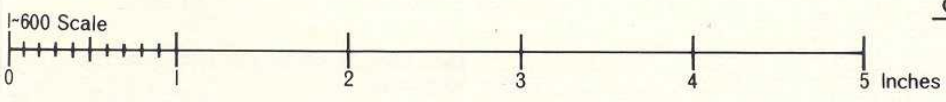




KEY

 SECTIONS TO BE REMOVED

 NEW SCRATCH BUILT ITEMS



mww

Admiral Class from page 355

(e) Covers the details required for the new after searchlight control platform.

(f) Deals with the midships searchlight control platform, with its two additional 36in units and RDF booms, which can either be shown extended or stowed.

(g) Indicates the position of the stern anchor.

(h) Outlines the parts required for the flying off platforms for B and X turrets.

Painting

The overall paint scheme is Humbrol authentic colour, HN 1 light grey, with the metal and planked areas of the deck being treated with HN 2 dark grey and HN 4 bleached teak respectively. HN 6 black is used for the funnel tops and the waterline boot topping, with the underwater hull painted in HN 5 hull red.

All the above sections besides being individually illustrated, can also be seen in a full size port elevation and plan view of a member of the 'Admiral' class, to finally give an impression of how these beautiful ships might have appeared upon completion in 1919.