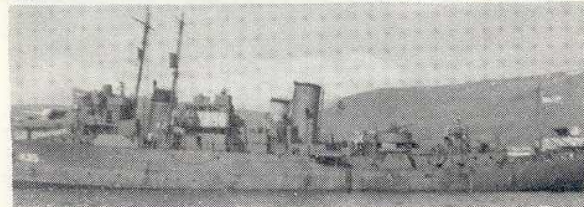


THE immortal 'Flower' class corvettes of World War 2 were Britain's quick answer to the U-Boat menace of 1939 and 1940 and they played a vital part for the whole war in escorting convoys across all seas and oceans, notably the Atlantic. Their feats were well commemorated in the classic book (and film) *The Cruel Sea*. More than 200 were built before the larger 'Castle' and 'River' classes started to replace them, and 'Flower' class corvettes served with all the Commonwealth navies as well as others like the French, Danish, Norwegian, and Greek. A few remain in service (some with the Irish Navy) but unfortunately this well-known type is not available in kit form. A model can be made in 1:600 scale, however, utilising the Airfix *Hotspur* kit plus oddments and scrap parts from elsewhere. My own model depicts HMS *Violet*, but many detail variations are possible and I've indicated some of them here.

First, however, start by making the hull, utilising that from the *Hotspur* kit, the two halves of which should first be cemented together and left to dry. The bow section is marked and cut 46 mm from the stem and the deck is cut at the same distance using a razor-saw. A balsa block is then cut 12 mm long and a bit wider and higher than the hull section. This is stuck to the bow section with UHU glue. Next the stern assembly is cut in the same way as the bows, and is glued in place after the bow section has had time to dry. It is cut 45 mm from the stern. The stern section is best aligned by looking along the keel of the model. Leave overnight then sand the block to match the shape of the hull.

After this is completed the stern deckhouse is built up. I made this from a balsa block 3 mm high, 7 mm wide and 35 mm long. After gluing this in place, invitation card cut to the appropriate dimensions was cemented over it. The balsa insert in the hull is now covered with clear dope and talcum powder mixture and all cracks filled and sanded. The kit gun deck is now added; this is cut 25 mm from the front and after sanding and squaring off is stuck in place. The blast screen is cut off and the edge sanded to a round shape. All holes are now plugged and sanded smooth.

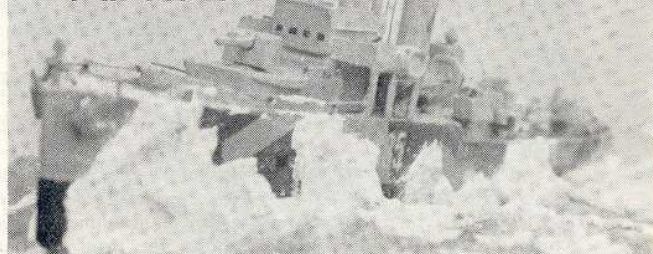
Work is now started on the bridge; approximately 2 mm is filed off the top, and the front is discarded and replaced by card cut to the new size. The base of the bridge wings is cut from card to the same length as the bridge, but extends out to the sides of the hull. It is stuck to the gun deck level with the rear edge. The bridge is then glued in position, but displaced 1½ mm forward of the rear end of the gun deck. The 4 inch gun is added to the gun deck and this was made from the gun supplied with the kit minus the protruding section of turret. The binnacle is added in its original position. The galley is added from a scrap plastic cube and the



Top: HMS Wallflower (K44) in 1942. Details for this ship are broadly as for Violet except for extra side plating abreast the 4 inch gun and the Carley raft stowage aft. Colour is light grey overall with pale sea green 'whale' marking on side—and plenty of rust. Note faded pennant number just visible at bow. Above: HMS Violet in 1940 with extra side plating as in Wallflower and mast forward of the bridge which, in those days was as in Verbena, shown opposite.

'FLOWER' CLASS MODELS

by
A. Walton



radar 'lantern' was made by filing down the forward director. The rangefinder is omitted completely. The bridge wings are next built up from card, 2 mm high. Supports are also added from card, 1 mm wide. There were 3 evenly spaced along the wings and clearly seen in the heading picture. The galley is 5 mm long × 4 mm wide, and placed 3 mm behind the bridge. An 'H' exhaust stack was added to this, made from stretched sprue.

The funnel is the aft funnel from the kit reduced to 10 mm high and mounted on a block 2 mm high and 6 mm square, made from scrap wood or plastic. The funnel is cemented in place and ventilation shafts come from the parts in the kit. Next came the searchlight tower; mine is from the *Campbelltown* kit suitably shortened. This is positioned 6 mm behind the funnel. A W/T spreader is added to this from stretched sprue. The 2 pdr came from the *Daring* single barrelled gun. The bandstand is made from bent card. Next in line are the engine room hatches, and the *Campbelltown's* are the most suitable. A pole mast is added to the end of the rear deckhouse. Also just forward of this are two wire reels, made from the capstans from the kit. The capstans were replaced by a cable winch, made from scrap. The winch on the aft deck was made from the kit rangefinder. Depth charges and derricks also came from the kit.

Gun sponsons are made from card and extend out from the deckhouse to the hull sides. They are 2 mm high and appear 2 mm and 26 mm from boat deck respectively. There are four and they appear opposite each other. Carley rafts are situated adjacent to the 2 pdr and on the bridge wings. Mine came from the *Daring* kit. 20 mm guns are made from scrap, and 6 are needed, two in the bridge wings and 4 in the waist. Three depth charge throwers are situated in the waist, carried on both sides. They come from the two in the kit and scrap.

The mast is now added which is the kit's mainmast cut down to 30 mm, with the lower yardarms removed. A crow'snest is added from scrap, 5 mm below the yardarm. A gaff was added from one of the discarded yards. This is cemented to the mast opposite the crow'snest. The ensign is made from paper coloured with red Biro and glued to the gaff. Finally the boats are added, a motor launch to starboard, and whaler to port. The davits from the kit are used. Anchors were put in place last. The jack staff may also be added near the guns.

'Flower' class corvettes were 205 ft in length, had a beam of 33 ft and drew 12½ ft of water. 'Flower' class only had one propeller shaft so the model should be modified accordingly if the keel is to be shown.

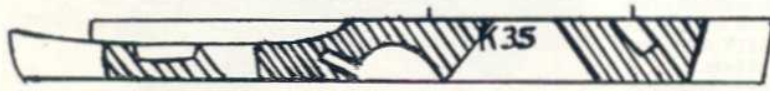
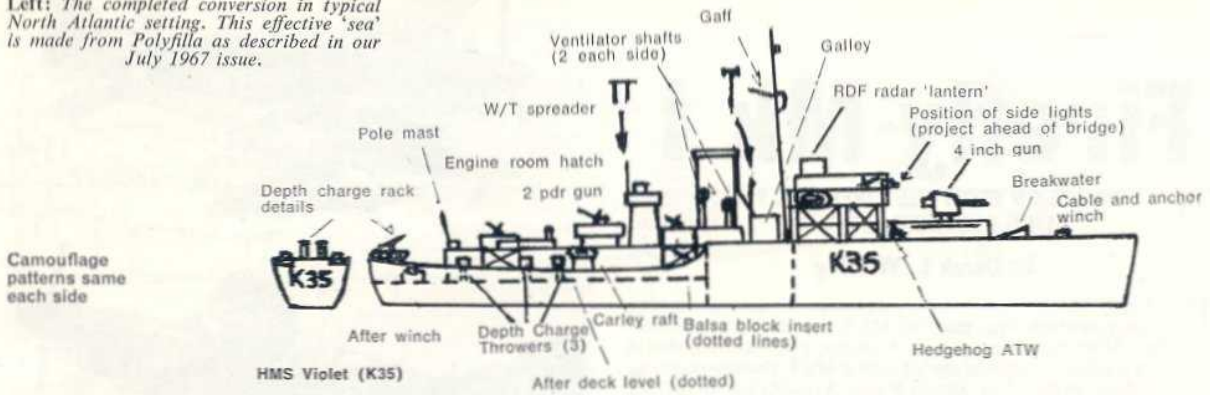
Most 'Flower' class ships looked like the *Violet*. For example, HMS *Anchusa* (K186) was the same except she was minus the aft 20 mm guns and sponsons. She did not carry her pennant numbers either, and had no gaff or wing Carley rafts.

HMS *Violet* as modelled by me, is camouflaged in the pattern shown. The nearest colour to the 'Atlantic Blue' is Humbrol 14, flattened with matt varnish. Grey was Humbrol 40, this also being painted on the decks and all other areas. Pennant numbers were white, and the number on the funnel was red. All came from suitable transfers.

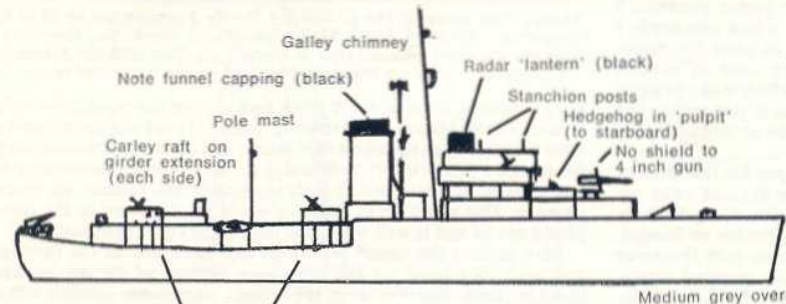
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AIRFIX magazine

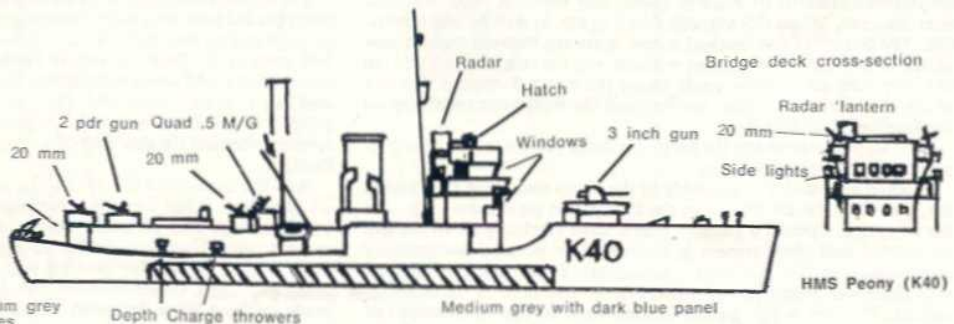
Left: The completed conversion in typical North Atlantic setting. This effective 'sea' is made from Polyfilla as described in our July 1967 issue.



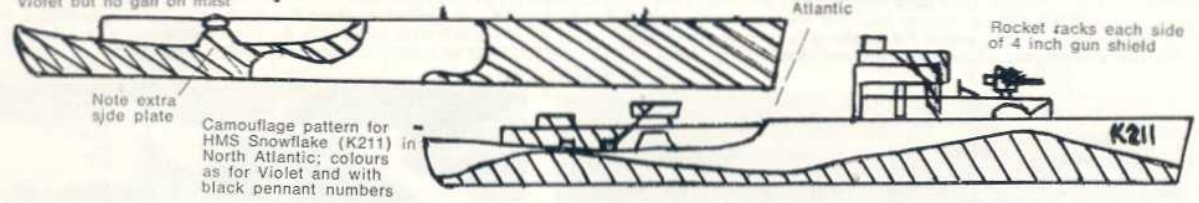
Camouflage pattern for HMS Violet in North Atlantic: medium grey with royal blue patches and white pennant numbers



Drawings 1:600 scale (full-size for model)



Camouflage pattern for HMS Anchusa (K186): medium grey overall with dark grey patches and no pennant numbers; carley rafts light grey; details at Violet but no gaff on mast



Below, left: HMS Verbena in 1942 typifies the original appearance of the 'Flower' class with merchant type bridge and mast forward. Very early 'Flowers' had a short forecandle as drawn in HMS Peony (above). Below, right: Another view of the completed model. This effective conversion does not betray its origin as a Hotspur kit.



'Flower' class—from page 62

Before modification in 1941 the mast was placed forward of the bridge (see photo) and the radar 'lantern' was on right of bridge. In 1942 a 'hedgehog' was added, and sponsons midships aft.

Detail Variations

HMNZS *Arbutus*: see diagram, no 2 pdr or searchlight tower.

HMS *Anchusa*: detail same as *Violet*. Pennant numbers not carried at some time.

HMS *Snowflake* (K211): same as *Violet* except 'hedgehog' was on the gun deck. No searchlight tower was carried, and four depth charge throwers. Far East colouring was dark grey hull, the rest light grey with a red band around the funnel. Pennant numbers were white now placed in the position shown on *Violet*. In the North Atlantic she was camouflaged and minus forward 20 mm guns and sponsons.

HMS *Peony*: for the more ambitious modeller she depicts the earlier style of 'Flower' class hull with short foc'sle and higher bridge. As built she had the mast forward of the bridge (and no radar) very reminiscent of the whaler style which inspired the 'Flower' design. The full-size drawing (for the model) should enable you to make her on the principles described here, allowing for a shorter bow section and longer balsa midship section, but study of other pictures is commended for further details. The drawing shows her later in the war.

HMS *Gloxinia*: was the same as *Peony* except that an open 3 inch gun (which can come from the *Campbeltown* kit) replaced the quad .5 machine gun mount and a pole mast replaced the W/T spreader. There were no 20 mm guns. Hull was dark grey with the superstructure, etc, medium grey. Pennant number K22 (white).

Some further reference may be found in *Warships of World War II* by Lenton & Colledge. Photographs are reproduced with the kind permission of Cmdr Dickinson, RANR, ex-First Lieutenant of HMS *Snowflake* who also supplied the colour details.