

The Fully Framed Model, Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop of 1767-1780

Volume IV Revised & Expanded
By David Antscherl

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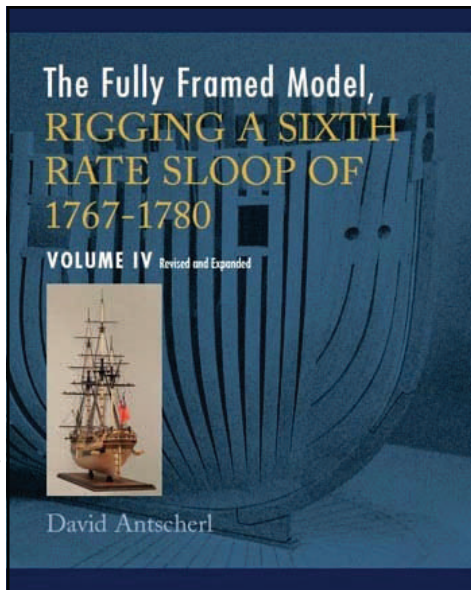
It has been approximately four years since *The Fully Framed Model, Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop of 1767-1780, Volume IV*, by David Antscherl, was published. Along with the three other companion books, this series on building a model of a Swan Class Sloop of War has become one of the benchmark references for model ship builders and naval historians.

When Mr. Antscherl originally wrote Volume IV, he had misgivings about producing a reference that would only be a duplication of previous works on the subject. Fortunately for us, he persevered, and produced a book, which has put an exclamation point on this treatise.

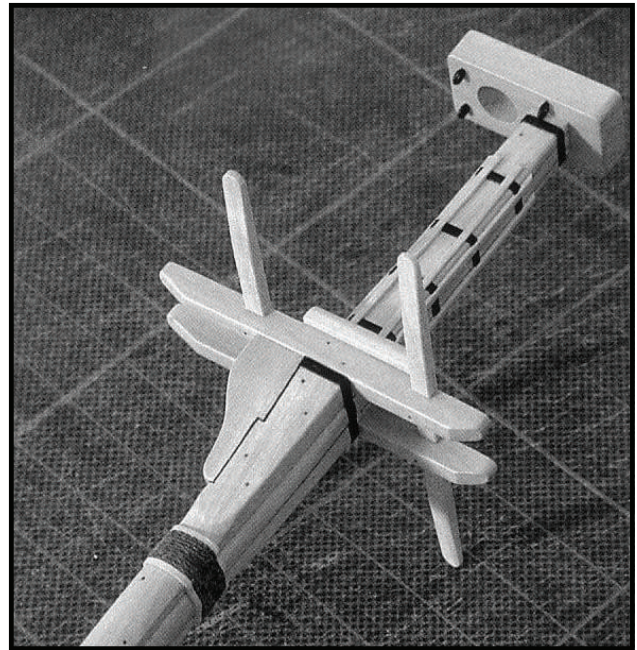
Nevertheless, it wasn't until after the first edition was released that the author became aware of several errors and omissions in the book. During that time, he also developed a technique for making realistic sails.

The net result was a revised and expanded second edition of *Rigging A Sixth Rate Sloop of War of 1767—1780*. This new book contains a number of updated passages, as well as a new chapter 26, composed of 16 pages that describe the author's procedure for fabricating and installing sails.

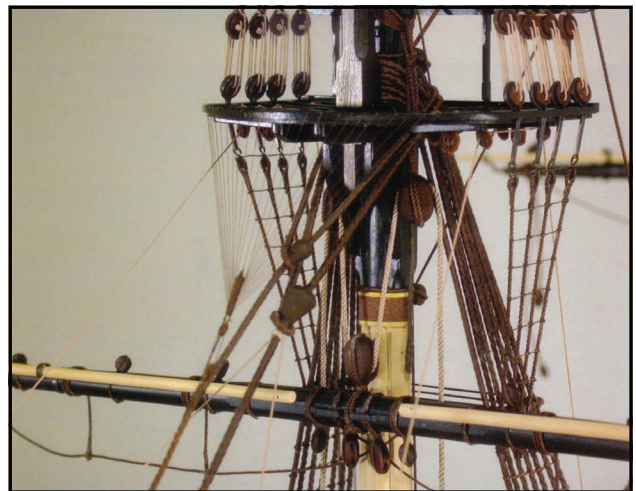
As is consistent with the format in Volumes I, II and III, *"Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop"* starts out with chapter 13. This has been a salient feature throughout this work that has allowed the author to easily refer back to segments discussed in the previous books. The initial two chapters start out by explaining the procedure for creating masts and yards to the correct proportions. Masts in particular were complex structures, and Antscherl breaks down their construction into an easily understood progression of steps.



"Understandability" is a common feature throughout this book, as the author does not assume that the reader is knowledgeable on the subject, and makes every effort to

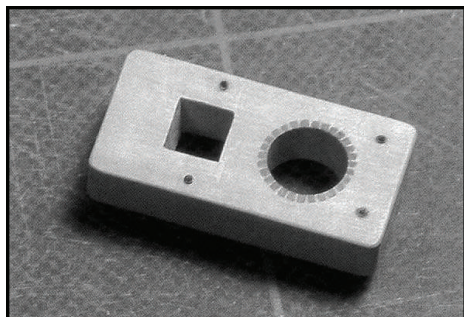


explain various terms. This makes *"Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop"* a very user friendly book, and although Antscherl makes numerous references to various classics such as Steel's *Rigging and Seamanship*, and Lee's *The Masting and Rigging of English Ships of War 1625-1860*, this treatise is capable of standing alone. This is especially important since David's research apparently found errors in "Lee" and gaps in "Steel", which could present a dilemma for all of us.



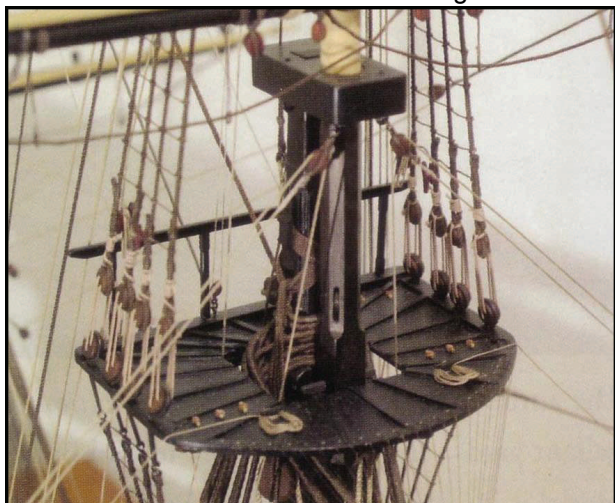
Rigging begins with Chapter Fifteen, and a description of Antscherl's ropewalk, which is very simplistic in design. His comments on the use of linen, silk, synthetic and cotton threads are especially interesting. He also discusses the principles of a serving machine, which is an absolutely essential device if you are interested in creating a first rate rigging job.

One aspect of the book that continuously impressed this writer was the level of knowledge Mr. Antscherl possesses concerning the complexity of these ships. He often makes reference to obscure fittings or procedures that are not common knowl-



edge to the rest of us. One excellent example is the leathering of the round lower mast cap hole, which the topmast slides through. In the photo above, David did not actually use leather. The procedure was simulated with tan acrylic paint.

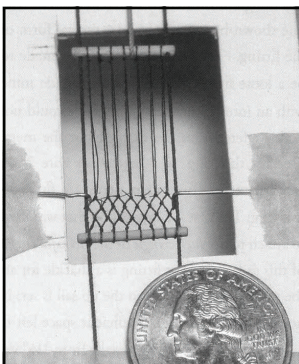
This brings us to another aspect of the author's modeling and this book. In spite of the impeccable crispness of his shaping and joinery, Antscherl also presents a practical side to his work. This includes "Magic Markers" for



tarring, and painted card stock, to simulate wood, where flexibility is required. Although not historically correct, the tops are constructed using a lamination process that gives them more strength and rigidity. They are then scribed to simulate planking. When painted, they become indistinguishable from a true built-up version.

Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop of 1767-1780 abounds with such hints and tips. Others include procedures for rigging crows-feet, catharpins, and fore topmast staysail netting, which can be especially problematical.

One short, but decidedly interesting chapter, number 25, deals with various "necessary ropes", as Steel terms them. They include the fish davit, tackle, cat blocks, hooks, pendants, anchor stowage, nun buoys, entering ropes and



stern ladders. None of these actually pertain to rigging, but are still appropriate for this book.

The final four chapters, which includes the new information on making sails, give a detailed analysis of each sail a sixth rate carried, and the required blocks and tackle that were required to handle them.

The book ends with a very nice selection of color photos depicting Antscherl's *Resolution*, which was also a sixth rate man of war, and dates from the same period.

Finally, this writer had an opportunity to compare the set of rigging plans (three sheets) that come with Volume IV, to the drawings that accompany a kit of HMS *Fly*, which is also a *Swan* class sixth rate. This European offering is one of the better kits on the market, and is highly regarded. It didn't take long to



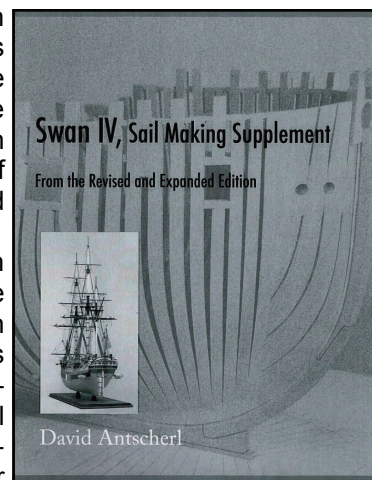
Completed rigging on the author's model of *Resolution*, 1772-1773.

determine that there were considerable differences between the two sets of plans. Whether you're interested in building this kit or any other vessel from this period, this book should be considered an absolute must.

The first edition of Volume IV has been sold out for quite some time, which means that many of us own a book lacking the latest information. The author and SeaWatch Books were well aware of this, and have produced an economical solution.

A supplement has been created that features the recent updates to *Swan IV*. Like the full book, this booklet of 16 pages describes Antscherl's sail construction and installation. Passages in other chapters that were modified, or added, are also included.

The *Swan IV, Sail Making Supplement*, from the Revised and Expanded Edition by David Antscherl, can be purchased for \$7.00 + \$5.00 S&H US/\$10.00 Canada/\$13 all other locations.



Reviewed by BobF