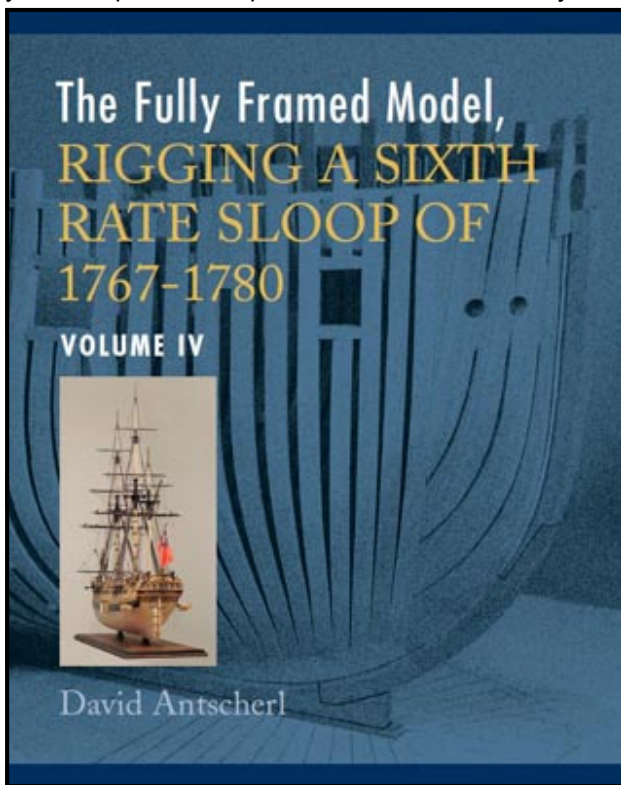


*The Fully Framed Model,  
Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop  
of 1767-1780*

By David Antscherl

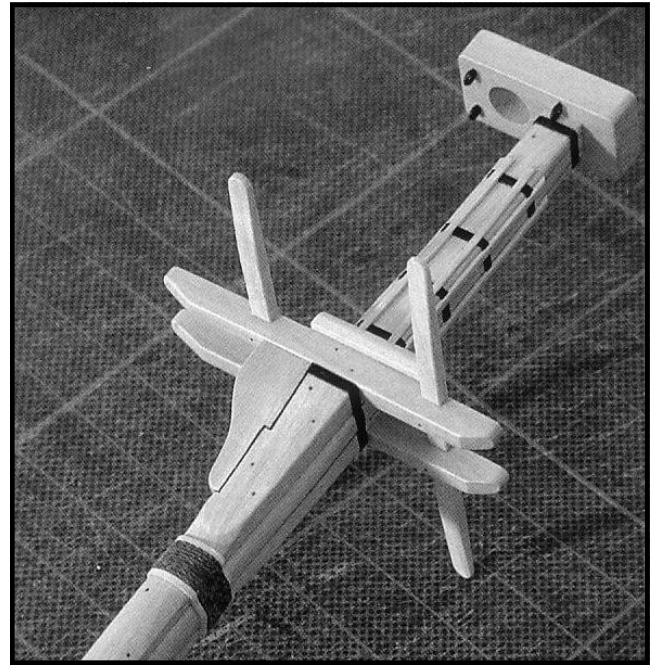
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In his opening remarks in *The Fully Framed Model, Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop of 1767-1780*, David Antscherl is quite honest about his level of expertise when it comes to masting and rigging. He felt that writing a book would only be a duplication of previous works on the subject.



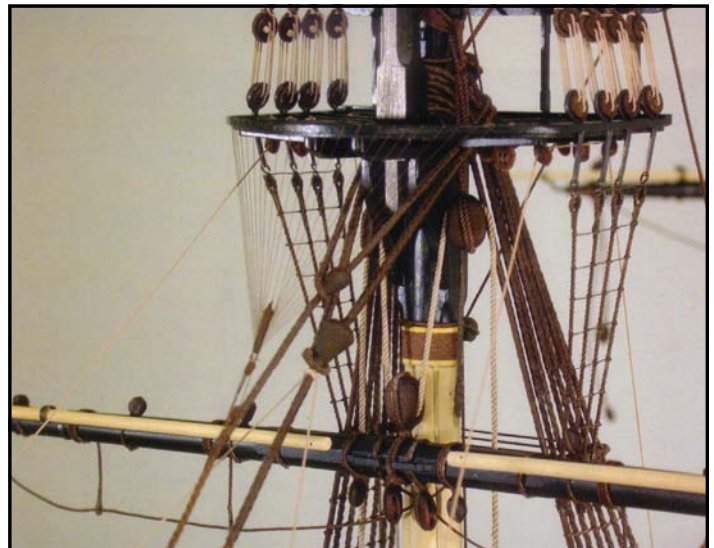
Fortunately for us, due to the urging of his friends and colleagues, he relented and produced a book, which puts an exclamation point on this treatise. It was only after David began to work on Volume IV that he realized that the information available was not as complete as he first thought it to be.

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.

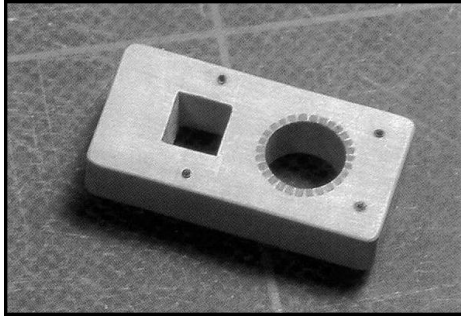


“Understandability” is a common feature throughout this book, as the author does not assume that the reader is knowledgeable on the subject, and makes every effort to explain various terms. This makes *“Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop”* a very user friendly book, and although Antscherl makes numerous references 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.

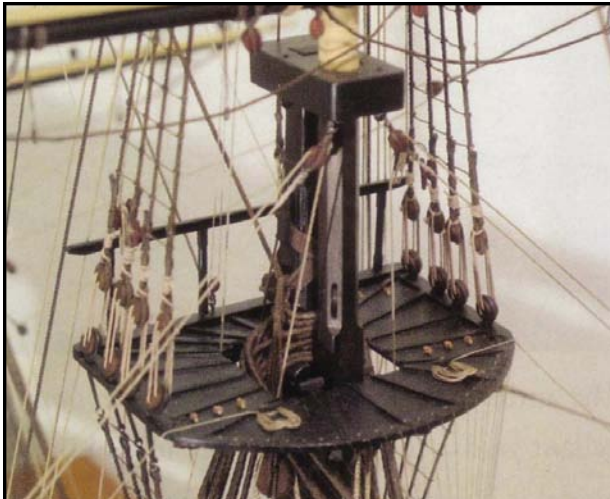


One aspect of the book that continuously impressed this writer was the level of knowledge Mr. Antscherl possesses concerning the complexity of these ships. He often makes reference to obscure fittings or procedures that are not common knowl-



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.

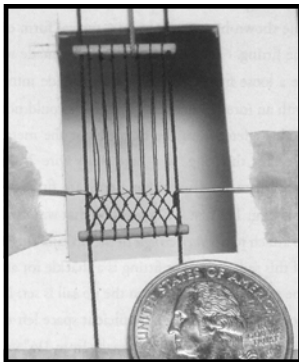
This brings us to another aspect of the author's modeling and this book. In spite of the impeccable crispness of his shaping and joinery, Antscherl also presents a practical side to his work. This includes "Magic Markers" for



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 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 masts and spars, but are still appropriate for this book.

Three of the final chapters give a detailed analysis of each sail a sixth rate carried, and the required blocks and tackle that were needed 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.

One refreshing aspect of David Antscherl's book is his willingness to share his mistakes, and how he compensated for them. In some cases, the net result was a procedure that approximated as much as possible the correct approach. In order to save us from such grief, he often refers ahead to future chapters, so that the installation of hard-to-get-to blocks and fittings can be installed while still accessible.

Finally, this writer had an opportunity to compare the set of rigging plans (three sheets) that come with *Rigging a Sixth Rate Sloop of 1767-1780*, 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. However, it didn't take long to 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.

Reviewed by Bob Filipowski