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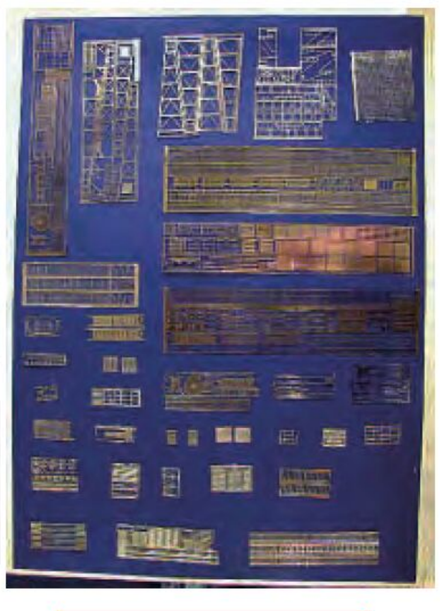
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EDITORIAL
Editor: Lindsey Amrani

Illustrator: Grahame Chambers

Publisher: Steve O'Hara

By post: Model Boats, Mortons Media Group, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6JR
Tel: 01507 529529 Fax: 01507 371066
Email: editor@modelboats.co.uk

CUSTOMER SERVICES
General Queries & Back Issues
01507 529529 – Monday-Friday: 8.30am-5pm
Answerphone 24hr
help@classicmagazines.co.uk
www.classicmagazines.co.uk

Archive enquiries: Jane Skayman
01507 529423 jskayman@mortons.co.uk

ADVERTISING
Advertising Sales Executive:
Mason Ponti
mason@talk-media.uk
Tel: 01732920499

Karen Davies
karen@talk-media.uk
01732 448144

By post: Model Boats Advertising, Mortons Media Group Limited, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs, LNP 6JR

PUBLISHING
Sales and Distribution Manager: Carl Smith
Head of Marketing: Charlotte Park
Commercial Director: Nigel Hole
Publishing Director: Dan Savage
Published by: Mortons Media Group Ltd, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6JR

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Tel: 01507 529529 – Mon-Fri: 8.30am-5pm
Enquiries: subscriptions@mortons.co.uk

NEWSAGENT RESERVATION (SEE PAGE 74)
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PRINT AND DISTRIBUTIONS
Printed by: Acorn Web Offset Ltd, Normanton, West Yorkshire.
Distribution by: Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London, EC1A 9PT.

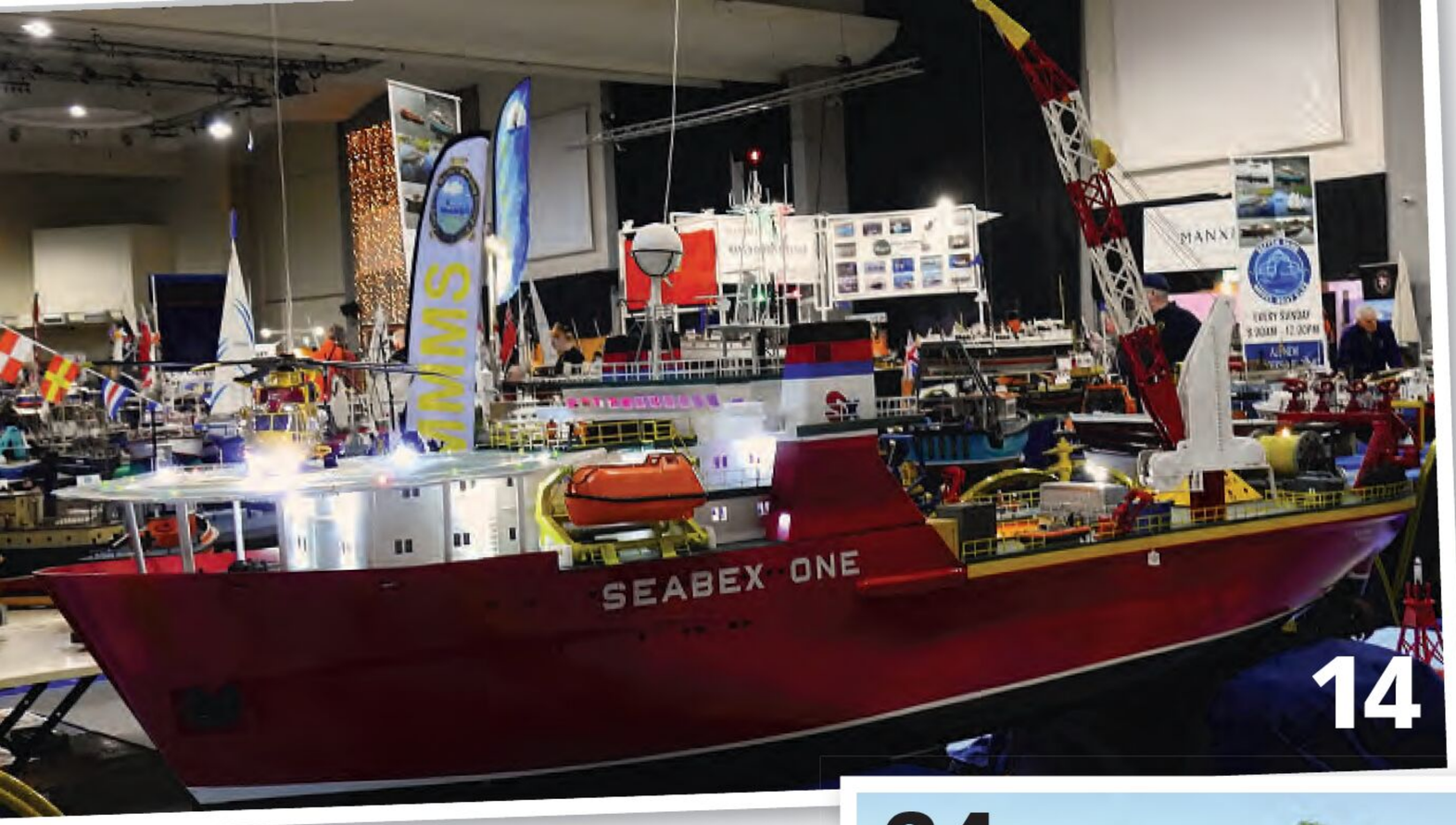
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Model Boats, ISSN 0140 - 2910, is published monthly by Mortons Media Group, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6JR UK.
The US annual subscription price is 89USD. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named WN Shipping USA, 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY 11256.
US Postmaster: Send address changes to Model Boats, WN Shipping USA, 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Subscription records are maintained at DSB.net Ltd, 3 Queensbridge, The Lakes, Northampton, NN4 5DT. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.

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WELCOME TO THE JANUARY 2025 ISSUE OF MODEL BOATS

As promised in my column last month, we've got a bit of a treat in store for the more advanced model boat builders amongst you in this issue – Ray Wood's free pull-out plan and build guide for a 1:48 scale model of the Lundy Island serving mail, supplies and passenger vessel MS *Oldenburg*.

Much easier to build is Billing Boats' Monterey Fishing Boat kit in its new Mediterranean guise. We're told this version is being produced in quite limited numbers, so we're delighted to have an example up for grabs in the exclusive prize draw you'll find on pages 12-13. Oh, and by the way, although marketed as a static kit, for those of you looking for a bit more of a challenge, at 1:20 scale there's always the possibly of installing your own R/C equipment – the world really is your lobster!

Plus, in a second prize draw (turn to our Compass 360 new section), there's a copy of Prestel Publishing's gorgeous new book *Boats* to be won. Presented in hardback format, it's a title that can be enjoyed by everyone from ancient mariners to inquisitive youngsters, thanks to the diverse array of topics covered and the brightly coloured retro-futurist illustrations, which are as beautiful as they are informative.

You will also find a report from the 2024 Blackpool Model Show, some great feature length articles, an interview with recent new member to the Black Park Model Club, the incredibly talented Crissy Howes, and all your favourite regular pages – so I hope you enjoy your read.

There will, of course, be lots more to come in 2025, so, to be sure you never miss an issue, check out our latest subscription deals (see pages 46-47). We'd greatly appreciate you subscribing—it's the best way to support us, as it ensures we retain the majority of the revenue. This allows us to continue investing in the magazine and delivering the content you love.

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Happy New Year everyone!

Lindsey

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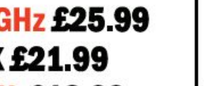
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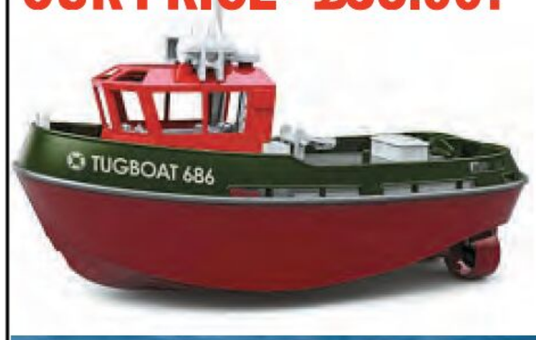
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Compass 360

If you have a news story for these pages, please contact the Editor, Lindsey Amrani, via e-mail at editor@modelboats.co.uk

ISMA[UK] accolade for the Sailing Wellness initiative

Simon Collyer, the social entrepreneur who was interviewed in this magazine about his 'blue health' R/C yachting initiative Sailing Wellness back in the November 2021 issue, has been presented with an award by (International Stress Management Association) at the 2024 annual Global Online Stress & Wellbeing Summit.

Sailing Wellness was set up to introduce those with PTSD, mental health, and physical injuries to one meter long (275cm) radio-controlled DragonFlite 95 sailboats, and in teaching them how to sail in a social setting help break the cycle of rumination and inactivity following a traumatic event or period of depression.

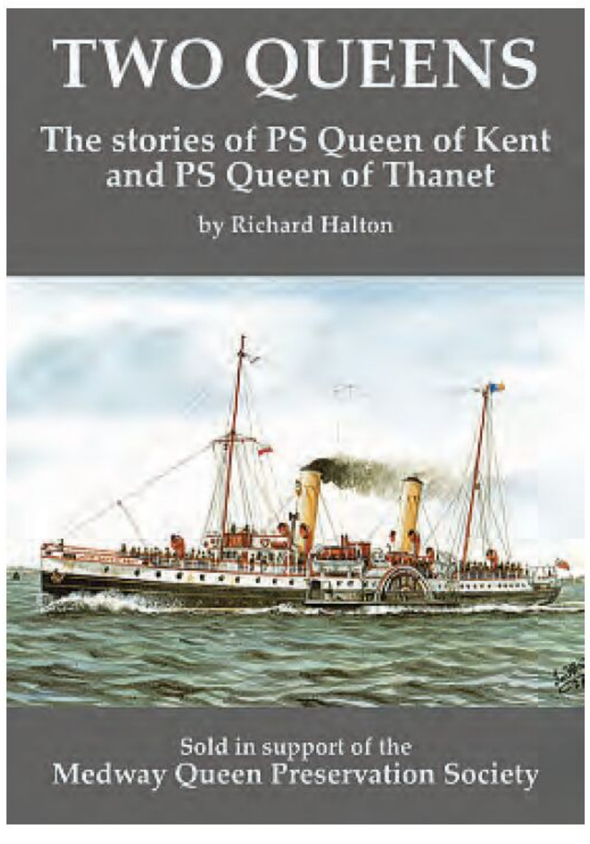
Commenting on this success, Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMAUK tells us: "*We congratulate Simon on winning this Award, which celebrates the outstanding contribution made by Sailing Wellness in reducing stress and improving mental health and wellbeing, and hope it will help him further this excellent cause and assist more people to change their mindset through learning to sail from dry land*".



Congratulations to Simon Collyer, founder of the Sailing Wellness initiative and recent ISMAUK award winner.

While further fundraising will be required to keep Sailing Wellness afloat going forward, Simon is delighted to report that Tendring District Council has this year provided seed funding for training and RYA (Royal Yachting Association) certification.

Two Queens



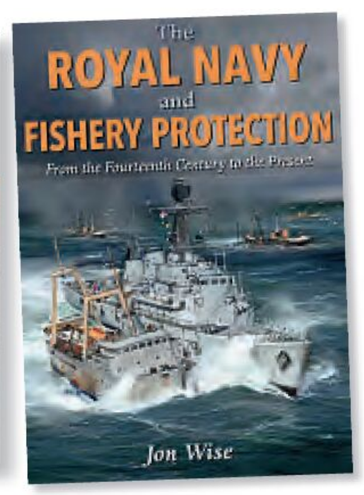
Richard Halton's new book details the history of two excursion vessels operated by the New Medway Steam Packet Co. during the 1930s, and for a short while after the war.

PS Queen of Kent and PS Queen of Thanet were both built as Racecourse class paddle minesweepers in 1916. They were sold out of naval service in the late '20s for the excursion trade and then requisitioned again in 1939 to once again sweep mines. One went to Dunkirk in 1940 and the other survived a very close encounter with a V2 missile in 1945! After the war they were converted back to being excursion vessels and were briefly operated by NMSP Co. again, before being sold on to Red Funnel. Sadly, they were both scrapped in the early 1950s. This fully illustrated book tells their stories from build to final withdrawal.

Published by Mainline and Maritime in A4 hardback format, while not a Medway Queen Preservation Society funded project, sales of the book will benefit the restoration and upkeep of the Medway Queen, and you order your copy either via www.medwayqueen.co.uk or purchase it in person at the Medway Queen Visitor Centre (open on Saturdays from 11am to 4pm, last admissions 3pm). Alternatively, signed copies can be purchased by post, direct from the author (through the Medway Queen West support group) at 2 Drury Close, Hook, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 8EL. Priced at £18.95, plus £2.70 UK p&p, cheques should be made payable to R. Halton. For all enquiries, including transfer payments, contact: richardhalton1502@gmail.com.

2024 Maritime Foundation 'Best Book' Award Winner





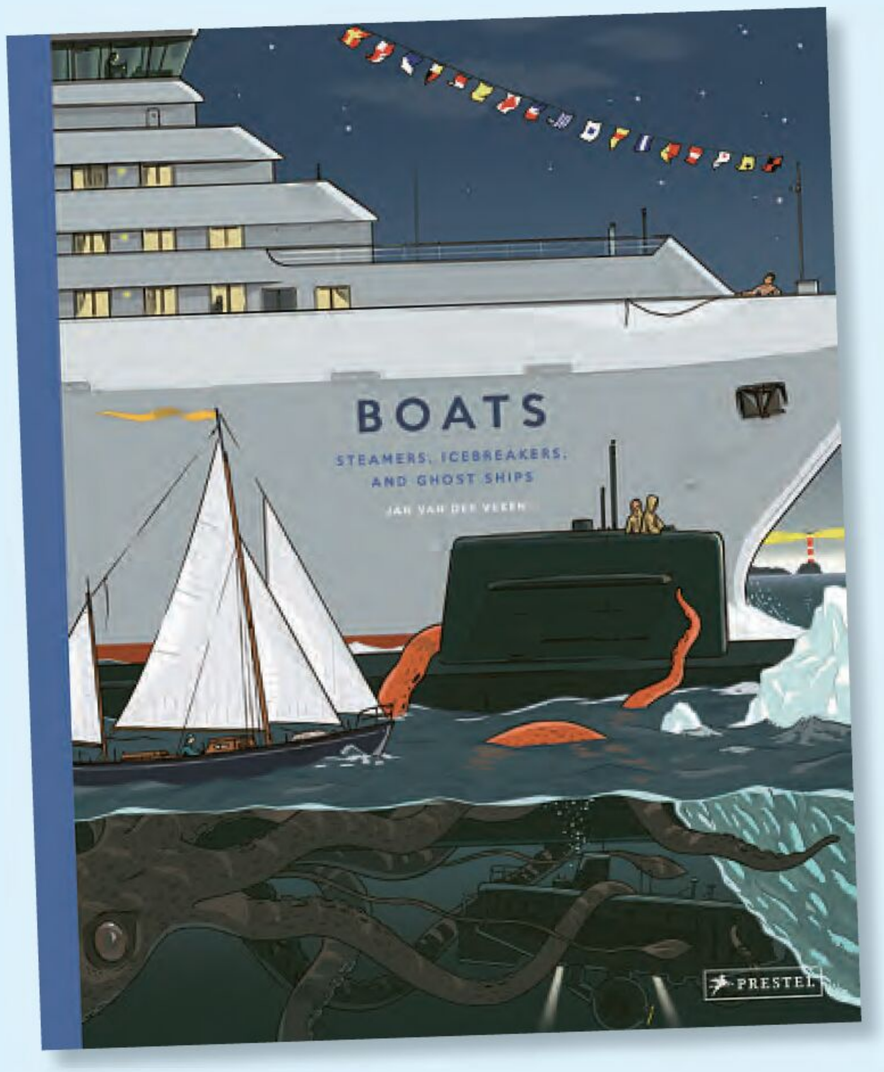
The Royal Navy and Fishery Protection from the Fourteenth Century to the Present by author and naval historian Jon Wise was announced winner of the 2024 Maritime Foundation Award for Best Book at the 28th Annual Maritime Media Awards on Thursday, October 17.

It is claimed that the Fishery Protection Squadron (FPS) is the oldest squadron in the fleet, predating the formal creation of the Navy itself in the early part of the 16th century, yet this is the first book to explore its 'Cinderella' role.

The hardback format book is priced at £25 and can be ordered either online via www.pen-and-sword.co.uk or from your local bookstore when quoting ISBN: 97813 9904 1706.

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This month, courtesy of Prestel Publishing Ltd, we're able to offer you the chance to win a copy of this delightfully illustrated, hardback format book *Boats – Steamers, Icebreakers and Ghost Ships*.

Perfect either to keep or gift, this visually enchanting voyage into the world of ships and shipping introduces young readers to an oceanic array of naval phenomena. Deftly weaving history, science and culture, the book covers a fascinating array of subjects, such as historic vessels, amazing voyages, extraordinary figures, technical details and cultural phenomena, while also delving into topics such as why seas have streets, which bodies of water are considered cursed, how a ship stays afloat, how to use a sextant, and how lighthouses work. The vibrantly coloured, retro-futurist, accompanying illustrations from artist Jan van der Veken are as beautiful as they are informative, making this the perfect book for naval enthusiasts of all ages.

Priced at 19.99, stockist details can be found at www.prestel.com. Alternatively, the title, carrying the ISBN 978-3-7913-7580-9, can be ordered from your local bookstore.

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Good luck, everyone!

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Billing Boats has now refinished its former 1:20 scale kit for the *Monterey* (an Italian-designed fishing vessel built out in California, USA, by an Italian expat fisherman) in traditional Mediterranean colours and, as can be seen in the pics here, has added some fun extras, such lobster pots, lobsters, etc, for inclusion on deck.

Although marketed as a static kit (and very pretty the resulting model will look on display, too!), the scale also offers the potential to equip this boat for radio-control. Those of you with the 'know how', therefore, could, with a little work and some blue sky thinking, have such a project finished and the model ready to sail by spring!

To further explore the Billing Boats' range visit www.billingboats.com

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Please note, the **closing date for entry submissions** will be **Friday, February 21, 2025**.

Good luck, everyone!

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A panoramic view of the boating pool, a very popular facility for sailing and resting those weary legs!

Blackpool Model Show 2024

Dave Wooley reports back from this year's event…

The Blackpool Model Show, first staged at the famous Blackpool Tower (hence the design of the iconic Best in Show trophy – more on which later) back in 1997, is now one of the UK's most enduring model events. A change of venue, to the Norbreck Castle Hotel's ballrooms in more recent years has seen it grow and evolve from the model boat show it started out as to an all-encompassing extravangza. Visitors to the show can now also book package deals that offer both entry to the show and hotel accommodation – ideal for those travelling extended distances and wishing to recharge their batteries, both figuratively and literally!

For those who love statistics, the 2024 show hosted 34 model clubs, 16 traders and six independent exhibitors/competitors.



Congratulations to the Bury Model Boat Club, who were awarded Best Club Stand for 2024. Will they do it again next year?



The National Association of Road Transport Modellers' enormous river themed diorama.



Under construction, a working model of Nelson's famous ship of the line HMS Victory, as displayed on the Scottish Warship Association stand.

An all-star line-up

This year's award for Best Club Stand went to the Bury Model Boat Club, who put on a superb display. That said, coming to a decision cannot have been easy for the judges, as all the clubs had gone above and beyond in showcasing their members' work. The Manx Model Boat Club, for example, put on a magnificent three-sided projection of models that featured everything from sail to steam to power boats, while the Scottish Warship Association put on a excellent show of force that included work in progress of a what promises to be a splendid, fully working model of HMS *Victory* on completion. The Kirklees Model Boat Club stand also featured a model currently under construction – the build of an old Stirling kit for the American Scout, but with the innovative twist using strong magnets to attach parts of its after deck. As they say, power gives



A superb build of the Canadian logging tugboat Free Winds.



Seen on the Ribble Model Boat club stand was this attractive pleasure craft, but it was what could be spied under the cabin roof that caught Dave's eye!



Looks like these passengers are having a good time! Clearly, elaborately fitting out the interior is becoming the done thing.

Showtime!



Always in great spirits, members of the Hoylake MBC.



All types of vessels are represented at Blackpool and non more majestic that this magnificent Sovereign of the Seas.



A superb display on the Life Boat Enthusiasts Society stand, representing many of the lifeboats that have given exemplary service around the UK and Ireland.



David Jack from the Edinburgh MBC presented this unusual model of a World War II Soviet BK 1124 Bronekater river gun boat at 1:24 scale.



Live steam remains popular, as evidenced here by John Mileson's evocative model of a Fenland lighter, displayed on the Wicksteed Park MBC stand.



The Ramon De Larringa, based on a Deans Marine kit of a Liberty ship, these vessels having been built in large numbers during World War II, with many remaining active well into the post-war years.



Showtime!

This superbly detailed model of the New Brighton Barnett class lifeboat William and Kate Johnston oozes character.



If you'd visited the Isle of Mann in the early 1950s, you would have seen this small double ender Douglas harbour ferry Thistle, captured here in 1:24 scale by Manx MBC member Les Quayle.



In Dave's previous life he was very much part of the fast-electric scene, so he found it very interesting to have a close look at some of the more advanced designs on display at this year's Blackpool Model Show.



This elegant, well-turned out Voith Schneider-powered model is based on the US/Alaskan tug Nanuq.



Seabex One, one of the most complex kits to initially have been produced by Graupner, with lots of working features.

way to sail and both forms were well represented by the Kingsbury Water Park Model Boats display. And I think everyone enjoyed how the more light-hearted side of the hobby was celebrated by the St Helens Model Boat Club, with a steamboat adorned with Halloween figures receiving lots of attention – boo!

And yet, the Best in Show accolade this year went not to model boat/ship but to an incredible scaled down working replica a Rolls Royce 1914 RNAS Armoured Car, entered by Mark Hawkins.

As working displays went (as well as the boating pool, the show featured special R/C tank/military vehicle and truck arenas), Hooton Trucks put on amazing demonstration, which, in my opinion, rivalled a similar event featured at the world famous Intermodelbau at Dortmund. Perhaps next year we might see trucks hauling boats – something the RNLI regularly does?

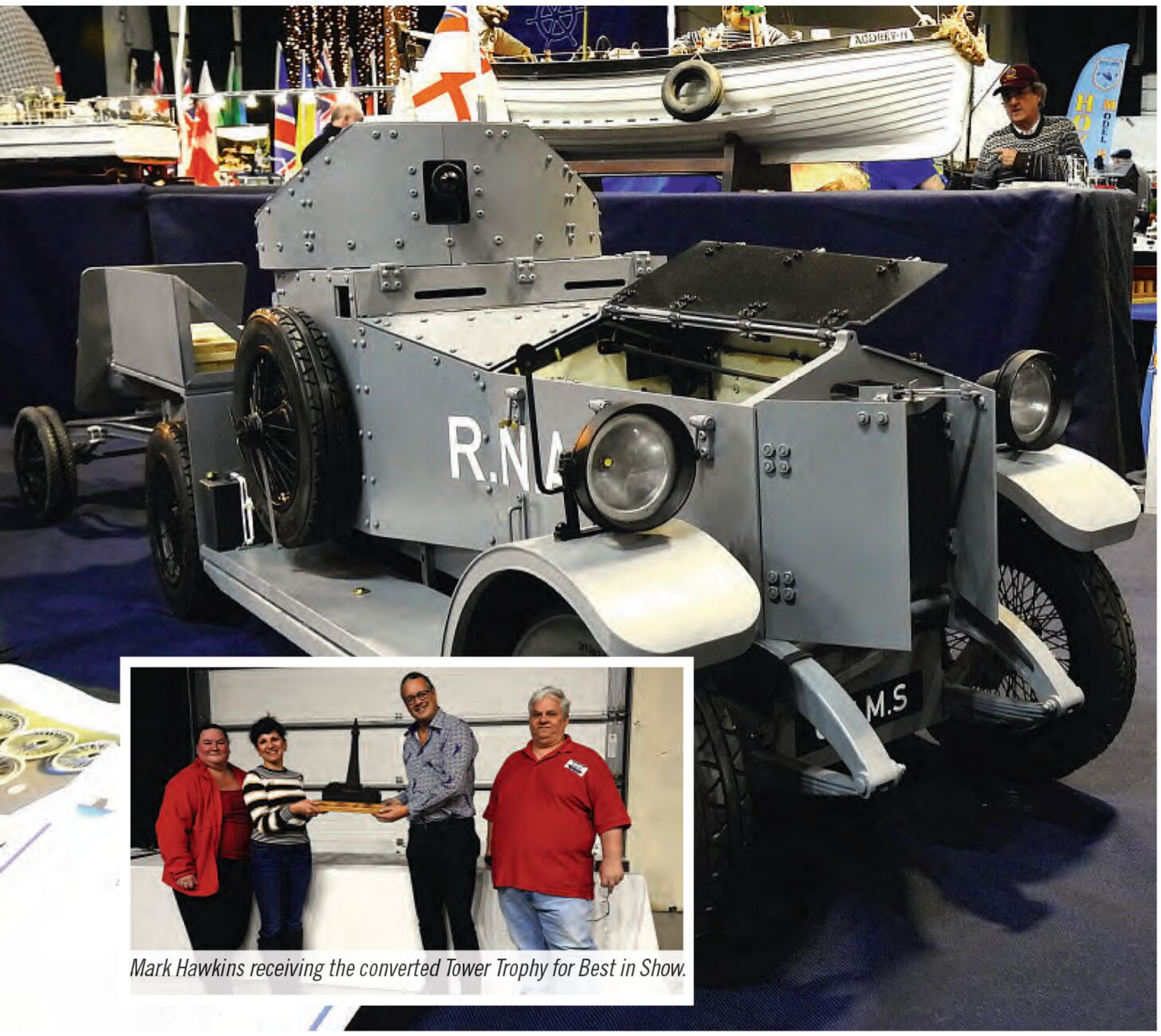
Talking shop

Once again there was a good cross section of suppliers and manufacturers in attendance, all adding to the show's interest. From a personal perspective, I needed to

Showtime!

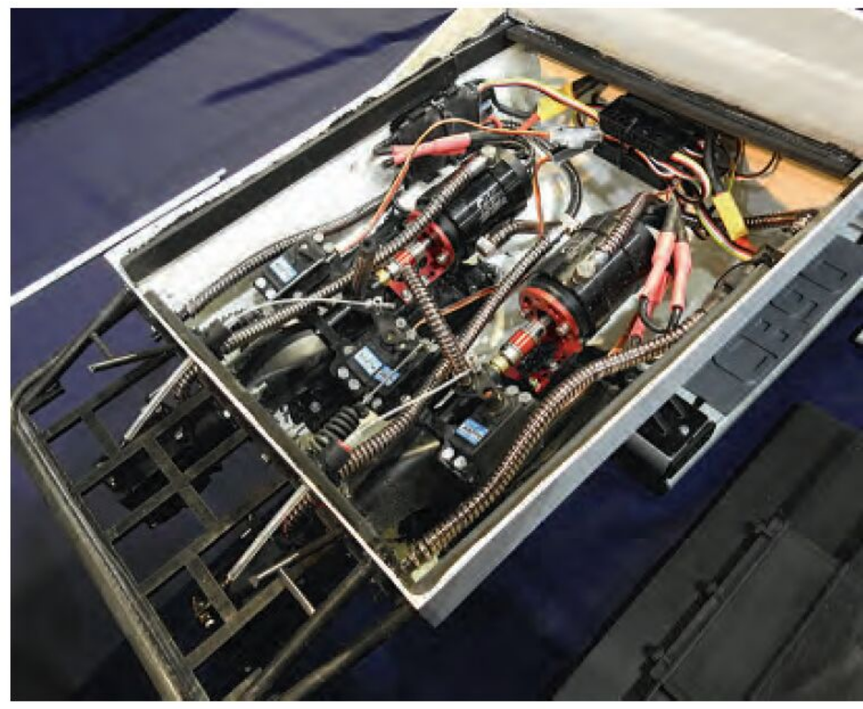
Work in progress on the traditionally built liberty ship American Scout could be viewed on the Kirklees MBC stand.

Magnets are being used to secure parts of the deck on the American Scout.

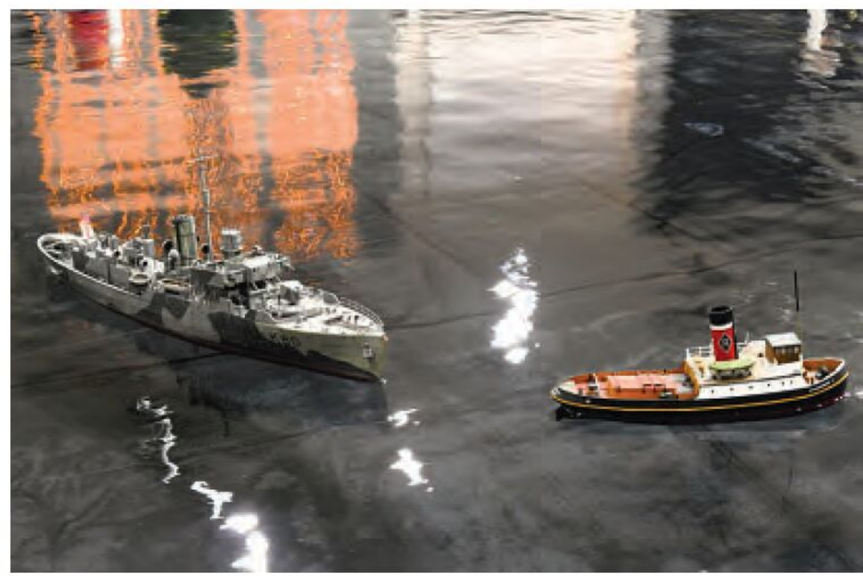


Mark Hawkins receiving the converted Tower Trophy for Best in Show.

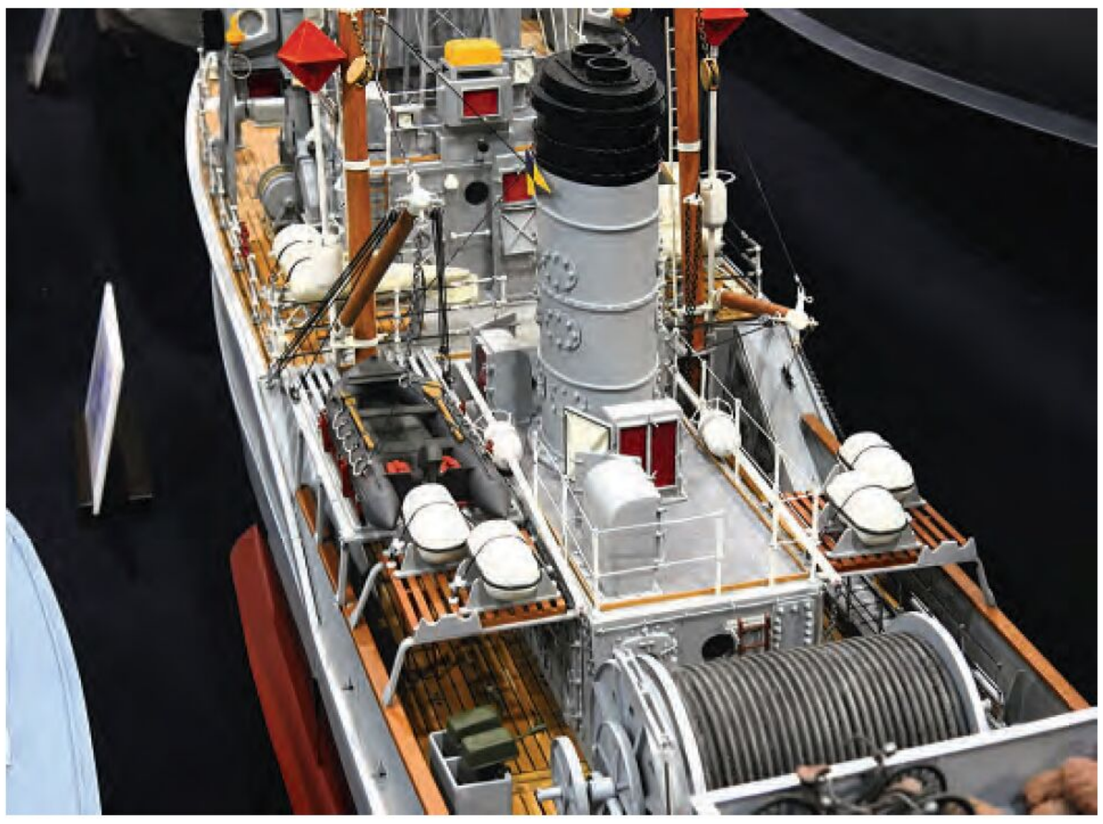
The 2024 Best in Show award went to this amazing 1914 Rolls Royce Armoured Car.



The ultimate in water jet drives fitted to a 1:16 scale Swedish CB90 assault boat developed and built by Mark Hawkins.



An indoor pool is a great attraction for both viewers and users and none more so than at Blackpool.



Amazingly intricate work on the Ton class mine hunter HMS Crichton by Gary Mills.



An astonishingly detailed 1:96 scale model of the Type 22 frigate HMS Campbeltown.



The very light-hearted approach to displaying steam launches by the St Helens Model Boat Club.



A record amount of money was raised for the RNLI at this year's event.



The massive truck arena hosted by Hooton Park Trucks was an on-going feast of activity.

replace some of my tools that have seen better days, so I was glad to get some time to peruse what was on offer from Peak Tools, and to be able to chat with other various traders about what's new and upcoming in their schedule of kits and fittings.

Funds raised for the RNLI

2024 will go down as a record year in terms of raising funds for the RNLI, with proceeds from the Bring and Buy stand making up a large percentage of the impressive £2,121 achieved.

"Plans for the 2025 event are now underway, with a date of November 15-16 having already been set"

2025

The Component Shop, and indeed all its partners/supporters, whose dedication to this long-running show is why it continues to thrive and expand, really must be applauded!

Plans for the 2025 event are now underway, with a date of November 15-16 having already been set. ●

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Tamar Class Lifeboat



The Tamar class lifeboat was introduced into the RNLI fleet in 2005. It was the result of several years of research and development to produce a virtually unsinkable slipway launched lifeboat; if it capsizes in will right itself within a few seconds.





The kit is to the usual high standards and includes building manual, GRP hull, other materials; CNC cut styrene decks and superstructure, full size plan, resin, and white metal fittings.

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Caldercraft's big tug kit Imara makes extensive use of white metal fittings for the fine detail.

MATERIAL MATTERS

Colin Bishop concludes his guide with the factors you'll need to consider when choosing fittings, adhesives, paints and varnishes

All scale boats need fittings. If you are building from a kit, then many will be included, otherwise you'll need to purchase items or make your own. So often it's the quality of the fittings that make the biggest impression when viewing a model.

In the late 60s you had four options: make the fittings yourself from whatever materials you could find; repurpose items, such as using eyelets for portholes; buy from the limited range of injection moulded plastic fittings available from manufacturers such as Keilcraft, Ripmax, *etc*; or look longingly and hopelessly at the advert in Model Maker for the exquisite Web Fittings, which cost an arm and a leg and were way beyond the means of the average boat modeller.

"So often it's the quality of the fittings that make the biggest impression when viewing a model"

White metal

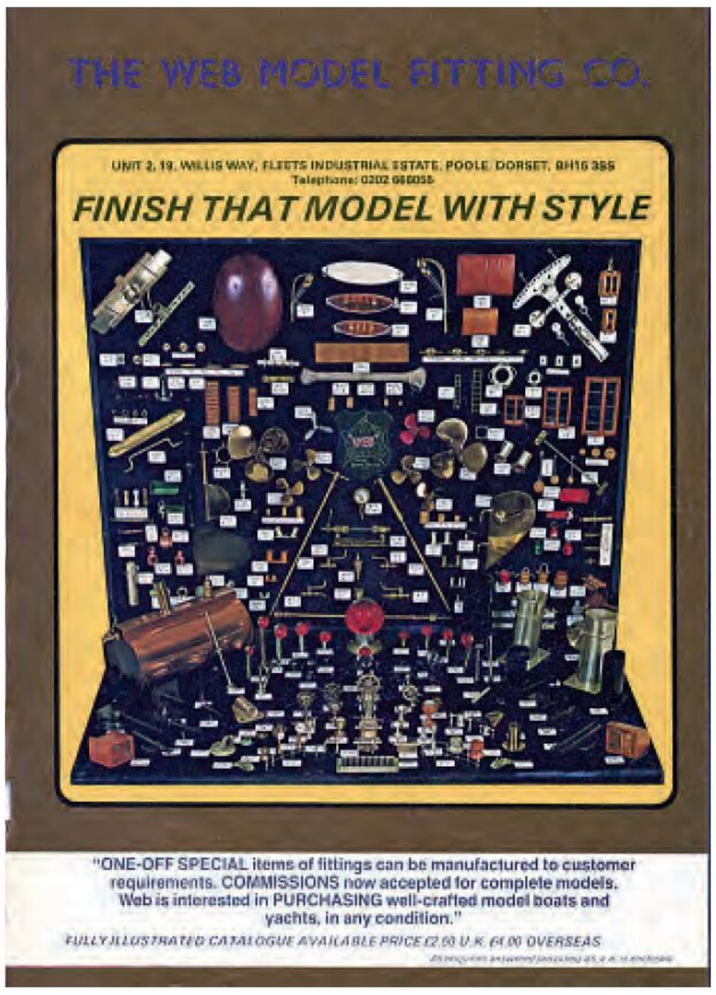
Things changed in the early '80s when white metal fittings became available from the likes of Caldercraft and other kit manufacturers. Silicone moulds and centrifugal casting meant that decent quality fittings could be run off in low numbers at modest cost compared with the injection moulding processes used by plastic kit manufacturers and the like. This was a huge plus for smaller manufacturers and widely embraced. Inevitably, the technique was sometimes extended into items which would have been better made from other materials, such as the cast metal propellors and weighty rudders fit only for ballast in some kits. Also, too many white metal fittings on certain kits tended to compromise stability. Overall, however, this was a big positive for the kit manufacturers and for some of the independent fitting suppliers. White metal does have some limitations apart from weight, in that it is soft and easily bent and broken, so not always the best option for items such as stanchions, *etc*. It needs to be protected as it can corrode after a while, but painting will take care of that.

Resin

Subsequently, there has been a tendency for cast resin to replace cast white metal in kits, as it's lighter, cheaper and can offer more detail. It's



Keilcraft marketed a range of generic injection moulded plastic fittings which were on sale for decades from the 1960s.



The superb Web model fittings that no ordinary modeller could afford!



Some of the superb white metal-based fittings from Mobile Marine Models, who also supply cast resin items.

also possible to buy resin casting kits, which enable modellers to cast items in polyurethane moulds from their own masters.

Many kit manufacturers offer a range of fittings alongside their kits which can be incorporated into scratch-built models, often with a mixture of white metal, resin and, increasingly, 3D-printed items.

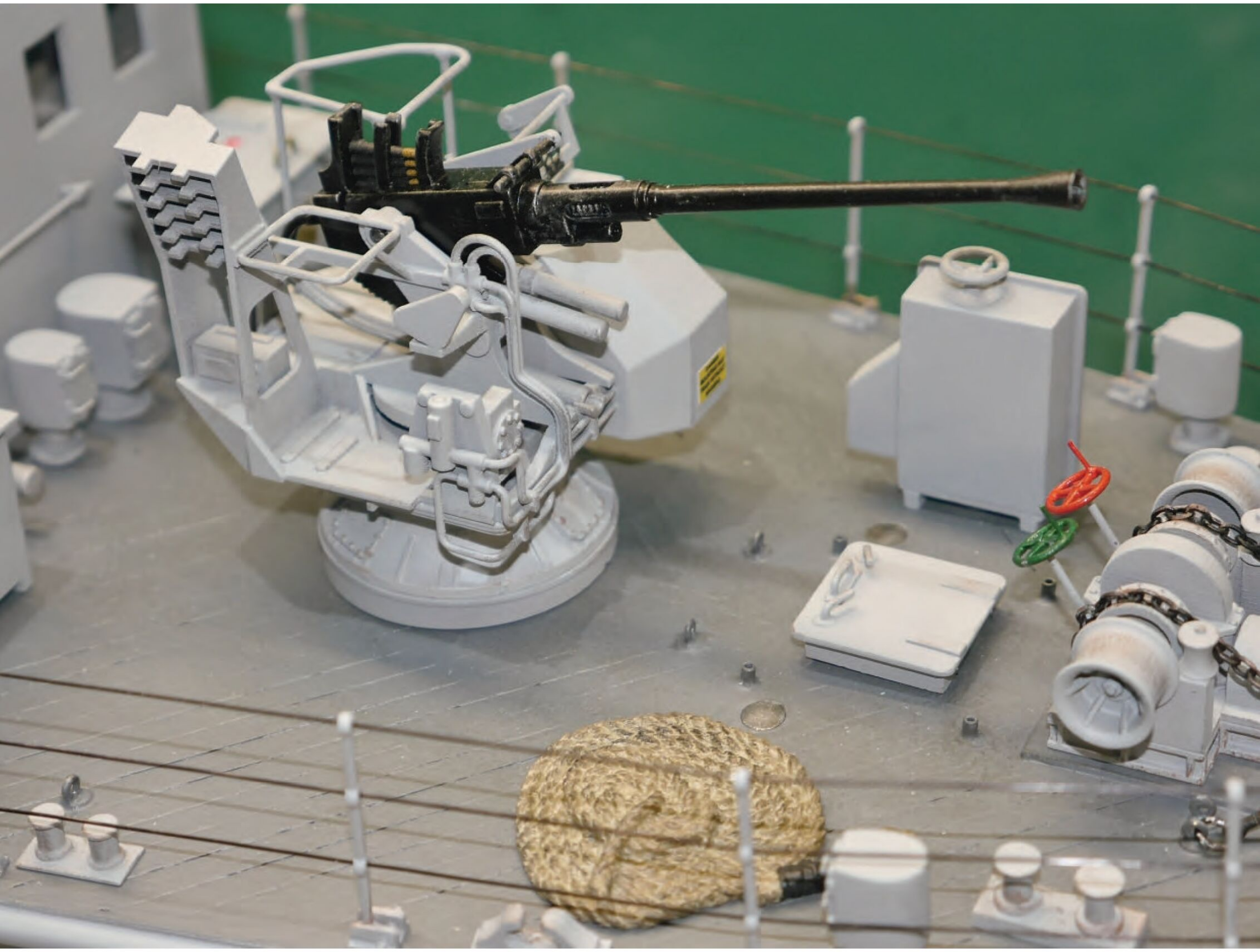
Adhesives

Adhesives are not strictly speaking building materials, but they are vital to holding your model together. There's

"There is a tendency to automatically reach for the universal cure all – superglue. It is a very versatile adhesive and suitable for a wide range of applications. It does have some drawbacks though…"



Martin Clifton of Macs Mouldings has an extensive range of resin fittings in larger scale sizes.



3D-printing offers commercial fittings in amazing detail, such as this 40mm Bofors gun, albeit at a price. Even the best scale modellers, such as Dave Wooley, are hard put to match the delicacy and degree of detail now possible.

a bewildering variety out there and it can be difficult to choose the right one for the task, which is essential, especially if you are gluing together dissimilar materials.

There is a tendency to automatically reach for the universal cure all – superglue. Superglue or Cyanocrylate can stick most things to most other things and comes in many variations to facilitate this, but it sticks some things better than others and is not always the best choice. In its standard form joints can be brittle, although some varieties introduce a degree of flexibility. It also comes in thin, medium and thick viscosities to suit the application at hand. As such it is a very versatile adhesive and suitable for a wide range of applications. It does have some drawbacks though.

"These days there are some very good wood glues on the market. Water-resistant PVA type glues tend to be particularly popular, but I prefer the aliphatic types, which are better for modelling as they are more readily sandable when dry"

Cyano fumes can have a respiratory effect on users. I am typical in that a whiff or two of cyano fumes can give me hay fever symptoms for three days or so, which makes it impractical to use in the workshop. I can tolerate the odourless variety better, but this usually needs a touch of 'kicker' to set quickly. The bond can go brittle after a while, meaning fittings stuck on with it can detach themselves, so it's always best to reinforce the joint with a mechanical pin connection into the deck or other surface.

When joining wood to wood, a woodworking adhesive is usually the best choice, as you might expect. These days there are some very good wood glues on the market. Water-resistant PVA type glues tend to be particularly popular, but I prefer the aliphatic types, which are better for modelling as they are more readily sandable when dry.

The August 2024 issue of this magazine featured a short article on Deluxe Materials SuperPhatic! glue and I can recommend this unreservedly. It is a woodworking alternative to superglue and wicks



Warships require very many fittings, as the Deans Marine kit of HMS Dreadnought shows.

into joints to give a strong bond. As a bonus, it also does an excellent job of bonding non-porous to porous materials, such as plasticard to wood. It's a very good alternative to superglue in these situations if you're allergic to cyano fumes, plus it is water cleanup, and any excess can simply be wiped away.

Some traditional wood glues, such as Cascamite, now known as Extramite, are still available, but modern glues are the way to go.

Another universally used adhesive is two-part epoxy resin. Like superglue, this will bond most materials to one another but benefits from abrading smooth surfaces to achieve a mechanical bond. Like superglue, it comes in various types which are formulated for different applications, as the resin can carry specific ingredients for the job in hand, such as metals for repairing vehicle cylinder blocks. For modelling purposes, the usual criteria is curing time. You can choose from 5 minutes or less, or up to an hour or more, in various increments. Generally, the shorter the curing time the less strong the bond, although all epoxies are very effective. My personal preference is to use the 5-minute variety for attaching deck fittings and the 15-minute one for structural joints. The people who build and repair full-size boats in Portsmouth Dockyard No. 4 Boathouse favour 30-minute and one-hour varieties, as this gives more time for the epoxy to penetrate the joint before curing.

"When it comes to plastic-to-plastic joints, the obvious option is liquid poly cement… That said, there are the usual caveats. Not all liquid poly formulations are the same and nor are all plastics"

When it comes to plastic-to-plastic joints, the obvious option is liquid poly cement. Yes, superglue will also do the job, but liquid poly actually welds the surfaces together and you cannot get a better bond than that. It's a no brainer. That said, there are the usual *caveats*. Not all liquid poly formulations are the same and nor are all plastics. The result is that while most adhesive options will work perfectly well with mainstream styrene materials, some are less or non-effective on other plastics, such as some of the ABS types used by kit manufacturers. Also, not all are effective on some sheet and profile materials – Plastruct, for example. As always, you need to test before committing!

The original tubes of polystyrene cement with which we used to ruin our childhood Airfix kits are still readily available, but the adhesive can be thick and stringy and unsuitable for fine joints. It does, however, have its uses, such as where flat surfaces rather than joints need to be glued together, and thin liquid poly would 'flash off' too quickly.

For the really difficult jobs there are emulsion and acrylic adhesives, which will just about bond anything to anything, but at a price. Well known ones are DeLuxe Fusion and Stabilit Express.

Contact adhesives such as UHU and Bostik have their place for particular jobs, such as sticking simulated plating on to hulls, and these now come in different varieties as well as the standard tubes. Be careful if using with plastic though, as the solvent can sometime soften and distort the workpiece. This is not always immediately evident, as some modellers have discovered, having apparently successfully stuck 'plating' to a smooth ABS hull only to find the



Not just superglue! Having a good selection of adhesives is the key to a well-constructed model.



Some paints and coatings. Acrylics have largely taken over from enamel and cellulose as the preferred options.

next day that the glue has eaten into and distorted the hull or the plating.

Another handy option is canopy glue from various manufacturers. As its name implies, this was formulated for attaching the transparent cockpit canopies to plastic aircraft kits, which can become fogged up if polystyrene or superglue is used. It dries completely clear, which is a big plus, but is not totally waterproof. It is very useful for glazing superstructure windows, as it is water clean-up and will not fog transparent styrene as superglue does. Any excess can often be peeled off if you are very careful.

"A left field alternative, overlooked by most people, is double sided sticky tape…"

A left field alternative, overlooked by most people, is double sided sticky tape. Applied to one surface and the backing paper peeled off, this leaves a thin film of adhesive, which is instant grab and permanent. There are also varieties with a foam backing, such as servo tape for attaching items within the hull.

In addition to the above, there are simply too many other specialist

"This is very disheartening and can result in rude words!"

adhesives to describe in an article like this, each of which have their own niche, but those described above will cover most model boat building needs. We have indeed come a long way from the times when much woodworking depended on glues based on rendering down horses' hooves!

Painting and finishing

You might not initially think of paint being a modelling material, but it is, along with other finishes and sealants. These are absolutely vital to constructing a successful model. For decades, the standard 'go to' was Humbrol enamel in those famous little tinlets, but today the first choice is usually one of the many ranges of acrylic paints on the market (including Humbrol), as they are non-toxic, odourless and dry quickly. They are easy to apply either by brush or spraying. They are usually waterproof when fully cured (as opposed to dry) but do not have the abrasion resistance of enamel, so on a working model, and particularly on the hull, they benefit from a protective transparent coating (see under Varnishes below).

Cellulose lacquer paints are also available, but more relevant to plastic models than our boats.

Successful painting has always been the great bugbear for modellers. Countless models have been ruined or marred by an unsuccessful paint job. And the reason is not just down to skill but equally to two other factors: patience and compatibility.

We have all been there, painting needs patience. Paint needs proper surface preparation and time to dry properly before adding another coat. But no, we always rush it and suffer accordingly, and I am no exception. Only now, in retirement, am I willing to walk away for a day or two before returning to the job. Some lessons are just learnt the hard way.

The other horror is compatibility. You take a huge amount of care in preparing your hull and putting on an initial coating of primer or other sealant, then you apply a topcoat, and it all comes up in blisters, necessitating a complete strip back to the original surface. This is very disheartening and can result in rude words!

Most people now realise that mixing enamel and acrylic is not usually a terribly good idea, but



Brian King's French battleship Bouvet shows off the perfect standards of painting and finish he managed to achieve.



Roy Hickling's scratch-built fishing boat seen at the Warwick Show is a masterclass in painting and finishing.

"Never, ever, take this for granted…"

take this for granted. Always prepare a test piece first before applying paint to your pride and joy; this is another point at which the need for patience comes in. Never has it been so true that a stitch in time saves nine.

Varnishes sit alongside paints but instead of covering the underlying surface allow it to show through. They are very useful indeed. Traditionally they have been applied over wood to bring out and protect the attractive surface, such as with yacht varnish. But they also have another role in protecting vulnerable surface finishes such as acrylic paintwork and applying a reflective surface finish, which can be gloss, satin or matt, as required. There are now some excellent crystal clear, non-yellowing 'varnishes' on the market, which can be brushed or sprayed. Many are intended for artworks. But do always check the specifications listing their characteristics, such as waterproofing and UV resistance, *etc.*

Suppliers

The suppliers, brands, ranges and products mentioned in this article are simply examples. Other sources of materials can be found advertised in this magazine, your local model shop (if you are lucky enough to have one), and through internet searches. The modelling forums on the internet, including the Model Boats forum, are invaluable for offering help and advice in sourcing and using materials.

Choose wisely!

Model boaters have never been so blessed when it comes to the wide range of materials and the means to attach them to each other now available. With a little research there is almost always a solution for the particular job in hand. What does cause confusion is that there are frequently several alternative solutions, all of which will work, but some will be better and easier to use than others. Personal preference also comes into it, as, inevitably, does cost.

In order to make the best decisions for your own project and circumstances, a general knowledge of the wide range of options and their advantages and drawbacks can be invaluable and greatly improve the chances of building an enjoyable and successful model. I hope these notes have gone some way to opening up the choices available in achieving this. ●

there is still a lot of confusion when it comes to acrylics. Some assume that acrylics are water-based and thus compatible, but unfortunately this is far from the case. While some acrylics are indeed water-based, others are alcohol based. In each case the solvent, water or alcohol, evaporates to leave the pigment on the surface. This need not necessarily be a problem but many of us like to use commercial 'rattle cans' to paint our models as it gives a better result than a brush and avoids the faff of using and cleaning out an airbrush, and I am all in favour of this. The problem comes when the propellent in the 'rattle can' reacts with the surface you are spraying onto, and not all 'rattle cans' are the same. The golden rule when using 'rattle cans' is to stick to just one manufacturer. Use their primer and then their topcoat and things should be OK. In my experience, the popular UK Halfords automotive primer 'rattle cans' primers are very tolerant for the surfaces they are applied to and can take Halfords topcoats or enamel quite comfortably. But never, ever,



MB Q&A

A JAWSOME *ORCA!*

Crissy Howes chats with Lindsey Amrani about her film-themed killer first build…

Q Firstly, congratulations on a truly spectacular model by anyone's standards, Crissy.

Can I begin by asking you to explain to our readers when and why your fascination with the *Orca* first began, and how that initial interest then developed into a desire to replicate the vessel in model form? Also, as I know you work as an Art Director in the film industry, were/are highly detailed models of other types already very much part and parcel of your working life and area of expertise, and did an early interest in modelling play any part in the creative career path you chose for yourself?

A As an Art Director, over the years I've been involved in the production of many films where vehicles are considered sets in their own right (Batman's *Tumbler*, James Bond's Aston Martin, the *Guardians of the Galaxy*'s *Milarno*, *etc*). From the era I grew up, the 1970s/80s, there are many of these sets that now considered iconic, *Star Wars' Millenium Falcon* being a good example, but for me there's one that particularly stands out for its sheer lived-in look: the *Orca*, from the film *Jaws*. Who could ever forget the scenes in which three men go in pursuit of a killer shark and become locked in a battle to the death aboard the wise, old captain's boat.

Jo Alves (the Production Designer) took a plain white Novi fishing boat, originally named *Warlock*, and





Close up detail of Crissy's CAD designs, created having first worked out the correct scale for everything from full-size props sourced. Her advice to fellow modellers is not to be afraid to experiment with CAD, as there are so many free to download programs out there.



Where the magic happens! Crissy's very own garden workshop.



Crissy had initially intended to build the Orca to 1:6 scale, but then NECA, a toy company, came out with this 8-inch (1:9 scale) Quint figure, which sold her on the idea of working to a slightly smaller scale.



The laser-cut frame for the Orca.

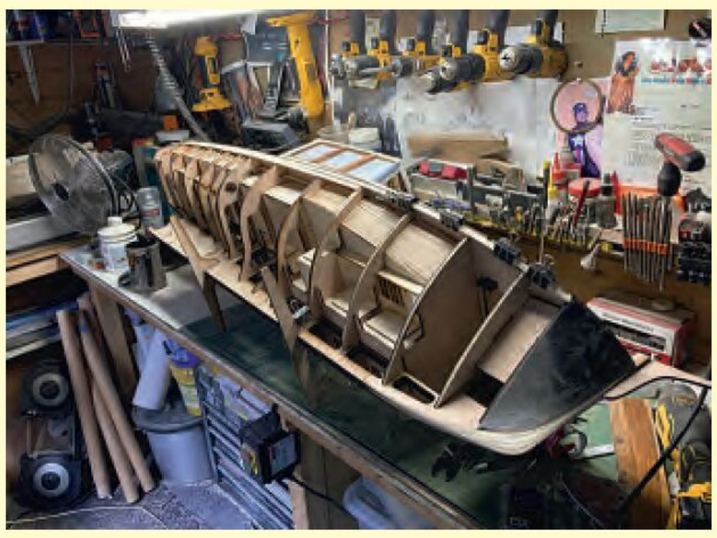
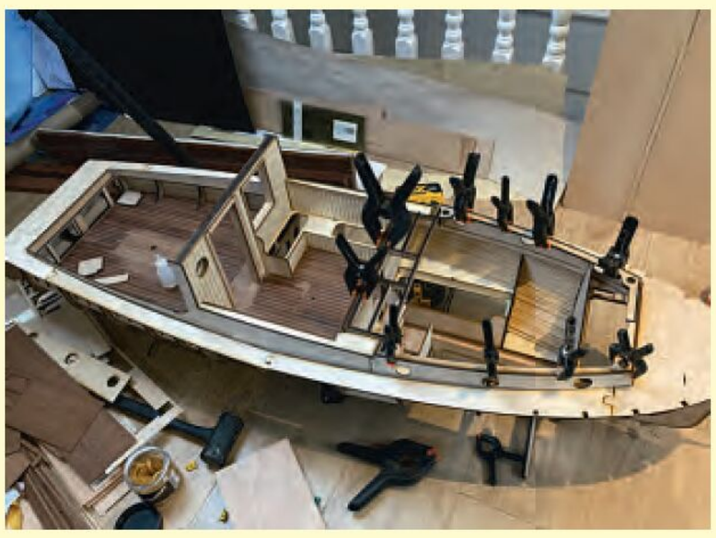
completely rebuilt it to accommodate the action in the script. But what really makes the boat excel as movie set is the attention to detail: the aging/weathering of the vessel, all the bangs and scrapes, deck clutter, *etc*, and, of course, the credibility of Quint's self-built sharking vessel adaptations. From an audience perspective, it's all totally convincing and, from a professional perspective, I hugely admire the art of its set dressing.

I've always had a deep interest in model VFX (visual effects) – the use of models to expand the vision of film makers – no doubt stemming from when, as child, I would lay on the carpet playing with toys and imagine them in various scenarios at full-size. I started in the industry in 1990 and consider myself really lucky †o have worked with Derick Medings and the team that made *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Blade Runner*, *Close Encounters* and *Flight of the Navigator* for a short time, before CGI (Computer Generated Imagery) took over and destroyed the model side of the industry. Following that, I moved on into practical SFX props and then the Art Department, but I've never forgotten the fun we all used to have shooting miniatures.

So, about three years ago I decided if I wasn't going to be involved with models at work anymore, I would build my own at home. After all, I am the proud owner of a traditional garden shed!

Q *Was this model built entirely from scratch, based on a pre-moulded hull, or kit built and then heavily customised?*

A The photos illustrated here show Version 2. The first model I built, although highly detailed, had some issues – although perhaps only ones that I was bothered about. Research is a big part of a build like this, and it's also half the fun. With the tools now available for that (the internet, the ability to take DVD screen grabs, *etc*) however, it's so easy to go down a rabbit hole! *Orca* Mk 1 was pretty good but, as I'd never built a model boat before, I got overly wrapped up in the outward appearance. With Version 2 I wanted to include all the other things I'd learnt and start again from the hull up, so I could get closer to, say, 98% accuracy. I contacted a man who owned the real shooting barrels from the film and bought as many other props as I could to use for scaling. Using real objects, I could work out, for example, the plank sizes and, as the *Orca* is covered in planks, count them from shot to shot. Likewise, I scaled down barrels, bottle screws, cleats, and even plates and wine bottles for the table. And I purchased a benzo gas stove to work out the window size. There is a man in America who has spent years turning his office


Getting stuck in, work progresses on Crissy's build.





Timber added to the frame.

a replica of the cabin and he has even more props, so once I knew someone else was taking the same approach in terms of dimensions I knew was on the right track. It was a slow process, as I had to fit this in between contracts (my job is freelance, so I tend to get a month off between movies). Working intermittently like this, the build probably took about four months in total.

Q *You decided to challenge yourself yet further by building a working rather than static replica of Orca. Why was that important to you?*

"Right from the off the whole point of the exercise was to build a working model I could shoot footage of out on the water. The big challenge was, could I make it look real?"

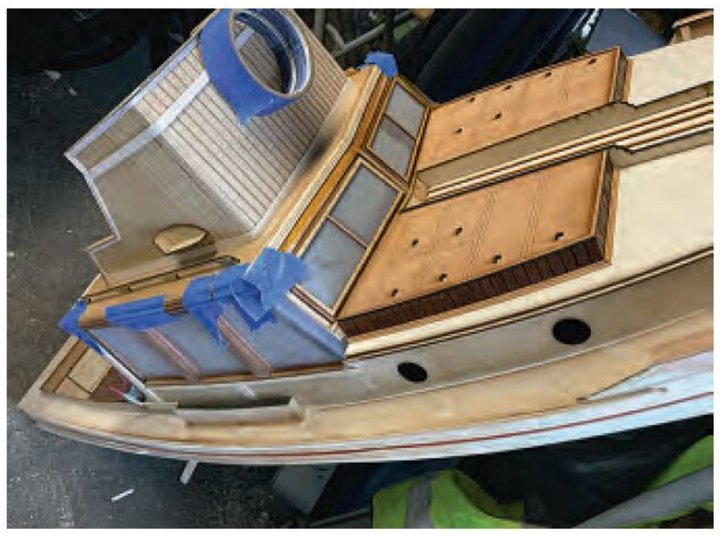
A Right from the off the whole point of the exercise was to build a working model I could shoot footage of out on the water. The big challenge was, could I make it look real? It's a very small model compared to a film industry shooting miniature. If this had been built for a film I'd have made it 1:4 scale, for two reasons: firstly, bigger is better, and, secondly, water does not scale well. Despite all the tricks we have, *e.g.*, frame rates, water still has the same size droplets. That's why the *Thunderbirds* vessels always looked like models. But deep down, everyone who sees these models wants to play with them, we're all still kids at heart.

Q *How did you hone the specific skills/techniques required for this build? Was it very much a case of trial and error, or did you have a mentor/s to guide you through the process?*

A I've made models for as long as I can remember. It started with paper, then cardboard from cornflake packets. I was always the kid at school who made the props for the play.

At 15, I make a replica Gremlin and sold it to my local wax works museum in York. At 17, I began working for a model company in York who was commissioned by the Imperial War Museum Duxford. I then got an apprenticeship in the art department at the York Theatre Royal, learning how to make props and paint cycs [large curtains/walls used as a stage backdrop]. It was there that they told me to go to art school. So off I went to study silversmithing and ceramics. During my third year I met the great Martin Bower's (of *Alien*, *Blake's 7*, *etc*, fame) who was visiting the colleague as guest lecturer. He took me aside and told me I was wasting my time and that I should just get down to London and start working in the film industry. Long story short, I ended up working for Jim Henson's Creature shop. I was with the company for 10 years, and it was on the *Muppet Christmas Carol* that I first got to meet and work with my mentor, David Sharp, a model supervisor from America who taught me about cameras. Back then, of course, the only way to get an immediate idea of something was going to look on screen was to view it through the eye piece of a camera, as it wouldn't be until the next day you would see the rushes. After that, he hired me to run his model shop for the film *Event Horizon*, where I met Richard Juricich, Dave Stewart and Jo Viskocil (the man who blow up the *Death Star*!).

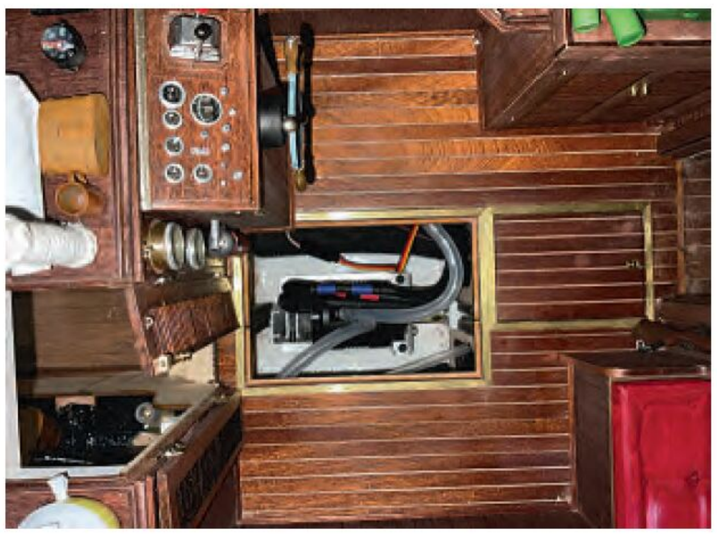
Resident Evil was the last time I was involved in model shoots. Now everything is CG (Computer Generated) from day one.



Fiddly but rewarding work: the positioning of accurate mouldings around the cabin windows.



The rear deck layout.



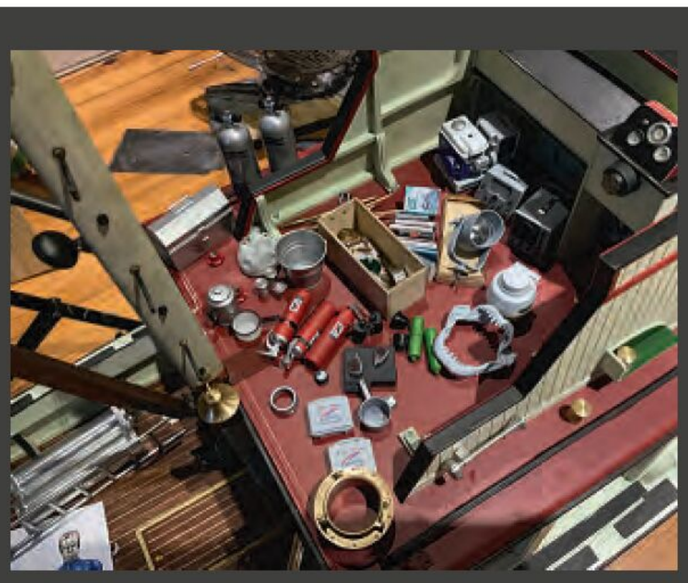
The hatch under which the water-cooled brushless motor was installed.

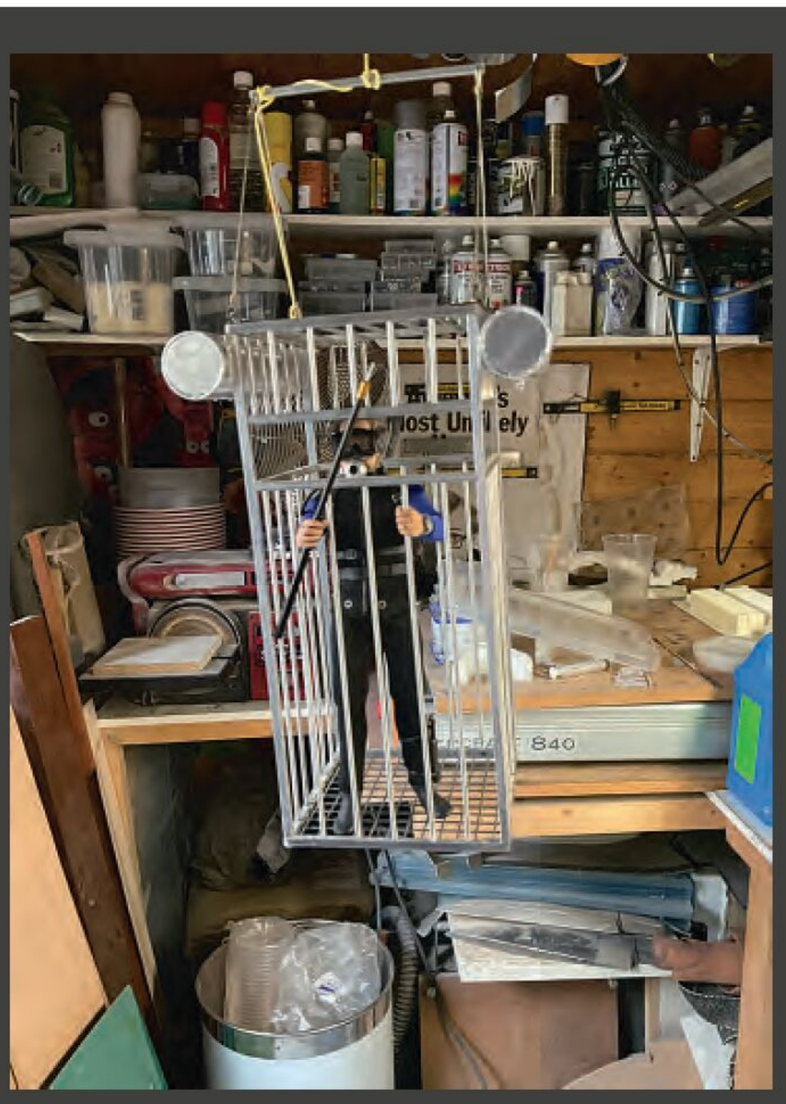


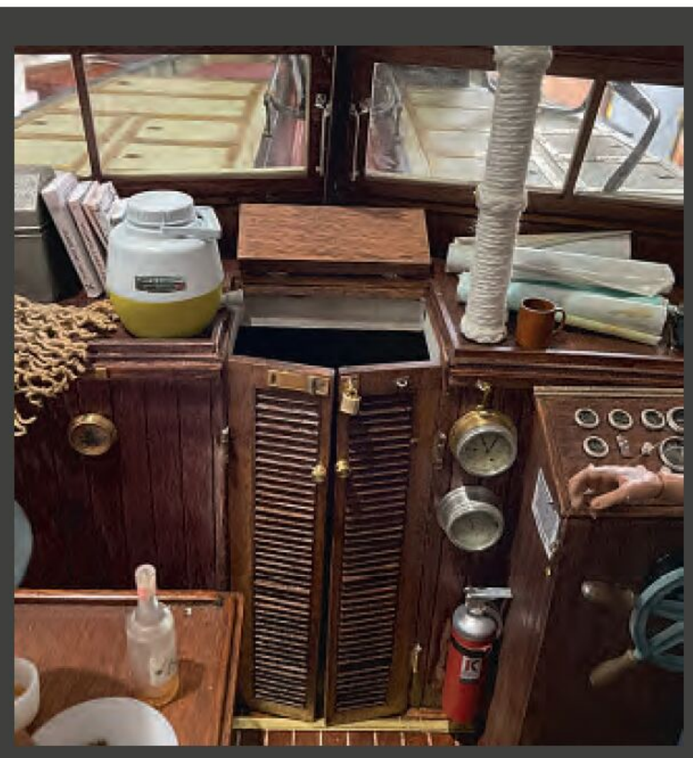
A rear view of the model, now ready for the installation of the mast.



This rear view of the finished model shows off the incredible finish achieved, including the beautifully weathered Orca lettering and Crissy's incredible scratch-built figure of Brody to the fore.







For this astonishingly detailed model, Crissy went to great lengths to accurately size each and every component, scaling everything down using calculations made from 1:1 scale props she managed to acquire.









The majority of parts, right down to the block and tackle for the winch, were scratch built by Chrissy.





Crissy has spared no attention to detail on this model, and indeed the iconic scene in which Quint recalls his chilling memories of time spent in the water after the sinking of the Indianapolis is instantly called to mind in the overhead shot seen here.

Q *What did you initially see as the single most daunting aspect of the build, and why? Which tasks actually proved the most difficult/time consuming? And which did you find the most enjoyable?*

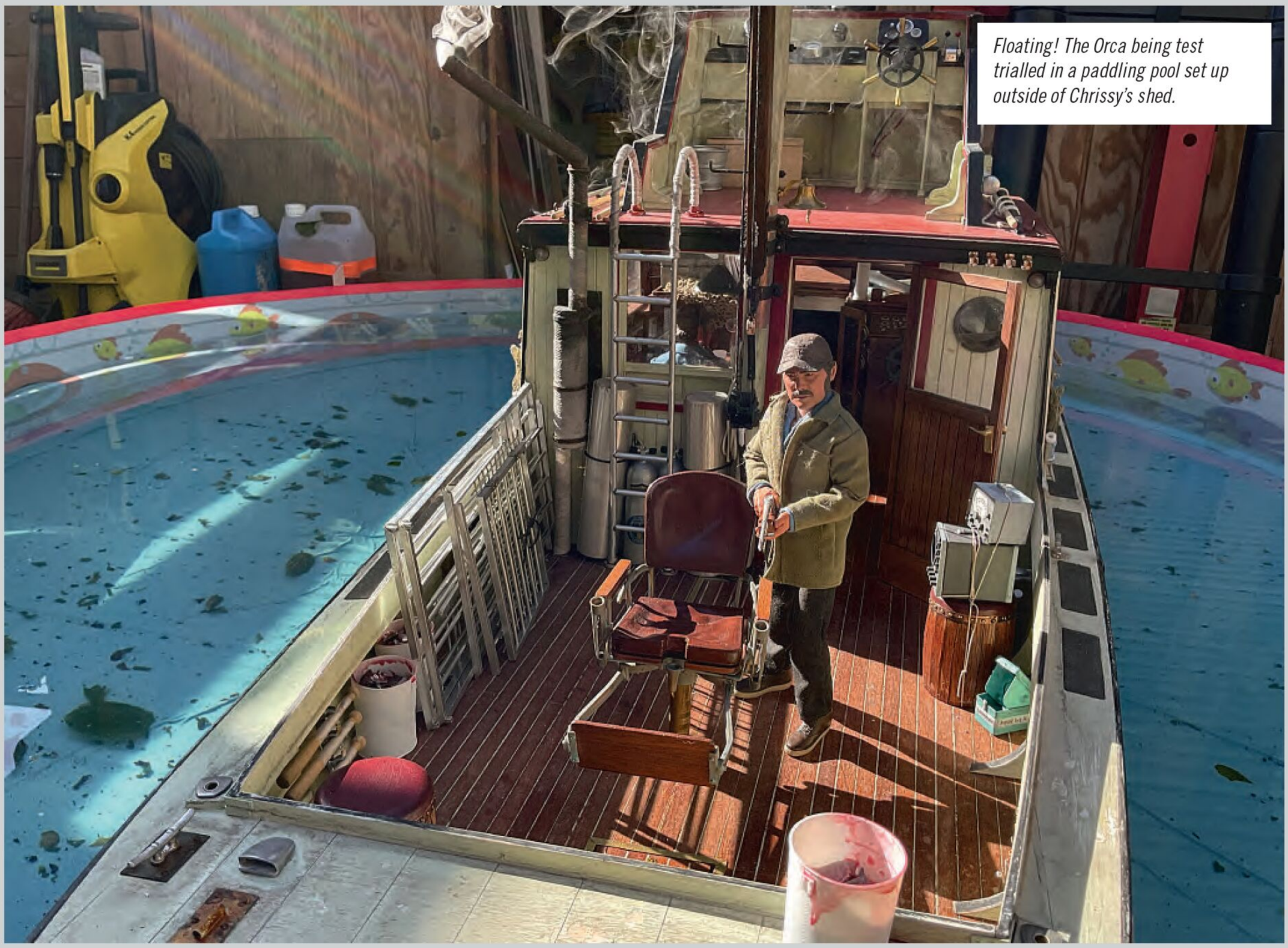
A Initially I'd planned to make a 1:6 scale model but then NECA, a toy company, came out with an 8-inch (1:9 scale) figure of Quint, and that sold me on this slightly smaller size. NECA had announced that Hooper and Brody were also in production, but Brody got cancelled. This left me no choice but to build him from scratch, but I think, from a distance, he's plausible.

The bottle screws holding the rigging were lot of work. There's ten of them, so this involved spending a whole day in the shed, covered in brass swarf. I think the hardest part of the job, though, was ensuring accessibility, and hiding the resulting joins. Both the roof of the main cabin and lower bunk are removable, and the mast has wiring for the lights. I eventually decided on magnets and magnetic electrical connectors so that when the roof panels and mast were put on, I could complete the wiring without too much fuss.

Q *As touched on earlier, the intention was always to get the finished model on the water. Did you, therefore, already have a working knowledge of radio-control? And if not, how did you go about selecting and installing all the equipment required to make this possible?*

A I've worked with servos for years doing the 'animatronics' with Henson's, but we never used radio handsets and I'd never put a motor in a boat. So, it was suck it and see on Version 1.

I then joined Black Park Model Boat Club, which turned out to be a great move. What its members don't know about radio-controlled boats probably isn't worth knowing – they're an amazing group of people! Version 1 seemed to go fast enough in real life if I shot about 72 frames per second, then



Floating! The Orca being test trialled in a paddling pool set up outside of Chrissy's shed.



Smokin'! Further realism courtesy of the smoke generator Chrissy has added to model.



Orca out on open water. We look forward to bringing you more on water/sea trials shots of this fabulous model, along with the R/C shark currently in the works, in the very near future.

slowed the image down. For Version 2 I've changed to brushless motors and have been experimenting with a whole world of option for batteries I'm only just getting to grips with.

Q *How many man (or woman!) hours went into the build in total?*

A I spent about a year just on the computer doing research and CAD drawings after Version 1, but the actual build of Version 2 went quite quickly. Using a 3D printer and laser cutter, while I did all manual stuff, it was finished in around four months of doing something every day.

In the YouTube comments someone complained about me using CAD and a 3D-printer, saying it's not the same as drawing by hand. I agree a hand drawn drawing is a lovely thing, but if your goal is the thing you're making and not the drawing itself, the modern world of design hasn't used paper and pencil for years! So, my advice to others would be, don't be scared of CAD. There are so many free programs out there to cut your teeth on!

"My advice to others would be, don't be scared of CAD. There are so many free programs out there to cut your teeth on!"

Q *Then, of course, came the challenge of learning to operate the model on the water via radio-control. How easy, or tricky, did you find that?*

A Here's the secret! My goal with this project was a shootable miniature, something I could point a camera at. Both Version 1 and 2 were operated by Phillip Hardy, a Blake Park Model Boat Club member. I'd also like to mention Stevie Power for coming to the rescue and fixing a melted connector after a weed incident. Oh, and Geoff Carter for being so welcoming when I wrote to the club saying I knew nothing about model boats and only wanted to film them. This fantastically friendly club welcomed me with open arms. They sail on a lovely lake in the park, and I'd really recommend anyone living in the area to go down and meet the gang. More details can be found at www.blackparkmodelboatclub.org.uk

"This fantastically friendly club welcomed me with open arms"

Q *Perhaps not surprisingly, considering your line of work, the videos of your instantly recognisable model of Orca out on the water are beautifully shot, edited and soundtracked, and I was thrilled to see that in one of them an R/C Great White makes an appearance, too. Is this also one of your creations? And if so, were there any initial worries about biting off more than you could chew, considering all the well-documented problems with the full-size mechanical model sharks created for the actual movie in the days before CGI?*

A After Version 1's first outing everyone kept asking "*Where's the shark?*", so, as the next week was the Club's Open Day, I threw together a towable fin to entertain the crowds. There is, however, a mechanical shark in the making. It's a neutrally buoyant twin thruster design that's just waiting for me to dig in my pocket to buy the silicone to cast it out. I've made the pattern, moulded it, made the mechanism, but, unlike the boat, it needs a lot more testing to make it work, and as it's 2ft long that's a lot of silicone to waste if I get it wrong.

The *Orca* is screaming out for little gags, but at the moment towing the barrels will keep everyone happy. After all, didn't Spielberg say it was *not* seeing the shark that really instilled that unforgettable sense of tension and foreboding?

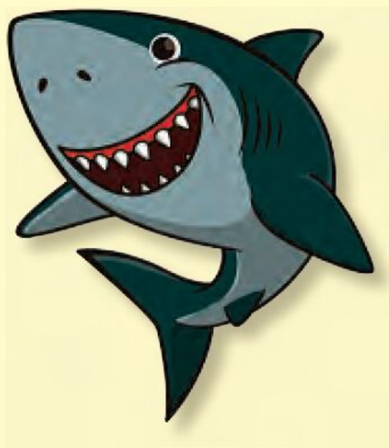
Q *While I am sure your day job keeps you very busy, as you are now a fully-fledged, and remarkably talented, member of Black Park MBC, what can we look forward to next from Crissy Howes?*

"All my friend say I'm nuts but, next…"

A Well, all my friend say I'm nuts but, next, now I have my CAD drawings, I really want to build a 1:6 scale version. I would be mad to make a 1:4 scale, so 1:6 is as big as I can get to a real shooting miniature. The idea is that then I can take it to the coast and shoot *Orca* actually at sea. The problem with a lake is you only have a very limited option of angles to shoot from. Looking down on the model or up at it, you can't get that horizon shot where the sea meets the sky. Yes, I could do some blue/green screen work, but that would defeat the whole point for me. I like a challenge! ●

QUICK FIRE QUESTIONS

Just for fun…



Q. *Sum yourself up using just one word…*
A. Fun!

Q. *What are the things you remember from childhood/young adulthood that may date you now…*
A. The Milky Bar Kid; waiting for the washing up bottle to be empty so I could use it for junk modelling; 'playing out' but knowing it was time to go home when the streetlights came on.

Q. *Give a title to the current chapter in your life story…*
A. Doing things just for fun

Q. *Your workspace: a place for everything, and every in its place, or creative chaos?*
A. My workshop is a 10ft by 5ft shed with spray cans magnetised to the roof to save space. I can't do anything without first moving something else out of the way!

Q. *Silence is golden, or a model boat workshop playlist?*
A. I usually have the radio on in the background, either Radio 4 Extra or any of the stations that play tunes from the '60s,'70s, '80s.

Q. *Your build of Orca serves as a testament to both your creativity and your practical skills, so for anyone else feeling as inadequate as I do right now, please flag up something you're really bad at!*
A. I'm highly dyslexic, I can't even spell dyslexic! I was told at school not to bother worrying about passing exams or going to college, just to get a job at the local chocolate factory. I'm so glad they were wrong. I've travelled the world with my job.

Q. *If you had to head out to sea in the Orca to hunt down Jaws, which three, alternative to Quint, Hopper and Brody, famous film or TV characters would you pick to accompany you?*
A. Great question! Paul Rudd (Hooper), Mark Ruffalo (Brody) and Robert Downy Jnr (Quint). I've worked with them all and I think those three would have the same dynamic. Robby has so much presence that the Indianapolis speech would floor me.

Q. *Again, casting reality completely to one side, if you could own/sail/live aboard your full-size dream boat, what type of vessel would that be, and what name would you give it?*
A. I'm afraid I'm a land lubber: I get seasick on the ferry!

Q. *If you were someone's 'Phone a Friend' on Who Wants To Be A Millionaire, what kind of questions would you absolutely not be able to help out with?*
A. Spelling anything!

Q. *If you were asked to participate in one of those TV game shows where any winnings are donated to charity, name the organisation you'd want to be playing for…*
A. Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Q. *When it comes to the forthcoming festive season, would you, in an ideal world, rather embrace tradition or spend the holidays somewhere altogether different and/or more exotic?*
A. Traditional, with all my friends around the tree.



Preserved M33 monitor in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, framed by a QE class aircraft carrier.

Monitor: M35

Ashley Needham presents yet another top idea for his super versatile GP hull

In the July 2024 issue I introduced my GP (General Purpose) hull, this being of no specific form and constructed so that it will accept any number of interchangeable tops, enabling 'different' boats to be sailed on the cheap, as it were. Because the hull is quite deep, so as to accommodate the varying amounts of ballast suited to tops of different weights, at no point will you see a picture of one of these boats out of the water, as this will undoubtedly spoil the illusion!

The top I will be sharing with you this month represents a vessel based on the emergency World War I series of five M29 monitors. M33, the only surviving ship of this class, has been preserved, restored and currently resides in Portsmouth's Historic Naval Dockyard. Barring the masts, this type of vessel isn't dissimilar to the Crimea gunboat a few tops back (see the Sept 2024 issue of Model Boats), and indeed was made for an almost identical purpose, close in shore bombardment.

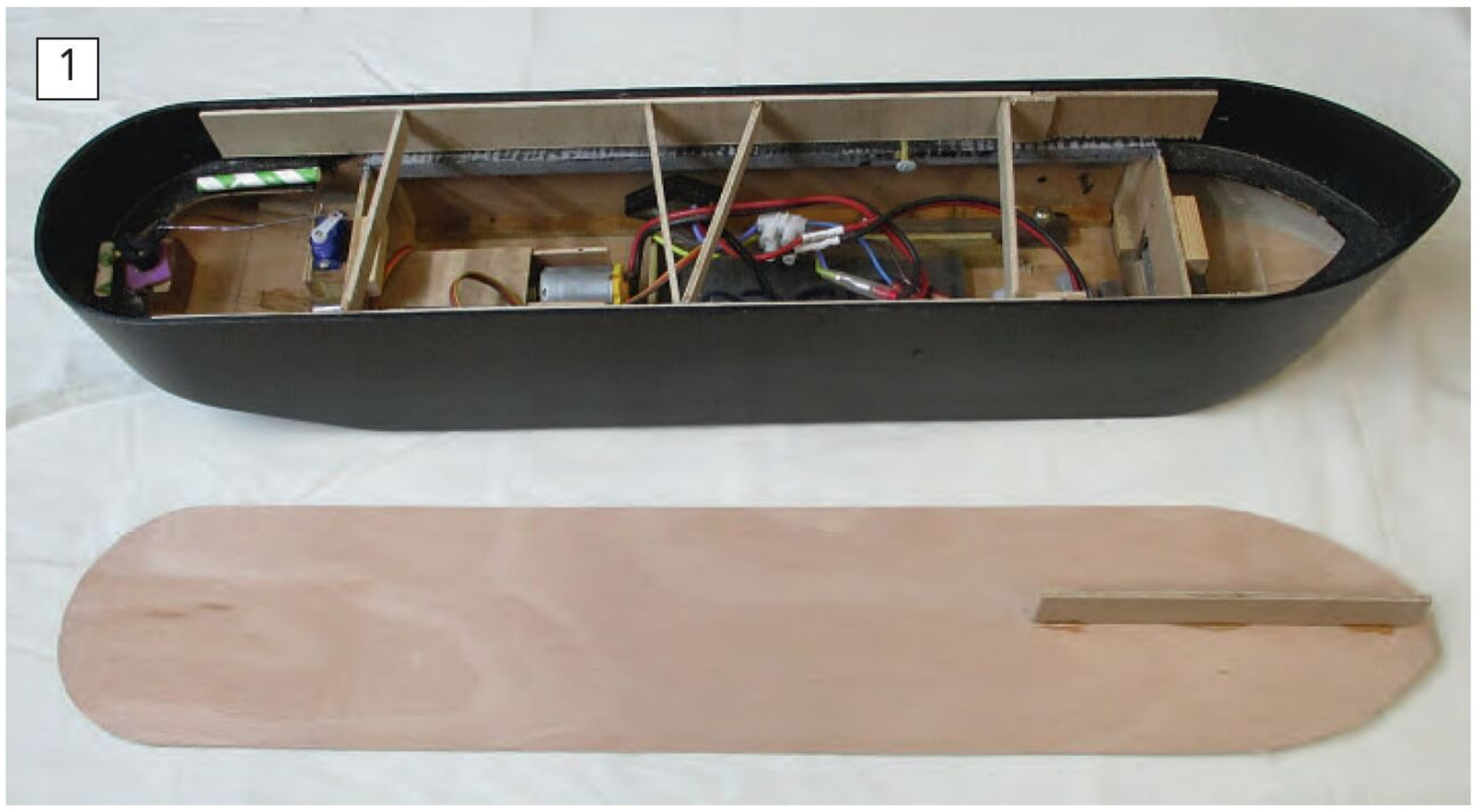
Built in 1915, using 6-inch guns removed from the Queen Elizabeth class battleships, they were built and commissioned in just four months, before being sent to support the disastrous Gallipoli landings. They were flimsy things: on testing, the 6-inch guns buckled the deck, leading to some ad-hoc extra plating being added. As they were unable to carry out deep-water voyages on their own, they were towed out by larger ships. Lacking the hull strength for proper towing attachments, however, chains had to be wrapped around the entire hull, so two 'pig snout' holes/guides were fitted to the bow through which the chain could be passed. Presumably the chain was lashed to side fittings along the length of the hull. Although there was accommodation, a galley and so on, these ships were not meant to deploy separately or for any length of time, so the interior fit was strictly based on 'a few days at a time' basis, and they would operate with a support vessel of some sort. Several classes of monitor were built during the war, these varying in size depending on the armament fitted – the supply of 'spare' guns determining the size of the vessels.

Why M35?

Well, this top is based on the M29 class of ship, the last of which was numbered M33, and I know of at least one other lookalike (numbered by the modeller as M34 – see Clive Halliwell's build in the MB August 2006 and Plan Number MAGM2032 M34 now available from Sarik Hobbies), so....

Design

I like to put figures on my ships, and having a boat with open gun mounts just begs for suitable figures to man them. A session playing with various size figures on a blank deck revealed that 25mm fellows looked about right. At 1:75 scale, a proper scale model M33 for them would be about 720mm long and have a beam of approximately 130mm. My hull is 600mm x 120mm, so not too far off. Using the SPAR design package,



it appeared to me that the overall proportions could be maintained if the forecastle deck was lengthened a bit, and the superstructure shortened by the same amount, and slimmed just a touch. The guns, in shielded open mounts, have a very long barrel, and by lengthening the foc`sle, the proportion of gun length to deck is maintained and, similarly, at the stern careful placement aided by the shortened superstructure preserves the look of the rear mount. Other considerations revolve around the figures and what looks right against them.

The four ~~month~~ week build

The first step, as with all the GP hull tops, is cutting a deck, in 4mm ply, to suit the build (see **Photo 1**). If you remember, the basic deck supports allow a 25mm bulwark height so as to have the most flexibility regarding superstructure styles, but in this case a flush deck is required, which simple involves up-ending the hull on a bit of ply, drawing round it, and cutting just inside the line by 4mm before sanding to fit. Runners also needed to be cut to support the deck at the top of the hull. Once the glue fixing the ad-hoc arrangement of bracing to keep the runners secure against the hull sides has cured, the runners can be lifted, the hull opening layered with clingfilm to stop the glue getting into the hull (see **Photo 1** again), runners replaced, and the top glued to the runners using PVA. Remove once dry, get rid of the clingfilm, easy!

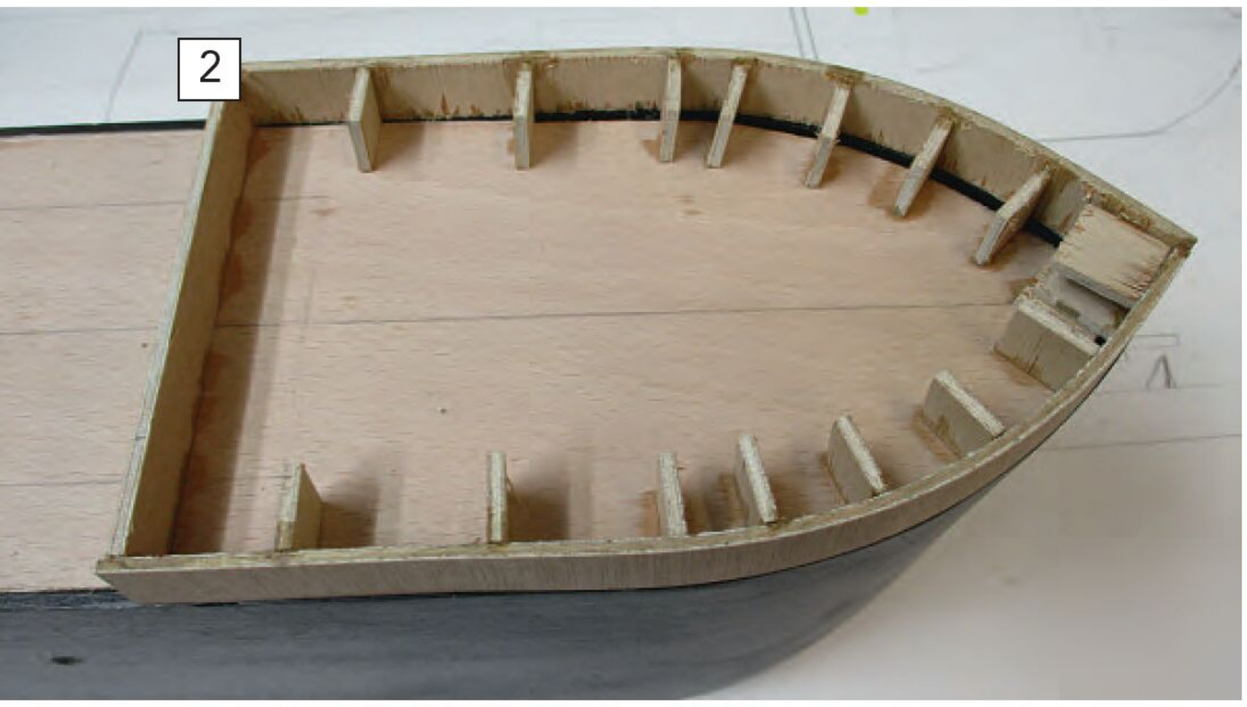
Some pencil work now ensues, drawing on the important centreline, marking the foc`sle edge and so on. As there is a raised foc`sle and the hull extension needs to be flush with the rest of the hull, squares of ply must be superglued to the deck, a rear edge glued in place, and then strips of 18mm deep 4mm ply, cut across the outer ply grain so it's more flexible, glued across the supports (see **Photo 2**) and trimmed to length. A deck can then be stuck on top, sanded, filled, sanded again, and then sealed!

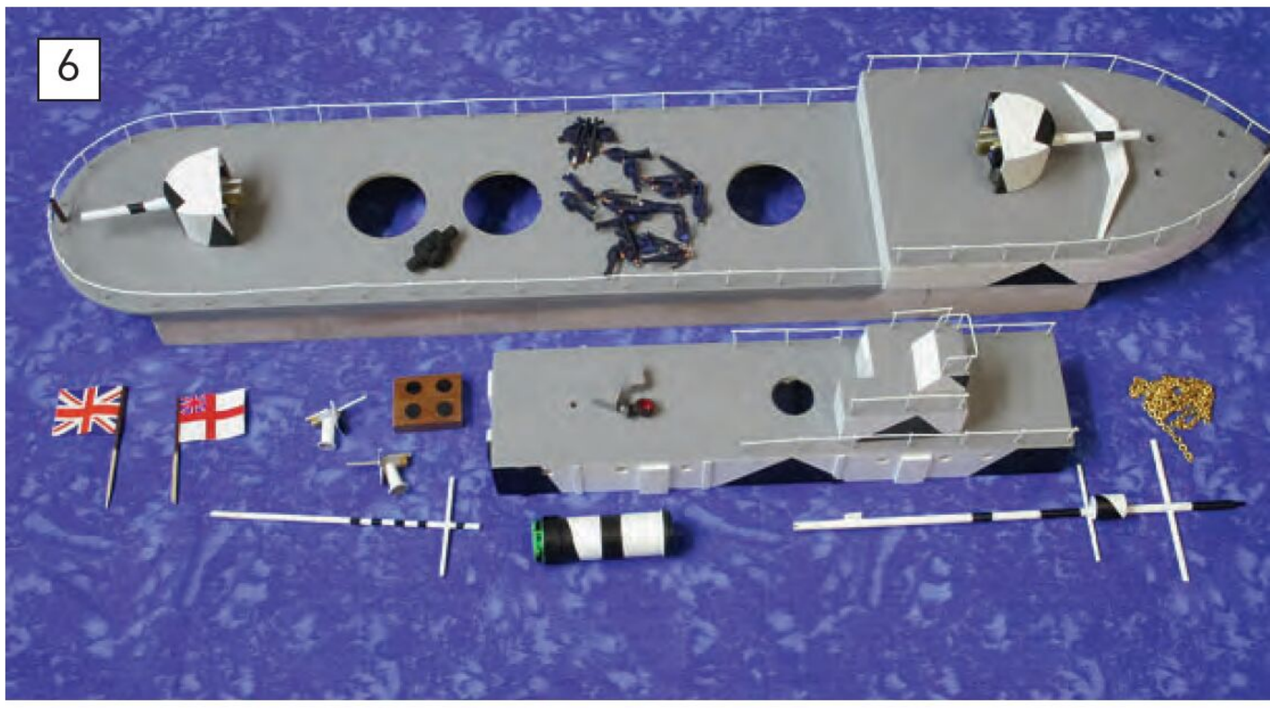
"It doesn't get any easier than this!"

Superstructure

It doesn't get any easier than this! The main cabin is a simple long box. On top of the box is another 'L' plan form box, with a small wedge-shaped structure (I don't want to use the word box again, but that's what it is!) on top. This wedge-shaped box on the original vessel was where the helmsman looked out from to steer the boat, as from the lower windows his view would have been obscured by the gun mounting. Fitting in with the general crudeness of the boat, he was provided with literally a wooden box inside the main cabin to stand on so with his head would be in line with the wedge front window. All the top superstructure is constructed in 4mm ply, superglued together. With the cut edges sealed, the whole lot can be sanded for a smooth surface, using just a swipe of filler here and there (see **Photo 6** further on). To adorn the sides, you will need two doors, a few drilled 6mm portholes and a few vertical ribs. Also required are a funnel (easy enough to craft with scraps from your materials box), a couple of anonymous boxes, a skylight, masts and three large funnel vents.

The masts are demountable to assist storage. I made mine up from mixed carbon fibre rod and bamboo stick. Blocks of wood must be glued in place underneath the mast positions and drilled to accept your masts so that everything is kept vertical (I used a pillar drill for this); the masts simply plug from above. I didn't drill right through, so my masts were cut to suit (again, see **Photo 6**). Vents will probably need to be purchased as it's very difficult to make these things, but you should be able to create the rest of the superstructure hamper using scraps and blocks of wood. I decided against fitting ship's boats, mainly due to the slightly reduced superstructure length, which meant they would have had to be unrealistically small. However, I purchased and fitted a pair of davits to fit to either side just to indicate that suitable boats were carried.











Things that go bang

The M29 series of monitors were equipped with two 6-inch guns, and two 6pdr QF types on the superstructure. The 6pdr guns were for anti-aircraft use primarily, and several airships and balloons were downed by them during the campaign. These have a simple flat shield, but the 6-inchers have a proper curved gun shield. I always look at these items and think they're not quite large enough or in proportion to the actual gun. In addition, they're an odd shape, round in plan at the front but flaring out to the rear, *i.e.*, not uniformly semi-circular. I found making one was do-able after a bit of fiddling, but that making two exactly the same demanded a former or mould. I therefore suggest cutting a chipboard former (I used my small bandsaw for this) and then laminating two pieces of 0.8mm ply together with PVA over this (see **Photo 3**). Once dry, a top can be glued in place, with a stiffener underneath, before you trim to the final size.

I used telescoping brass tube for the barrels and some creativity with bits and bobs furnished the breeches and the 6-pdrs. You will need to make up some seats for the gunners and then after the gun, men and seats have been painted, they can be stuck on with superglue. Lastly, a winch needs to be fitted at the bow along with hawse pipes (brass eyelets) for the anchors, a made-up item using slices of dowel and fine chain. These should then all be painted black to disguise their simple construction.

The matelots

I touched on the cheap plastic railway passenger figures at 1:75 scale that I found proved a good stand-in for sailors earlier (see **Photo 4**). Their heads were flattened a bit with a file to represent hats, their bodies suitably painted with acrylics (navy-blue for their uniforms, a flesh colour for all exposed skin, etc) using a very small brush, and, hey presto! Around 18 or so sailors now grace the decks, simply stuck in place using







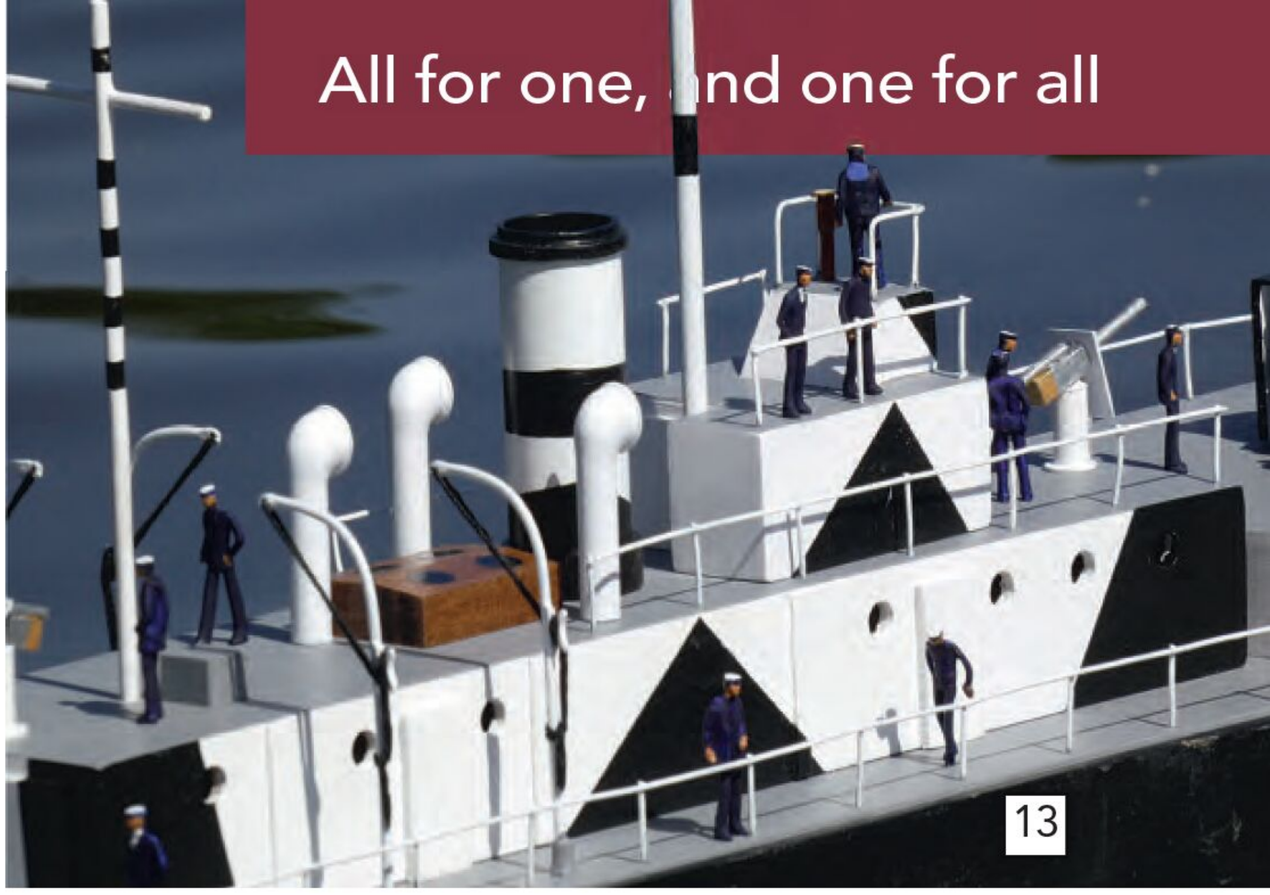




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13

superglue, really bringing my ship to life. A bit more action might have been nice – however, as they spend their time on training voyages around the pond they are, as far as I'm concerned, adequate.

The railings

The deck must be flush with the hull side as the ship has handrails all around the hull and on top of the superstructure. Generally speaking, I dislike putting rails on boats as they get damaged very easily; however, while railings are not necessary for something at a much smaller scale, at this size we cannot leave them off. My go-to for large scale railings is galvanised steel garden wire mesh, which is perfect for 1:32 scale figures. The chaps on M35 are, however, a lot smaller, so the rails only need to be about 12mm or so tall. Unfortunately, the 25mm mesh I had was in a 1.6mm wire thickness, which is OK for the large figures but way too thick for the small ones. A small roll of one inch square by 0.85mm wire mesh was therefore purchased (this was advertised as having 25mm squares, but they are in fact an imperial one inch, a fact that becomes clear when you drill a row of carefully marked 25mm spaced holes and wonder why the railing are skewed towards the end of the run!). From this I created a single rail, using one square, as it were, of mesh and wood spacers to set a 12mm rail height. Simplicity itself, a line 3mm inside the deck was drawn, small holes drilled at one-inch spacings (after the first discovery!), the mesh cut and teased into place over a 12mm ply spacer with a small hammer, and a few drops of superglue added underneath to stop any movement (see **Photo 5**). The deck, forecastle, superstructure and cabin were all treated to a nice shiny silver rail, which was then painted white.

Thin brass tube can be inserted into holes front and rear to serve as sockets for the flag staffs (in my case, cocktail stick flags!). I added a Union Jack forward and a St Georges flag aft, with a felt pen Union flag doodled in the corner to make a white ensign. These are a loose fit so that they can swivel in the breeze (again, see **Photo 6**).

It all comes together

Up until this point you will have an odd collection of bits (finally, see **Photo 6**!), but now it's time to glue them all together. Some items, such as the superstructure and guns, will need to be painted prior to fitting, so mark their position on the deck with pencil. A smear of PVA will be sufficient to hold your items securely to the lightly painted grey deck. Then, once everything has been positioned, the deck can be sanded and a second coat of grey applied before sealing with a clear satin varnish. The holes you have pre-drilled for the boat davits should be cleaned out prior to the davits being glued in place, followed by the bollards, anchor cables and anchors, the last pieces of the puzzle.

Painting

One of the limitations of my GP hull is that it's finished in a plain satin black. This suits most of the tops I've built so far, and to a degree suits the monitor, but that does mean we can't have a full body 'dazzle' paint job. There are only three colours on this boat: black, white and grey. As per M33 in Portsmouth, all the top-works need to be painted with an acrylic white undercoat and a gloss white topcoat, then suitably adorned with black bits, while the steel deck can be finished in a 'non-slip grey', as previously described (this saves having to make a deck that looks like it was planked with wood!). Finally, the gun breeches need to be painted using silver and gold (for the brass bits).

On the water

It's no surprise, if you have caught any of the other GP top builds, to find that the monitor performs similarly to all the other iterations of the hull. It's slowish, turns very well, and because it's so heavy (it was heavy anyway, but 300gm of lead had to be added to lower the hull even further to get the low freeboard look) is very stable. The small prop (25mm) and small 385 can brushed motor ensures the boat will run forever on a 3700mAhr 7.2Nimh stick battery, and it's nice and quiet (see **Photos 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11**).

"As the deck simply sits on the hull, there's no fiddling required to fit it, it's all very easy, and the entire deck/top fits in quite a modest sized storage box"

Attractive, practical and easy-peasy

Visually, this is quite a striking top, and possibly the best yet. The crew add loads of interest (**Photo 12** shows a close up of the foc`sle and bridge, while **Photo 13** shows the busy centre section), the subject matter is slightly unusual, and the dazzle white and black top is crisp and clean. As the deck simply sits on the hull, there's no fiddling required to fit it, it's all very easy, and the entire deck/top fits in quite a modest sized storage box. Embarking on the creation of a new boat without first having to build a hull and go to all the expense of purchasing the mechanicals still feels a bit weird, but that's the beauty of the GP hull!

So, another completely different look to try out. Whatever next? ●

Will it fit in your dry dock?

Length: 600mm
Width: 120mm
Overall height, excluding masts: 85mm

FREE PLAN



MS *Oldenburg*

All aboard for Lundy! **Ray Wood** provides a pictorial build guide to accompany this month's free pull-out plan…

The Motor Ship *Oldenburg* first caught my eye some 10 years ago while moored alongside the quay in Ilfracombe during one of the many enjoyable holidays my late wife Gwen and I spent on the north Devon coast. *Oldenburg* shares the quayside with *Verity*, the Damian Hurst bronze statue which is some 66 feet high and truly amazing. Realising I had only really made one *actual* ship model before, that being HMS *Diamond*, D35, at 1:96 scale, I felt *Oldenburg* would make a perfect project, so I started a collection of photos of her and did some research.

A little bit of background history

Oldenburg was launched on March 29, 1958, in Bremen. During the 1980s however, having passed through the hands of various German owners, she was purchased by The Lundy Island Company to replace



MS *Oldenburg* moored alongside the quay at Ilfracombe. At low tide she dries out completely and sits on the putty, so the summer schedule is governed by the tide times to a large degree.

its older transport boat *Polar Bear*, and operated by the Landmark Trust, who have properties on the Island. Following her acquisition and an extensive refit at the Appledore Shipyard, she entered service carrying passengers and supplies to Lundy Island (in the Bristol Channel) from Bideford, where she is registered, and Ilfracombe during the summer months. She was subject to a Heritage Lottery grant in 1999 and had new Cummins diesel engines installed of 425HP each. She winters in the Sharpness dry dock for annual maintenance and refitting to a very high standard.

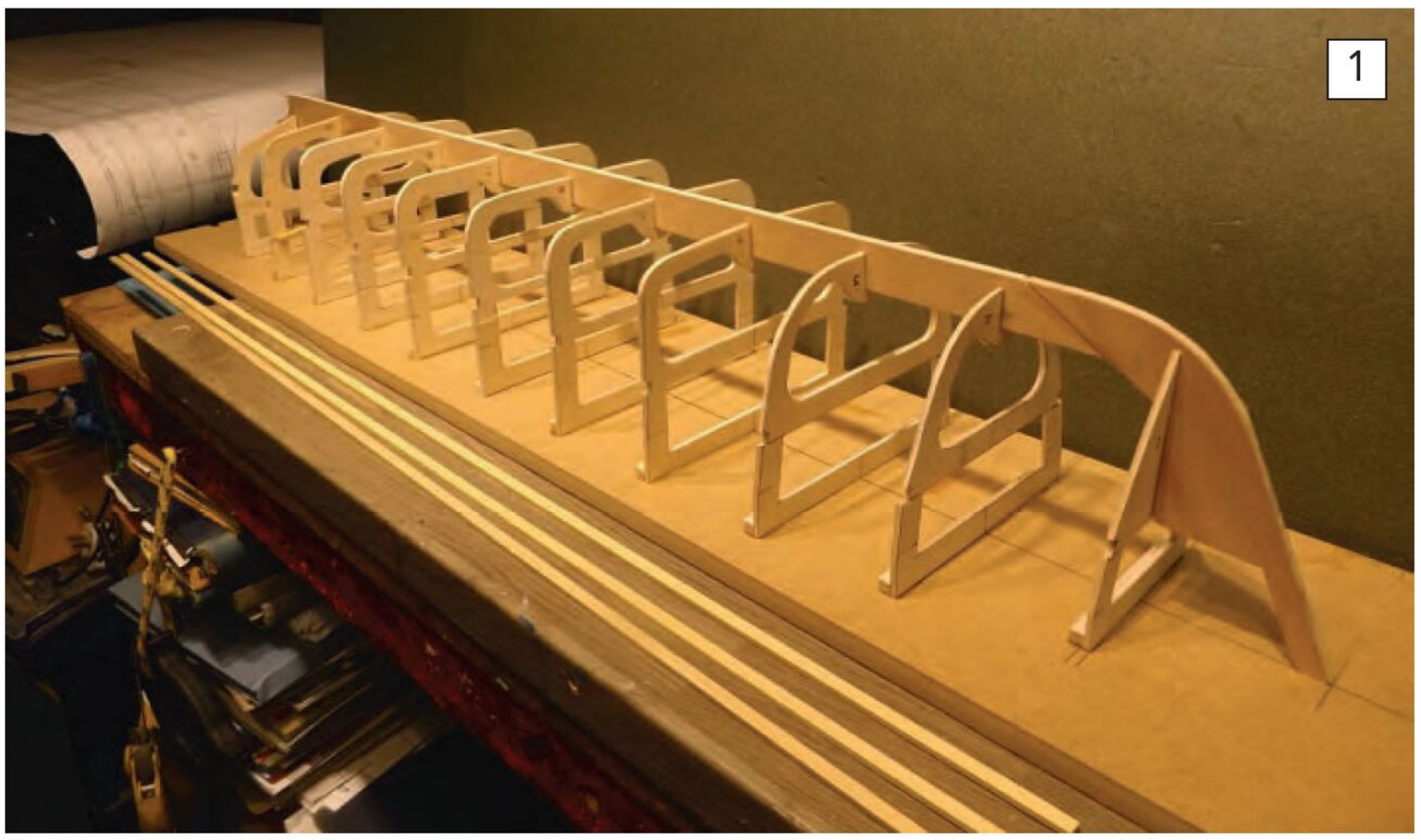
Vital statistics

- Length: 142 ft 7 inches
- Beam: 25 ft 8 inches
- Gross tonnage: 294 GRT
- Top Speed: 12.5 Knots
- Passenger capacity: 267

The model

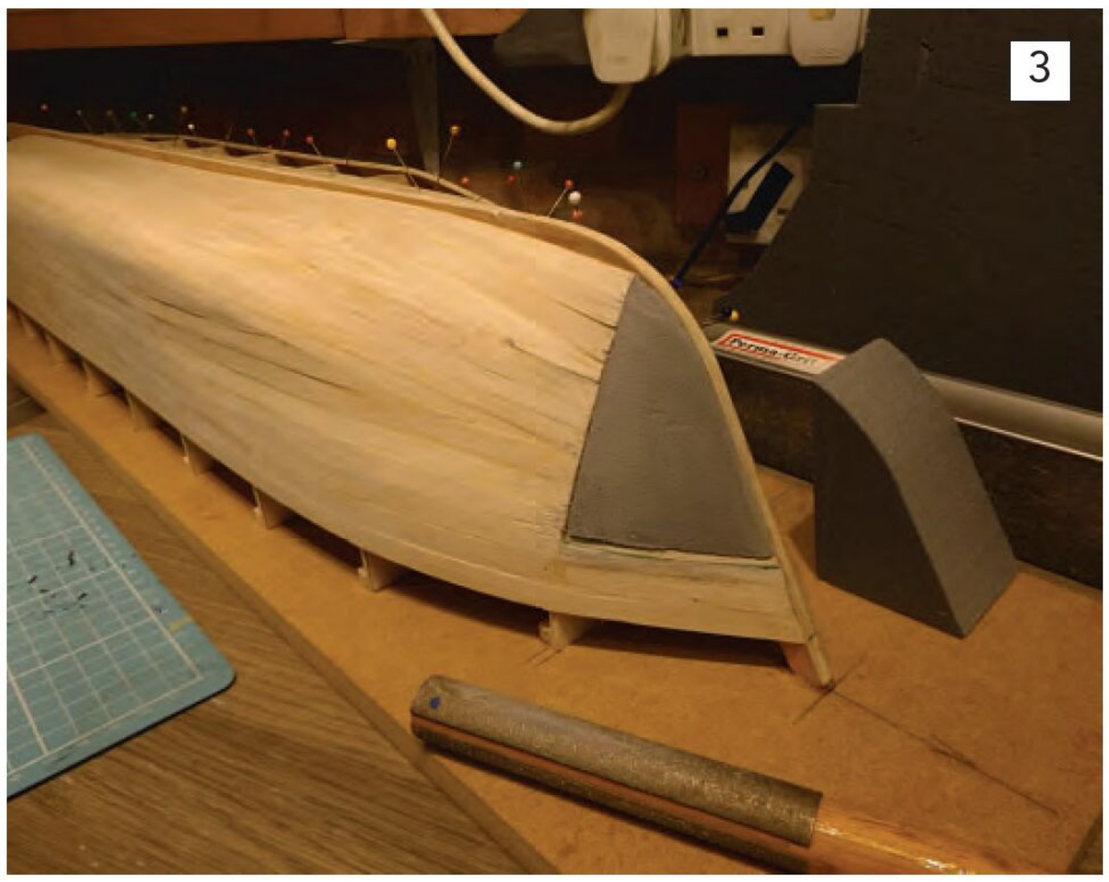
Having taken many photos of my own for reference purposes over the years (although you will find many pictures of the old girl online), I produced the working drawings using her overall dimensions. I worked to 1:48 scale to give a manageable 35-inches in LOA (length overall) model and received much encouragement from the Lundy Island Facebook Group during the build. I'm basically a balsawood model maker, with some plywood for the keel and superstructure. You will find my design for *Oldenburg* is a cross between Jim Pottinger's excellent scale drawings and my usual plank on frame approach, with the bulkheads constructed as they were on my recent *Shandau* design. It has to be said that this is not a beginner's model, but for the more experienced amongst you there's plenty of scope to add detail/accessorise/customise to your heart's content.

"This is not a beginner's model, but for the more experienced amongst you there's plenty of scope to add detail/accessorise/customise to your heart's content"



1. *The hull should be built inverted on a sturdy board. The bulkheads need to be traced and transferred to 1/8-inch balsa sheet, then cut out and sanded to shape, including the extensions to a common datum, which are cut off once the hull is complete. The central keel is cut from ¼-inch plywood. At this point she could be made with a single propellor if you don't want the complication and expense of twin drive trains as per the real ship. The gun whale strips are ¼-inch x 1/8-inch obeche.*


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2. *The planking is 1/8-inch x 3/8-inch strip balsa, which needs to be glued and pinned temporarily until the adhesive sets (I used Gorilla white woodworking PVA adhesive). Planking from the gun whale down ensures good looking topsides. I suggest working from the keel and then round the curve of the bilge, with steeler planks tapered to fit as the gaps reduce. This, for me, is the most enjoyable part of creating the hull shape. Vertical planks must be fitted around the canoe stern as illustrated.*

3. *The bow blocks can be cut and shaped from Styro foam, which is brilliant material as it carves and sands very well. Alternatively, you could use block balsa. These blocks must then be carefully sanded to follow the contour of the planking to the ship stem.*

4. *The stern Styro foam blocks take the curve of the stern, with some lightweight filler (as required). I've marked the position of the twin stern tubes on the drawing. It's worth making a jig with the same centres as these tubes to ensure they're parallel to the centre line of the keel. Using the 25mm brass three-bladed propellor to verify there's clearance from the hull, these can be epoxied into position.*

5. *Once the planking is complete, filled and sanded as required, the hull can be gently prised off the building board. At this point I recommend fabricating a simple stand for your hull to sit in; this will be useful for the superstructure build and marking on the waterline at a later stage. The central bulkhead extensions should not be cut off as they give a good support to the sides, which are extended up to the boat deck level.*


6


7


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6. *The balsa hull now needs to be covered with lightweight glass cloth. I do one side at a time, trying not to cover the keel! I use a water-based resin from Bucks Composites. Epoxy, such as West, could be used, but it's an expensive option for a small job like this. The resin should be painted directly through the cloth, which takes all the compound curves well, making sure to brush out any bubbles. The cloth weave should be filled by three to four coats, leaving your hull ready for priming.*

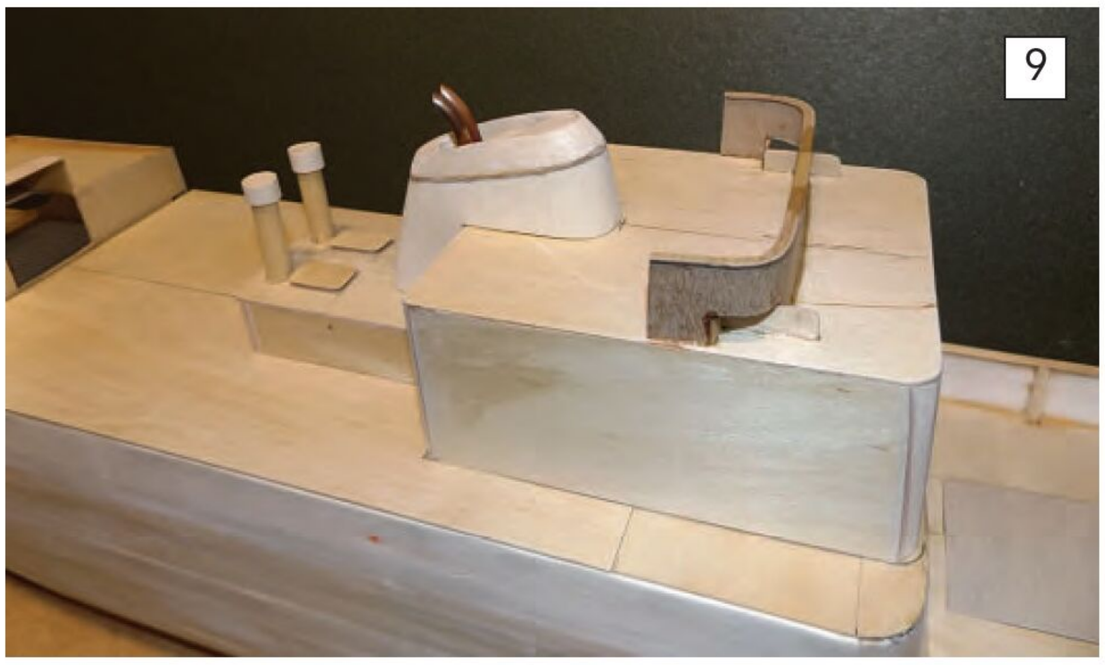
7. *Two 400-size brushed motors provide more than adequate power in the engine room and can be controlled by a single ESC for both motors. Smaller motors would, however, suffice. The usual Huco type couplings need to be installed. The inside of the hull can then be protected from damp with a coat of sealer and some oil-based Humbrol enamel.*

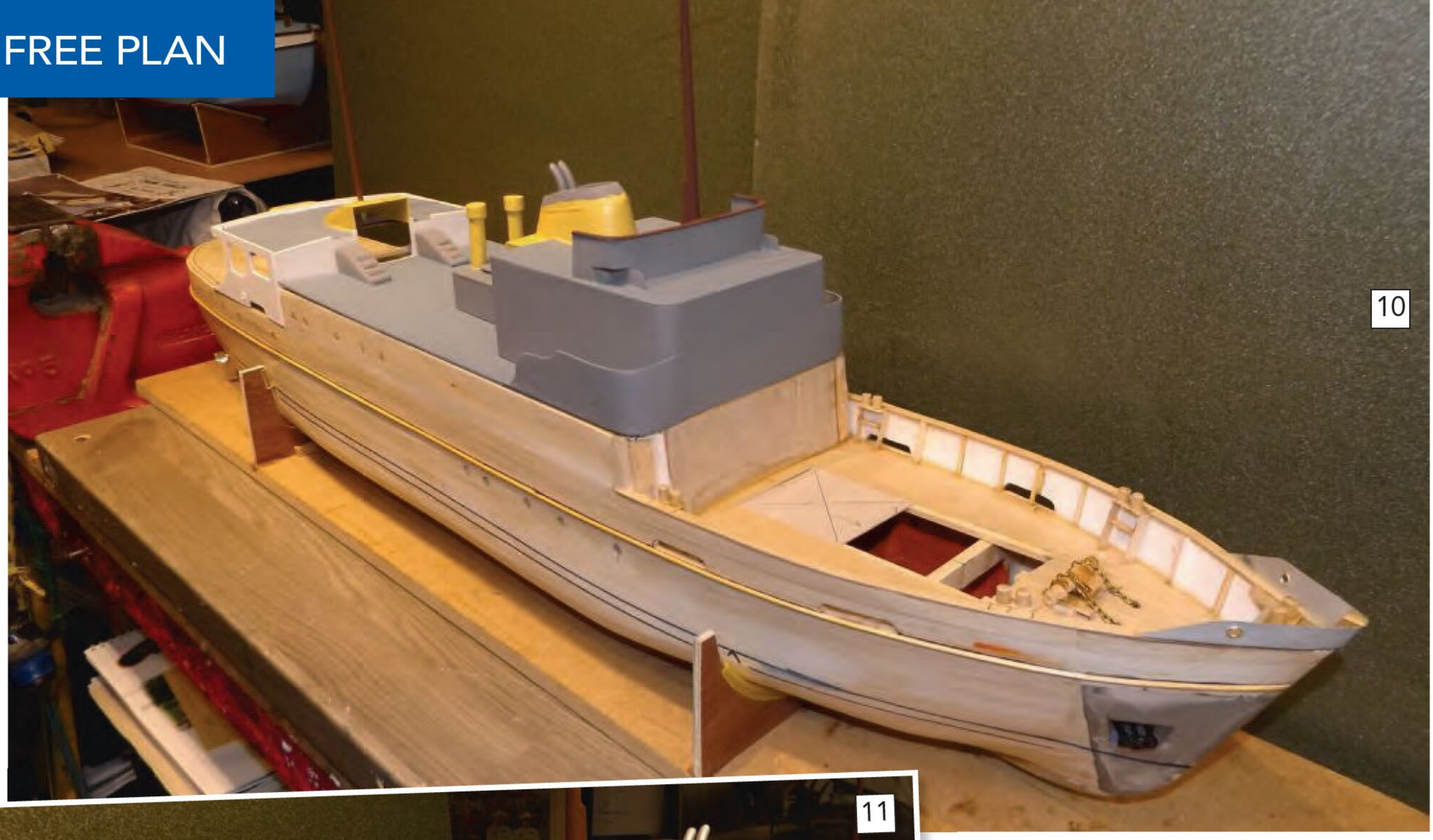
8. *The top deck has been left removable to allow access to the motors and batteries, which on my model are 2nr buggy packs 7.2 volts, the second only really have been used for ballast.*

The superstructure is made up from a series of ply boxes. The rear shelter can be built in situ from 1/16-inch plywood, as can the rear deck, incorporating a small access hatch to the rudder linkage.

I drew my planks on with a black pen before staining the deck. However, since building the model, Peter, the friend who I passed it on to, tells me he has replaced the deck with a steel one painted blue.

9. *I really like a ship with a funnel! Here we have a lithoplate-covered one with a carved balsa capping in place, with two exhaust pipes having been fashioned from scrap copper tube. The flying bridge needs to be laminated using two layers of 1/64-inch ply shaped around a former, with cut outs for the navigation lights. The rear vent I crafted from dowel.*


9





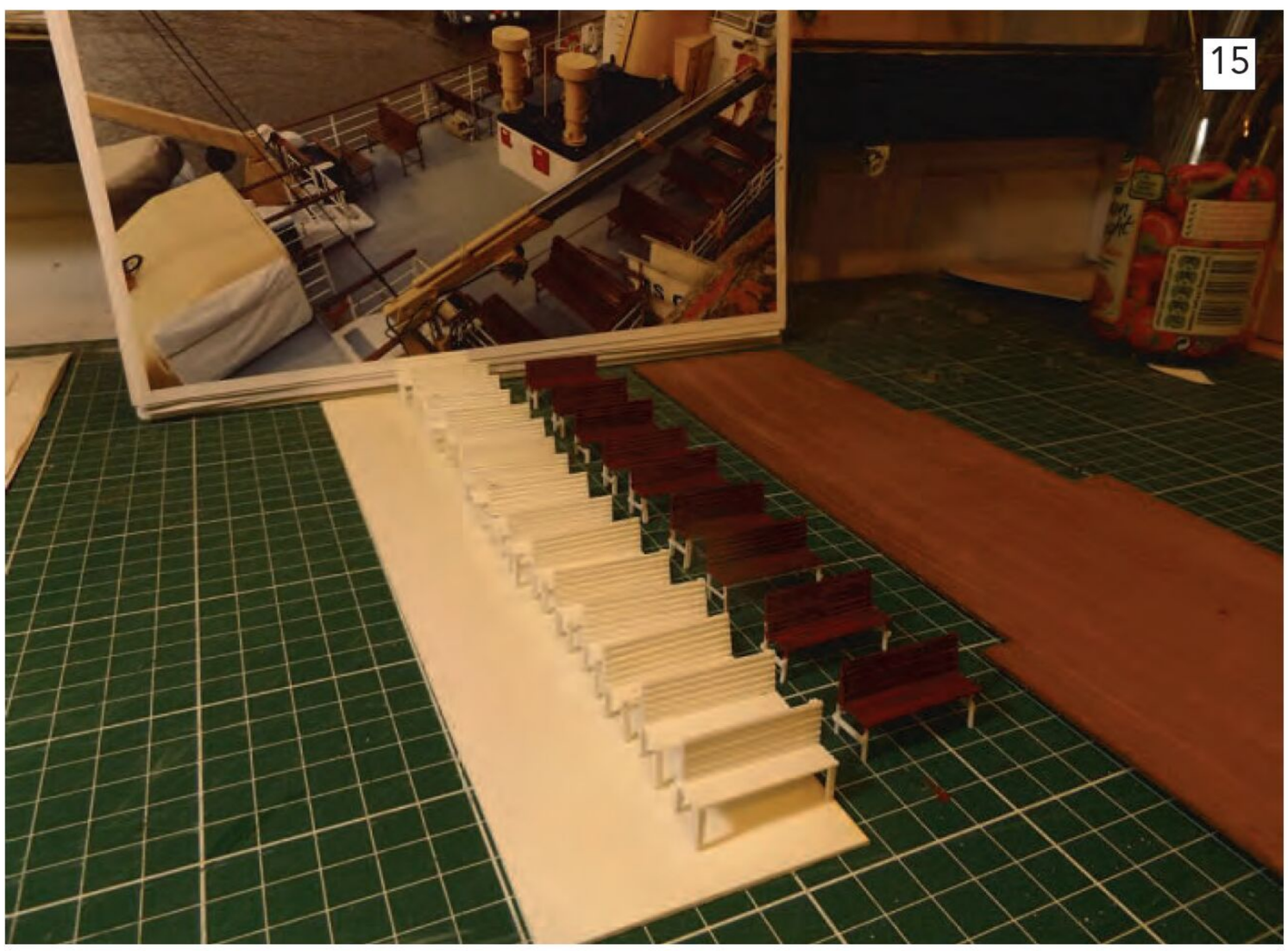
10. *Here we see details, such as the anchor winch, added, while the main superstructure cabin has been primed ready for the final colours to be applied. I use Humbrol oil-based enamel paint where possible. I'm not a fan of water-based paint as, in my view, it gives less coverage.*

11. *The Hiab type hydraulic crane on the foredeck is quite a feature of this model, as the ship is used for loading bulk cargos for transportation to the island. I made mine from various pieces of ply and used brass rod for the rams. I turned the base from aluminium, but this could be made from wood. I cut out the many windows from self-adhesive Fablon sticky-backed plastic, which looks OK at a distance.*

12. *The model is starting to look like a proper little ship at this stage, with her name having been applied to her bow with Becc lettering from Cornwall Model Boats.*







13. *The ship's RIB (Rigid Inflatable Boat) is a big part of the top deck scene. Here I used some rubber garden tie material, which is ideal for the inflatable tubes, which I glued to a ply base and thwarts. The outboard motor was built from odds and ends in my scrap box. Clearly impressed, my yet to be painted Captain looks on in amazement!*

14. *The two staircases from the rear deck up to the boat deck were a real labour of love, as, to be honest, they can't be seen under the shelter on the finished model. But I enjoyed making them, using wet and dry paper for the non-slip treads – a little OTT maybe?*
Small self-tapping screws will secure the top deck when the model is 'at sea'.

15. *Now for the tedious part! The top and rear deck seating benches can be made using plastic strip material for the legs and back supports, and corrugated plasticard for the slatted seating. For a realistic finish, matt black then brown applied to the ridges gives them right effect, I think. Alternatively, creating these would be piece of cake if you have access to a 3D-printer!*





16. *Sitting in front of one of my reference photos, the seating is now in place, simply awaiting passengers. As you will see, I have also fitted Caldercraft brass stanchions, and a mahogany capping rail. And, yes, the port lights actually have white blinds inside!*
17. *MS Oldenburg sets out on proving trials on the Chantry Model Boat Club's lake at Bluewater Shopping Centre in Kent.*
18 *MS Oldenburg underway on a new voyage, showing her portside, and handling well.*



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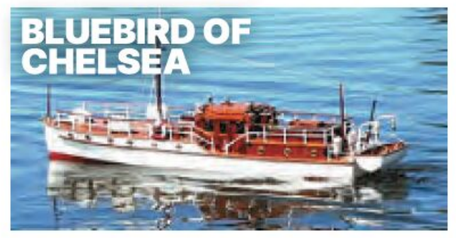
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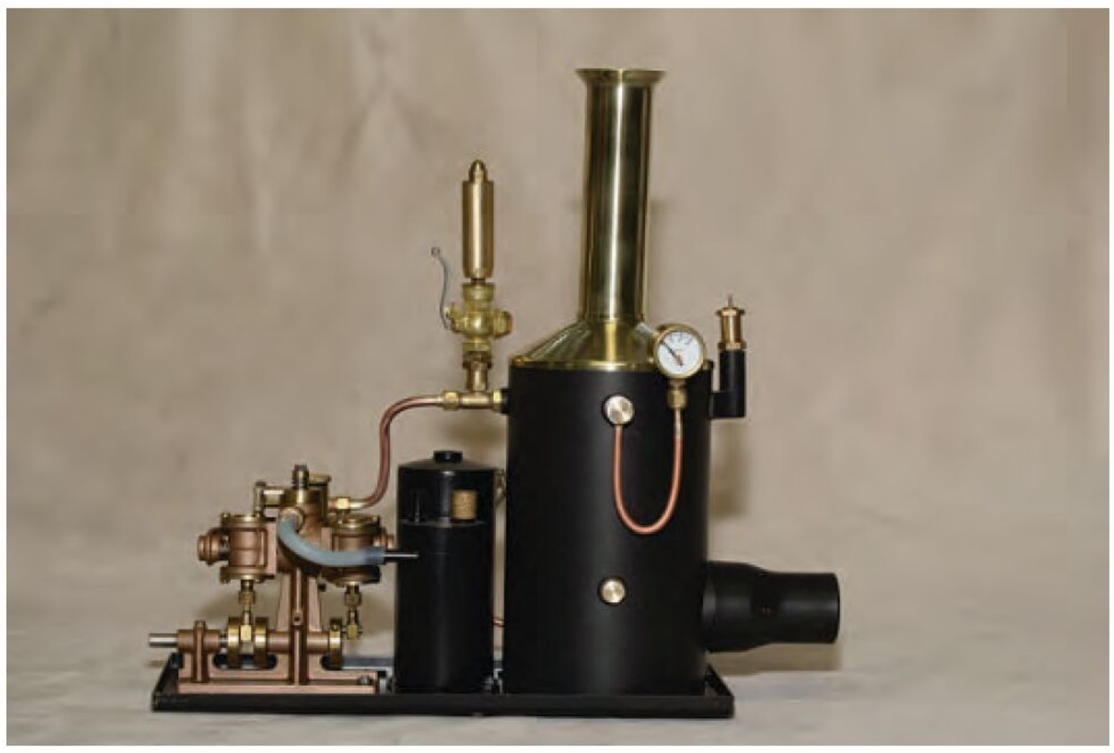
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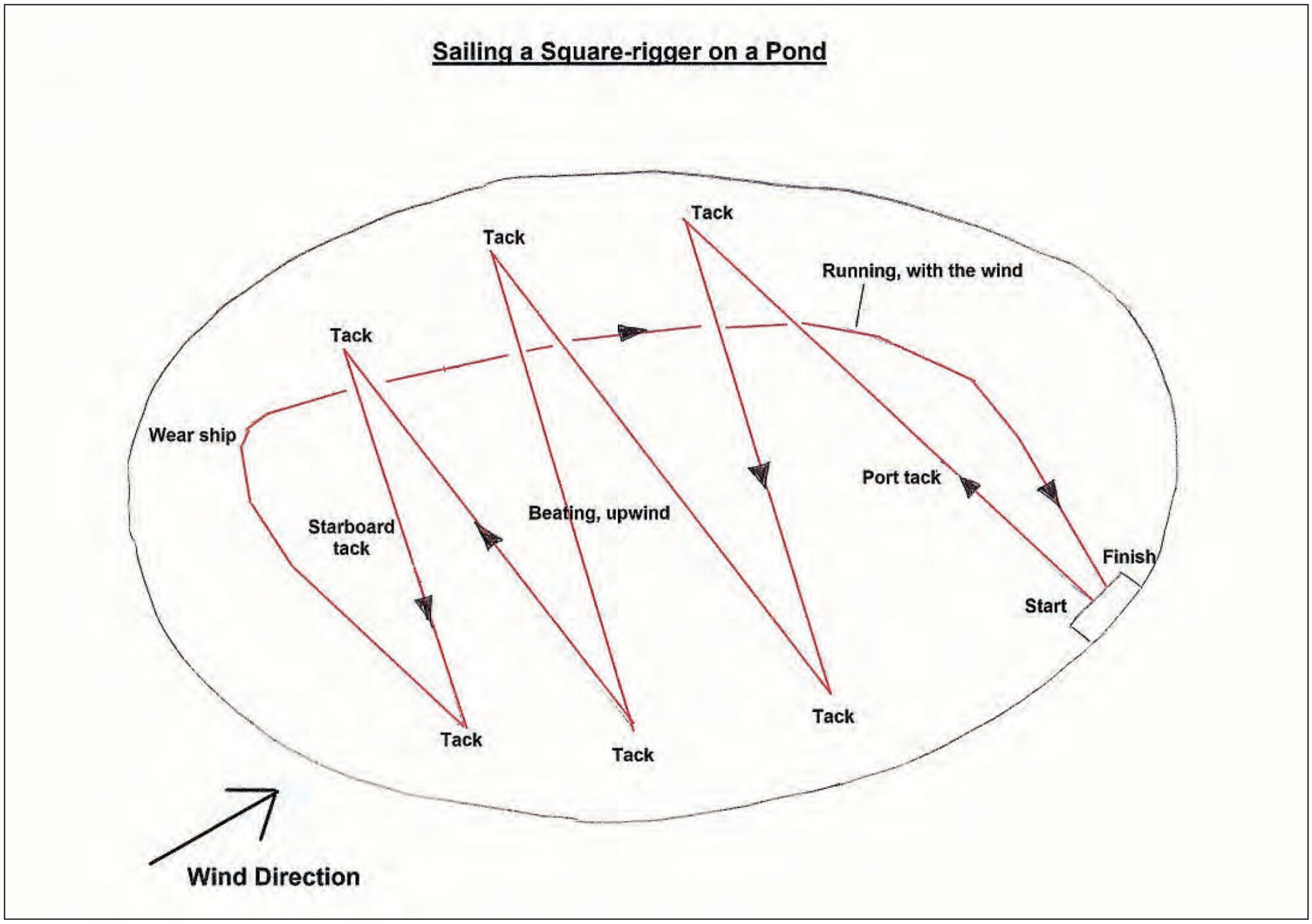


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Nev's drawing of the pond at Tynemouth (not to scale), showing wind direction and the track, out and back, of a typical 'voyage' up and down the lake. The article refers to this drawing when describing various manoeuvres.

Going Square round a pond

Nev Wades explains how it's done

If you sail a model square-rigger, you'll occasionally be asked if your boat has a motor/propeller. When you say "No, it's just moved by the wind", some will go on to ask how that can be done, and, in particular, how you sail "against the wind". Part of the reason for the question is just to do with model boats, but some people are equally fascinated by how the real ships did it. This piece attempts to explain some of the 'hows' and 'whys' of both.

Pondlife

The pond at Tynemouth is oval shaped, is about 250 metres long, 100 metres wide and, being right next to the North Sea, has good, clean wind. It's an almost perfect place to sail model square-riggers and I'll explain how it's done by describing a 'voyage' 'up' and 'down' it.

The voyage

We'll start by leaving the landing stage, marked 'Start' and 'Finish' on the diagram above. As you'll see from the wind direction, we will be sailing to windward, on the port tack – that is, with the wind from the port side and the yards braced right round, with the port yardarms forward. In this position we can keep the wind behind the sails and make progress if they are braced round to within 30 degrees of the centreline of the model, and if we sail no closer to the wind than 65 degrees (yachts will manage 35 degrees).

"It is important to understand that this single fact will dominate most of our sailing on a pond"

So, braced as above, we push off from the landing stage and start to make progress 'up' the pond (to windward) by 'beating'. We use the rudder to keep the vessel's head 'off the wind', that is to say, we will keep the boat as close to the wind as possible, without letting it get round the front of the square sails and 'catching them aback'. We can do this by watching them carefully; if they start to shake, then we are too close to the wind, so we just steer to starboard a little to keep going forward. We are now 'making a board', a movement in a direction taking us across and 'up' the pond. We continue like this, and it can take several minutes, concentrating all the time, until we start to near the opposite bank.

Despite it being the motive power, the wind is also our enemy in doing this. It wants to push us to the leeward end of the pond, and it will do so if we don't keep the model's head up to it. It is important to understand that this single fact will dominate most of our sailing on a pond, as most of the time we shall be 'beating' to windward.

To return to our voyage, we are now approaching the opposite bank. If we don't do something, we will crash into it and that will be the end of our progress. Our best option is to 'tack' – that is, to turn, to take the wind from the other side, by turning into the wind (see my diagram. The procedure is as follows. We turn slightly away from the wind, to allow us to pick up a little speed, which will help us maintain momentum as we turn across it. Now we turn hard to port. As the boat's bow goes across the wind, we brace the yards on all but the foremast on to the starboard tack, with the starboard yardarms forward. If we've timed matters correctly, the wind will now be on the after side of the sails on these masts and that should 'hold' the model to the wind and stop it from going astern. As we continue to move and turn (now slowly), the sails on the foremast (now caught aback) push round the bows and the success of the manoeuvre becomes assured. Once we are successful, the foremast yards are also put on to the starboard tack and progress up the pond continues. All square-riggers have some type of fore and aft sail on the aftermost mast, and this is used to assist the steering, by pulling it in and getting the wind to push round the stern more effectively during tacking.



This is the full-rigged ship Mount Stewart 'running', with the wind from astern. With the wind from this direction, you take it on the quarter, so as not to have some sails masking the others, and then just steer, like a powered boat.



The four masted full rigger Peter Rickmers.



The four-masted barque Parma surging down the pond.



The four-masted barque Archibald Russell ghosting along on a quiet day.



Archibald Russell 'beating', on the starboard tack in a good wind.



Mount Stewart 'close hauled', 'beating' on the starboard tack. Mount Stewart was the last of the wool clippers.



Parma sailing herself! The wind acting on the sails that run the full length of the model 'balance' her, fore and aft, keeping her on a steady course. The reason this happens is that the original ship's designer knew what he was doing!



The five-masted barque Potosi. At this length and scale (1:116th), it is less easy to sail 'hands off'.



Full riggers, with square sails at the after end of the ship, are inherently more likely to try to turn into the wind, to 'gripe', as the old-fashioned term has it. The extra sail area at the stern wants to push the boat about.

"Tacking is a manoeuvre that requires good timing and accurate control, but, even when done well, it is not guaranteed always to succeed. There is another, almost foolproof, way in which we can turn, to take the wind from the other side and that is 'wearing ship'…"

Tacking is a manoeuvre that requires good timing and accurate control, but, even when done well, it is not guaranteed always to succeed. There is another, almost foolproof way, in which we can turn, to take the wind from the other side and that is 'wearing ship', turning away from the wind. To do this we simply turn to starboard in this example and, as the wind comes more from astern as we turn, we brace round the yards,



This is how you spend most of your time, sailing on a pond.



Parma in the sunshine.



Parma: the real ship made the fastest ever Grain Race passage, from South Australia to Europe – 83 days in 1933.



Queen Margaret, in her day, the 'Beautiful Queen Margaret', 'beating' in 15mph of wind.



Queen Margaret 'beating' on the starboard tack in great conditions.



Queen Margaret.

first to be square across the boat and then, as the turn continues, to be braced round on to the other, starboard, tack, with the wind from the starboard side. During this kind of turn, the aft fore and aft sail is let out, the better to allow the bows of the vessel to move away from the wind at the start of the turn.

Whichever of the above methods is used, we are now on the next 'board', making further progress 'up' the pond, on the starboard tack. You will see from the pond drawing that the opposite bank will eventually loom and that we shall have to tack again, this time from starboard to port tack. It will require the same actions as above, but the opposite way round. Thus, we shall make progress 'up' the pond, by a series of zig zags, until we reach the 'top' end.

Having made it from the lee to the windward end of the pond, it is now time to sail back, 'down' it, to our start point. This is much simpler. We turn to starboard in our example by 'wearing ship', turning away from the wind and bracing round the yards as we go, to get them 'square' across the boat. Now we have the wind from astern, the boat will simply move forward; all we have to do is steer to



A tall ship.



The Archibald Russell was, in 1905, the last large merchant sailing ship to be built in the UK. Here Nev's model is about to put her lee rail under.



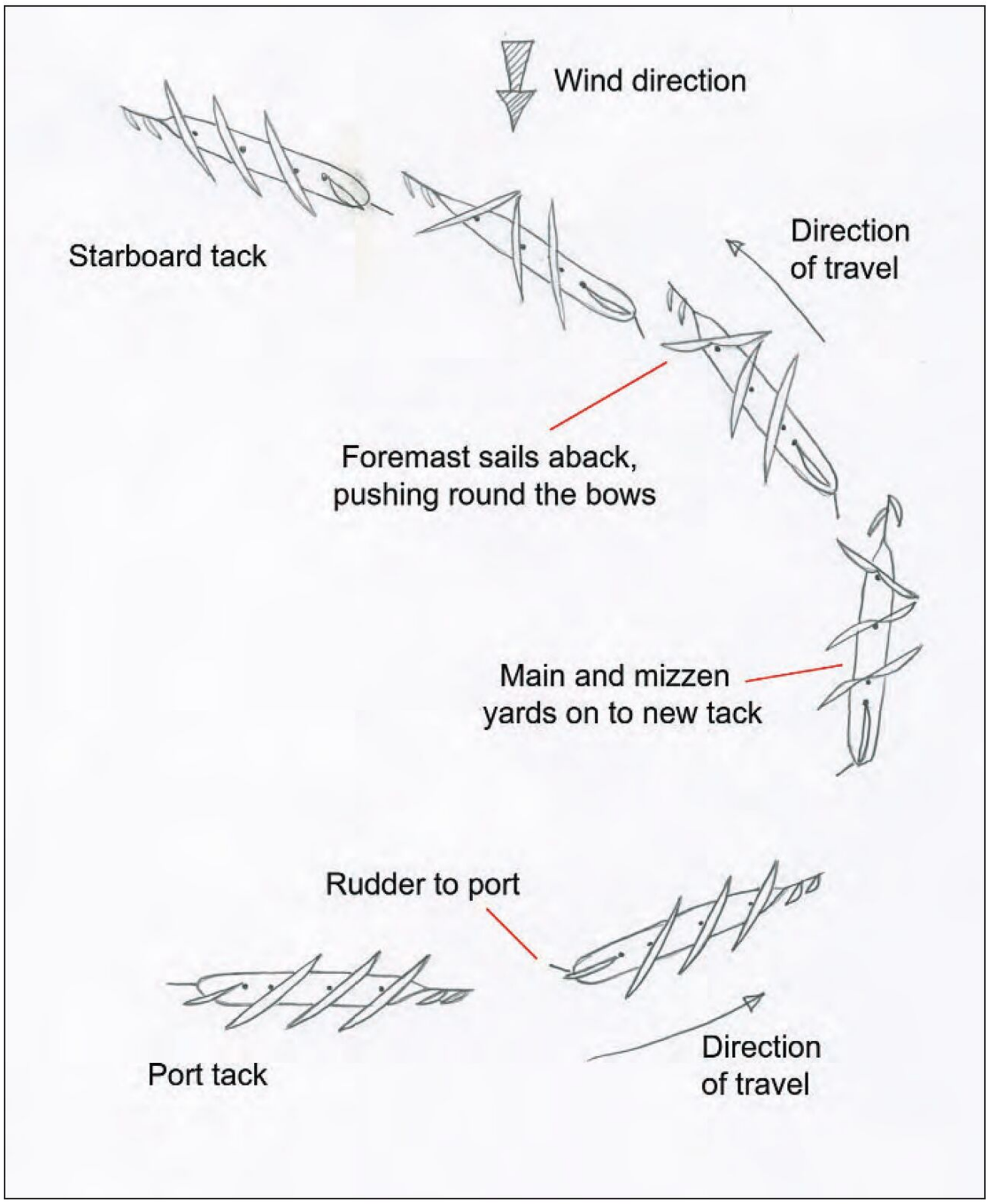
The wind is blowing from the camera towards the vessels here, with both models (the Queen Margaret and a tea clipper of 20 years earlier) making good progress, in opposite directions.

get back 'down' the pond. It can give us greater speed when 'running', as this is called, if we take the wind from one quarter or the other (over the boat's 'shoulders' as it were), and brace the yards accordingly, so that the sails don't mask one another. Very soon we will be back near to where we started. We shall turn to starboard to head towards the landing stage, bracing the yards round on to the starboard tack as we do so and sailing right up to it. As we approach the stage, we will 'round up', turn again to starboard to take the 'way' off the boat, so that it will stop just as we come alongside. Voyage complete!

It can take half an hour to 'beat' our way 'up' the pond and two or three minutes to 'run' 'down' it, and none of the actions described above come with a guarantee of success. Lots of things can go wrong, leading to situations that are unique to square-rigger sailing. The next part of this piece covers some of the ups and downs, the oddballs.

Other manoeuvres

The most frequent source of failure is to get 'in stays' as we tack the boat; essentially this means that we fail to maintain momentum through the turn to windward. If we have plenty of 'sea room', when this happens, we can put all the yards back on to the original tack, move forward again, and then have another go. If we are too close to the side of the pond, we will need to go astern, to get away from the bank. The drill is as follows. If you imagine we were on the port tack, with the port yardarms forward, if we need to go astern, we brace round the yards so that they are on the starboard tack, with the starboard yardarms forward. That puts the wind on the forward



How to tack a four masted barque (see the body copy of this article for details).

side of the sails, which will become 'all aback' and stop the model. It will then start to sail astern.

If we put the rudder to starboard, we will sail astern, in a straight line (more or less). This will take us further away from the bank. When we're far enough from the bank, we turn the rudder to port and that makes the vessel also turn to port. Doing so brings the wind on to the stern of the model, so we can brace round the yards and get the wind to act from behind the sails. As soon as this is the case, we sail away, downwind, and then turn to starboard, brace the yards round on to the starboard tack, and make the next 'board' across the pond. Only in very light winds was any of this was available to the real ships, dismasting being an only too likely outcome in heavier weather.

Real sailing ships could do some limited manoeuvring by deliberately allowing the square sails to be taken aback. They could, for example, move slowly astern in order to do a 'three-point-turn', in the manner described above (in our 'in stays' example). The real ships would do it in favourable circumstances, to turn and get the wind from the best side in order to leave an anchorage, for example. Another manoeuvre regularly performed was 'heaving-to'. If a real ship had to stop, in order, for example, to pick up or drop her Pilot, she would put some of her square sails on to one tack, while the rest were on the other. As you will see in the photo on page 55, *Moshulu* has 'backed' her main yards on to the port tack, while the rest are still on the starboard tack. Thus, the sails on fore and mizzen are trying to push the vessel forward, while those on the main are trying to push her astern. The net effect, with the helm in a suitable position, is for the vessel to stop, or move very slowly, and make leeway for the Pilot to leave or arrive aboard. (Note that the other 'heaving-to', sometimes done in very heavy weather and high seas, when progress was not possible, is beyond the scope of this article).

A model sailing ship is sometimes in a better situation than the full-size



Mount Stewart tacking. The foremast sails are pushing round the bows.



Here Mount Stewart has been on the starboard tack and has been turned to starboard, across the wind. The yards on the main and mizzen masts have been braced round onto the port tack and those on the foremast are now pushing round the bows. Very soon the foremast yards too will be braced onto the port tack, then the vessel will start to make way again, this time on the port tack.



Sometimes, just like the real thing, the wind is too strong to carry the full suit of sails. Here the Hooghly River pilot brig Fame is sailing in 20mph of wind, with her 'royals' (the highest square sails) removed. The model is 'beating' on the port tack.



20+ mph and big waves. This is the four-masted full rigger Peter Rickmers nearing the point at which some sails will have to be removed.

equivalent, sometimes in a worse one. Real sailing ships' masts were stayed to take the wind from astern, because that was what they were designed to do. Therefore, it was often very dangerous for them to be 'caught aback', dismasting was a very real possibility. With a model there are no such consequences, so it is possible for a model square-rigger to do an 'emergency stop'. If you are sailing on the starboard tack and another boat crosses your bow, you can brace all the yards round on to the port tack, get caught 'all aback', and stop more or less dead. With the wind from in

"It is possible for a model square-rigger to do an 'emergency stop'"

front of the sails on the port tack, if you put the rudder hard to port, the boat will sail straight astern, at least for a while. It is a move which can even get the attention of model yachtsmen.

On the other hand, it is possible to 'heave-to' with a model, but the water for a model is as real as it was for the full-sized ship, so you will neither stop nor simply 'make leeway' as the real thing did. It is a much less satisfactory manoeuvre for a model.

"You can sail 'hands-off' in this way and just watch the beauty of a sailing ship in action"

If the wind favours a direction other than the one shown in my diagram, then progress along the pond to a required destination will be easier on one tack than the other. This means you'll have to plan your voyage to use the wind to the best effect. It can confuse the casual observer, as you will often have to go, seemingly, far out of the obvious way to gain your objective.

Occasionally, as you are 'beating', the wind will start to sneak around the fore part of the sails, causing the boat to falter and hesitate. If you quickly put the foremast yards round on to the other tack, the wind acting on them from ahead will push the bows back round to where they should be, at which point you can put the foremast yards back on to the original tack and regain momentum.

Also, in a kind of 'beating' situation, you can let the vessel fall 'off' the wind a little, usually with the aftermost fore and aft sails let 'out', and then you can sail 'full and bye', sails full (*i.e.*, in no danger of being 'caught aback'), and 'by the wind' (an archaic sailing ship expression). You can sail 'hands-off' in this way and just watch the beauty of a sailing ship in action.

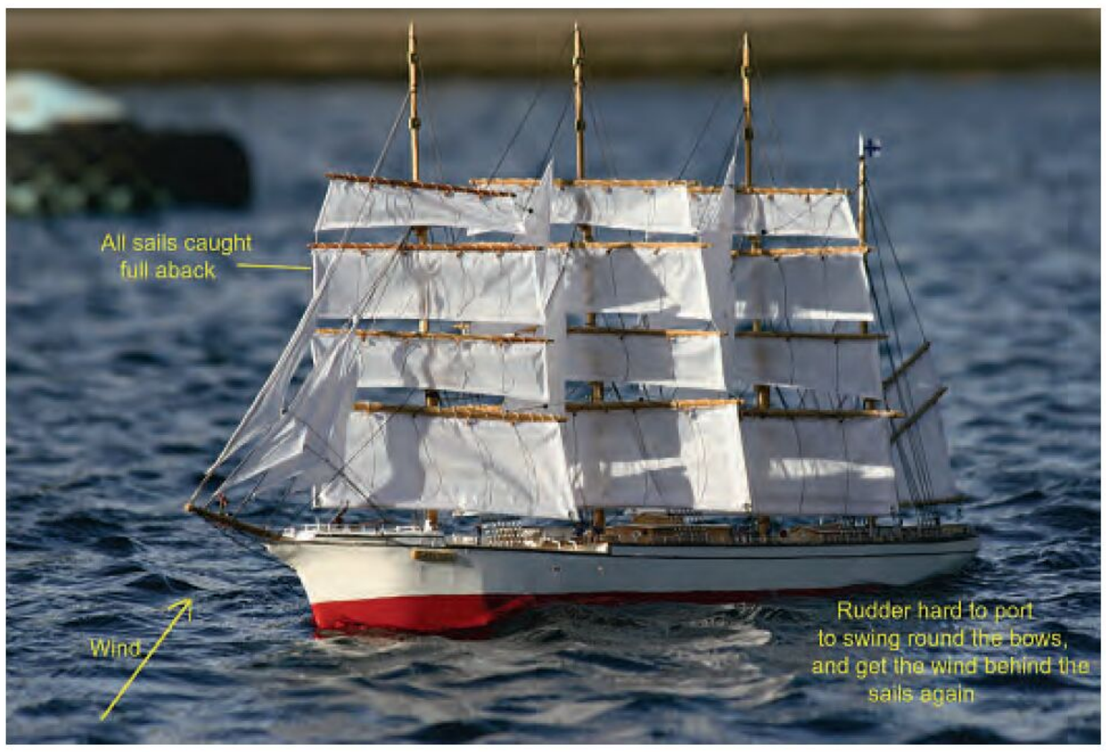
In this article I've described 'running' (sailing with the wind from astern) as a simple matter. In fact, just as it was with the real ships, it has its peculiarities. You can gain a little speed by taking the wind over one 'quarter' or the other (over the ship's shoulders, as it were). You will notice that the boat 'corkscrews' as it sails along, with its bows being pushed under the water somewhat, and also that you have to watch the steering, so that your vessel doesn't 'broach to' (turn, involuntarily, and end up across the wind). All these things were features of the real ships as they 'ran their easting down' (made progress to the east) in the Southern

YouTube viewing

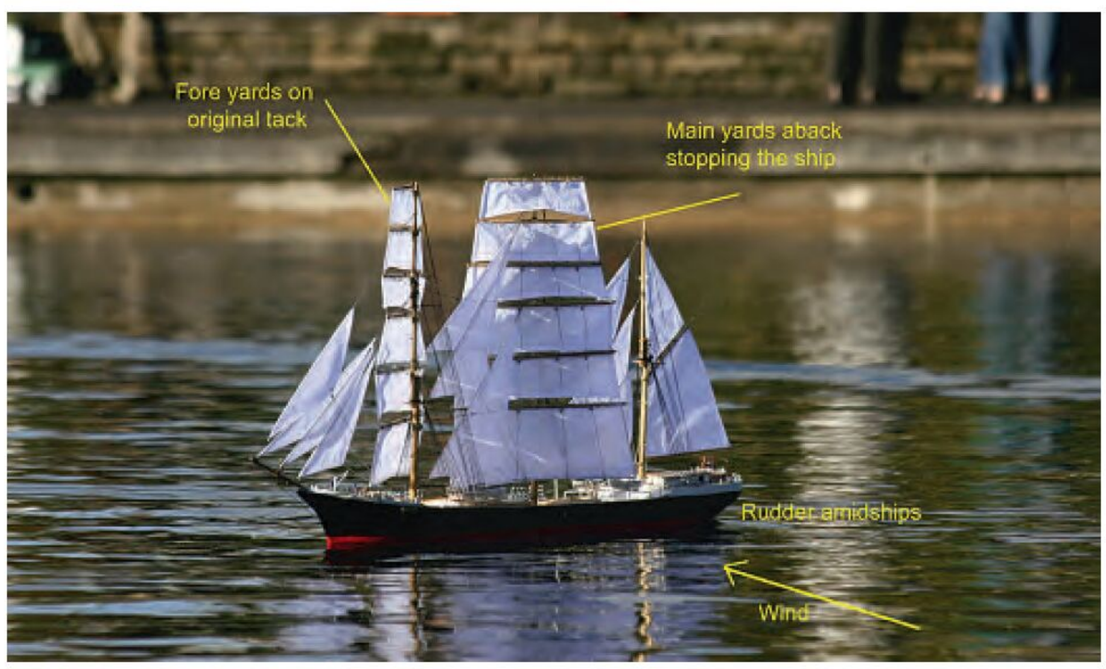
If you type 'Nev Wade' into the browser on YouTube, you will find videos of his models, including an old one demonstrating some of the techniques mentioned here. Enjoy!



Mount Stewart with seven sails removed (two each from fore and mizzen, three from the main mast). The model is flying along with the wind from the left of the picture on the starboard tack.



Herzogin Cecilie, here with seven sails removed, caught 'all aback'.



Penang 'hove to' on a pond. A model will stop, but it won't be long before it 'falls off' (turns one way or the other) and starts to make headway, albeit slowly.



The wind has gone around 180 degrees, with no warning, and the model has been caught 'all aback'. On a real ship the masts would have, quite literally, gone 'by the board' and the vessel would have been dismasted. On a model, the boat stops dead and starts to go backwards. In this illustration, the rudder was turned hard to port and the boat went astern to port. As the wind became favourable, all the yards were braced round to take the wind from astern and she was able to sail away. Almost literally, a three-point-turn!



This is Moshulu, in 1938 the world's largest surviving sailing ship, 'hove to' for her pilot. The fore and mizzen sails are braced to take the wind from astern, to push the vessel forward, while the sails on the main mast are braced to take it from ahead, to push her astern. The intention is to hold her where she is, just making leeway, to allow a pilot to be put aboard.



Queen Margaret becalmed. Not all square-rigger sailing is action, sometimes their tranquillity can match that of the real vessels. Here a real North Sea fog creates an eerie, beautiful scene.

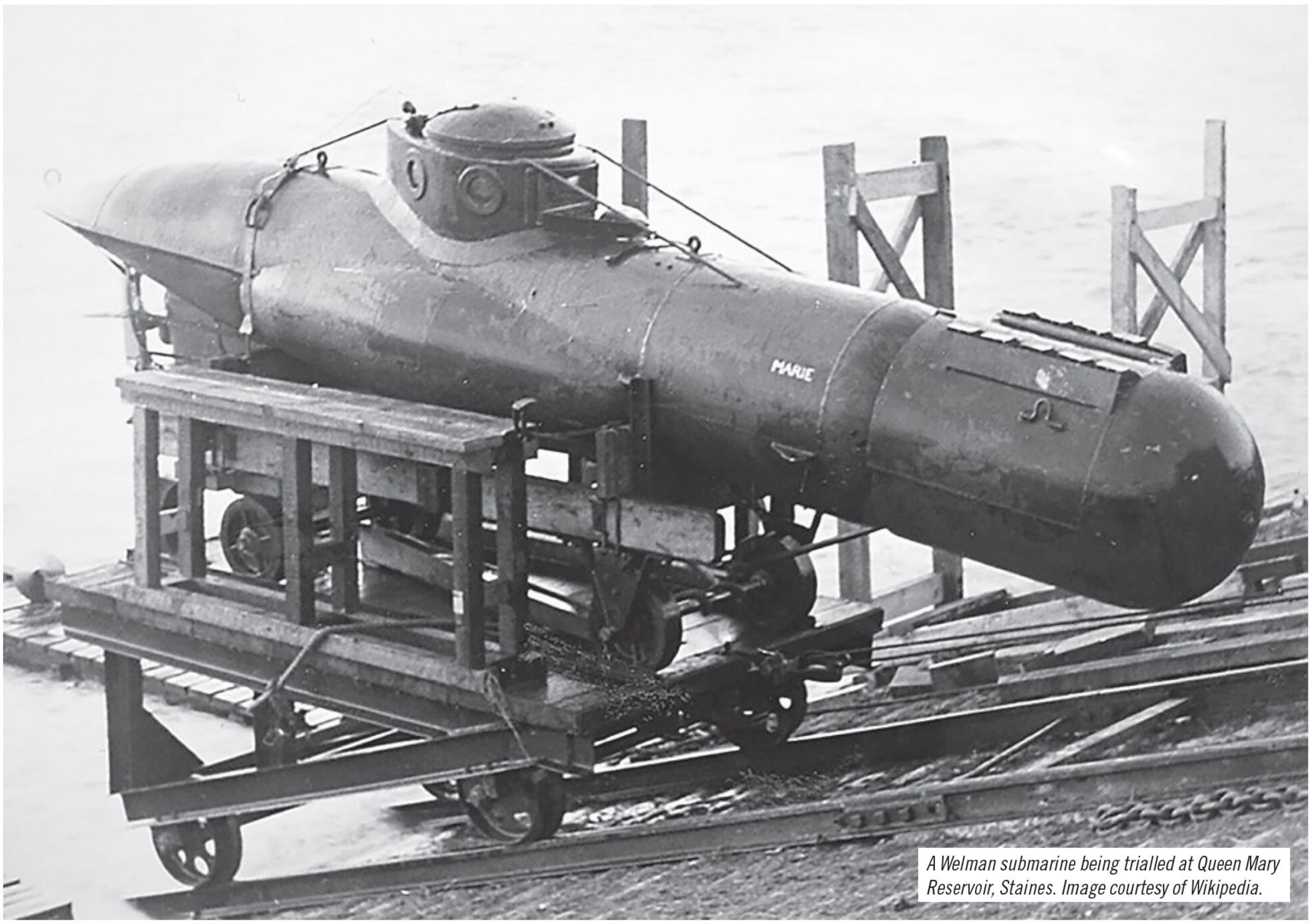
Ocean, the conditions for which they were designed.

A perfect day

Sometimes the sun comes out, the wind blows at right angles to the long axis of the pond and stays steady at 15/20mph. In these conditions you can sail the length of the pond, in both directions, in a single 'board', on one tack going one way and on the opposite tack going the other. All you have to do is keep the vessel's bow from turning 'up' into the wind – 'griping', as the old term has it. You can do this all day if you want, or you can sail into the wind by 'beating' as above, or 'run' the other way by turning to sail across the pond. In my opinion, there is very little that is more relaxing and absorbing, as you watch for your opportunities and re-live a bygone age, sailing what has been described as 'man's most beautiful industrial creation', the merchant sailing ship. ●



This is what we're trying to re-create. Herzogin Cecilie, seen from the four-masted barque Olivebank, near Cape Horn, in a good wind, homeward bound from South Australia to Europe in 1933.



A Welman submarine being trialled at Queen Mary Reservoir, Staines. Image courtesy of Wikipedia.

THE WELMAN SUBMARINE

John Parker reflects on this 'desperate times call for desperate measures' sub-standard design

Churchill's 'dirty tricks' department, the SOE (Special Operations Executive), was set up in July 1940 to wage war overseas by any and all means of sabotage and subversion. Essential to its operation was the research and development of the unique weaponry and equipment required, which was carried out at a requisitioned private hotel, the Frythe, at Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire. This was known as Station IX, and many of its inventions took the prefix 'Wel-' from the city's name. Some, such as the Welbike folding motorcycle and Welrod pistol were successful, but others were not. The Welman one-man midget submarine falls into the latter category.

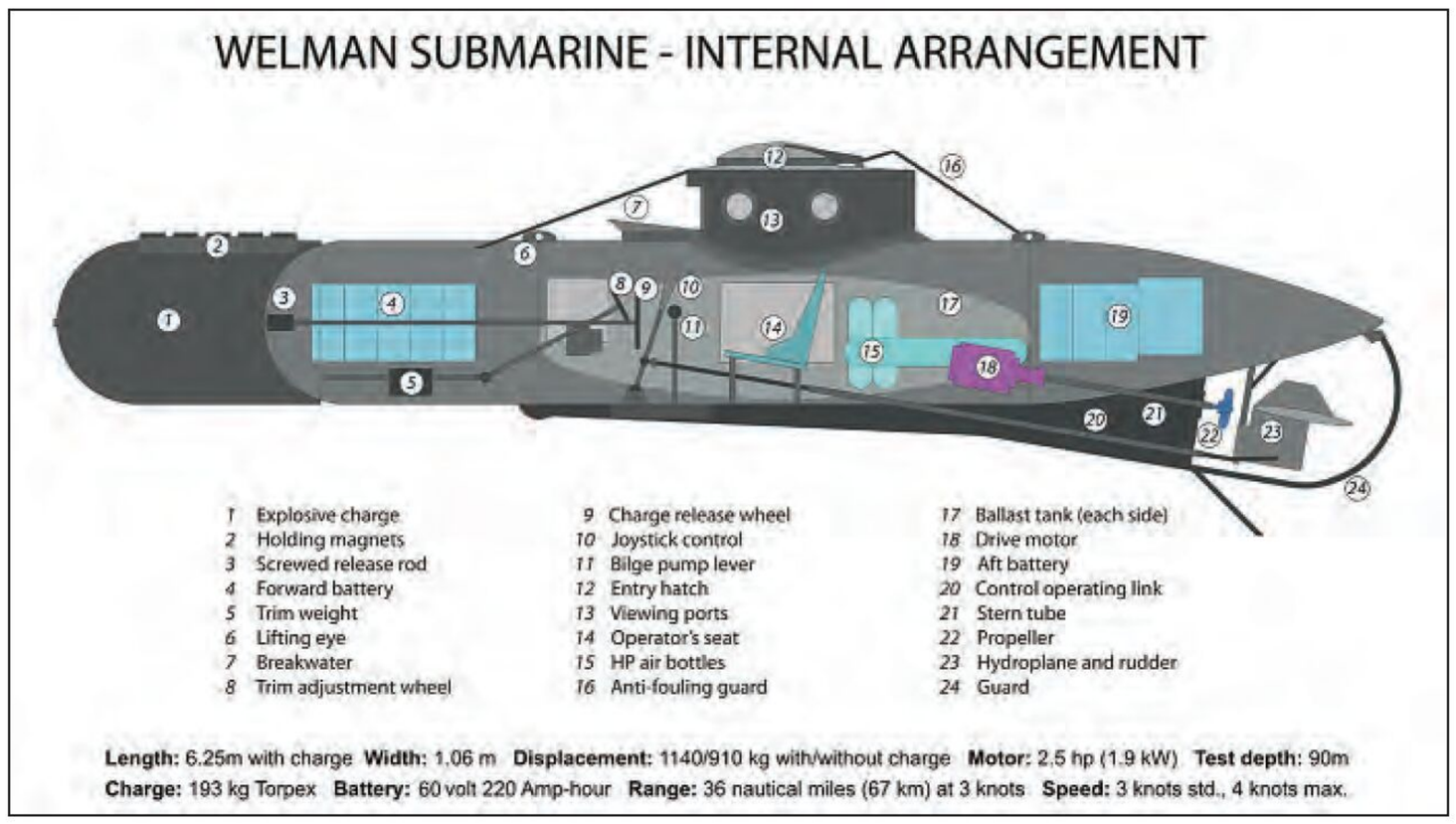
"It was designed without input from the Royal Navy and not built to navy standards; understandable, perhaps, given the secret nature of the project, but the unwillingness to consult those with operational experience of midget submarines was the cause of serious deficiencies in the design"

The Welman described

The Welman took the form of a cylinder with a rounded nose and flattened tail section. The operator sat amidships, tightly enclosed in a squat conning tower with viewing ports for navigation. A 60-volt battery of 220 ampere-hour capacity filled most of the space in the nose and tail sections and powered the 2.5 horsepower electric motor behind the operator which drove a small propeller under the tail. A small joystick-operated hydroplane and rudder assembly was fitted behind the propeller and a blister each side of the centre section housed the ballast



Welrod Mk. 1 (top) and Welbike. Wikipedia sourced image.



John's own self-labelled artwork.



A Welman being removed from its storage shed in Australia. Image courtesy of the Australian War Memorial.

tanks. Various items of equipment, notably the high-pressure air bottles for blowing the ballast and an adjustable 135 kg trim weight, filled the remainder of the interior space.

The principle designer of the Welman was Army Colonel John Dolphin of the Royal Engineers, and he placed the highest priority on simplicity and ease of manufacture. It was built principally of 3/16-inch (4.8mm) sheet steel and existing parts were used wherever possible – for example, the operator's seat came from an Austin 7 motor car and the joystick and some of the instrumentation came from a Hawker Hurricane. It was designed without input from the Royal Navy and not built to navy standards; understandable, perhaps, given the secret nature of the project, but the unwillingness to consult those with operational experience of midget submarines was the cause of serious deficiencies in the design, the most glaring of which was the lack of a periscope.

Held to the front end of the craft by a threaded rod was the Welman's weapon: a bullet shaped charge containing Torpex explosive. The idea was that the operator would make a submerged approach to an enemy ship, porpoising briefly at times to check his course, then flood up beneath the vessel and attach the charge to its underside by means of the magnets attached to it. He would wind the threaded rod further into the charge to arm it, and then wind it out fully again to detach it from his submarine, while furiously adjusting his balance weight to try and counter the change in trim. The charge would be set to detonate five hours later. Without a periscope, the operator was severely hampered by a line of sight that was only inches above the water through viewing ports that could rapidly become obstructed by any floating debris or oil on the surface. He also had no means of dealing with anti-torpedo nets.

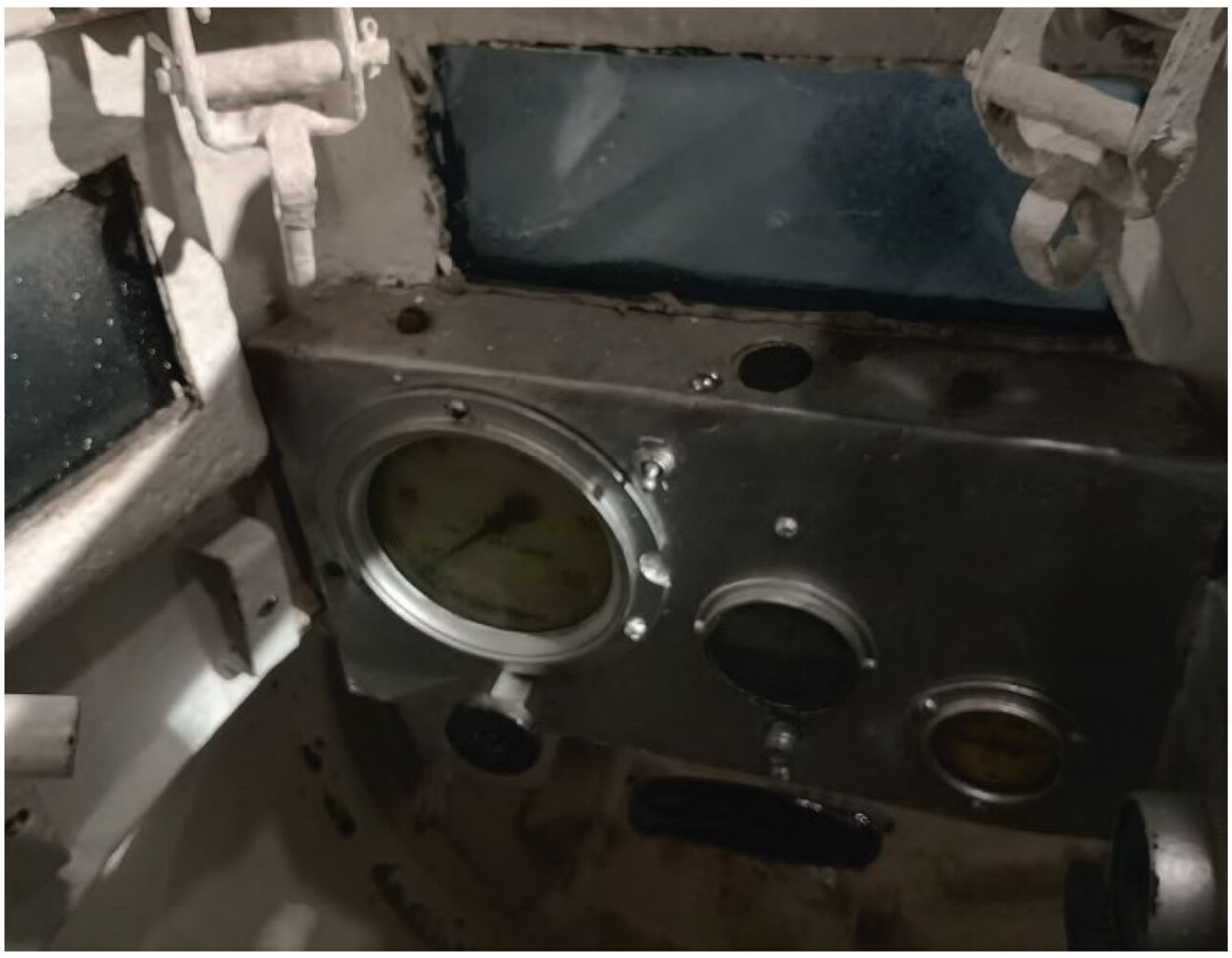
Completion of trials in 1943 revealed other shortcomings, such as the limited control afforded by the rear hydroplane and weakness in the pressure hull, which necessitated its maximum diving depth being amended to 100 feet after an unmanned prototype suffered a collapse long before reaching its



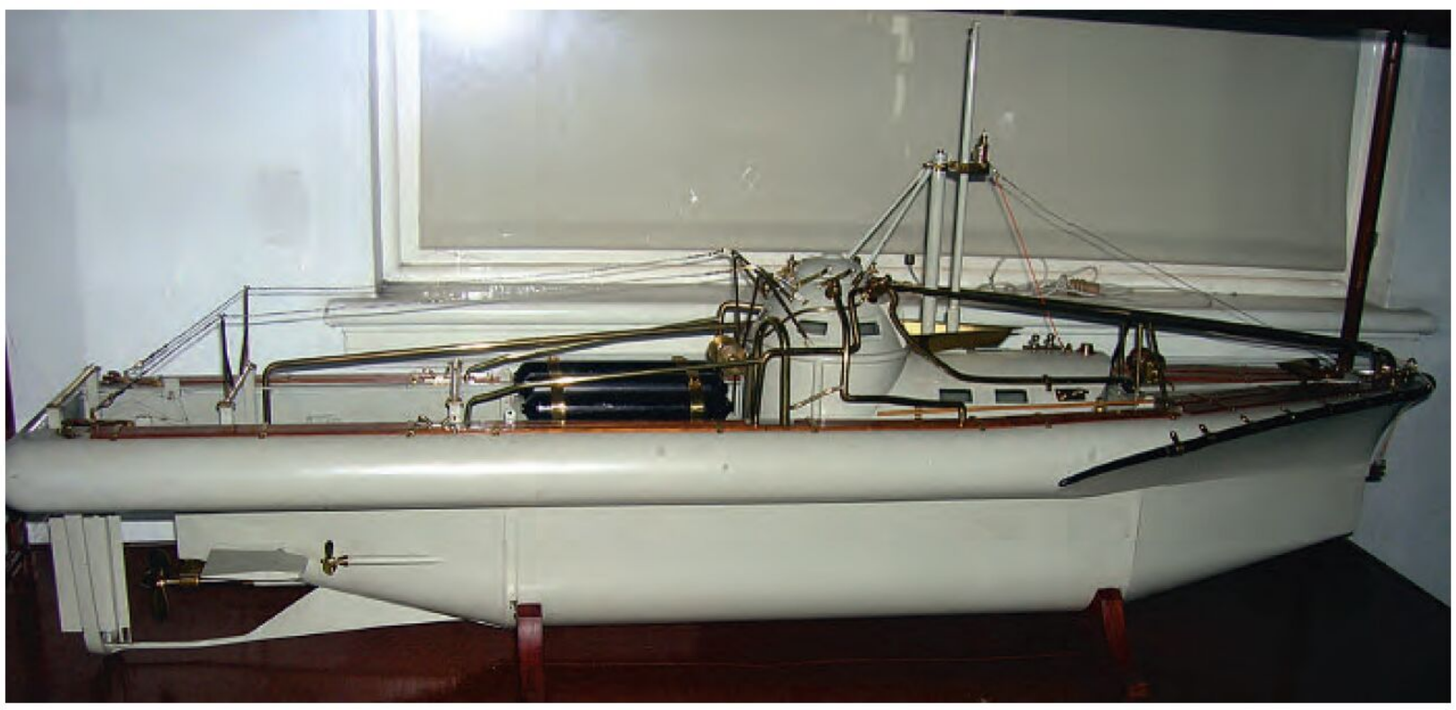
Welman W48 at the Horton Marine Museum, Norway. Image courtesy of Vincent Malloy via Wikimedia.



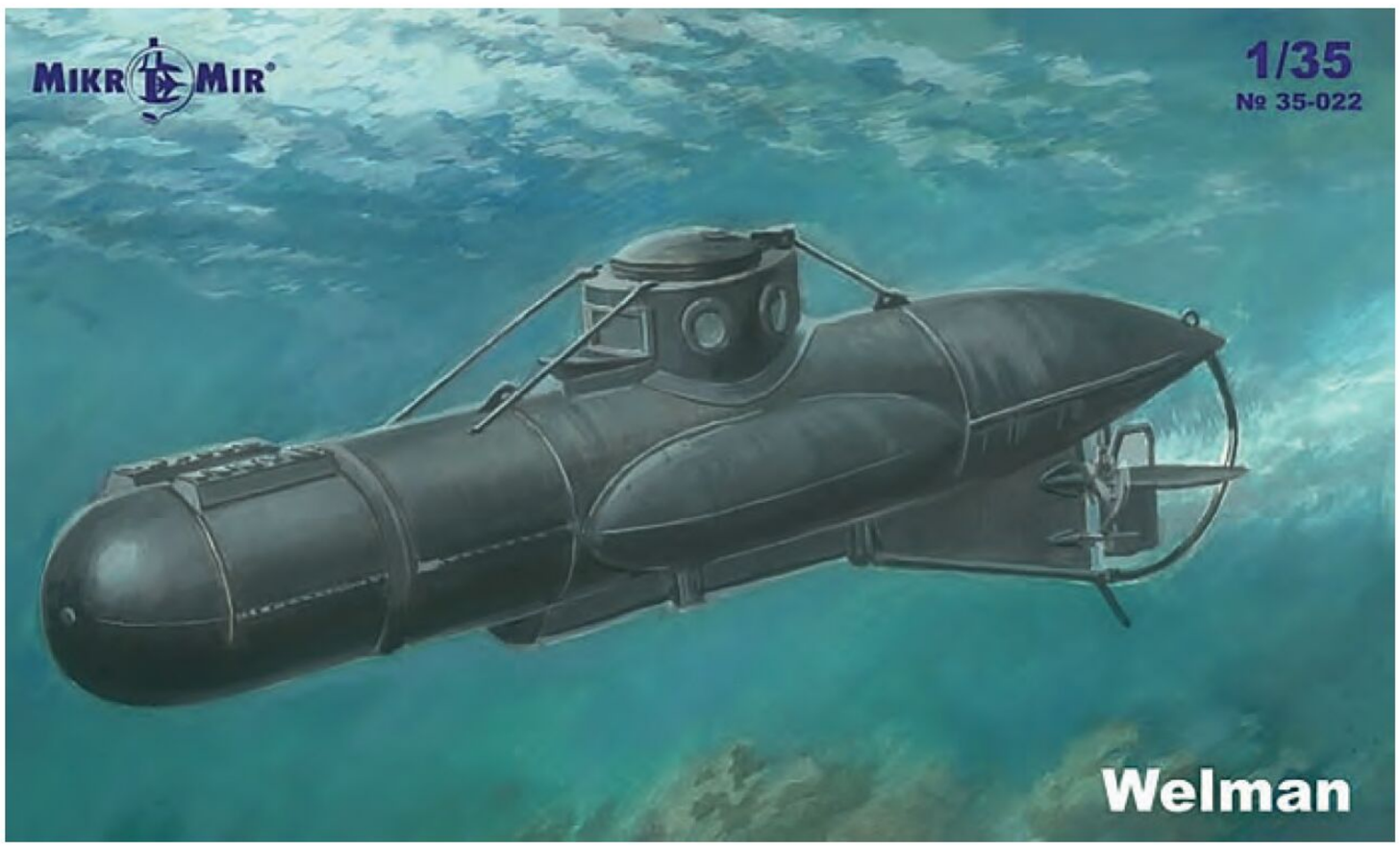
Another view of Welman W48. Image courtesy of Vincent Malloy via Wikimedia.



Forward instrument panel of W48. Image courtesy of Vincent Malloy via Wikimedia.



Model of a Welfreighter Mk.3. Image courtesy of Rémi Kaupp via Wikimedia.



The box top illustration of the Mikromir 1:35 scale kit of the Welman.

"It might be argued that in this way the Welman did at least provide some contribution to the allied war effort"

300 feet intended limit. Despite this, orders were put in hand for the production of 200 units by the Morris car plant at Cowley. By late 1943, growing doubts as to the potential usefulness of the craft had set in, and the order was cut to just 20 units, but the momentum had been built up and by the time production was halted 100 had been completed.

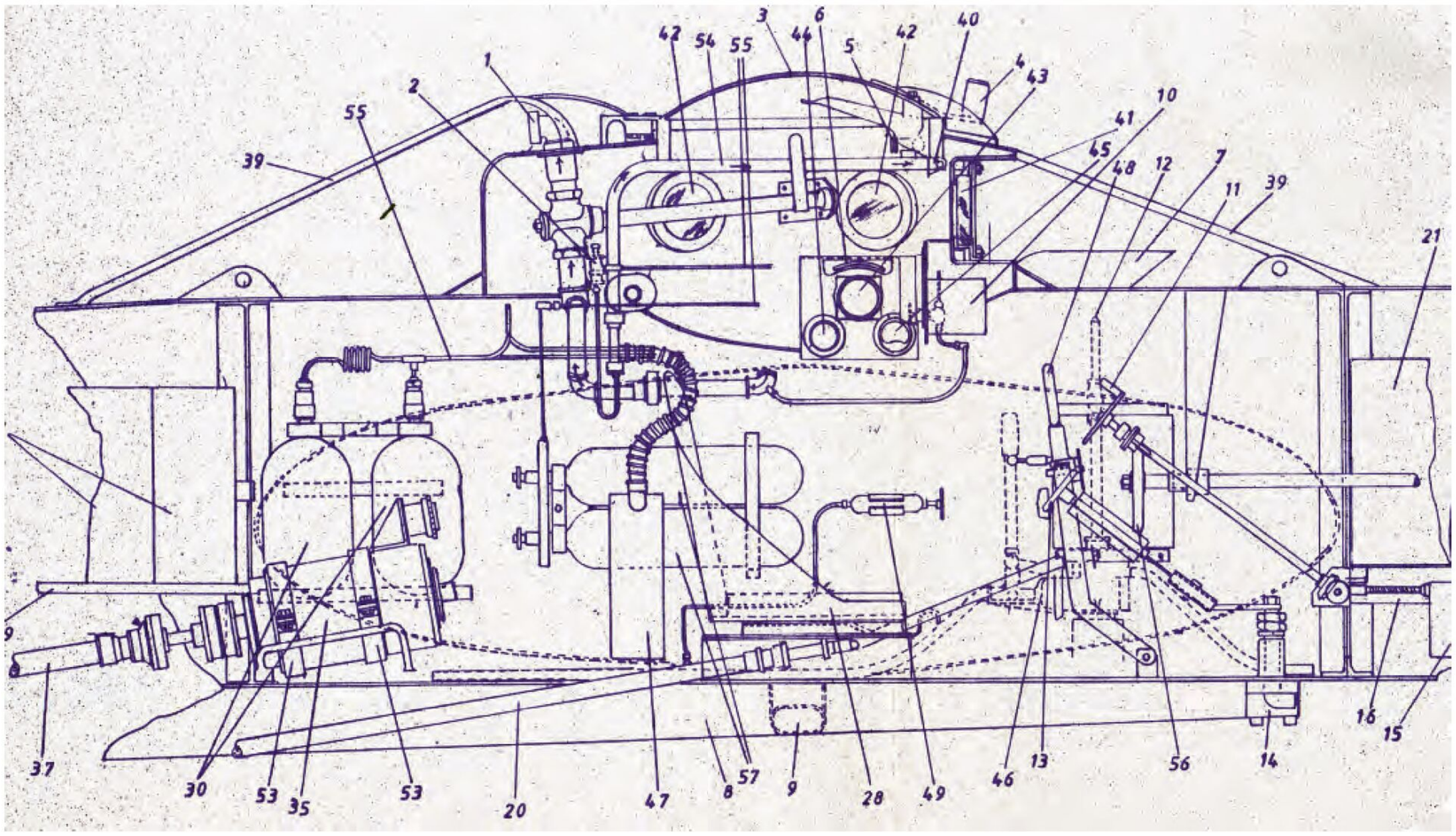
Operational debut

The Welman's one chance to prove itself finally came in November 1943, when four of the craft were carried by MTBs to Norway to attack the Laskevag floating dock in Bergen Harbour, which the Germans were using for U-Boat repairs. Alas, one Welman (W48) was captured intact along with its operator, while the other three craft had to be scuttled, their crews escaping by foot. Despite its crudity, the Germans were sufficiently impressed by the captured Welman to set in train the development of their own version, the Biber. This was to prove only slightly more successful, but it was built in large numbers causing the diversion of scarce wartime materials. It might be argued that in this way the Welman did at least provide some contribution to the allied war effort.

A number of Welman submarines were shipped off to Australia in 1944 where they were used at the Garden Island naval base, Fremantle, to train operatives for the Services Reconnaissance Department, otherwise known as Z Force. It appears that no actual operational use was made of them however. Amongst the scarce information available is a note that a dozen Welman craft were scuttled off Rottnest Island in 1946.

The Welfreighter

The Welman had a cousin of sorts: the Welfreighter, a small submersible that resembled a fishing boat on the surface but could submerge to covertly deliver two agents and up a ton of equipment in sealed containers. Long shrouded in secrecy, it was developed over three prototypes while its designers, again headed by John Dolphin, strove to overcome various shortcomings and convince the navy of its usefulness. An order for 34 of an improved Mk.III



Detail from the John Lambert plan for the Welman.

"Fancy scratch-building a radio-controlled Welman?"

version was eventually placed in late 1944, but by then the need for such a craft had all but disappeared. Twelve are believed to have been shipped to Australia and used in extensive trials, but again there is no evidence of any operational use ever being made of them.

A Welman model

Display models of the Welman midget submarine are available from Choroszy Modelbud and Mikromir. The Choroszy offering (No. CHOS21) is a resin kit to 1:72 scale, making up into a tiny model about 88mm long. Mikromir's MIK35-022 kit of the Welman W10 is injection-moulded, and about twice the size at 1:35 scale. Either make for an unusual display piece of this strange craft.

Fancy scratch-building a radio-controlled Welman? Here John Lambert has come to the rescue with a two-sheet plan to 1:11 scale, producing a model about 530mm long, or 640mm with its charge fitted. The plan is very comprehensive, with all interior fittings and technical details shown, but no model construction. Issued by Marine Modelling in July 1997, it is available from Sarik Hobbies as Plan No. SH-MAR2593.

The builder of a Welman model would certainly have a curious and intriguing subject to introduce at the boating lake. The cylindrical shape suits the usual watertight cylinder arrangement well, and the minimal displacement of the above-surface structure means that only a small ballast tank is required. On the other hand, the full-size Welman was never known for its ease of underwater handling, so prepare for some experimentation here. Enlargement of the small hydroplanes, that swivel with the rudder, may be required. If the plans are enlarged slightly to 1:10 scale, the model will be about 625mm long by 80mm in diameter and weigh just 3 kg. ●



The Choroszy 1:72 scale Welman kit.

BOILER ROOM

Richard Simpson completes his build of the *Ben Ain*

The last couple of instalments of Boiler Room have focused on the build and modification of a Mountfleet Models' *Ben Ain* kit. I covered the assembly of the hull, the steam plant, the sea trials and bridge unit first, and then last month focused on the complete remodelling of the aft accommodation unit. This month will be dedicated to the conclusion of the project, why things took an unexpected turn, and what can be learnt from that.

Finishing the hull

Although by now the majority of the work on the hull had been done, some finishing touches and a couple of modifications were still required. The first job was the capping rail. This was made from a combination of strip wood along the straight sections and lite ply around the curves at the fore and aft end of the decks, nicely blending the capping rail into the bridge structure and the forecastle. I decided to finish the edge of the capping rail with a section of 'D' shaped edging to create a nice rounded external edge; this was simply Evergreen 'D' section strip, glued (with a cyanoacrylate glue) to the outside edge of the capping rail and heated gently with a hair dryer to help it form around the curves at the ends. At the bridge section this was then continued up the side of the bulwark to provide a bit of continuity and help to detract from the joint, and at the bow the 'D' section was continued around the edge of the deck and the raised bow.

"The question was how to make them look more authentic on my model..."

Another detail I'd noticed when studying pictures of real vessels of the time was the wooden rubbing strakes on the hull. These are actually incorporated into the fibreglass of the kit's hull moulding. On every model I've ever seen the rubbing strakes have been simply painted over. In real life, however, this would not have been the case, mainly because, I assume, the paint would quite quickly have been scuffed from the surface (see **Photo 1**). So, the question was how to make them look more authentic on my model. Removing the moulded items would have been a big messy job and would have almost certainly damaged a lot of the plate and rivet detail, so I decided to simply glue a strip of wood on the top surface of the rubbing strake with some epoxy. Once this had cured, the edges were trimmed to size and then epoxy filler applied before I then sanded to shape. The top and bottom edges only were painted black, leaving a bare wooden surface which was far closer to reality. Later I would also apply a bit of scuffing and weathering. Wash port doors were added, taking care to ensure that they aligned perfectly with the grids on the inside of the bulwarks, simply by gluing in place with epoxy (see **Photo 2**). Another detail was the addition of



Never underestimate the importance of studying real life examples of the type of vessel you intend modelling. The wooden rubbing strakes along the hull of this old vessel, for example, give perfect guidance for making something similar.



The capping rails on Richard's model run up to the bridge unit, with the 'D' profile edges having been taken around the bridge bulwark for continuity. Wash ports and the real wooden rubbing strakes finished the bulk of work on the hull.



A period picture gave Richard the proportions and location of the ramp used to ease the boats over the rubbing strake when lowering and raising them. Noticeable on the Ben Ain was that there was only one fitted. An all over brush applied matt black enamel prepared everything for weathering.

the small ramps to ensure the boats slide over the rubbing strakes when they're being lowered and raised. These were simply carved out of wood stock and glued to the hull. Finally, the hull was given its last overall coat of matt black enamel, which I applied with a small flat brush to create a bit of surface texture (see **Photo 3**).

Further detail work

With the main components of the hull, the removeable bridge and the aft accommodation unit all sorted and working (see **Photo 4**), it was time to concentrate on the addition of further detail, mostly around the main deck and the forecastle.

Studying old photographs and reading firsthand accounts of life onboard gives invaluable information regarding how a model of this period can be enhanced.

One of my favourite little indulgences was powering up the mast head lamp. In the early days of the *Ben Ain*'s life oil lamps were still frequently used at sea. Access was therefore required to light them. For a lamp at the head of the mast this involved an arrangement of two guide wires that the lamp slid up and down on, and a continuous rope loop to lift and lower the lamp. I wanted the lamp to be operational, but I didn't want any visible wires to the grain of wheat lamp, so I eventually came up with the



The major components disassembled. The bridge unit and the aft accommodation simply lift off and the power plant is all mounted onto a single brass base for ease of removal.



Getting power to a suspended oil lamp at the top of the mast without unsightly cables showing wasn't easy, but the guide wires proved very useful. The power was connected inside the hull to the anchors of the two wires.

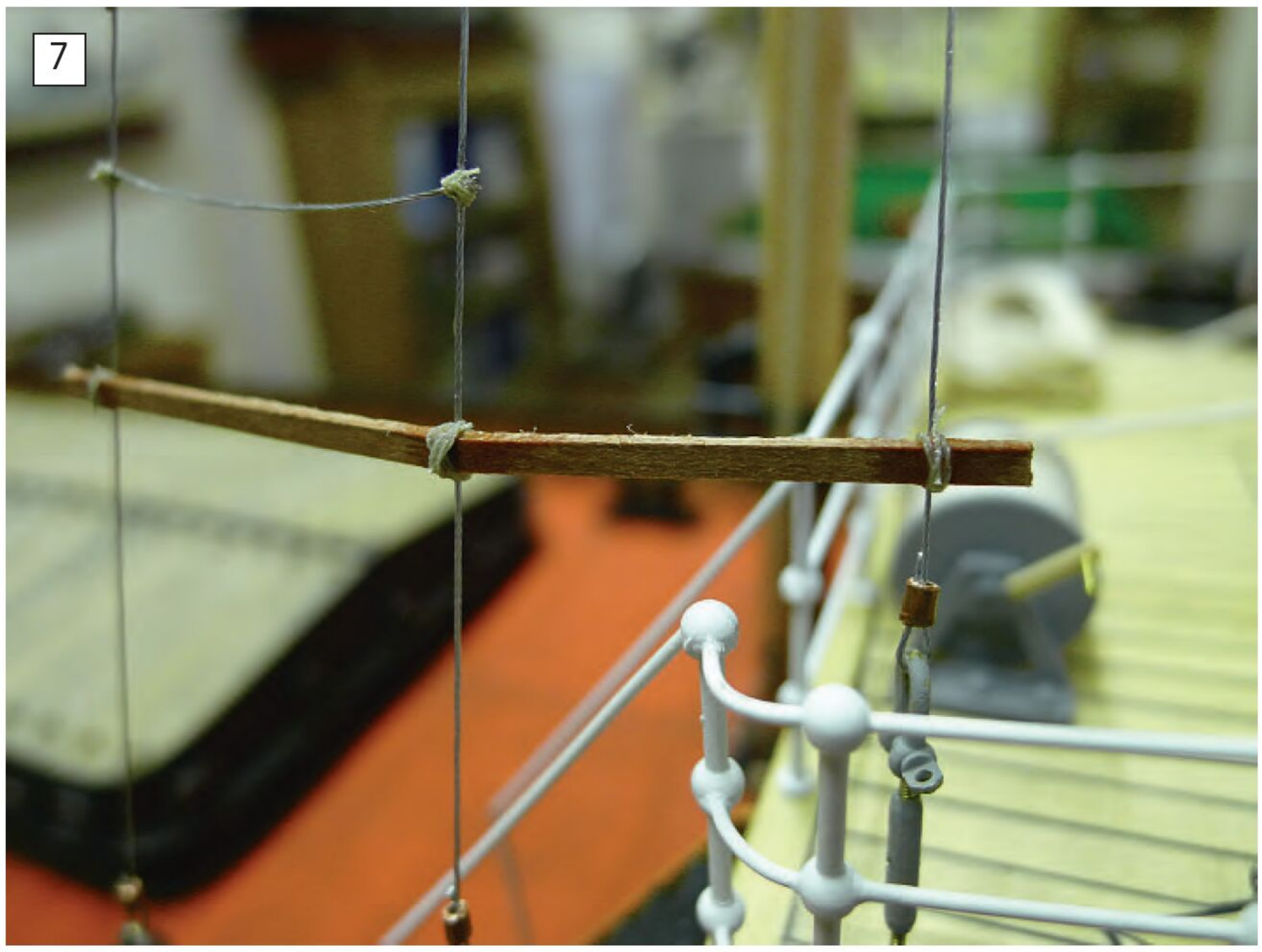
idea of using the guide wires to carry the power. This involved some tricky insulating sleeves to prevent a short, but I did eventually manage it. Power is supplied to the deck fittings on the base of the guide wires (see **Photo 5**), so the lamp was connected into the navigation lights circuit of the model (see **Photo 6**).

"Another out of the ordinary approach was taken with the ratlines…"

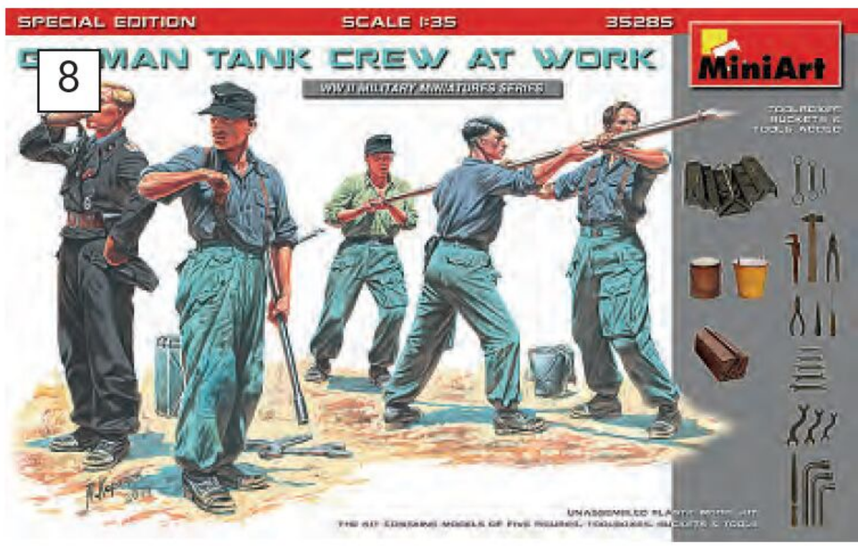


This was then used at the lamp to power the 12v grain of wheat lamp inside the oil lamp. Careful insulation and tricky soldering kept the two polarities apart.

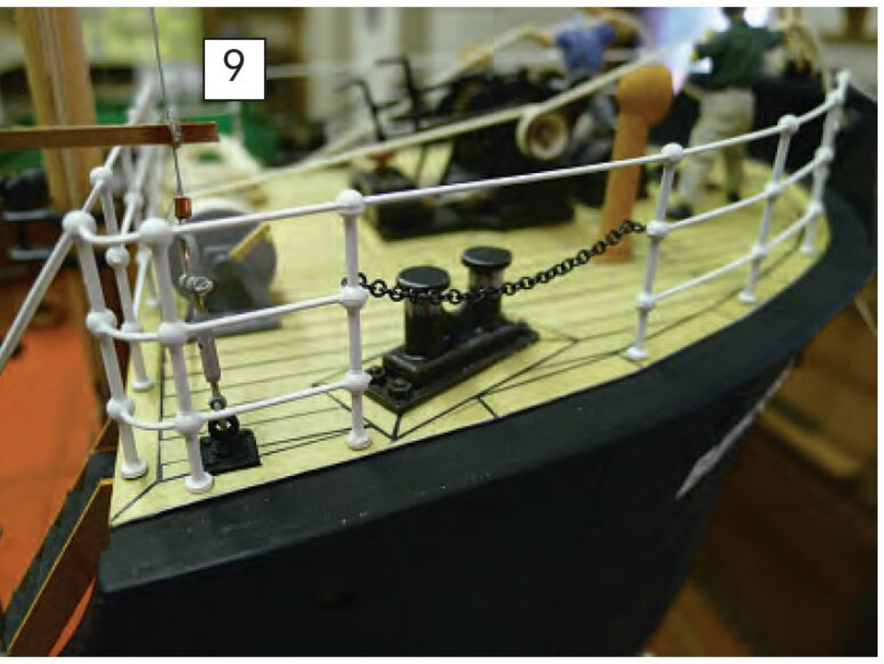
Another out of the ordinary approach was taken with the ratlines. I did have a nice period shot of the ship that showed she had ratlines only on the starboard side of the mast, along with a noticeable shroud spreader at deck level. I notice many ship models where ratlines have been added but, being of a light cord or cotton, invariably form their own very unrealistic 'S' shape. Ratlines in real life always sag under their own weight. I wanted to recreate that shape while maintaining the look of rope. After some experimentation I decided to use the same braided wire that the shrouds were made



To avoid the typical 'S' shaped ratlines, Richard decided to use soldered wire with a suitable scale sag. The ends were tied with fine scale 'rope' to hide the solder. The spreader was simply scored and bent to suit the shroud positions and tied to the shrouds.



A little imagination enabled Richard to see that these German Tiger tank crew figures, posed as if cleaning the gun, would be suited, once reattired, to mooring rope handling.



The brass handrails were built in place as a single unit and soft soldered together before removing for painting. The chain is to allow ropes to be passed out from the bollards.

of, but bent to form a curve, and soft soldered them in place. The ends were then bound with a similar diameter cord over the solder to create a knot (see **Photo 7**). This was then painted up in a buff colour to create a more realistic rope-looking sagging ratline. I must admit the jury is still out on this one, but I do think it looks a lot better than some of the heavily twisted ones I see.

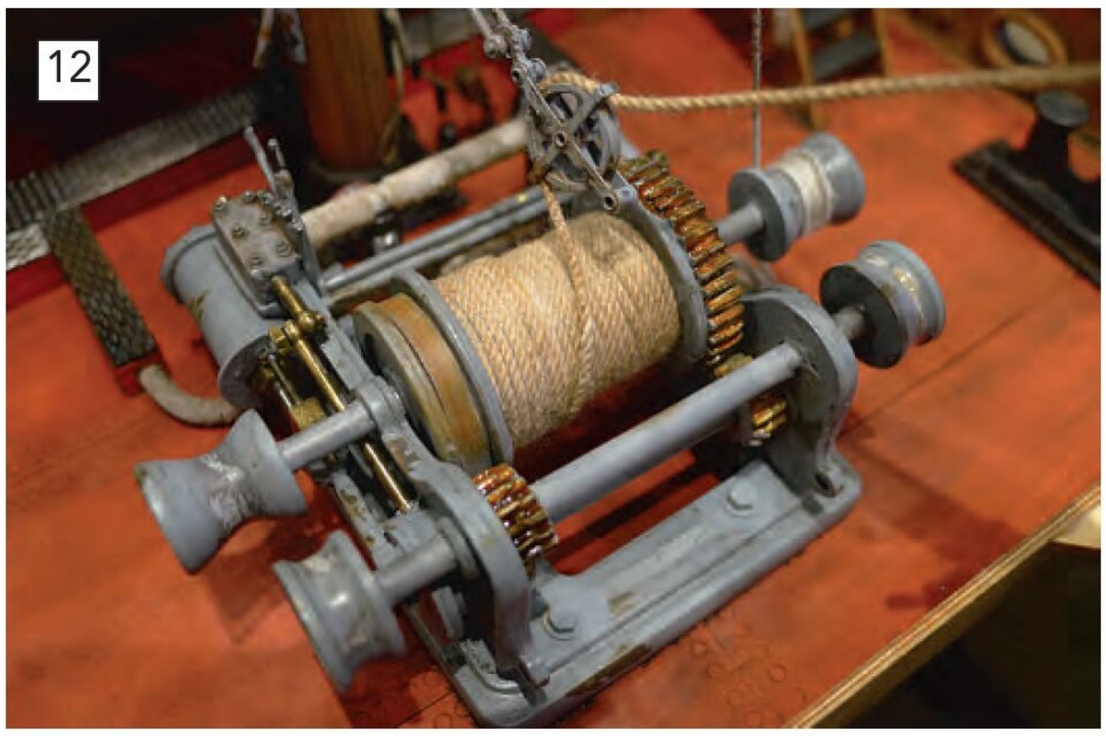
Finally, concentrating on the forecastle a bit more, probably the main additions were the two figures. These were repurposed German Tiger Tank crew figures posed as if engaged in rodding out the gun (see **Photo 8**). These were painted up in civilian clothing and their hands drilled out to enable ropes to be passed through. It was surprising how well the position for rodding through a tank barrel lent itself to pulling on mooring ropes! Other work on the forecastle included adding the rope reel and a drainage platform for the port side rope as well as the cabin stove vents, and replacing the kit supplied anchor chain with proper studded chain. The handrails were built in place by fitting brass two-hole stanchions, threading brass wire through them, and spot soldering every joint with soft solder. The handrails were then removed as a unit for painting, before refitting and gluing in place with very thin cyanoacrylate glue. A chain was fitted by way of the two deck bollards, which was a fairly typical arrangement to allow the mooring ropes to pass through (see **Photo 9**). Again, steam pipes were fitted – some covered by plated conduit, but where they were exposed**,** the copper pipe was lagged with string. Deck vents were also fitted in place and a light weathering wash was applied over all to tone down



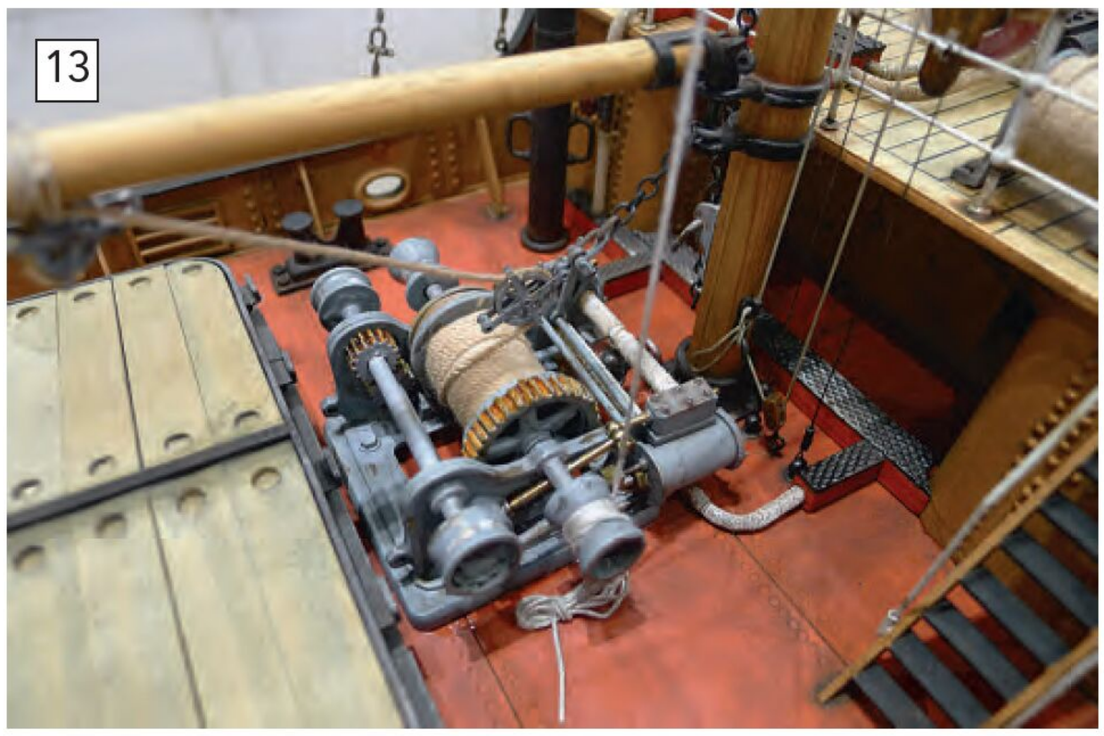
The forecastle just about done, with the figures, vents, mast shrouds, cabin stove exhausts, steam pipes and studded anchor chain all fitted. Note the foot worn chequer plate on top of the steam pipe conduit.



Richard replaced the forecastle bell with a real brass one. Just a very light weathering, involving nothing more than a wash and a faded and salt-stained life belt, finish the area off.



The cargo winch was upgraded with many modifications and detail additions. Carefully chipping/weathering made it look much more like the hard worked piece of machinery on the real vessel.



This enabled it to fit in much more appropriately with the busy area at the base of the mast. Steam pipes were laid appropriately, with exhaust lines added over the ship's side. Running rigging nicely brought all the components together.

colours and bring everything together. Proper scale studded anchor chain was weathered and fitted down the hawse pipes and to the chain locker, while mooring ropes were fitted with 'whipped' loops on the ends (see **Photo 10** and **Photo 11)**.

The cargo winch

I described how I put this item together in the June 2024 instalment of Boiler Room but, just to recap, the build incorporated quite a bit of extra detailing to the kit supplied item. This included a new base machined from aluminum, a number of metal components to improve on the cast items, and the addition of valve chests, valve actuating rods and steam pipes replaced with copper pipe lagged with string. A weathering job and more detailed handling and rigging gear also made for a more realistic unit. I decided to finish the winch with a different paint to that used on the anchor windlass, as in real life this was frequently done back in the days of very limited maintenance budgets. Paint from almost any source might be used to keep a piece of equipment protected, sometimes temporarily and sometimes more permanently, so an odd coloured item of deck equipment was not unusual (see **Photo 12** and **Photo 13**).

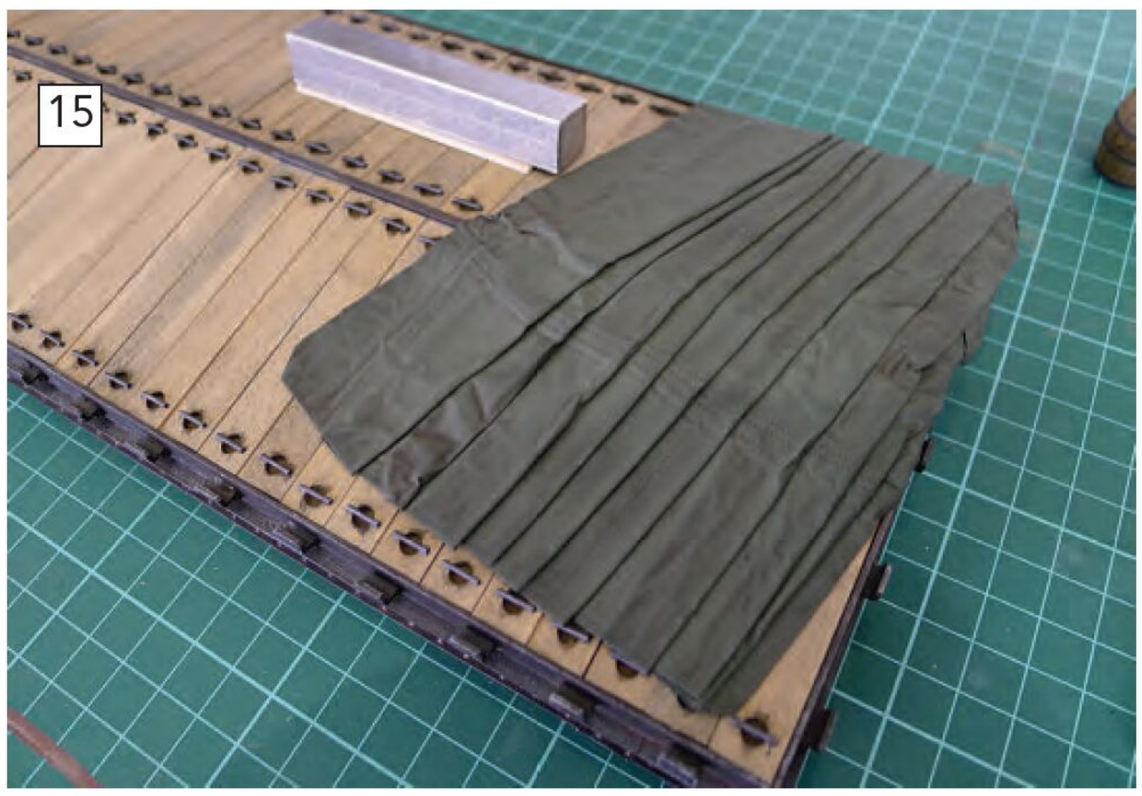
"I decided to finish the winch with a different paint to that used on the anchor windlass, as in real life this was frequently done back in the days of very limited maintenance budgets"

The hatch cover

As previously mentioned, the hatch boards were supplied in the kit as a pre-printed ply overlay, but I decided to replace this with wooden boards. While I had drilled the ends for handles, I still had to fit them. These were simply cut from short lengths of Evergreen round rod, glued in place to resemble a staple-type handle, and painted with a metallic enamel. I also wanted the deck clutter to include the hatch wedges and the metal plate strongbacks used to hold the canvas cover in place. These were scratch built (see **Photo 14**) and then displayed around the deck area as though ready to be refitted. The cover was made from heavy foil, which I scored with a pounce wheel to create stitched joints before applying a couple of coats of primer and painting to create a realistic looking canvas cover (see **Photo 15**). To further accessorise, I sat a few barrels on the hatch, waiting to be



When it comes to laborious and repetitious work, fitting the hatch board handles was only beaten by the rivet detail on the hull plating. The handles are Evergreen rod, spotted with cyanoacrylate gel. The wedges were hand cut from wood strip.



The hatch cover, made from foil air-conditioning tape, actually sat on Richard workbench for many years before finally getting folded, primed, painted and sat on the hatch ready to be fitted by the crew.



The finished hatch, complete with a deck cargo of barrels waiting to be stowed, a couple of hand tools and a coil of rope.



The final member of the Ben Ain crew waits with his wooden mallet to fit the canvas hatch cover. Of the eight crew fitted, two were original kit supplied items and six were repurposed plastic kit figures.



Exactly the same process as would normally be used to create a painted waterline was adopted to create the salt and barnacle-stained light load waterline and another intermediate one. Brushing on a very light grey pigment was enough to create the salt-stained effect.

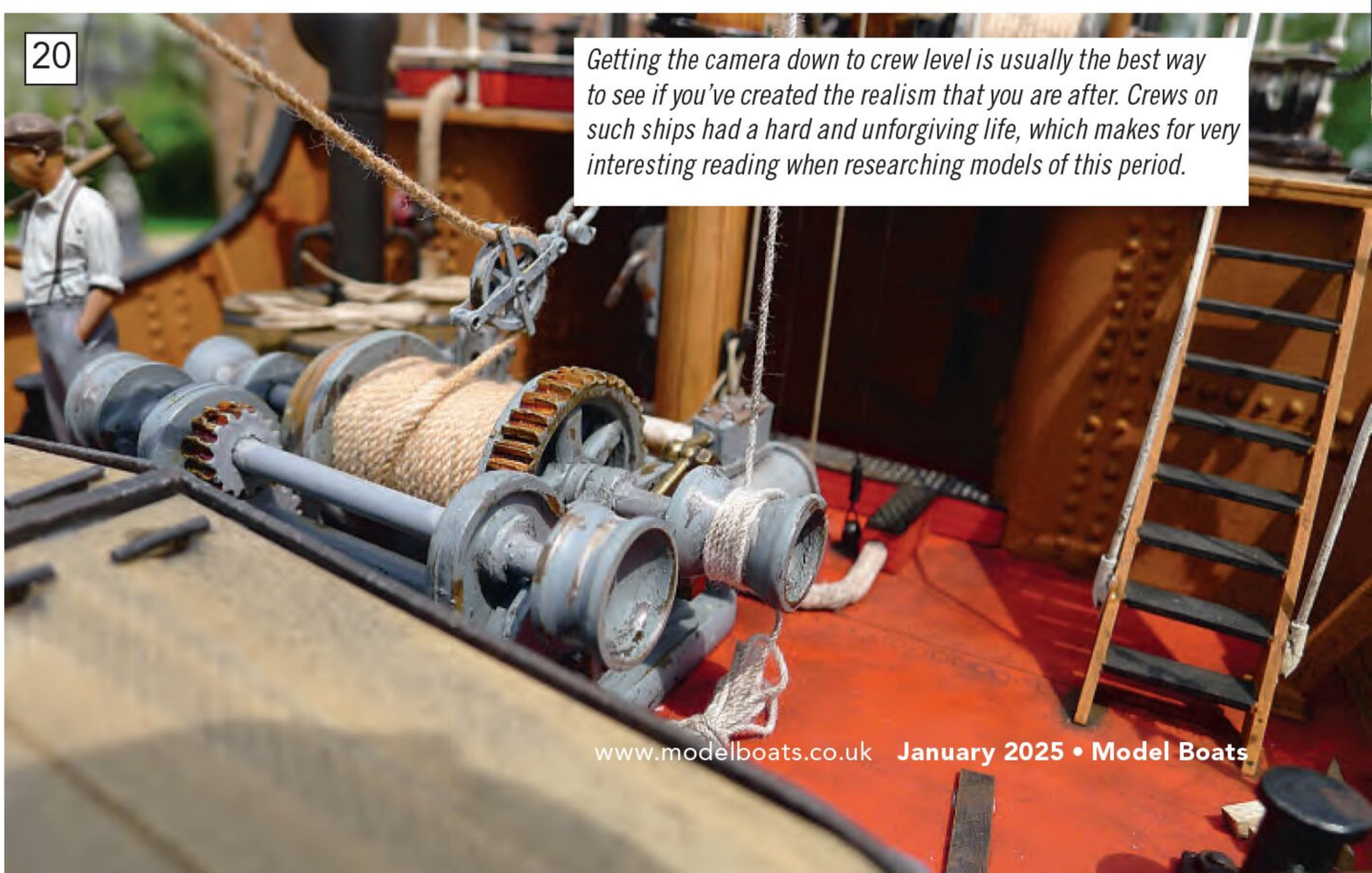


Richard always errs on the side of "not enough" rather than "too much" when it comes to weathering. Real life hulls of this period were usually in very poorly maintained condition, which would probably look unrealistic if attempts were made to reproduce the effect to scale.

stowed (a common practice in those days), and a figure with a shovel, just finishing clearing cargo spills from the deck and about to start the process of fitting the hatch cover (see **Photo 16**). Another figure, with a large wooden mallet, was added by the cargo winch, again waiting to start the process of fitting the cover (see **Photo 17**). This time the figures came from the model railway world; they were both formerly lineside workers!

Final paint

With all the bits and pieces of detailing added, the only remaining job was to give the hull a little weathering. Something I had observed in many period pictures of *Ben Ain* and other ships of the time was the noticeable salt shading at differing loaded water lines. These waterlines tend to be far more noticeable at the bow than the stern, where the draught changes more significantly under different loads. So, after an all over thinned down wash to enhance the plate detail, the ship was adjusted on the bench to an angle of a light load position and the water line was marked around the hull in pencil before masking. Below the masking tape, a very light dusting of a dark green acrylic paint was first gently wafted over the hull to give an impression of barnacles and weed. This was followed by the lower edge of the masking tape being brushed with a light grey pigment to create a salt stain at the waterline. I then repeated this at a different angle to give another loaded waterline



Getting the camera down to crew level is usually the best way to see if you've created the realism that you are after. Crews on such ships had a hard and unforgiving life, which makes for very interesting reading when researching models of this period.



Richard particularly likes models that he can simply enjoy looking at as he tries to imagine living and working on the real thing. It does take a lot of work, though, to recreate such an environment.



A lot of work to do and not much time to do it. Stow and lash the deck cargo, pull the hatch cover in place, fit all the straps and wooden wedges, then put everything away – and all with the captain shouting down at you from the bridge.



Here, a nice spot of sun brings out the colours, textures and finishes that helped Richard achieve the realism he wanted.



On top of the nice warm engine room casing, the cook continues to distract the seaman as he tries to get the damaged mooring line repaired.



A couple of stern mooring lines were added by whipping the ends into a loop and lightly staining them with a heavily thinned brown wash to knock back the bright light colour.

stain (see **Photo 18**). Finally, the hull was given a few rust stains with oil paints, which I dragged down the hull with thinners, before additional salt stains were added to tone everything down. I didn't go all out here, as while period photos clearly show that sometimes the hulls were in quite a grubby state, I didn't want the effect on my model to look over done (see **Photo 19**).

"The resulting model taught me two very important lessons…"

Conclusions

The resulting model taught me two very important lessons…

Firstly, while initial calculations proved correct and she finally sat in the water at the appropriate fully loaded water line, this proved to be way too deep for a model. The additional weight made it extremely difficult to manage/move the model around, and with the freeboard being so low there was a very real risk of too much water on the deck making her unstable. She would therefore only be suitable to use in flat calm conditions, which is a little restrictive.

Secondly, I had allowed my love of creating detail to take over and had therefore ended up with something significantly more delicate than ideal in an operational model. The rigging in particular is very fragile, and simply touching the top of the mast would almost certainly damage many shrouds.

It was, therefore, easy to see that I had a model that would almost certainly be damaged if used, as well as being difficult in terms of restricted access. Having said that, I will be more than happy to enjoy looking at it in the glass case I now intend to put it in, and I plan to somehow get power to the lights so they can be operated from outside the case. I have plenty of more robust models I can enjoy operating, and the *Ben Ain* has served its purpose of giving me many hundreds of hours of modelling enjoyment. Ahead of encasing the model, I've taken plenty of photographs, particularly from low angles to see just how well I did in creating the working atmosphere of an Irish Steam Coaster from the early 20th Century, and I think I've been more successful in that aspect (see **Photos 20**, **21**, **22**, **23, 24** and **25**). ●

DAVES CHRISTMAS STEAM-UP, PART 2

Dave Wiggins continues his festive foray into the world of vintage marine steam

This month we will continue my rare foray into the world of steam – vintage and collectable marine steam, that is – examining items that could well have been bought as Christmas presents back in the dim and distant past. And, readers, what a dream gift this month's exciting item would have made for a mid 1950s' model-minded schoolboy!

"What a dream gift this month's exciting item would have made for a mid 1950s' model-minded schoolboy!"

A Stuart Turner 'ST' marine plant restored

Back in the day, this could be purchased either as a complete ready-to-run marine steam plant or as an engine only. I did own one of the baby engines once



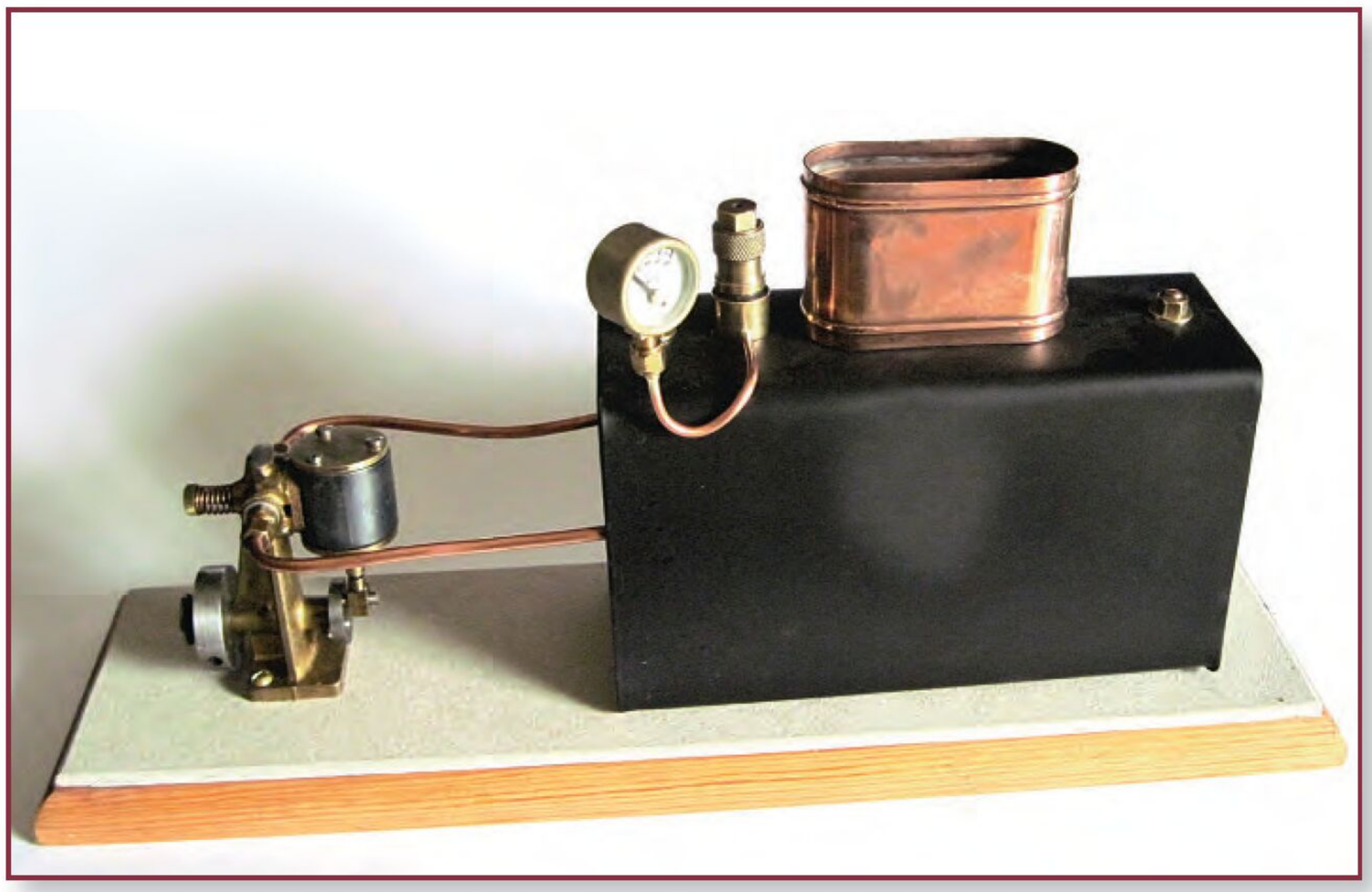
The unit as it came – looking a bit tired.

(many years ago), so know full well how limited in power and usefulness they are to a serious model steam boater. Really, the maximum size boat for such a small thing is about 24-inches, and the only model I've ever seen one of these plants actually mounted in was Stuart's own little 'Henley' steamboat. This was exhibited at a London Model Engineering show some years back, and a pretty little thing it was indeed, but it was, as I recall, offered at a quite extraordinary four figure sum by Stuart Models. Recent enquiries lodged with the firm have revealed that neither the boat nor plans for same are still available today.

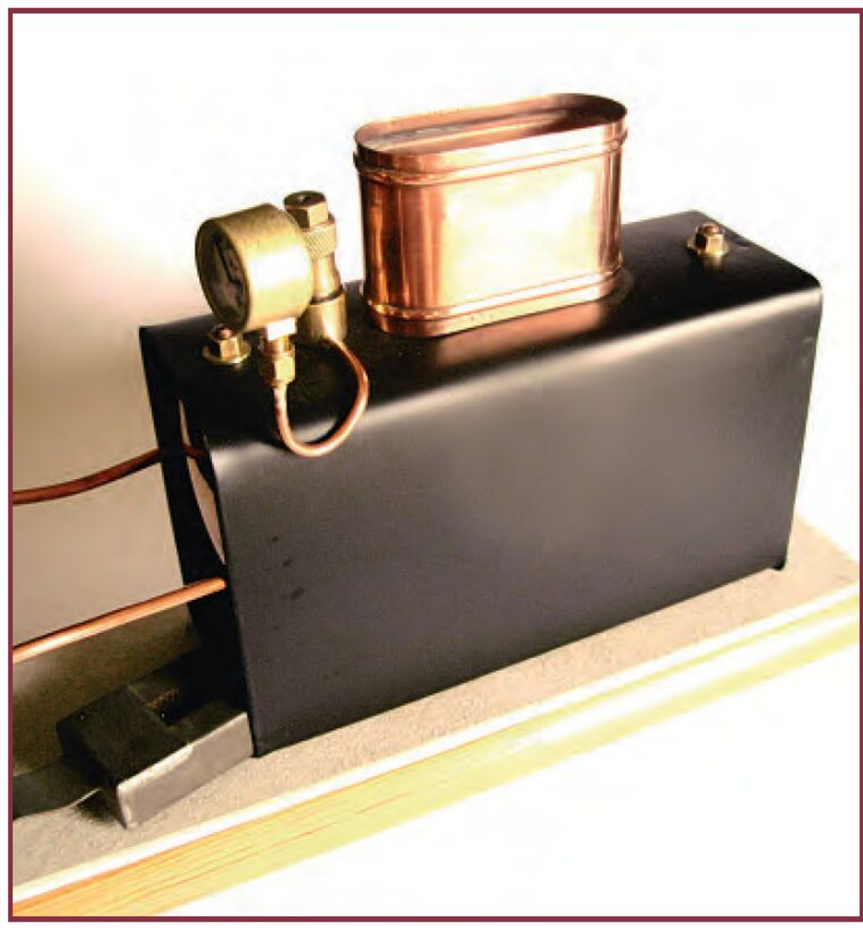
That said, there is some nice vintage data on the Henley to be found on the internet, including pictures and dimensions, if one cares to simply Google 'Stuart-Turner Henley model boat' – and a genuine, and rare, example recently featured in Model Boats. A replica Henley shouldn't be all that difficult to build using this information. In fact, I just might 'have



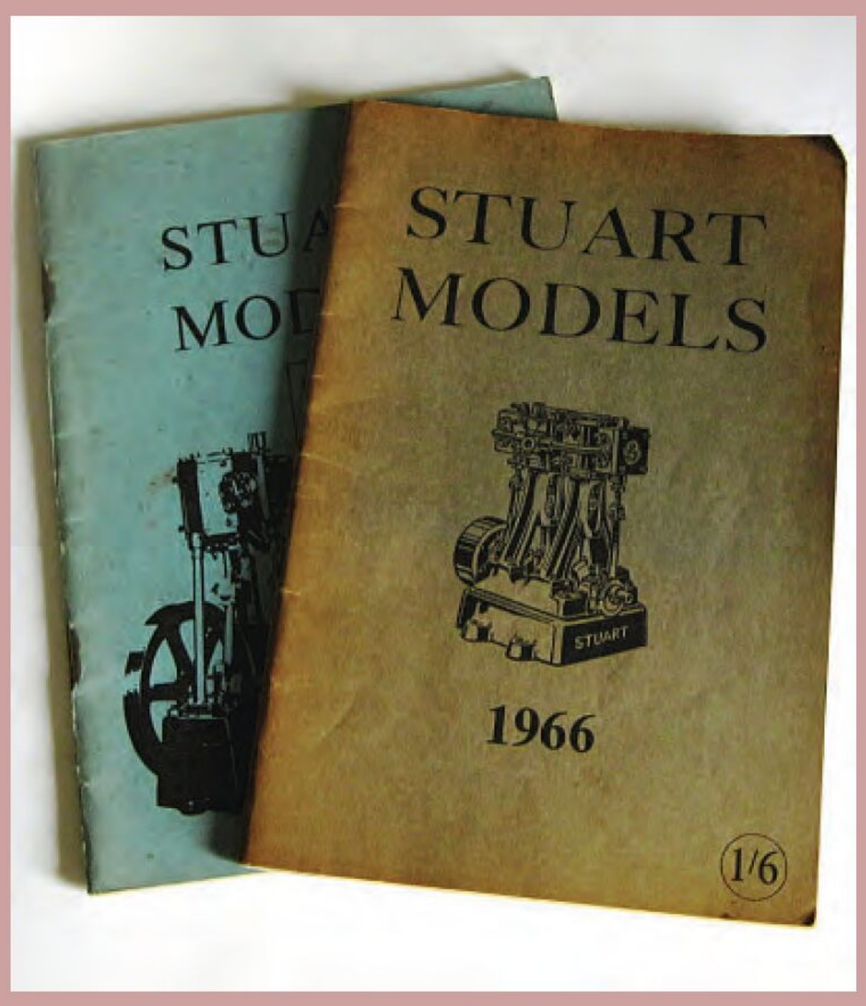
Burners ancient and modern – the latter being a 'Mamod' product.



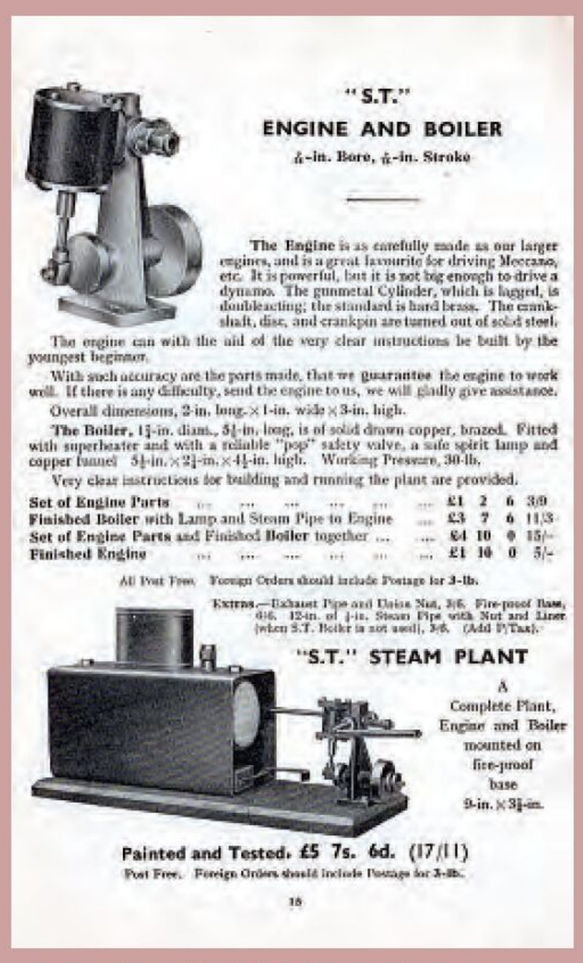
Dave's completely restored Stuart Turner 'ST' marine steam plant.



A view of the boiler casing, complete with original meths burner.



A brace of Stuart catalogues from my Dave's own model library.

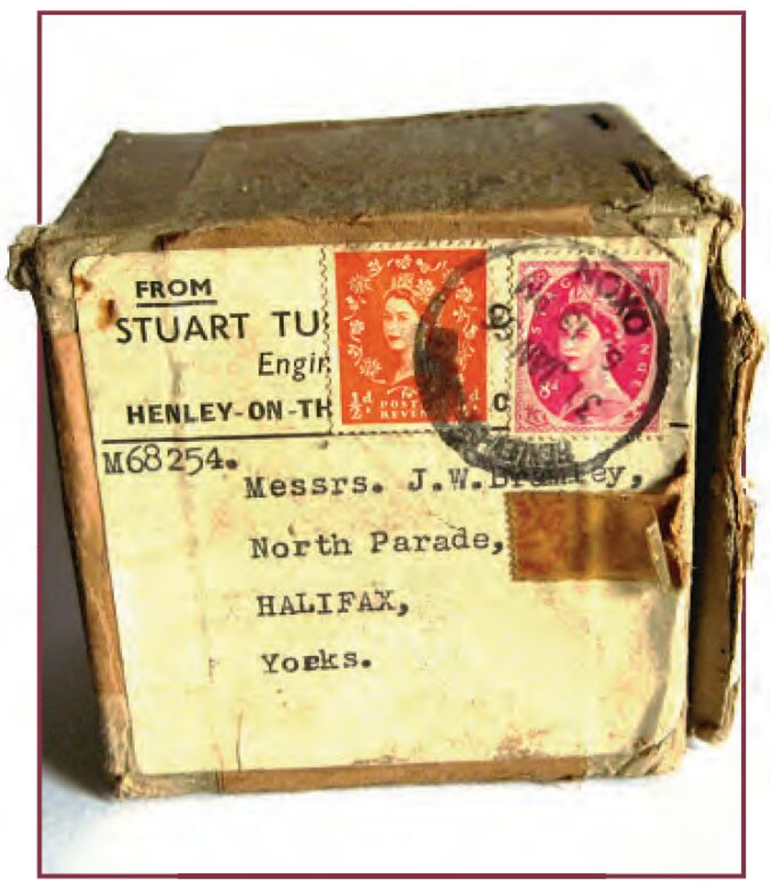


A page from the 1966 issue, showing our 'ST' plant

a bash' myself one of these fine days, as, being small and flat-bottomed, I reckon it shouldn't take too much skill or effort, and the end result would be very attractive indeed. After all, schoolboys of the '50s made such hulls routinely in their carpentry lessons, so how hard could it be?

Examination time

An examination of this little marine plant reveals some surprises, in that although this was the firm's least complex and least expensive entrée into the post-war model steam hobby it was of good quality throughout. Indeed, some more recent steam producers would do well to emulate the decent construction standards of the simple little copper boiler and brass engine – our example being one made in the mid 1950s.



A piece of this model's history – the Stuart Turner box for the engine, dated 1955.

"An examination of this little marine plant reveals some surprises…"

The boiler is little more than a copper 'pot' with double copper water-tubes suspended underneath and a simple super heater (more a steam dryer) in the steam feed to the engine. The only criticism one might make is the total lack of any lubrication for the rather nice 7/16-inch bore and stroke single cylinder oscillating engine – it really would have cost the manufacturer next to nothing to insert a small displacement lubricator in the steam feed pipe, but it didn't bother. Noting my 'pro' comments on steam stop cocks last month, there is none fitted here of course. That said, and in fairness, in an oscillator excess steam is easily and automatically vented by the lifting of the cylinder against the spring should excess pressure build up. All the same, one inserted in the steam pipe (perhaps with a small displacement lubricator as advised) would be a good idea. The engines exhaust is prettily vented up and into the polished copper 'launch' style funnel. It's all very 1930s really – a lovely little thing!

The steam pressure gauge seen on my example was never fitted by Stuarts. This was added at my request by Clevedon Steam in Cornwall while my plant was in this company's workshop for a thorough, professional, restoration.

Going way back to the 1930s, lots of books aimed at schoolboys showed plans for very simple DIY model boats meant for single cylinder oscillators like this in their pages, and I have one myself called the *Scootalong* somewhere. Commercial British makers of such craft included, amongst many others, Bassett Lowke, Hobbies, and Bowman. Fanciful pictures often used in period advertising inevitably show such craft racing along at speeds way in excess of reality.

By myself, and by Jerry down in Cornwall…

My own example, pictured both before and after overhaul, was purchased from an ad in our very own magazine, as recently as late 2023, and I was pleased indeed to get it. As you can see, it needed a fair bit of 'TLC' (rust removal, new pipe work, *etc*), as it had been in storage and unused for many years. The baseboard was missing, but that was probably a good thing as it was described by Stuarts as 'fireproof', which almost certainly meant asbestos in c.1955. I was fortunate indeed in persuading Clevedon Steam to take on the total restoration of my unit, and a lovely job Jerry has done of it too, making a replacement baseboard and fitting a pressure gauge while testing the old boiler and bench testing the plant. The plant is now fired by a modern Mamod tray that takes the easily obtained Mamod solid fuel tablets, this being a much safer option than Stuart's old liquid spirit burner in our joint opinion.

The nature of business enjoyed by these two famous British firms was quite different. Stuarts was a very marine-focussed concern, supplying engines to full size steam boaters as well as to model boat and engine builders, whereas the main business of Bassett Lowke Ltd (featured last month) was rooted in model railways, up to and including passenger hauling lines for very wealthy landowners, and in wonderful ship models for the offices of the major shipping lines. I own just one Bassett Lowke boat myself, and that is an *Iolanthe II* electric motorboat, aimed at a similar customer base to the well-known steam-powered *Streamlinia – i.e.*, boys with rather wealthy parents!

Feb's R/C retrospective

Next month I'll be returning to more familiar Memory Lane territory, with a look at making a beginning in R/C back in 1960 or so. Until then, enjoy opening your (vintage!) Christmas gifts! ●

Your Models

Whether you're highly skilled and experienced or completely new to the hobby, you're definitely invited to this launch party! So please keep the contributions coming by emailing your stories and photos to **editor@modelboats.co.uk**

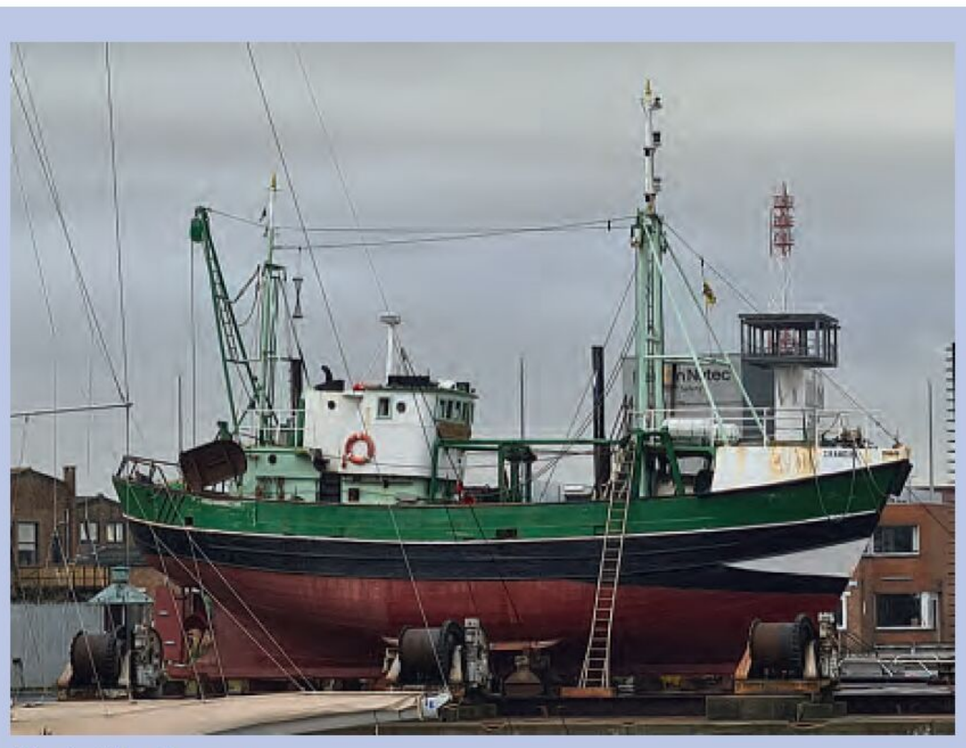
De Crangon

De *Crangon* (the Latin name for gray shrimp) was the last wooden vessel built in Belgium (1964). Originally named *Eldorado* and carrying registration number Z 582, she fished not far from the Flemish coast for round and flat fish or for lobsters and shrimp. Fortunately saved from being scrapped, she is now, following a complete restoration, preserved as part of Belgium's proud sailing heritage. Moored in Ostend, she is today mainly used to accommodate tourists and show how the shrimps were once caught in an authentic way. The vessel is still equipped with the original gear for plank fishing, where





Just look at how beautifully the model measures up against the real vessel in these harbour-side shots!





The 1 :1 De Crangon.







Dirk's superb 1 :100 scale model.

the shearing boards pull the net open thanks to the speed of sailing. Once the catch has been hauled aboard, the shrimps are then sorted, cooked and peeled, so the participating tourists can both taste them and/or take them home for tea!

I modelled this vessel to 1:100 scale, resulting in an overall length of just 29cm – so, very small, but no less work! The hull and some of the parts came from the Dutch kit for *Artitec,* but the rest of the model was completely self-built working from numerous photos and dimensions taken from the 1:1 boat.

DIRK BONNE
BELGIUM

Wow, Dirk – take a bow! You've done an outstanding job of capturing this vessel in miniature. Ed.

Restored and modified Board Shark surfer

Radio-controlled surfers were first introduced in North America in the 1990s by Echo and Radio Shack and were very toy-like and operated at 27MHz. In 1999 Kyosho America released the 1:5 scale R/C Surfer which formed the design standard for R/C surfers for the next 25 years. Kyosho released the R/C Surfer 3 'Lost' in 2016 and R/C Surfer 4 'Catch Surf' in 2022.
In 2008 Planet Toy's 'Board Shark' took the R/C surfer to a new level by making the surfer move in conjunction with the rudder while still utilising a 27MHz radio. However, the design involved a complex motor/gear drive for the surfer and rudder movement. The gear assembly was plagued with failures, caused in part by the plastic gears and the on/off non proportional function of the radio. Production ceased in 2009.

I already have two Kyosho R/C Surfers, one refurbished after it exploded, and its replacement purchased from Kyosho under warranty. I was intrigued with the Planet Toy 'Board Shark' and its animated surfer dude and felt I could redesign/modify the gear drive as reported on various R/C websites.

I was able to purchase a used 'Board Shark' locally off Market Place for $35 CDN, although its gear assembly was faulty, and the antennae was missing from the transmitter. After several attempts to repair the gear assembly I realised the original design was faulty and needed to be scrapped for something better. In addition, the supplied R/C components were outdated and needed to be replaced by a 2.4Ghz proportional setup.

I removed all the electronics and gear assembly and retained the original motor with cooling coil, prop shaft, propeller, coupling and rudder. I dismantled the gear assembly and retained the hex drive gear axle for reuse. The upper gear assembly cover was used for the design and 3D-printing of a new cover (see **Photo 1**), which would provide a bearing surface for the hex drive. I drilled out a surplus servo horn to fit over the hex drive and then CA glued it to the spur gear/hex drive.

The bottom cover of the gear assembly was modified to make clearance for the servo horn while still retaining the lower mounting hole for the hex drive and mounting holes for the new upper cover (see **Photo 2**). The bottom and top covers were then screwed together utilisng the remaining two screw holes. This assembly was then mounted in the hull using the three mounting pedestals in the hull. Thin CA glue was applied to the lower cover where it contacted the hull.

I mounted a steering servo where the original electronics had been mounted and ran the servo rod more to the centre of the hull. This allowed for the hex drive horn and rudder horn to be activated at the same time, thus making the surfer move in conjunction with the rudder (see **Photo 3**). The on/off switch was removed to make room for the servo, and the button glued back in place to seal the hull.



"Let's go surfin' now, everybody's learning how..."
— Geoff's super cool R/C surfer collection.







The original electronics were replaced with the following:

- Kyosho transmitter, Syncro KT-231P
- Kyosho receiver, Syncro KR-331
- Kyosho brushed ESC, KSH KA060-91W 60amp with Deans connector
- Kyosho servo, Perfex KS4031-06W

A 3mm x 4" long tube was installed in the original antennae hole in the access cover. This would accommodate the 2.4GHz receiver

antennae, as well as provide a vent to prevent an explosion due to heat buildup in the hull.

I replaced the hardened plastic control lines which controlled the rotation of the surfer with 6lb test monofilament fishing line. This virtually disappears when viewed and is very flexible.

To complete the refurbishment the hull was thoroughly cleaned and polished with Meguiar's PlastX plastic cleaner. I peeled off the aging red tape sealing the hull split line and degreased the area with rubbing alcohol. A new stripe of blue automotive pin stripe tape was then applied to seal the hull split line.

The refurbished and re-engineered Board Shark joins my other two surfers Dude and Dudette ready to surf the waves!

GEOFF FAIRFAX
EMAIL

These look so much fun. Thanks so much, Geoff! Ed.

Soviet superstructure from scratch

I thought I would share this some pictures of a boat I recently built. I bought the hull second hand off eBay but made all of the superstructure from scratch, referring to pictures of World War II boats for guidance.

Most of the plastic for the model came from shop display stands I retrieved from a bin. Other details on the boat were fashioned from playdough tubs, pen lids, plumbing parts, parts from old switches and light fittings, spice jars, plastic rings from fizzy drink bottles, etc. For example, I used the safety guards from disposable razors for window covers. The guns were built from plastic tubes stripped from devises for giving children mediation, with a plastic bubble blower attached. Women's nail accessories provided the rivets.

Following the application of a good undercoat, everything was spray painted grey. I then spent the next few weeks weathering, as I wanted the boat to look suitably rusty and worn.



Creative and resourceful work on the superstructure in progress.



Getting down and dirty to wonderful effect !

JAMES COXALL
EMAIL

I love how creative you've been with materials here, James. The finished model looks absolutely amazing, not least because of the excellent job you've made of the weathering. Ed.



On pond patrol.

Farley Tarpon boat

The Fred Farley & Son model boat building company was set up by my great uncle and his son back in 1915 and operated around Port Aransas, Texas, area through until the 1970s, so I thought I would share this Farley Tarpon boat model I built with you. It was constructed from the same materials (white oak frames and cypress planks) used on the real vessels. It is now on display at the Farley Boat Works annex of the Port Aransas Museum, along with one of the last of the 1:1 boats to have survived the many storms.



In this shot from Keith Farley's family album, Franklin D. Roosevelt is seen seated to the rear of the boat with his rod during a fishing trip in May 1937.



Keith's Tarpon Boat (named Mary Jean, for his wife, Mary, and his mother, Dorothy Jean) model, now on display at the museum in Port Aransas, Texas.

Back in 1937, two of these boats were used to take Franklin D. Roosevelt fishing. One was crewed entirely by Farleys – the boatman being my cousin Don and the guide being my grandfather, Barney Snr. The second belonged to Teddy Mathews. A third accompanying boat was a 1935 Chris Craft owned by Ed Tarrant. This is one of the many fascinating stories that will be included in a presentation I will be giving at the museum in January 2025.

KEITH FARLEY
EMAIL

What a fabulous tribute to your family's history, Keith. Thanks for *sharing! Ed.*

Your Letters

Got views to air or information to share? Then we want to hear from you!

Letters can either be forwarded via email to **editor@modelboats.co.uk** or via post to **Readers' Letters, Mortons Media Group, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6JR**

Transmitter feedback

I really enjoy reading Model Boats, as personally I find it far more interesting than its German counterpart. What caught my eye in the December 2024 issue was the request for 'transmitter advice' on the Your Letters pages. The transmitter illustrated looks very similar to a remote control that was sold in Germany as FM-SS-PROFI 7/14 by a company called Conrad Electronic. The manual is copyright 1985, and, yes, that's probably about the time I got that remote (my first). The company is still around and can be found online at www.conrad.com, although I don't think it still has the remote available. Unfortunately, I can' t send pictures of the manual, due to the copyright on it.

ANDREAS BREUEL
EMAIL

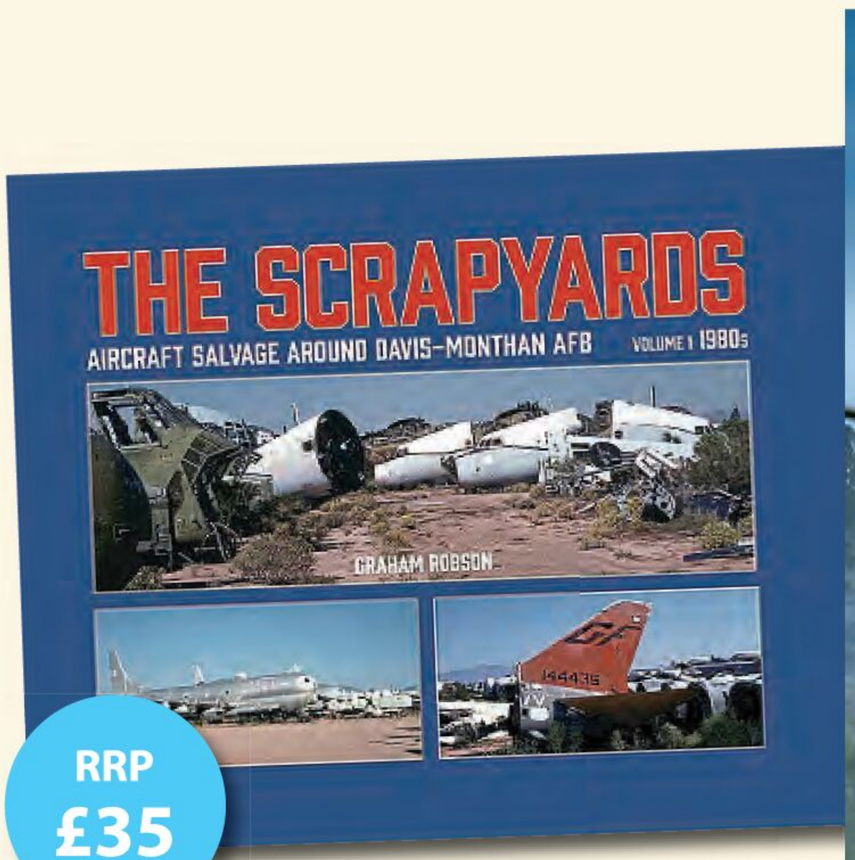
Thanks for your very kind comments about the mag, and for this really interesting feedback, Andreas. I love that we can always count on MB readers to come up with the answers! Ed.



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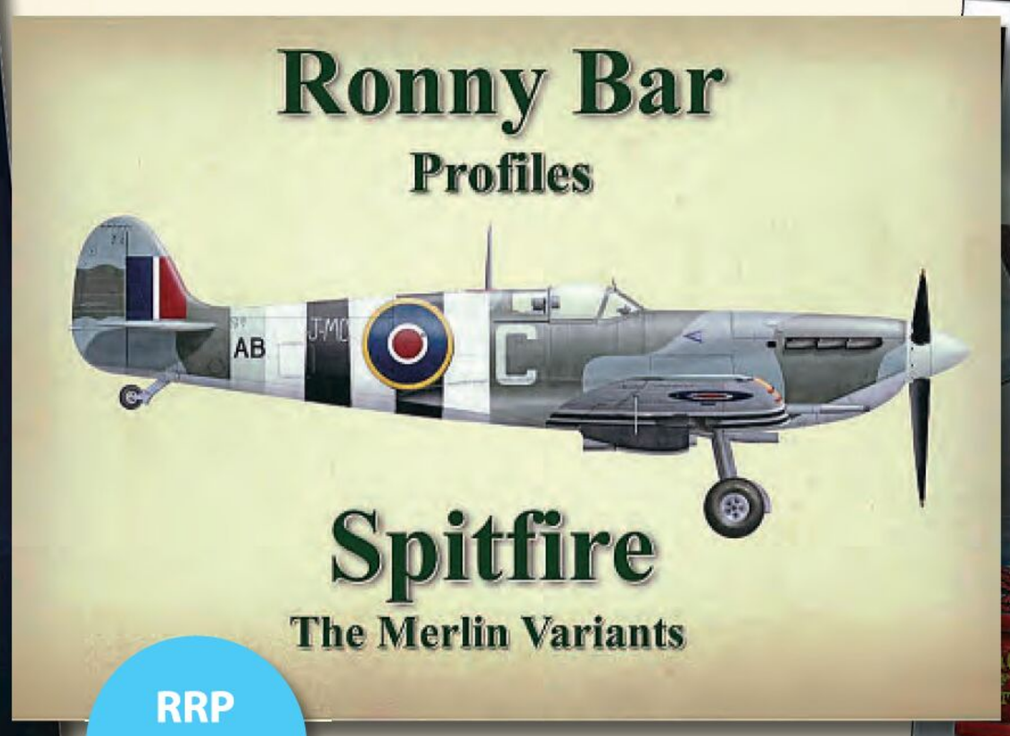
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We report back from the 2024 show in Telford

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Converting a plastic coastal tanker kit into a super little 'sea-going' model

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PLUS A thematically varied selection of feature-length articles, all your favourite regular pages – including Your Models, Your *Letters, news, reviews – and lots more* *(Please note: content may be subject to change)*

You will find more about the exciting content coming next, features of particular interest you may have missed in past editions and details of the very latest subscription offers on our website at www.modelboats.co.uk

You can, of course, order you copy of the February 2025 issue, which goes on sale at all good newsagents from Friday, January 24, 2025, now, but why not treat yourself to an annual subscription, as monthly copies will then be delivered directly to your door.

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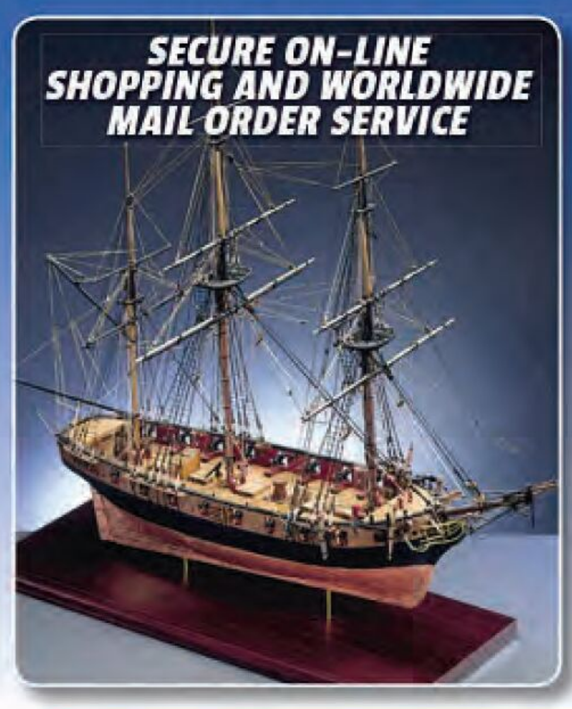
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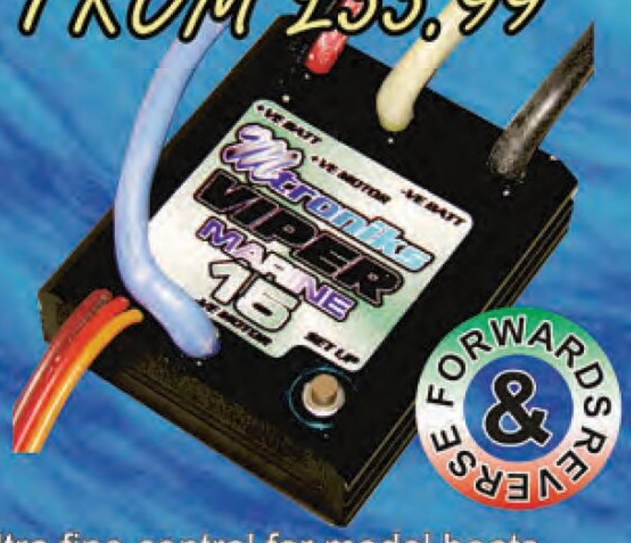


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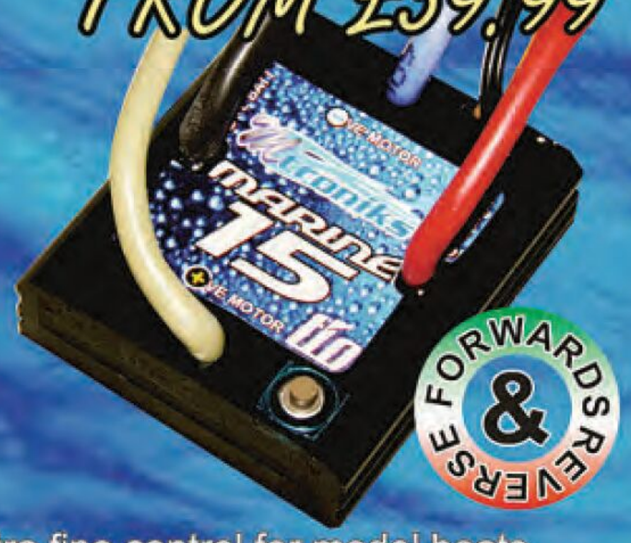
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28

24

500

400

300

1

2

FOREDECK

LITHOPLATE
DEVELOPED SHAPE

INVERTED

LEVEL OF BUILDING BOARD

20

16

3

4

5

K - GREEN

9m

9m

16

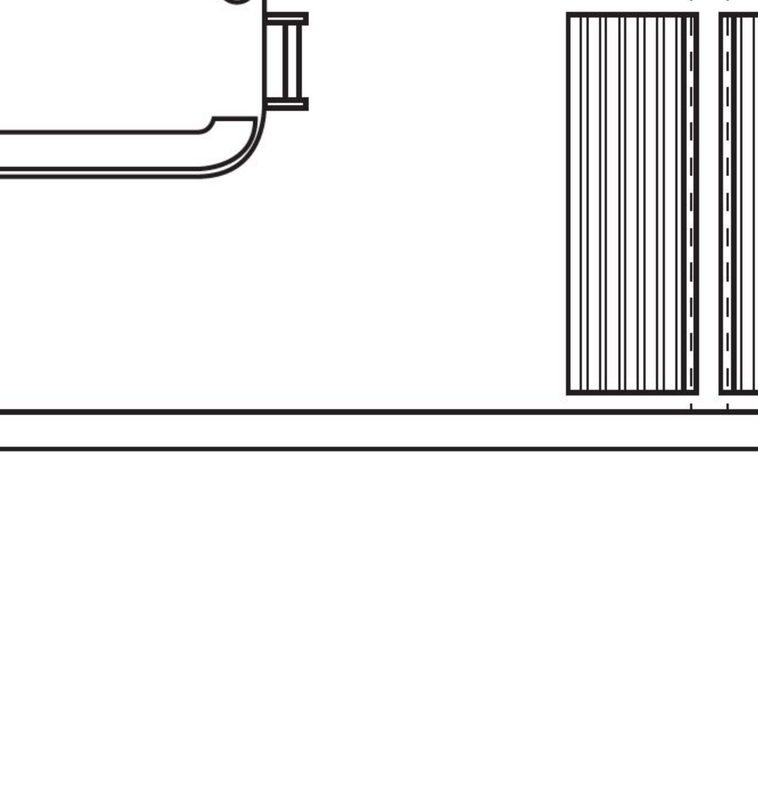
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5

6

7

DECK - LIGHT



BENCH SEATING FROM
CORROUGATED PLASTICARD & STRIP
23 REQ;D

10

Model Boats

OLDENBERG

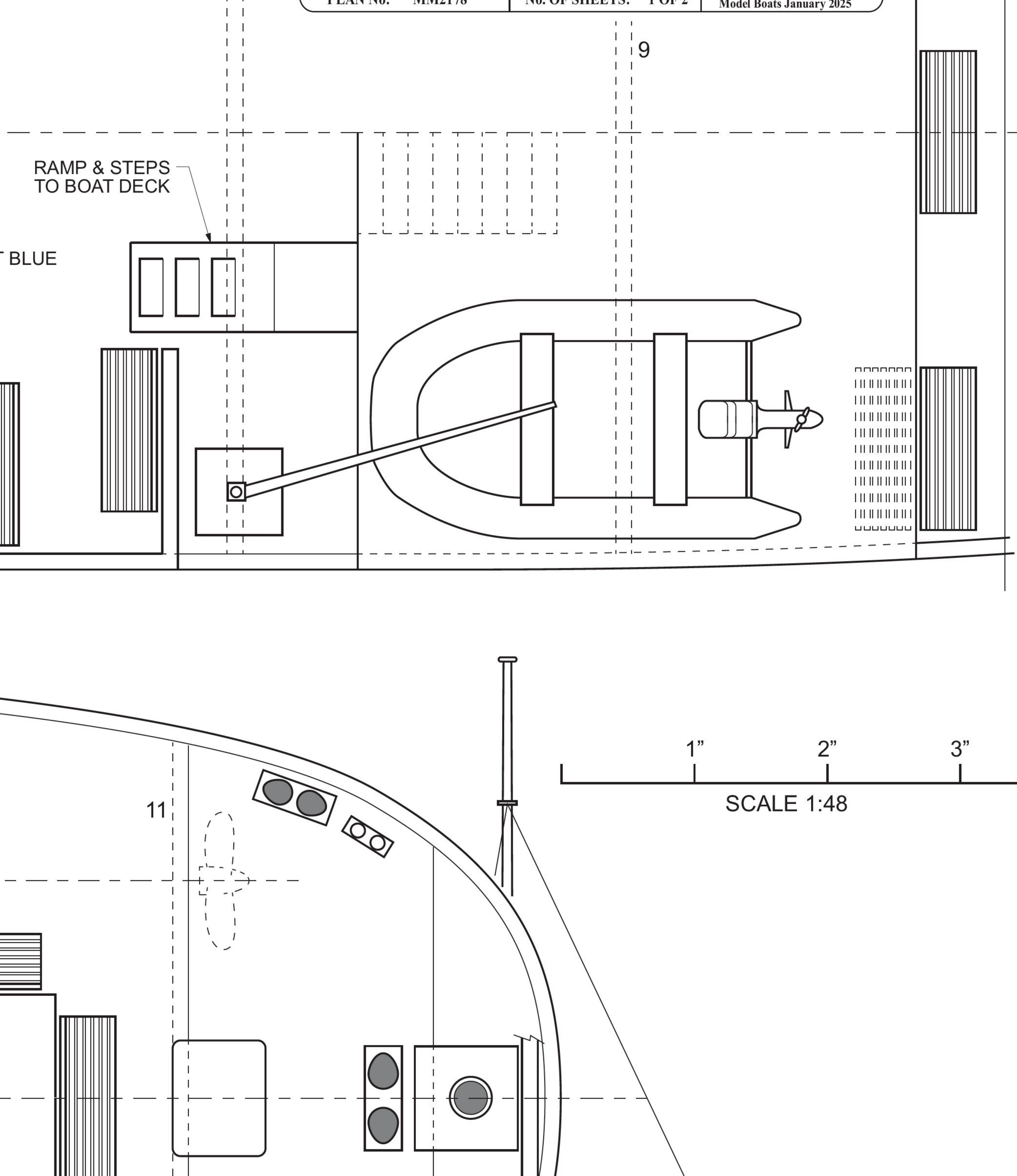
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PLAN No: MM2178	No. OF SHEETS: 1 OF 2	First published in Model Boats January 2025

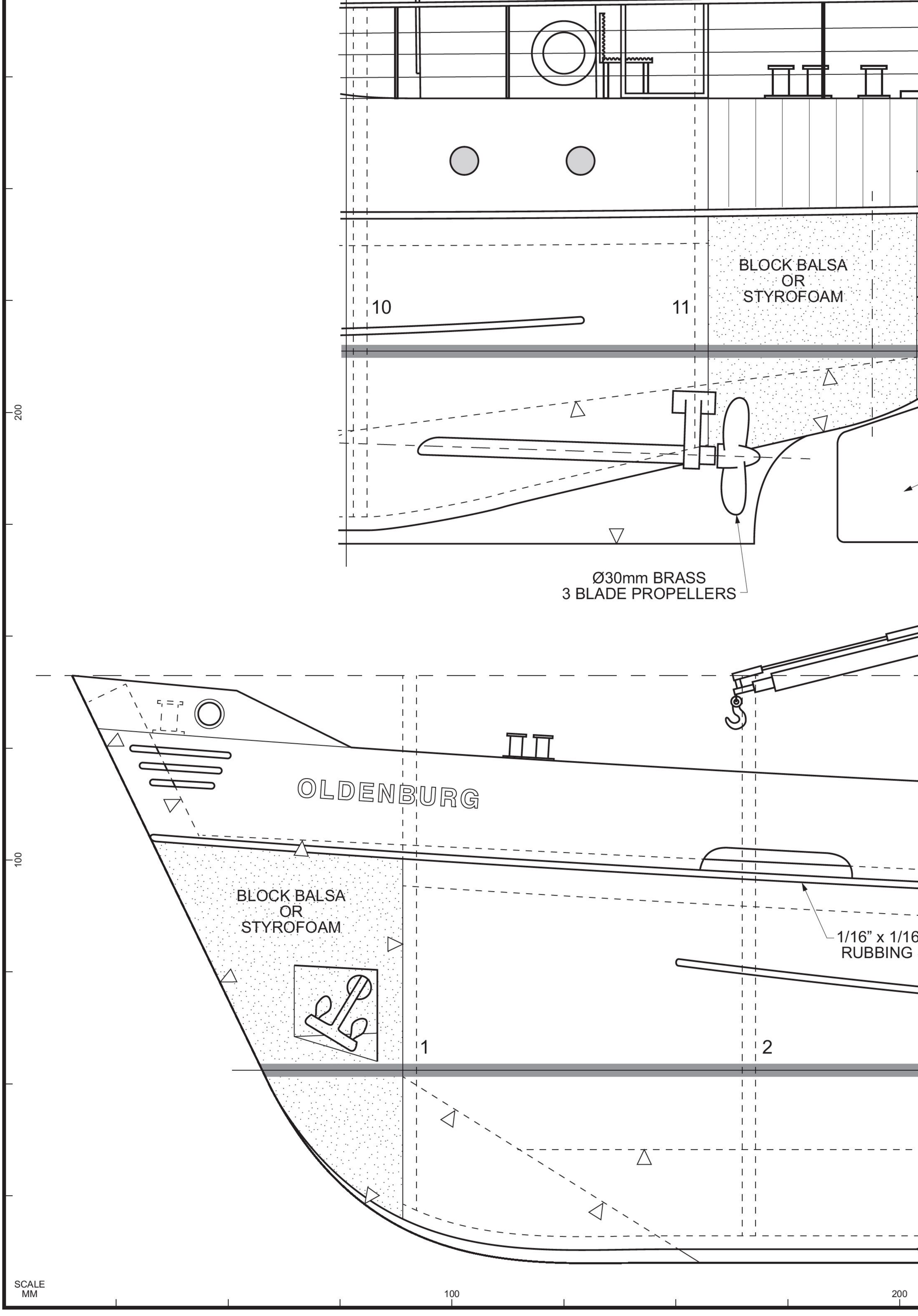
SCALE INCHES

RAMP & STEPS TO BOAT DECK

BLUE



SCALE 1:48


BLOCK BALSA
OR
STYROFOAM
10
11
Ø30mm BRASS
3 BLADE PROPELLERS
OLDENBURG
BLOCK BALSA
OR
STYROFOAM
1/16” x 1/16
RUBBING
1
2
SCALE
MM
100
200

9m

TWIN BRASS
RUDDERS

TMC BS300M

" OBECHE
STRAKES

3

4

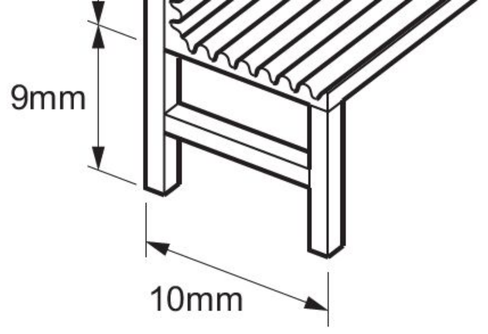
5

1/8" BALSA PLANKING
GLASS-CLOTHED

1/4" PLYWOOD KEEL TO △

300

400



BENCH SEATING FROM
CORROUGATED PLASTICARD & STRIP
23 REQ;D

DECK
NOTE:
REPL
STEE
REC

1/4” x 1/8” OBECHE

5

6

7

L TO △

400

500

- LIGHT BLUE
TIMBER DECK
LACED WITH
EL DURING A
CENT REFIT

10" STERN TUBES

8

9

10

12

16

20

600

700

28

24

500

400

300

1

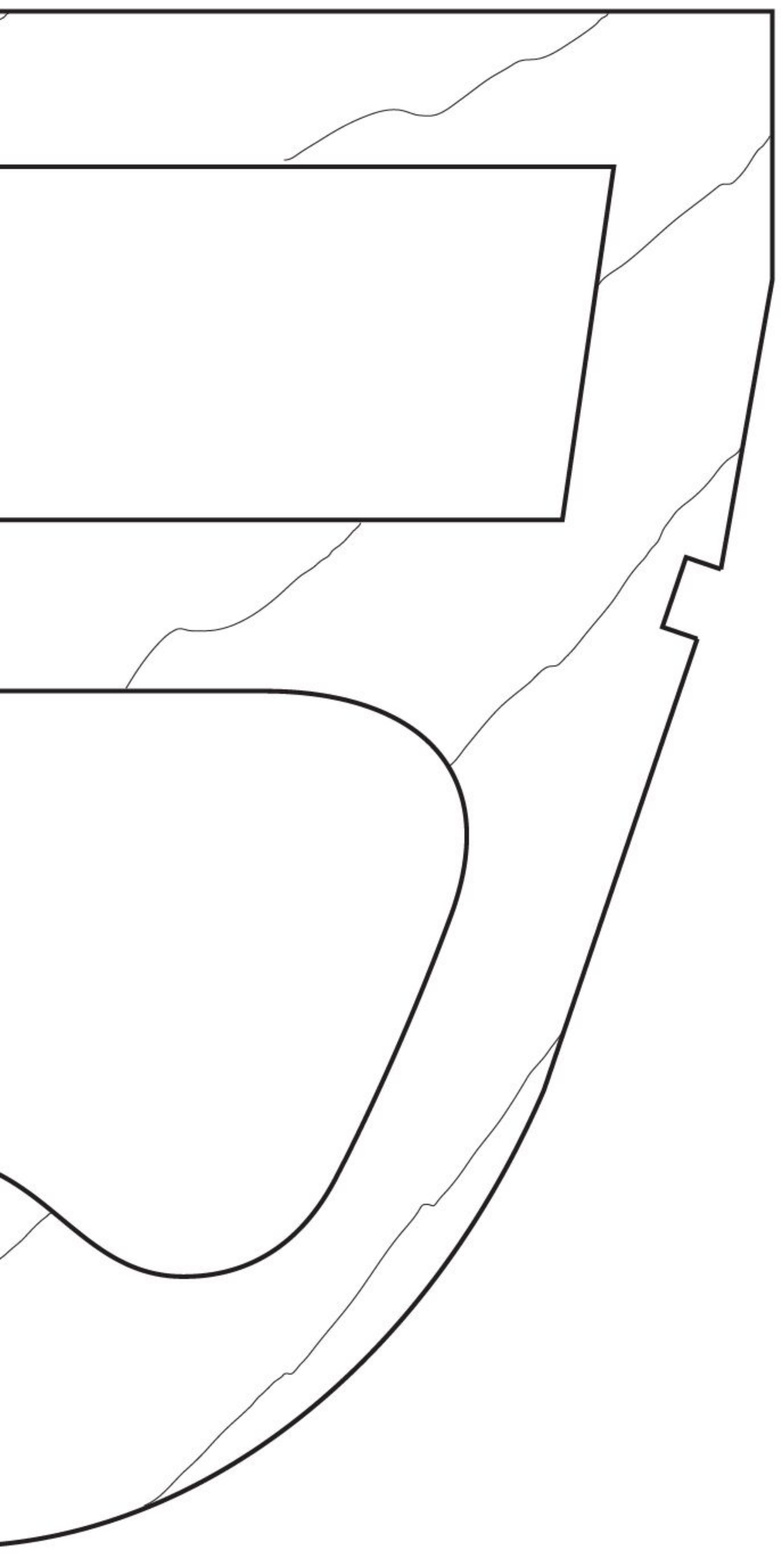
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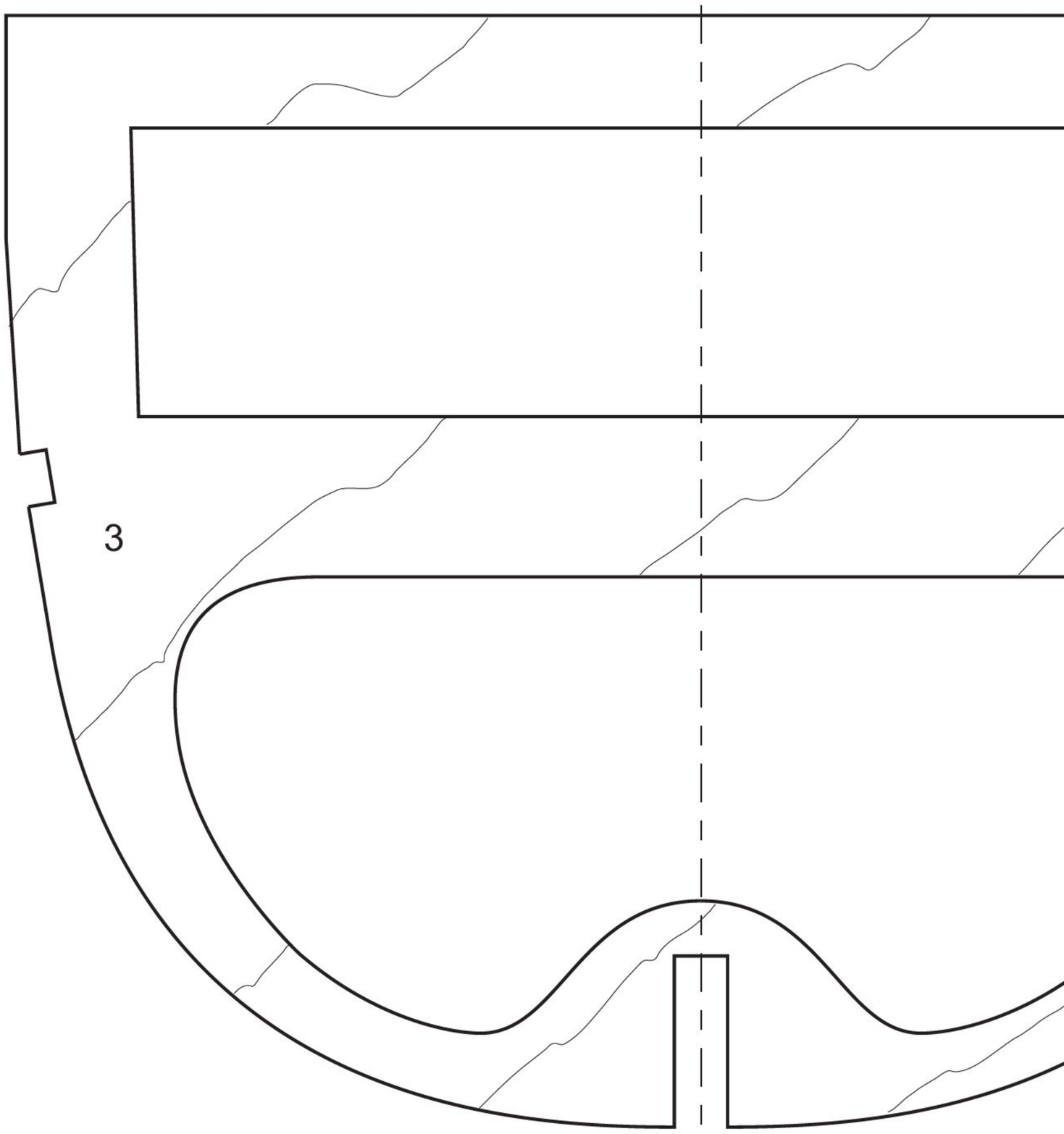
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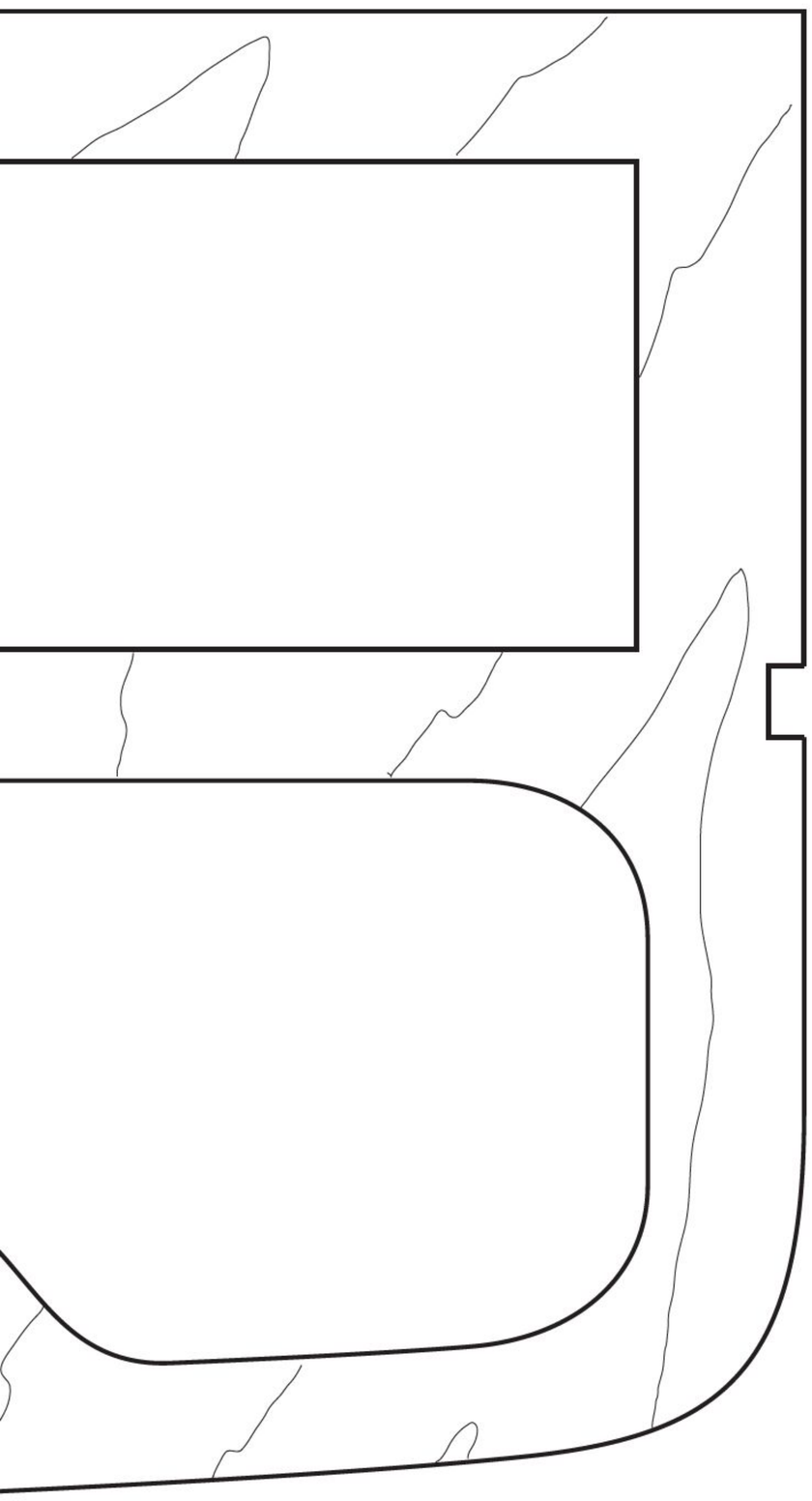
1/4” PLYWOOD KEEL

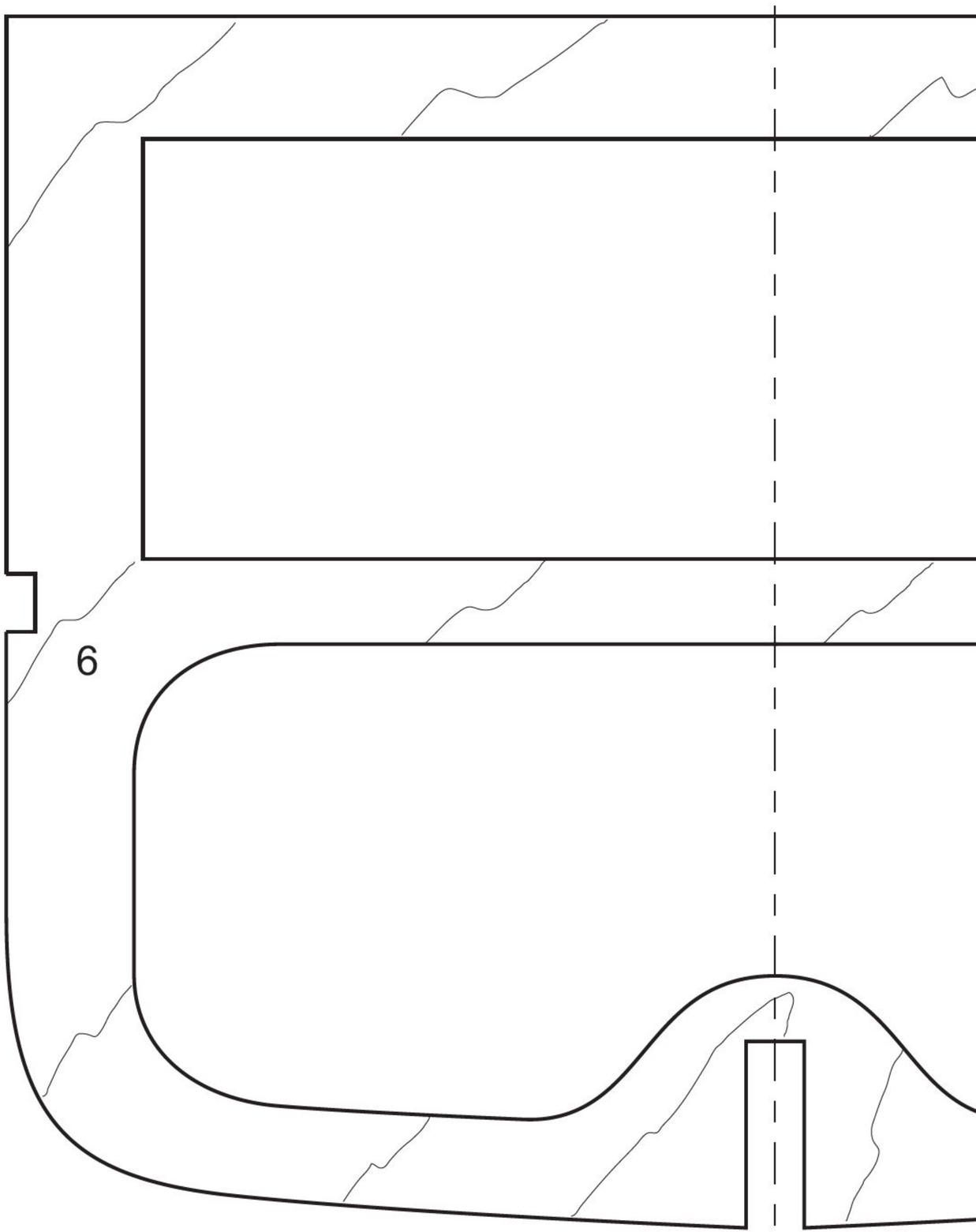
20

16



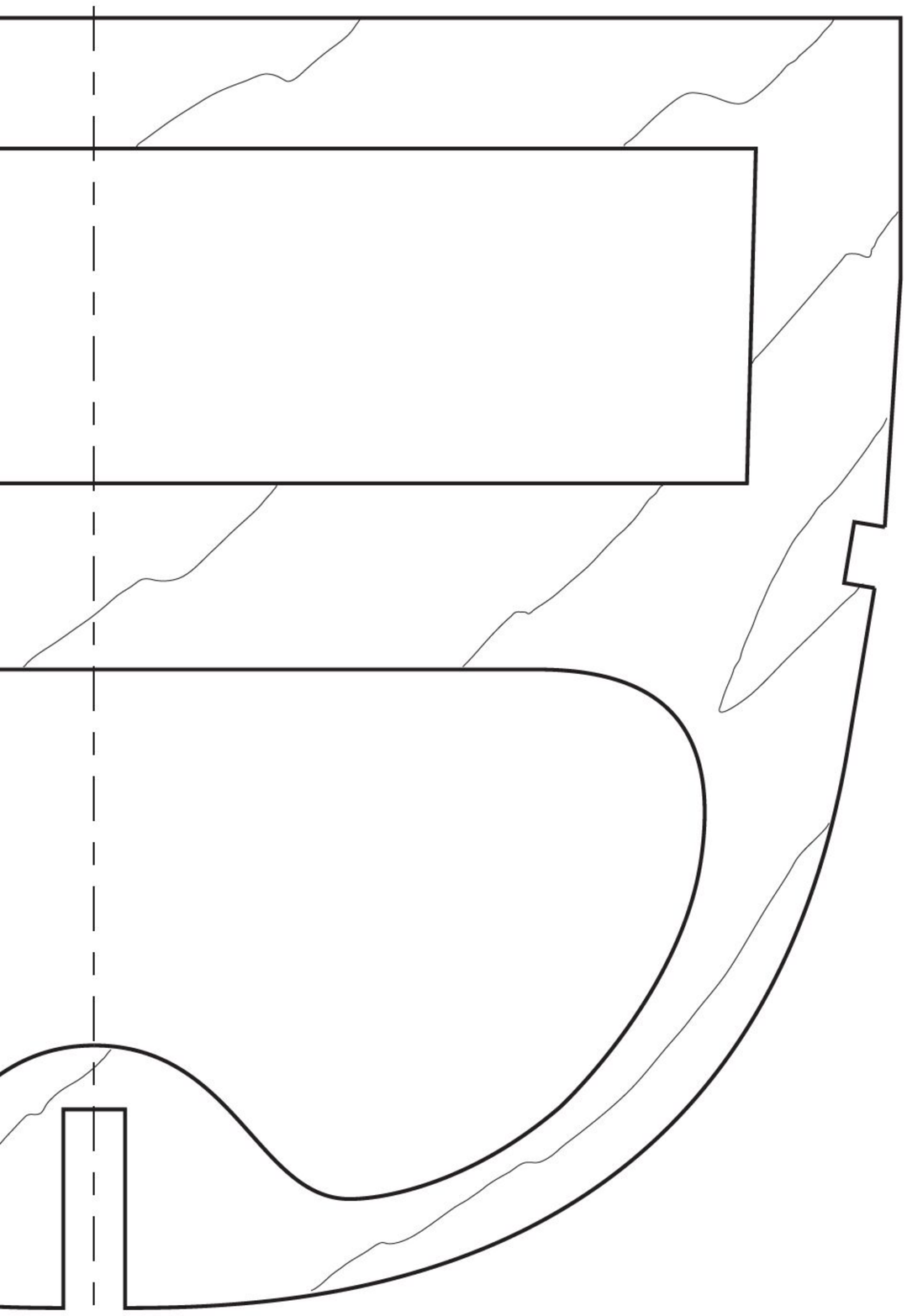


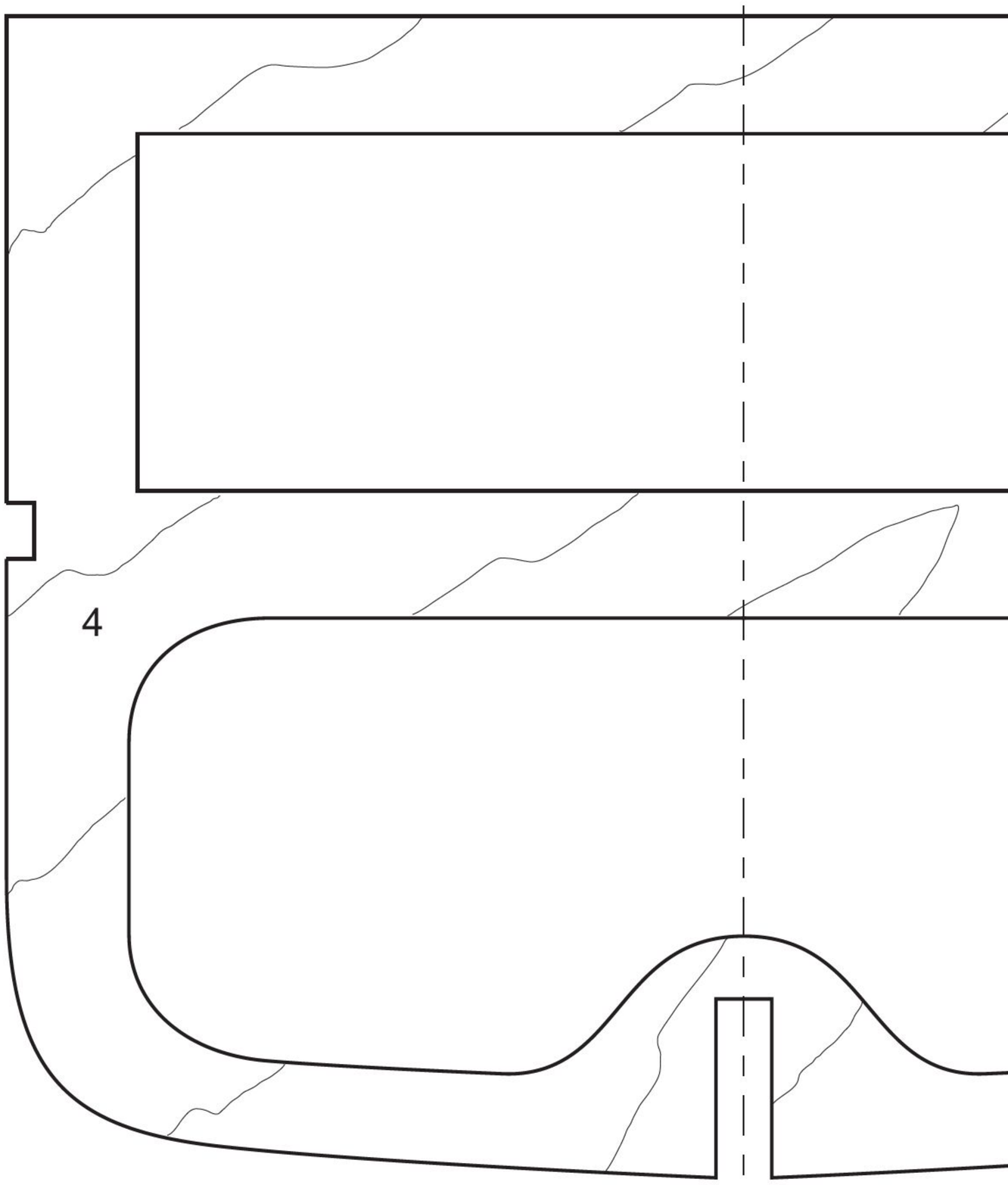


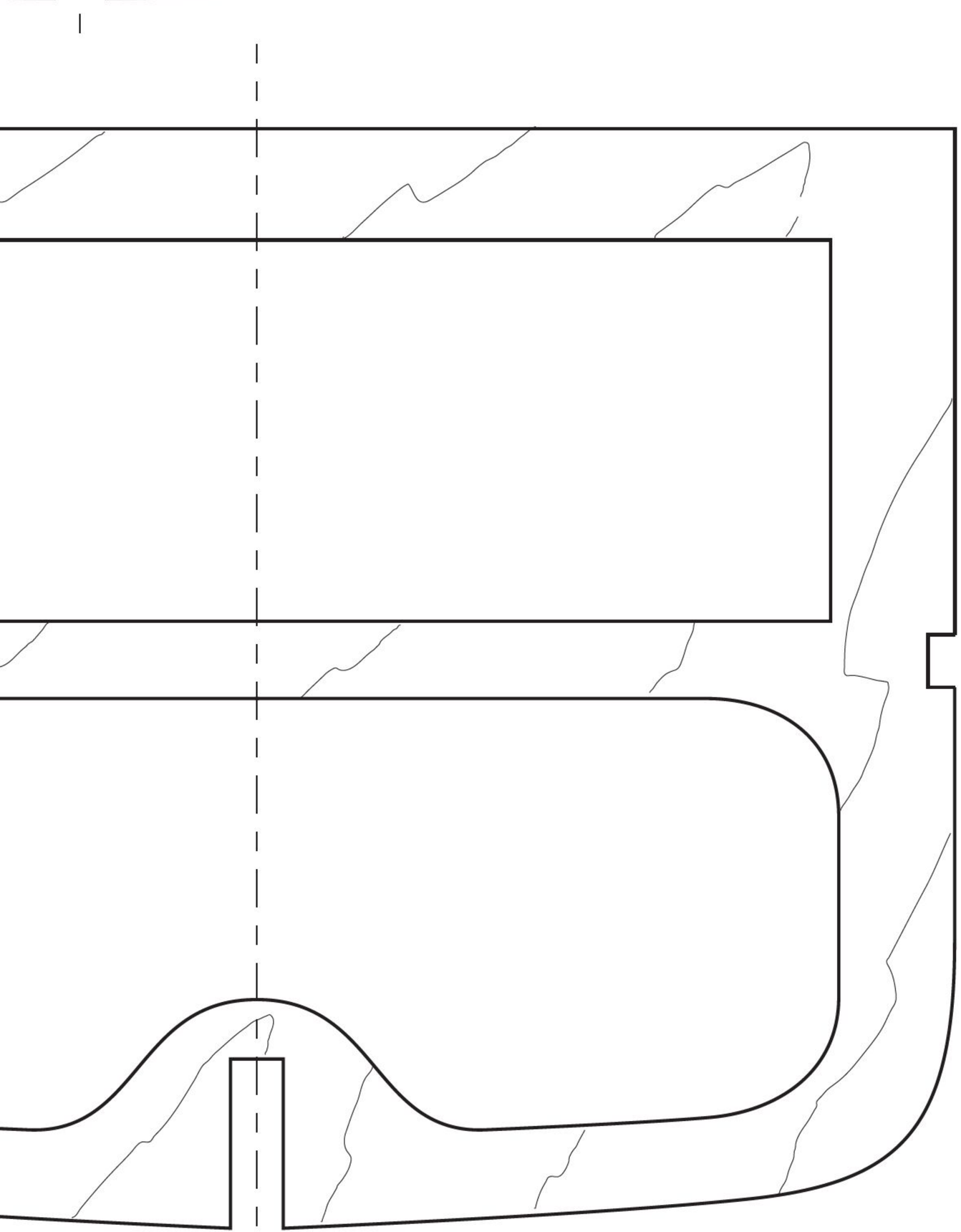


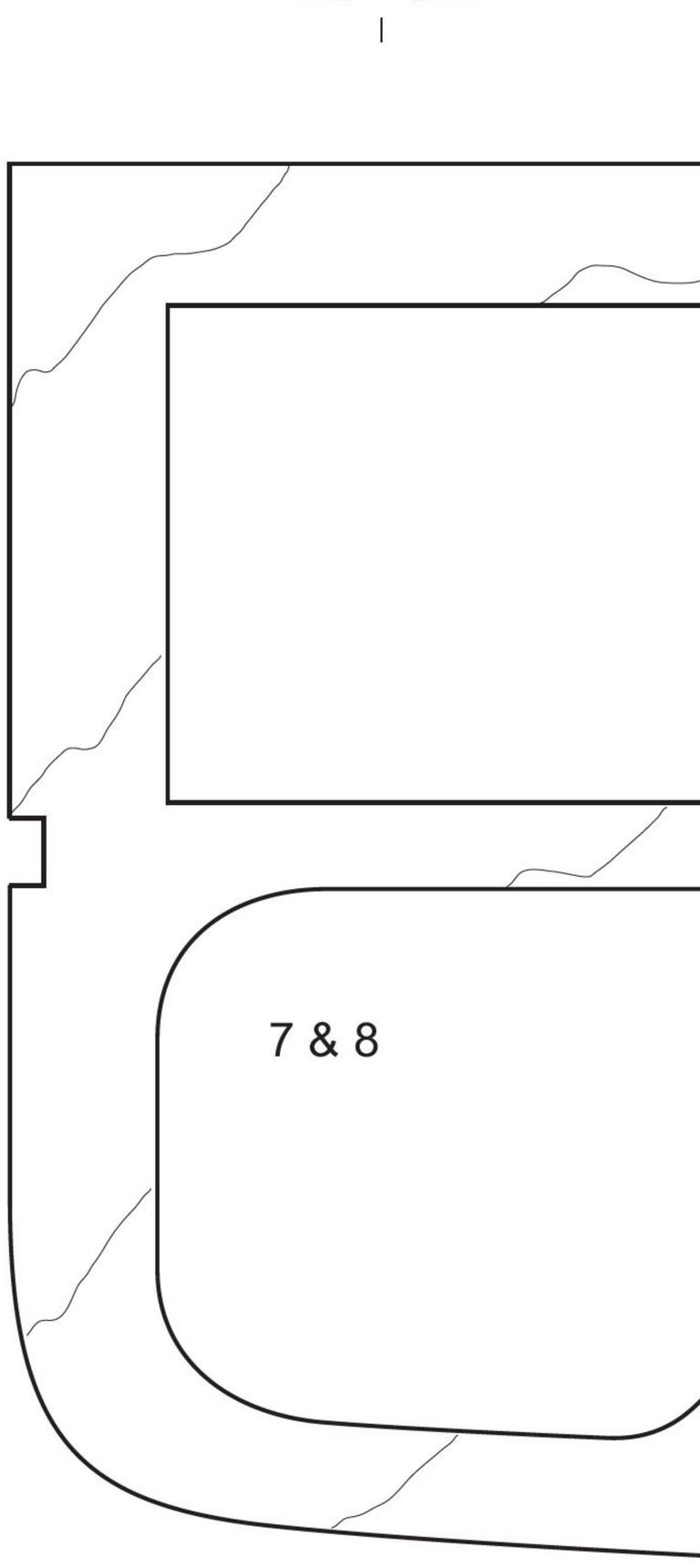
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12









8 4

SCALE
INCHES

Model Boats

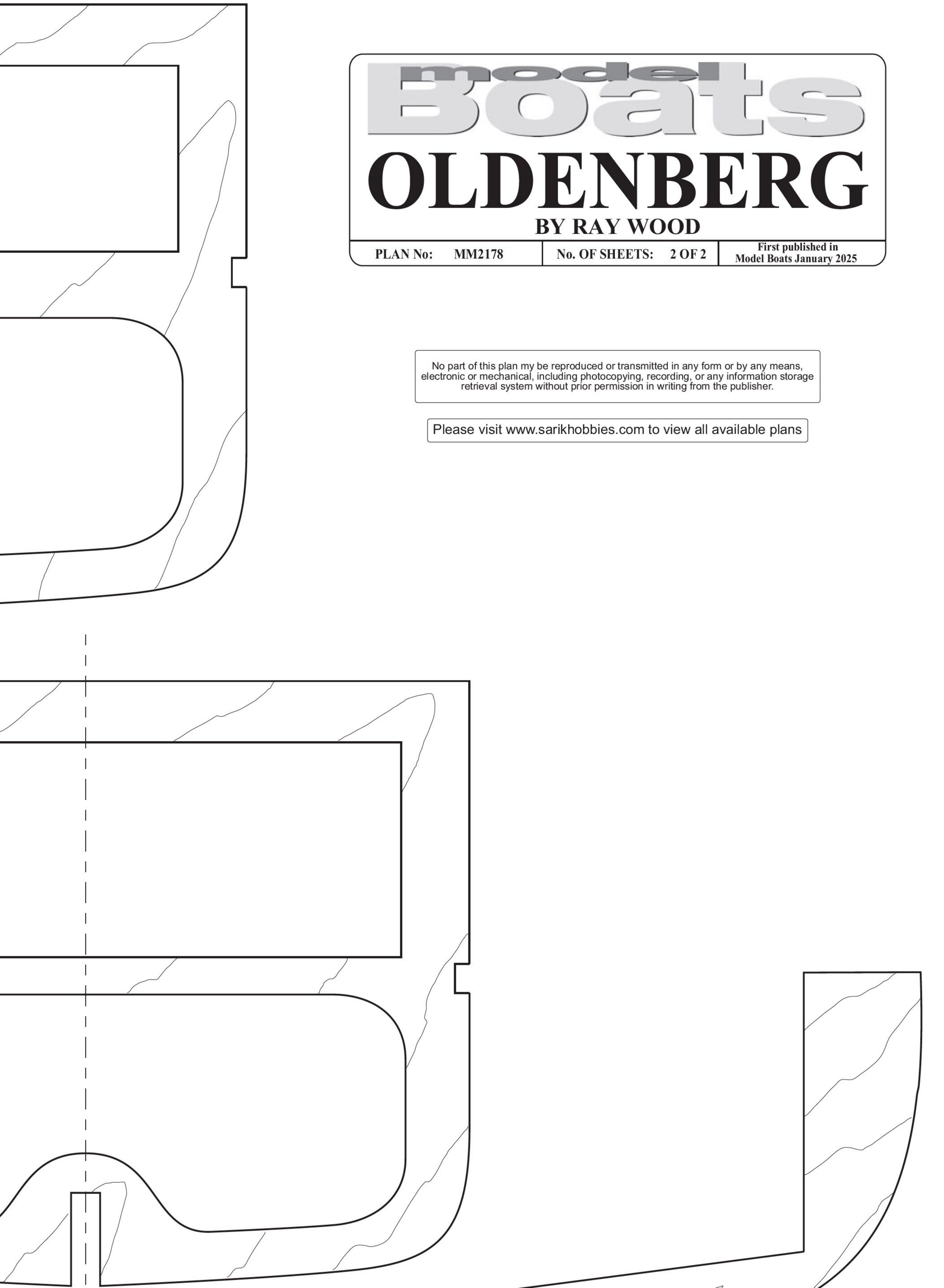
OLDENBERG

BY RAY WOOD

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4 8

1/4” PLYWOOD KEEL

9

SCALE
MM

100

200

NOTE: BULKHEADS ON THE PROTOTYPE
WERE CROSS-LAMINATED 1/16” BALSA BUT
COULD BE 1/8” PLY OR LITE PLY

1/4” PLYWOOD KEEL

10

300

400

TOTYPE
ALSA BUT
PLY

WOOD KEEL

11

400

500

1/4” PLYWOOD KEEL

12

16

20

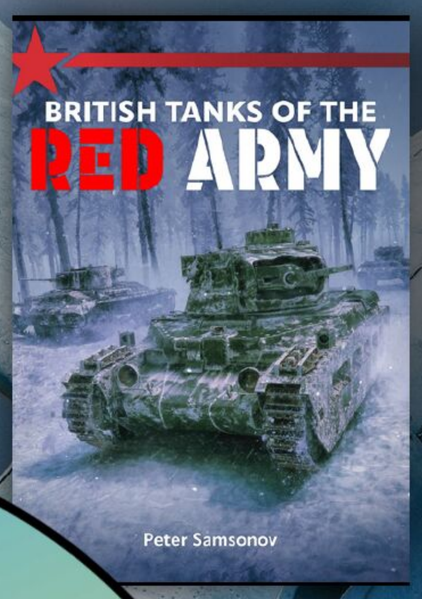
600

700

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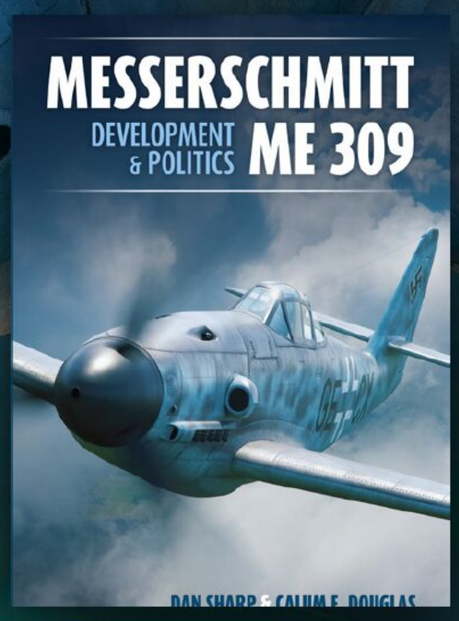


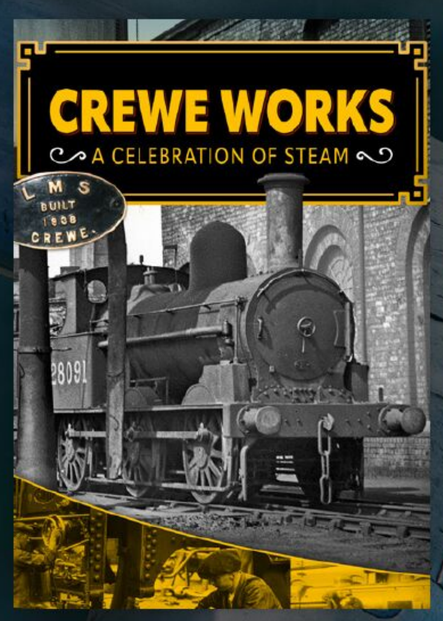
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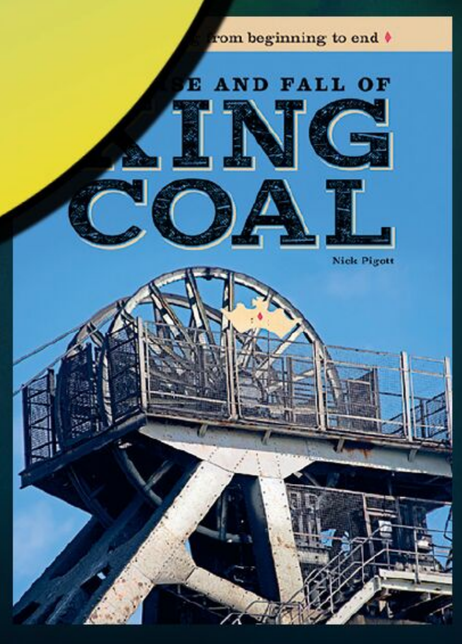
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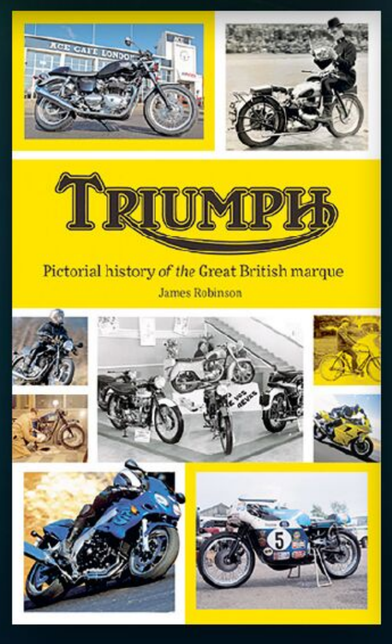
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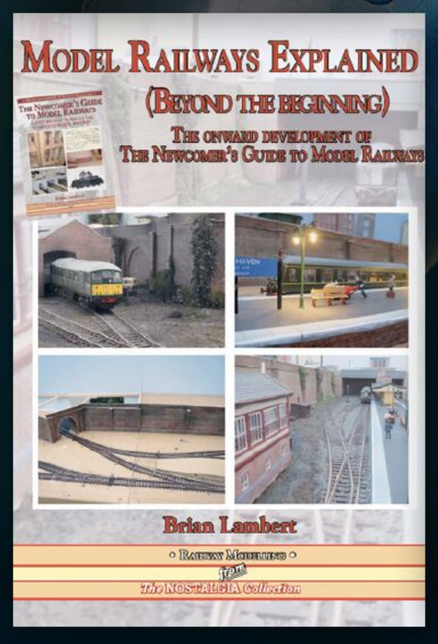


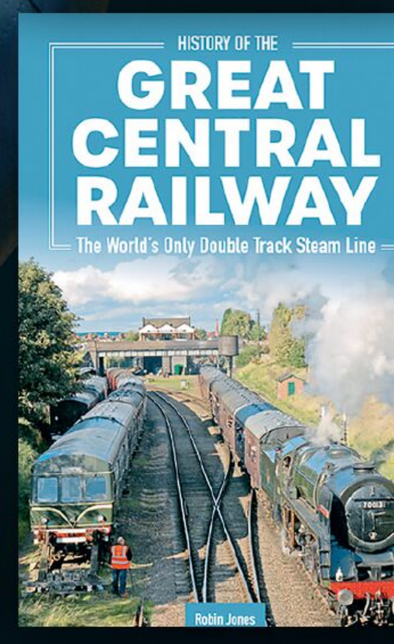












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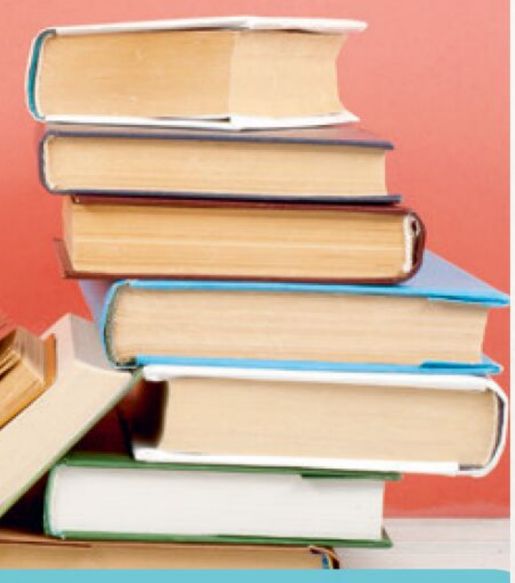
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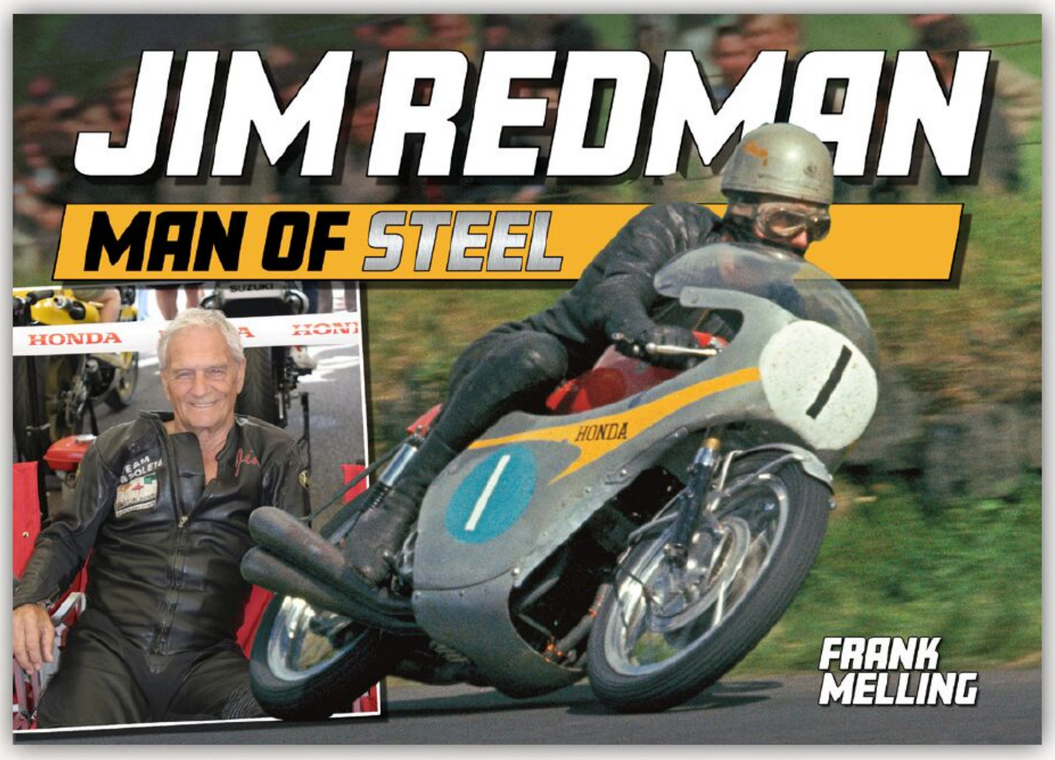
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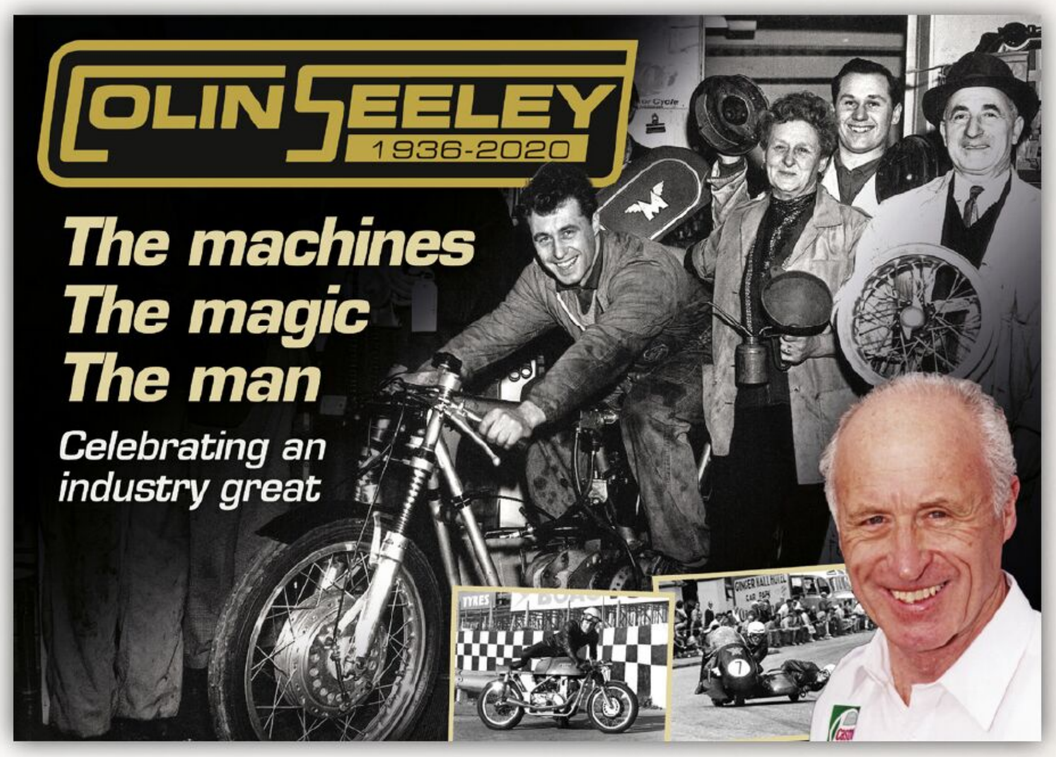
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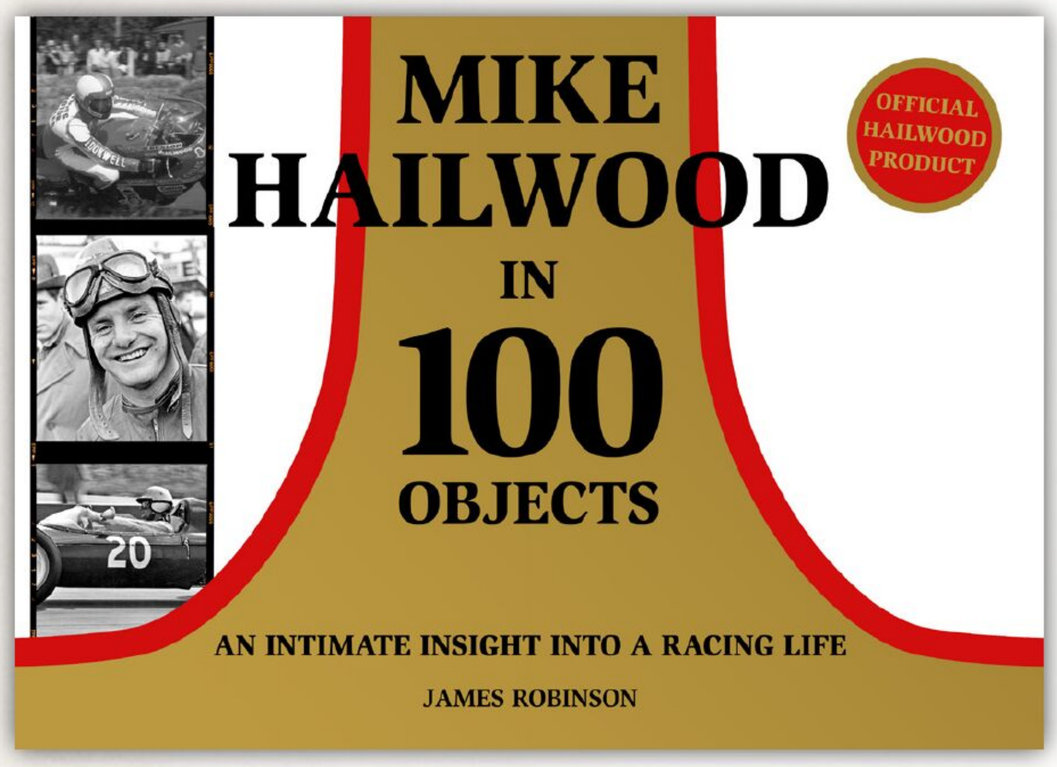
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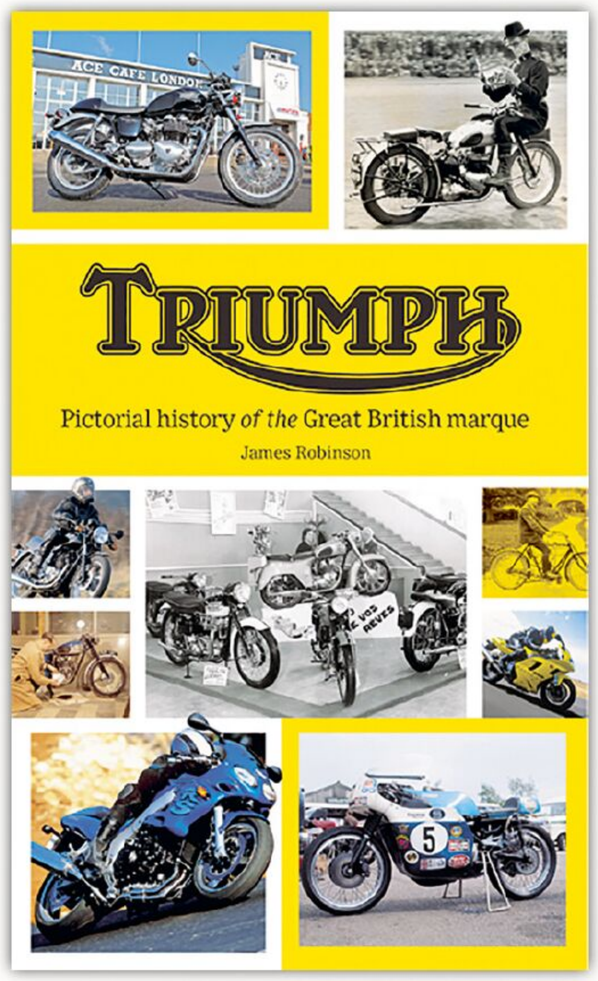
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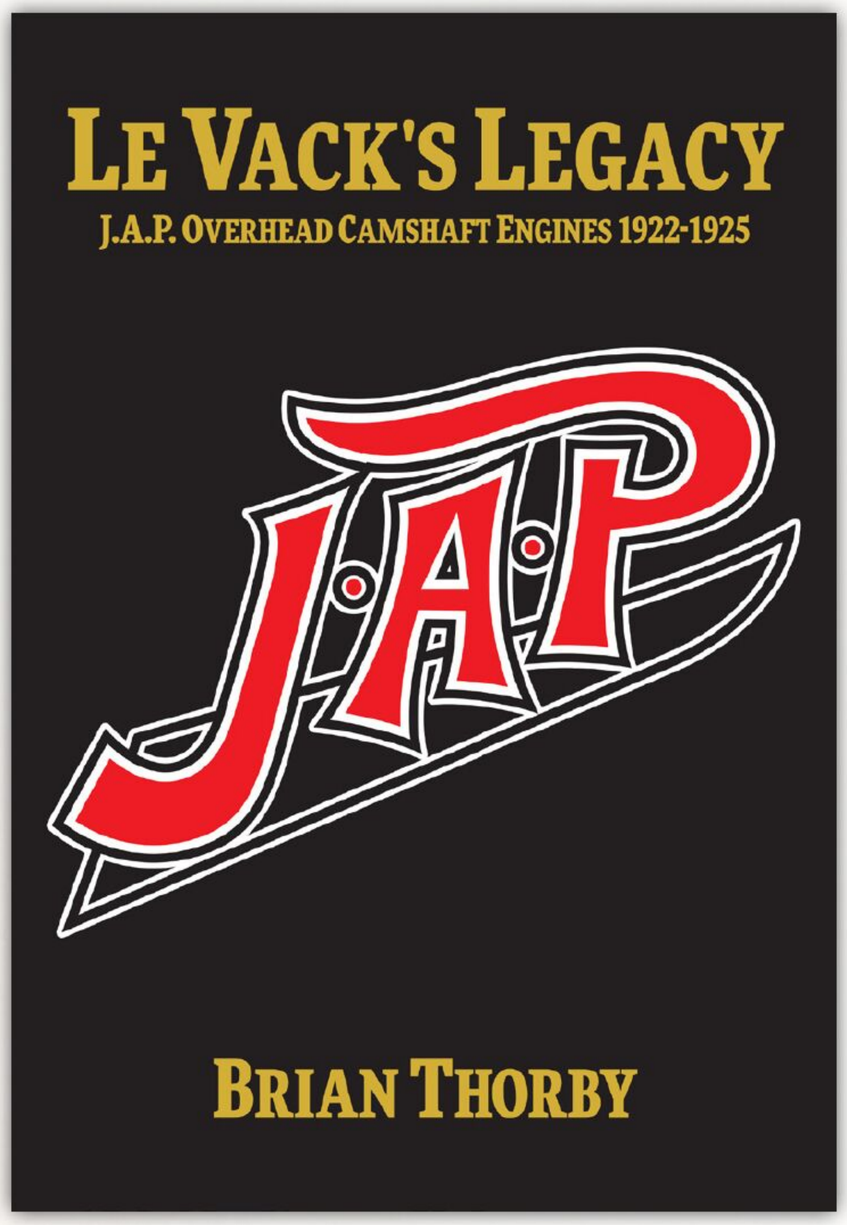
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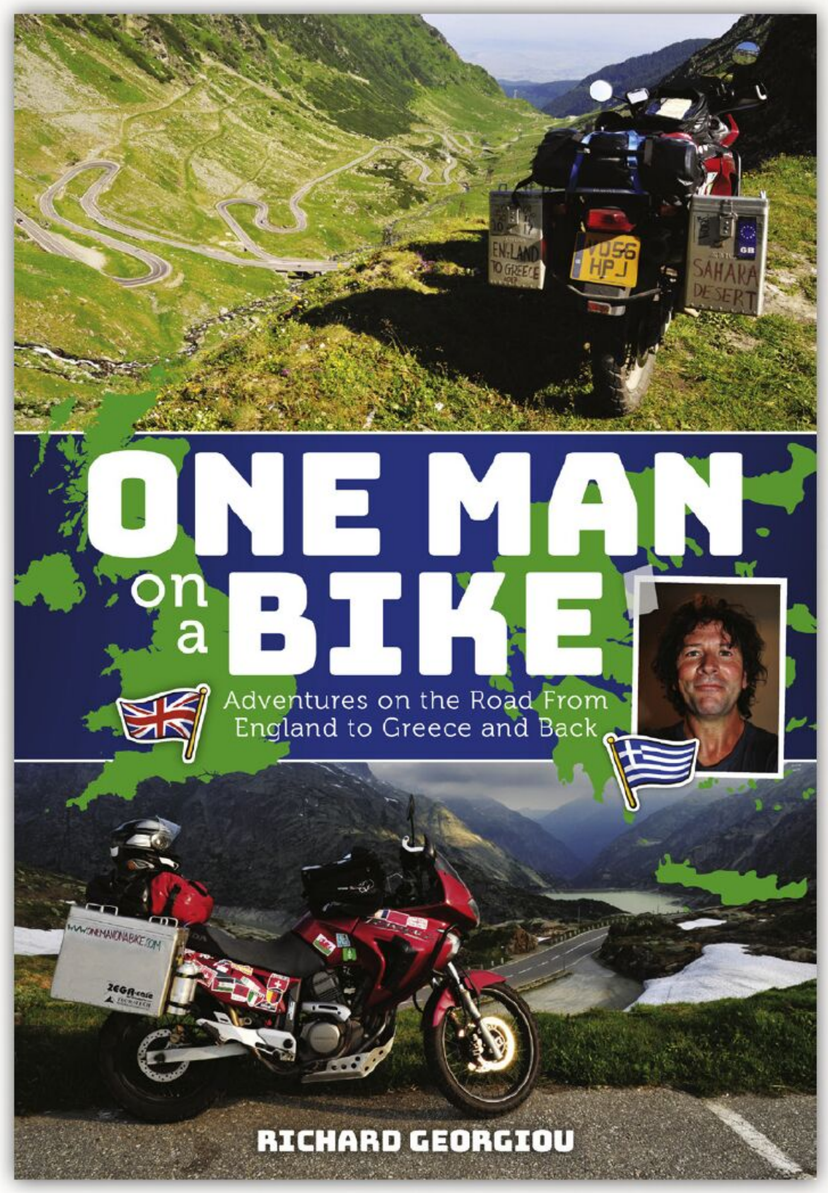
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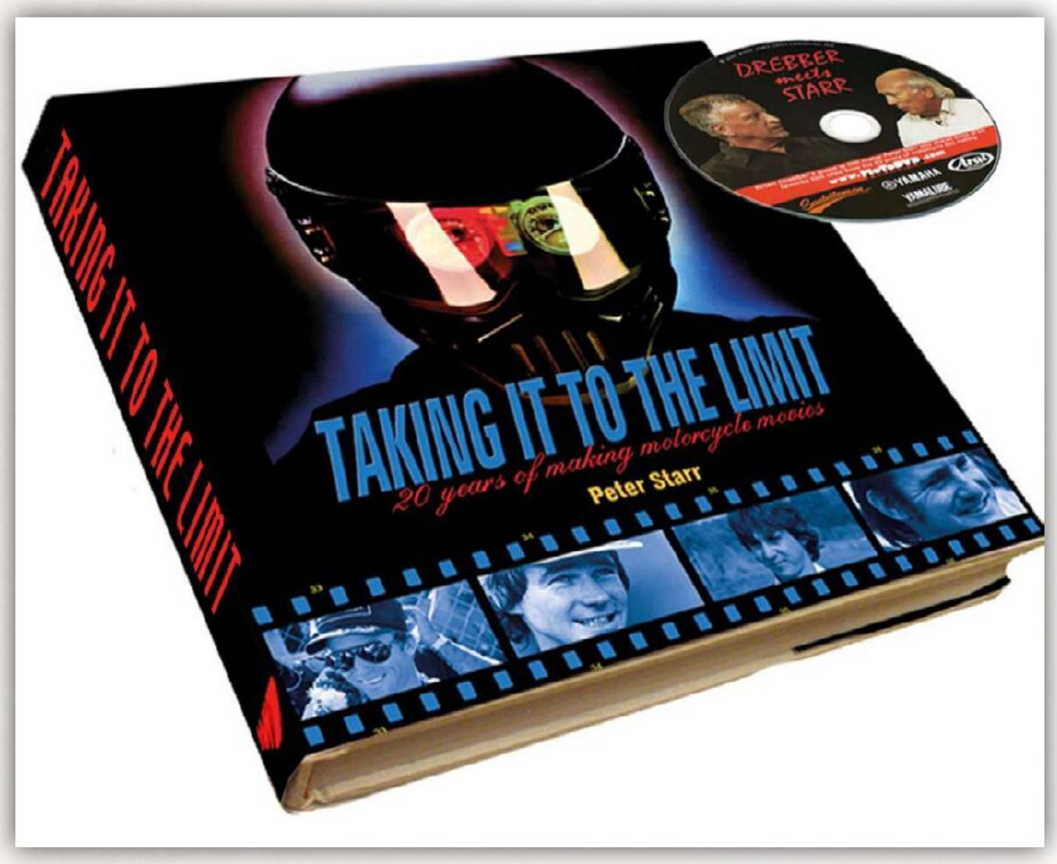
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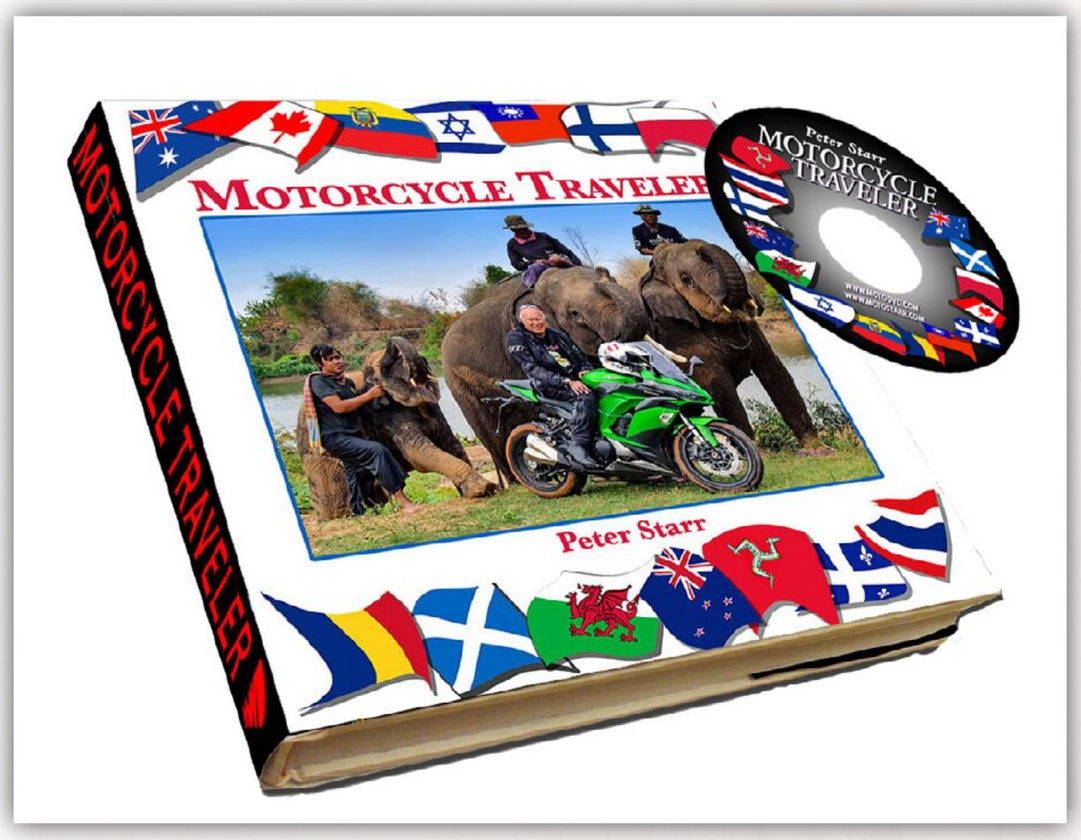
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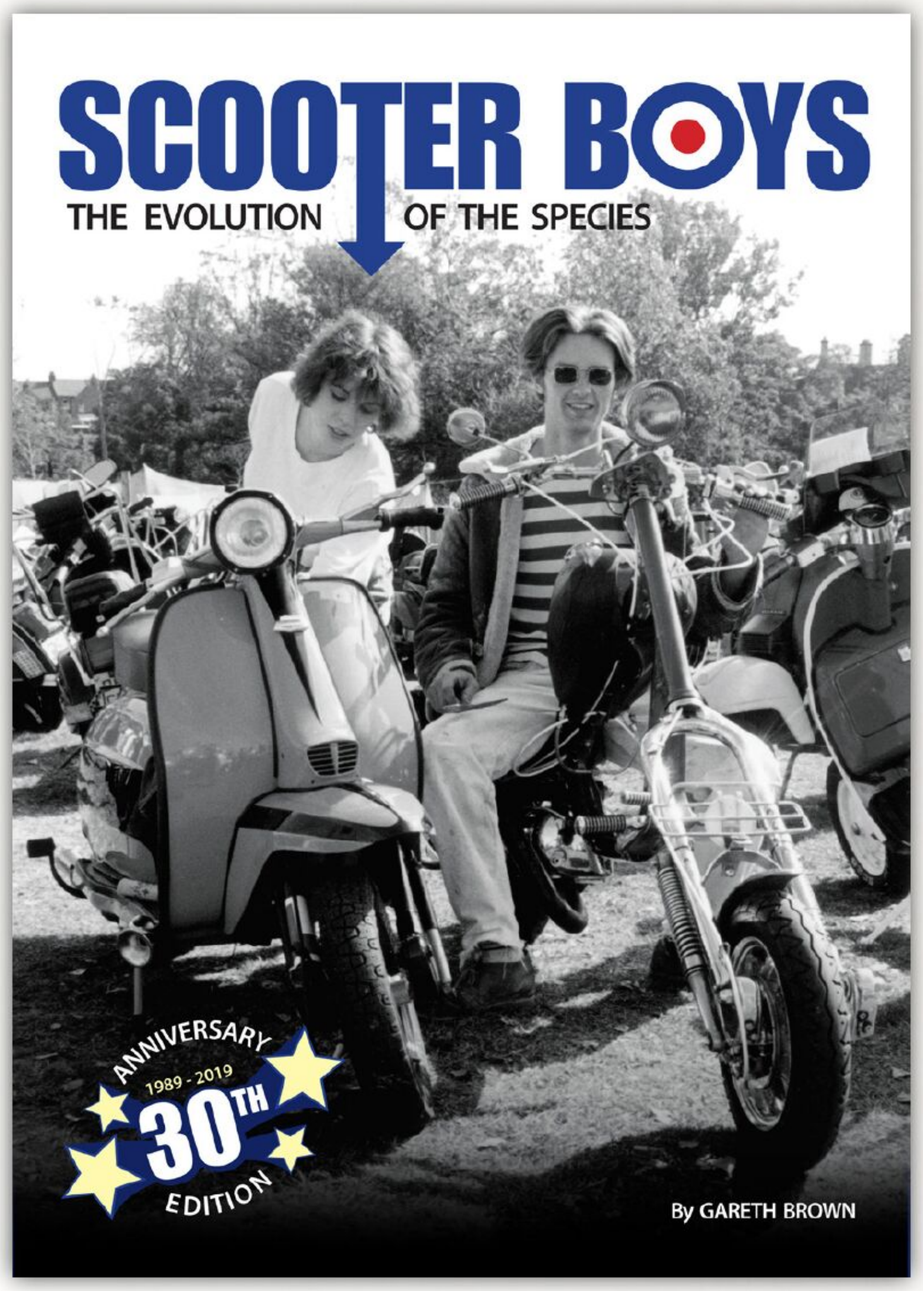
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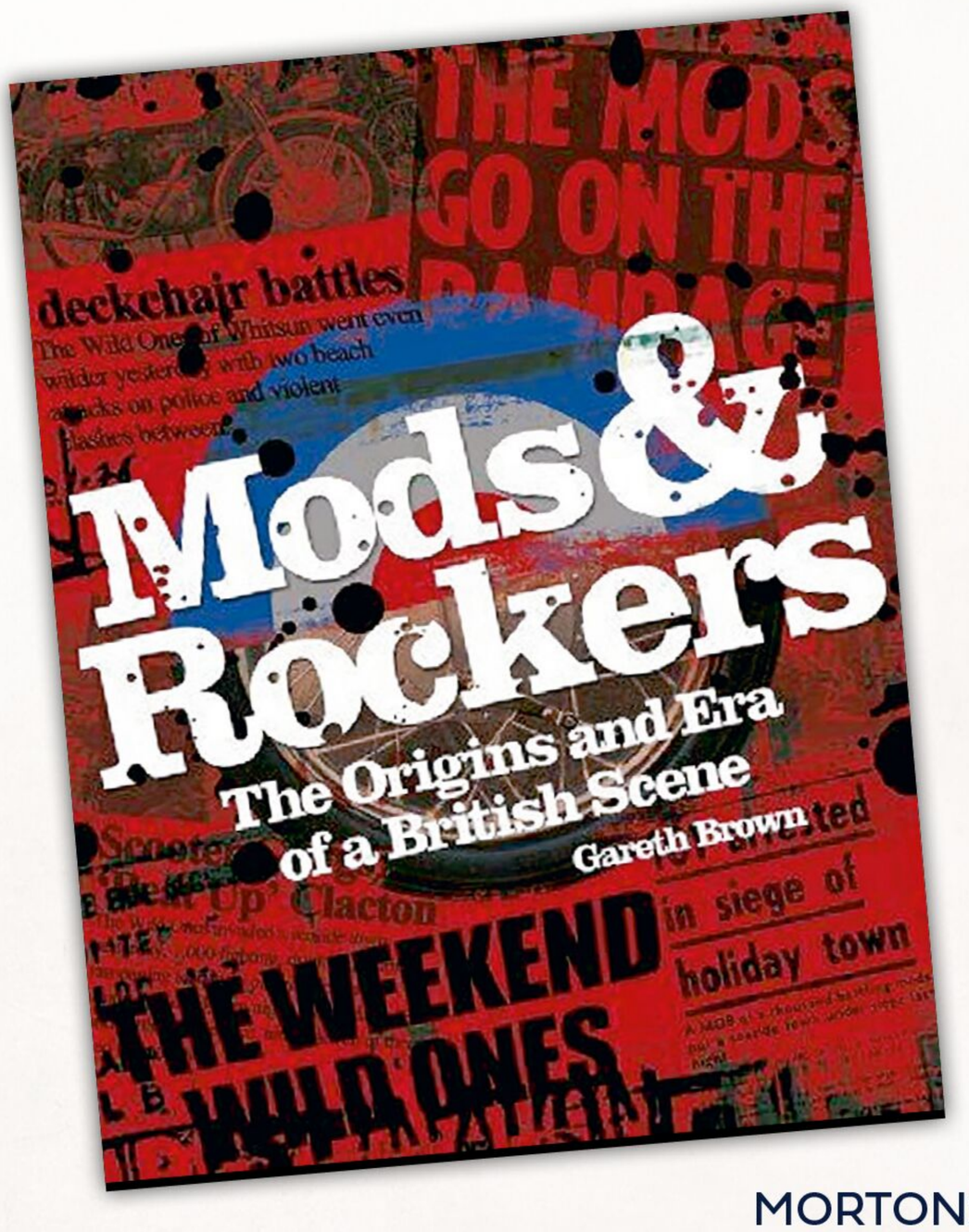
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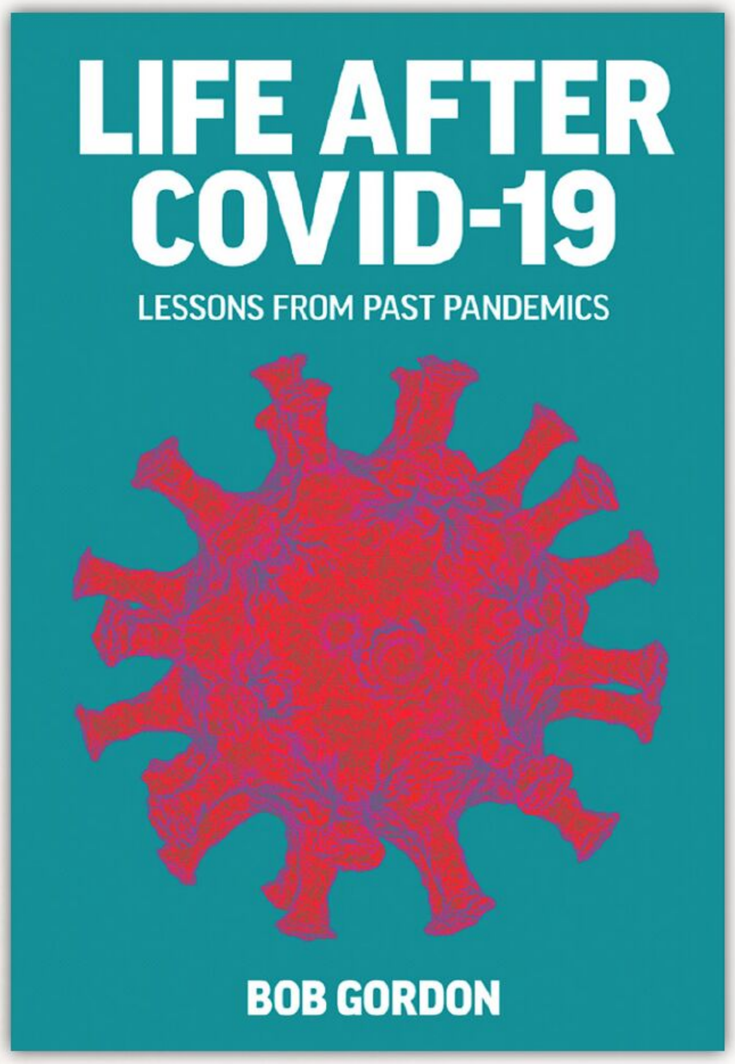
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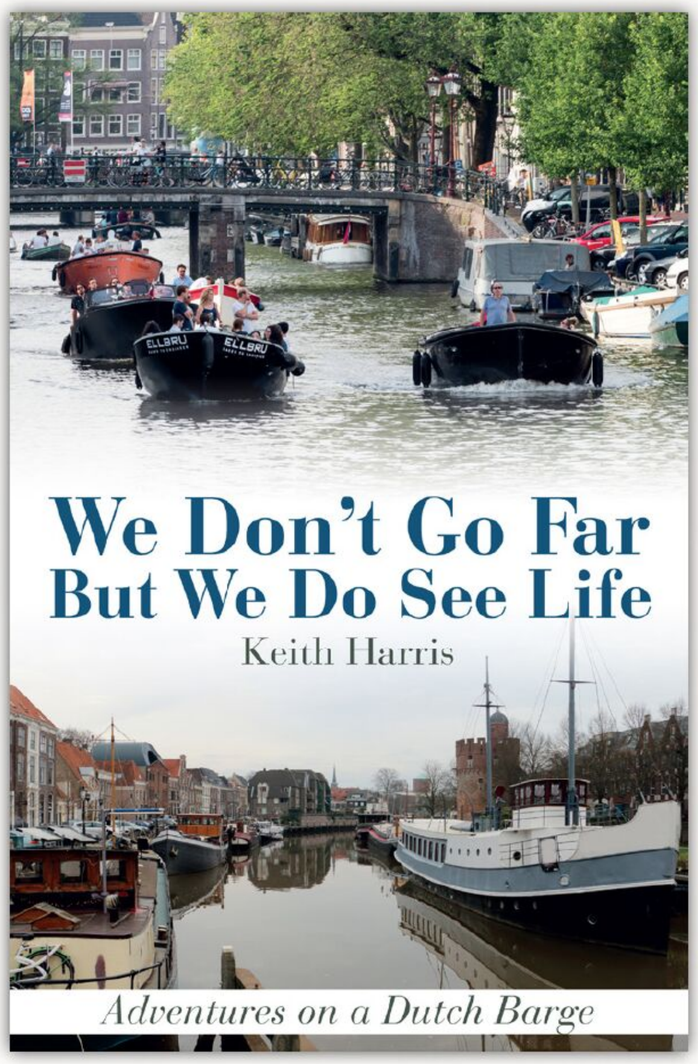
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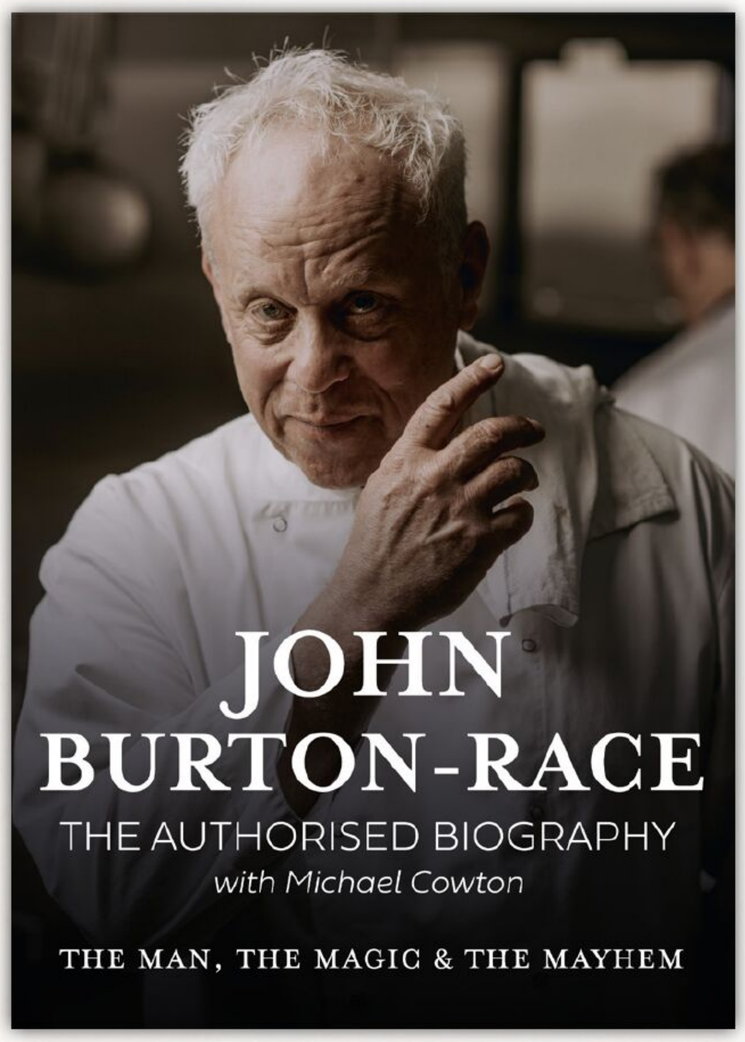
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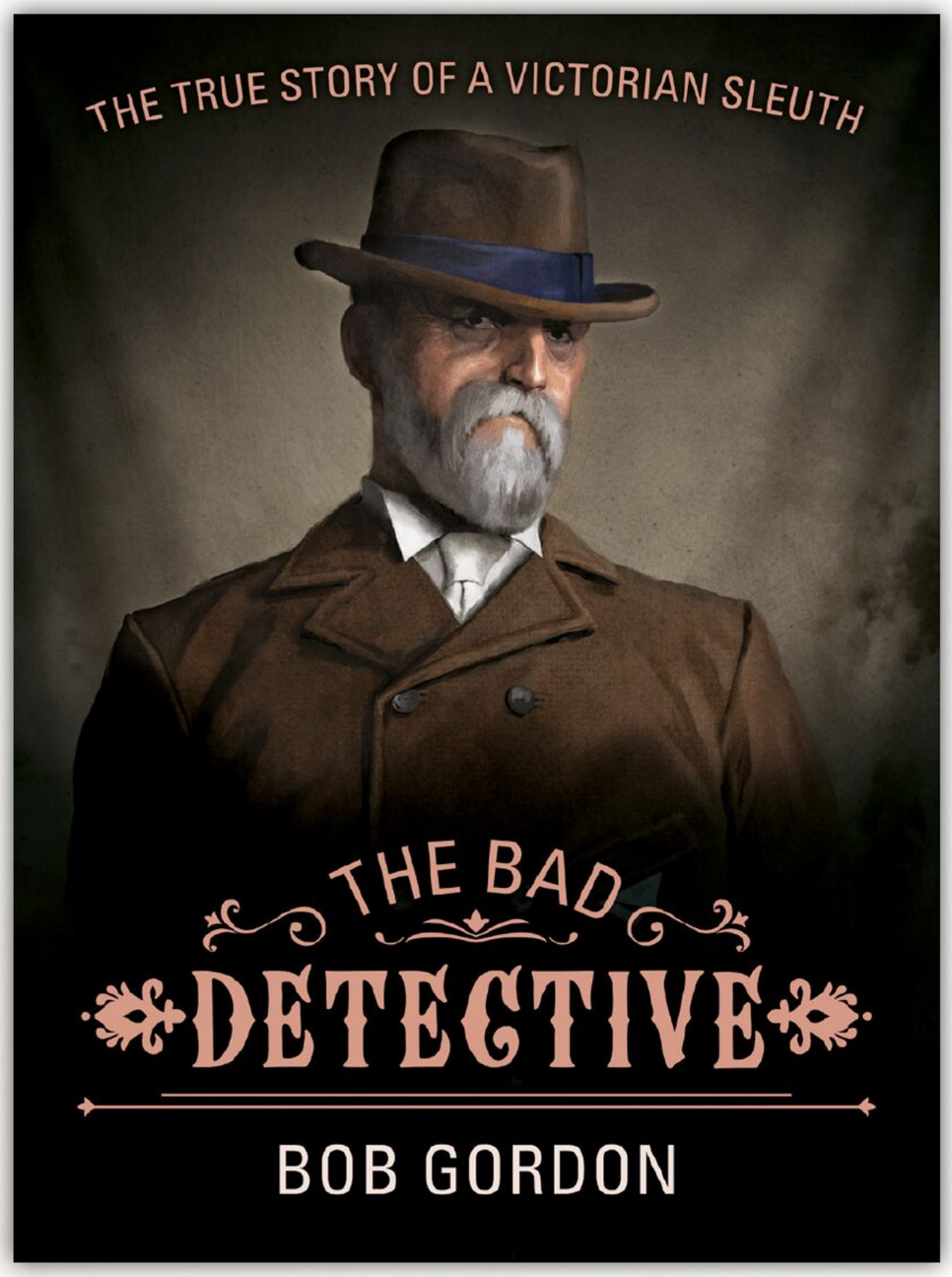
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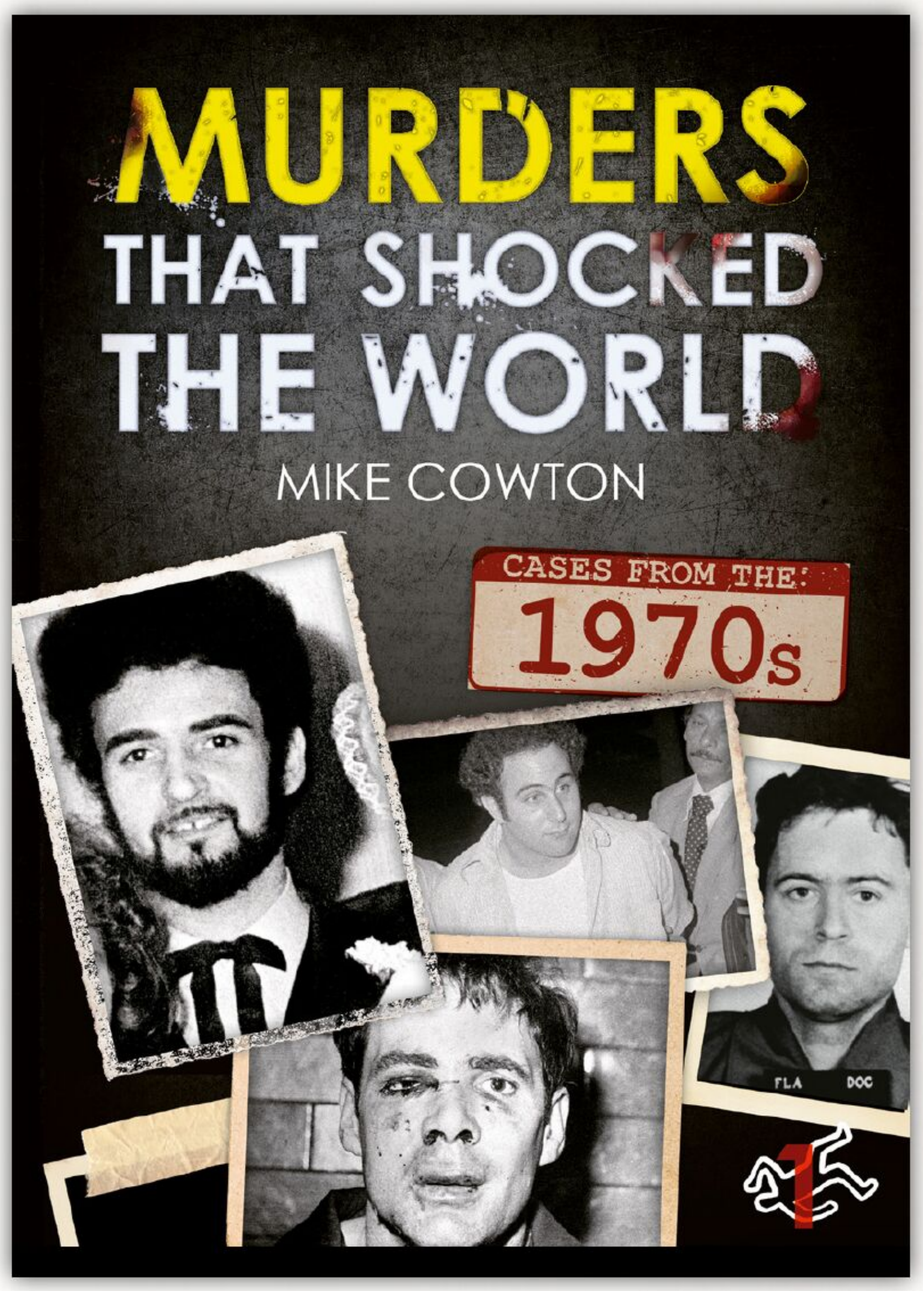
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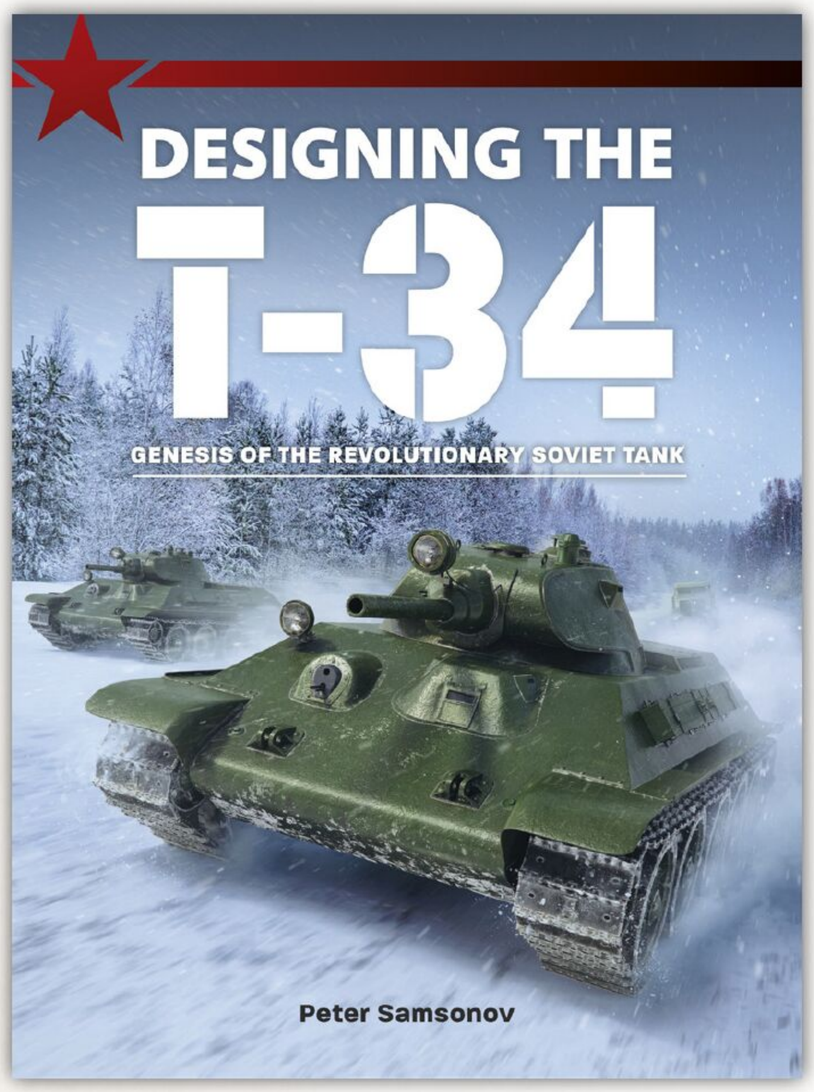
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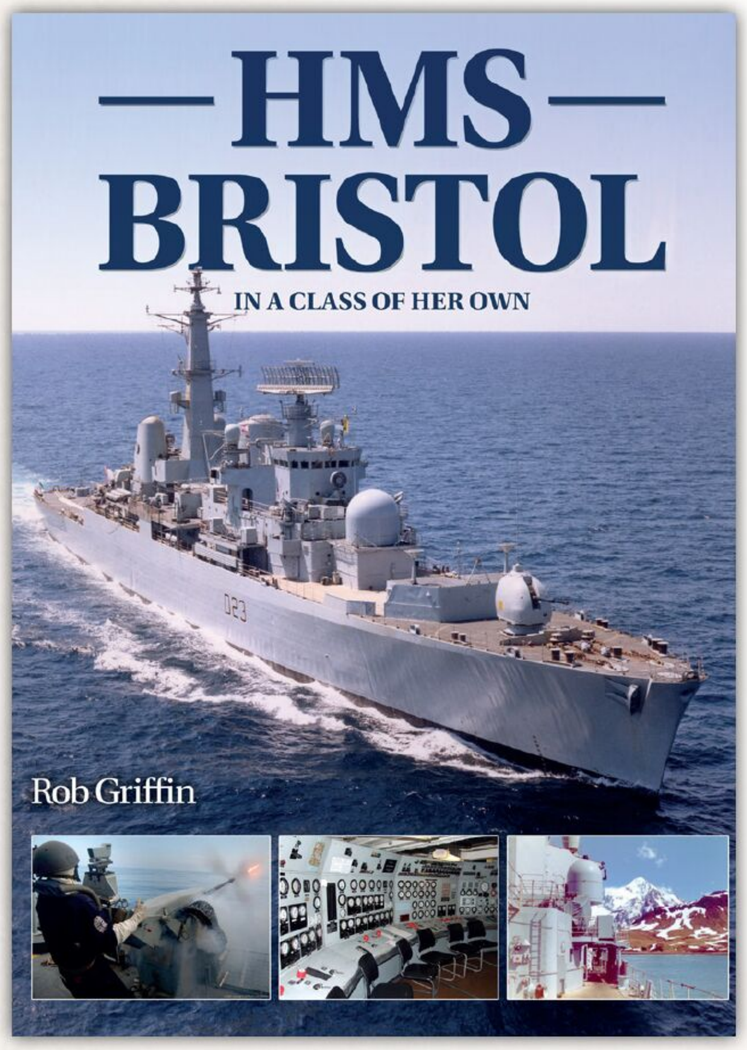
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The first encounter between British armour and the Red Army was not on friendly terms – with the British sending surplus tanks to reinforce the pro-monarchy White Army in the Russian Civil War. When the Reds won, war trophy Mark V heavy tanks as well as medium Mk.A Whippets and Mk.B Hornets entered service with the RKKA. As the political landscape changed during the 1920s, the Red Army assessed British designs available for export and a licensed copy of the Vickers Mk.E entered production in 1931 as the T-26.

During the early days of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, armour losses were huge and the Red Army once again looked abroad to acquire new fighting vehicles. A large-scale programme of military aid to the USSR began in August 1941, with the US and Britain offering help under separate terms – though not for free. A deal was struck and Convoy PQ-1 with the first 20 British tanks for the Red Army left for Arkhangelsk on September 29, 1941. These tanks arrived in time to take place in the Battle of Moscow and as shipments continued, British armoured vehicles would remain in service with the Red Army until the conclusion of the Second World War nearly four years later.

A wide range of British vehicles served under the Red flag during the war – ranging from Matildas and Valentines to Churchills and even Tetrarch light tanks.

In British Tanks of the Red Army, tank expert Peter Samsonov presents a history of British tanks in the Soviet Union and provides a detailed account of their use on the battlefield, including what the Red Army tankers thought of them.

Locomotive No 32 Tamerline became the first steam locomotive to be completed at Crewe Works on 10 March 1843. One hundred and fifteen years later BR 9F No 92250 became the 7,331st steam locomotive to be built at the Cheshire works, when completed in December 1958. This publication is a tribute to the thousands of people employed there during the steam locomotive building era.

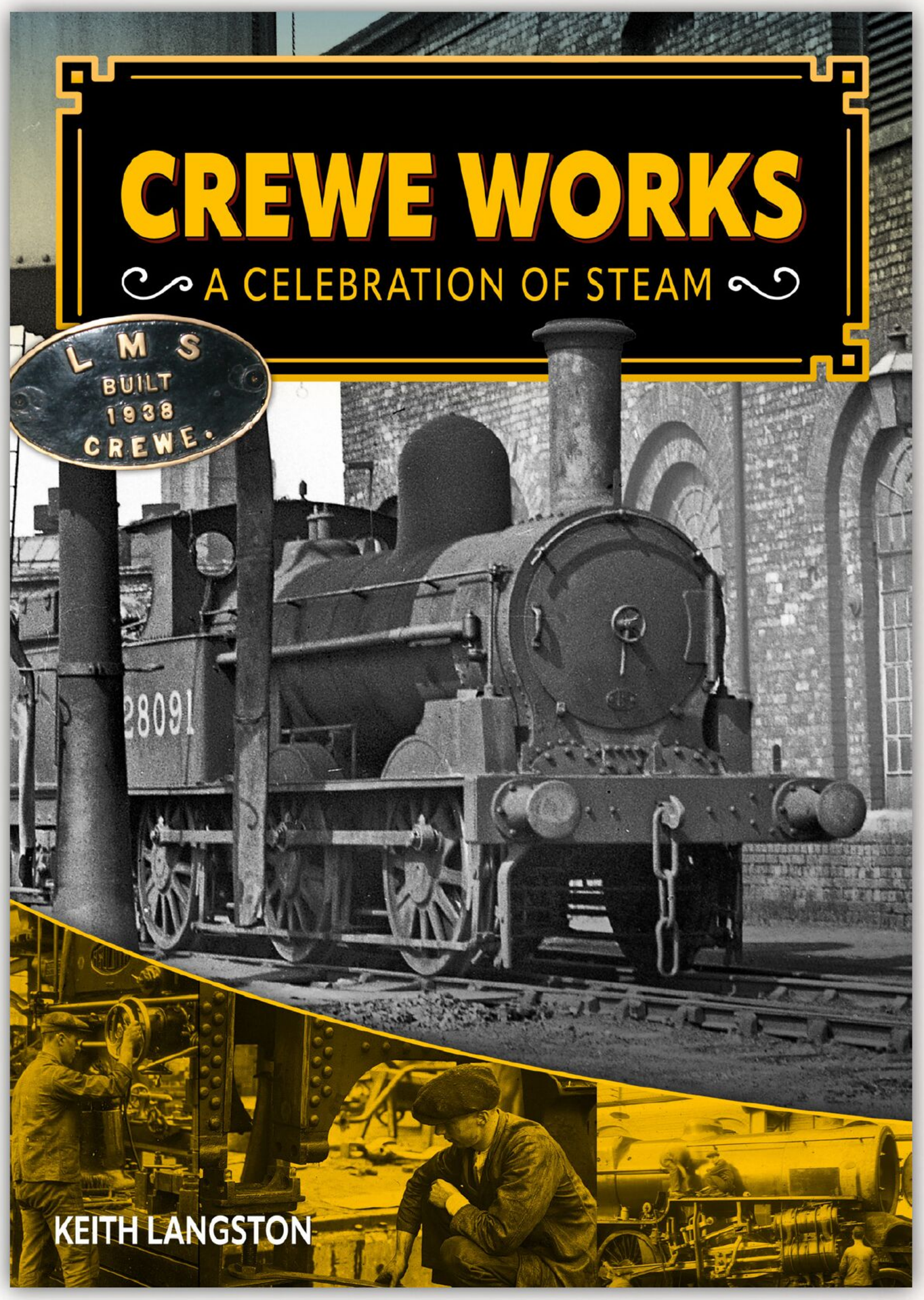
In 1913 The Railway Magazine proudly described Crewe as "the most famous railway works in the world". Indeed, railways throughout the world benefited from adopting 'best Crewe practice'. Many who worked at Crewe in its heyday, first under the London & North Western Railway and later the London Midland & Scottish Railway, held the firm belief that the works was the 'beating heart' of the Cheshire town.

Back in those days you would be hard put to find a local family without some kind of connection to that vast engineering enterprise. In earlier times the works not only provided the steadily growing town with employment, but furthermore supplied the town with both gas and domestic water. For example, the consumption of the gas produced at the works in the 1940s was assessed as 30% to the works, 20% to Rolls-Royce and 50% to the town. Those statistics are a great example of the many close ties that existed between the works and the town.

After the post-war Trasport Act, steam locomotive construction and maintenance continued under the newly created company British Railways. From 1948 under Nationalisation in addition to locomotive building, BR Crewe Works was responsible for the maintenance of some 2,779 steam locomotives. However, even as the Standard Locomotive building programme got underway plans for a future railway system without steam traction were being drawn up.

The timeline of this publication highlights those steam locomotive classes which were listed as being built by Crewe Works (in any time period) but importantly included in the BR January 1948 stock list. It also includes BR Standard class locomotives built at Crewe post 1951. Steam traction did return to the works, albeit in only a token manner during the occasion of the September 2005 Great Gathering.

Crewe Works – A Celebration of Steam by Keith Langston is not intended to be a source of detailed steam engineering practices, but is a comprehensively illustrated record of steam locomotive building and maintenance at Crewe Works. Fortunately, important engineering work was still carried out at Crewe Works in 2023. Given the reduced size of the works, and reduction in numbers employed, it would not be unfair to say that the once 'beating heart' of the town is at least a 'discernible pulse'.



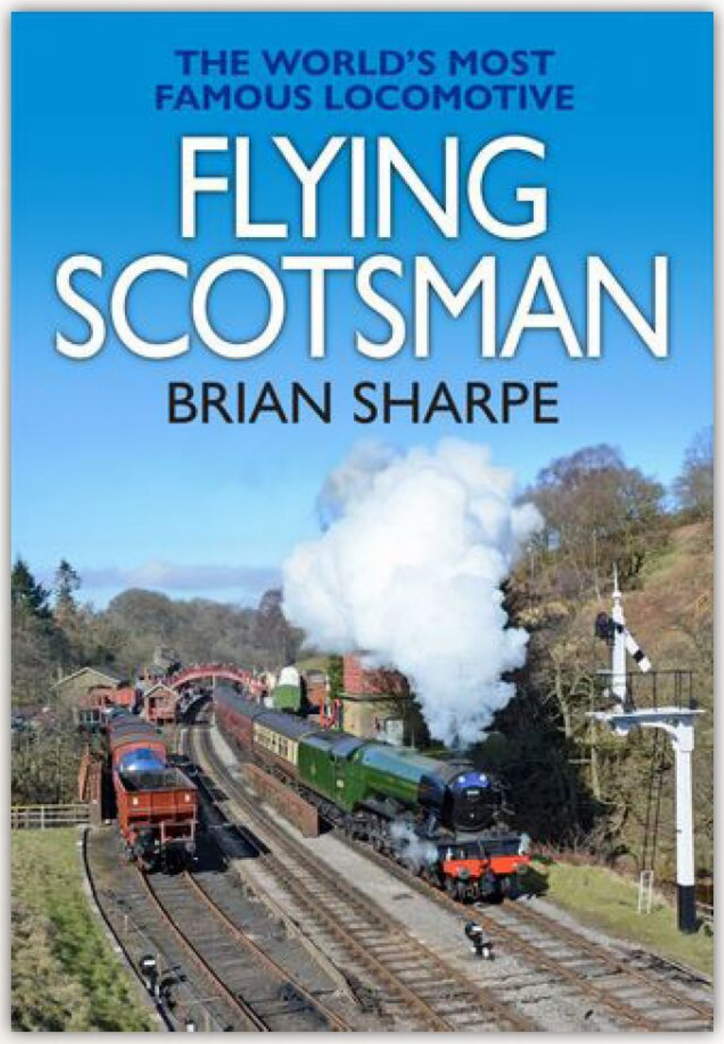
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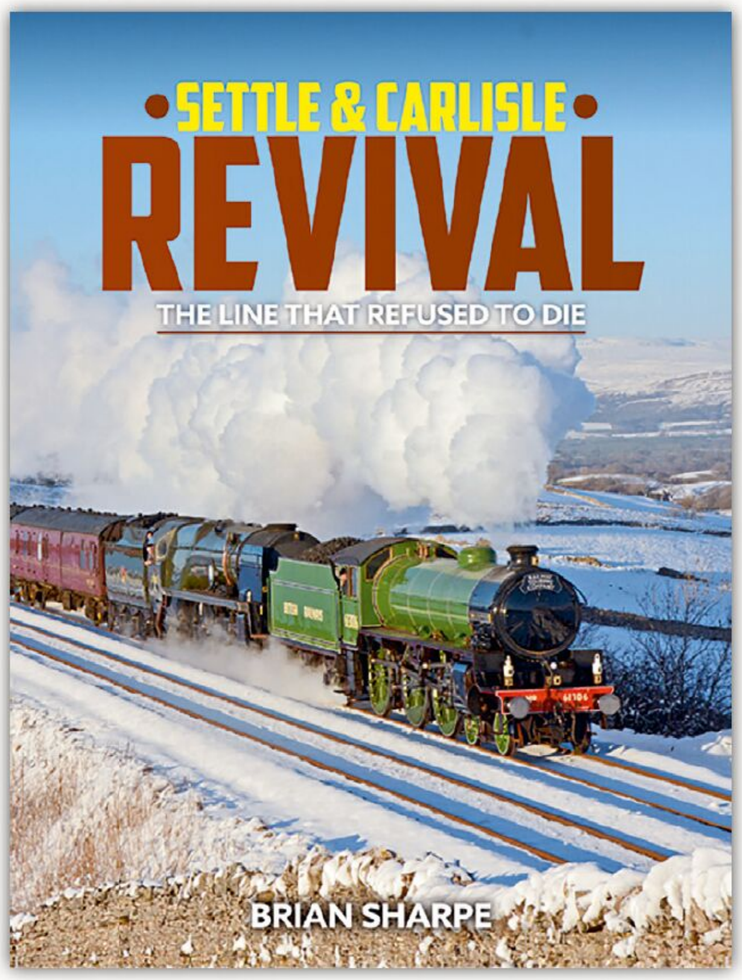
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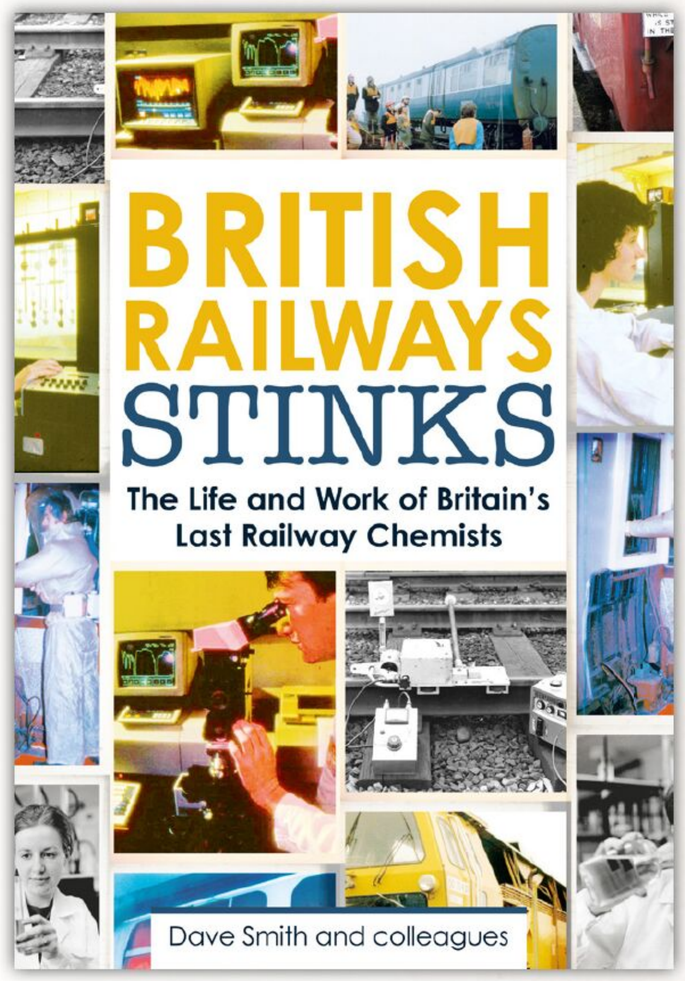
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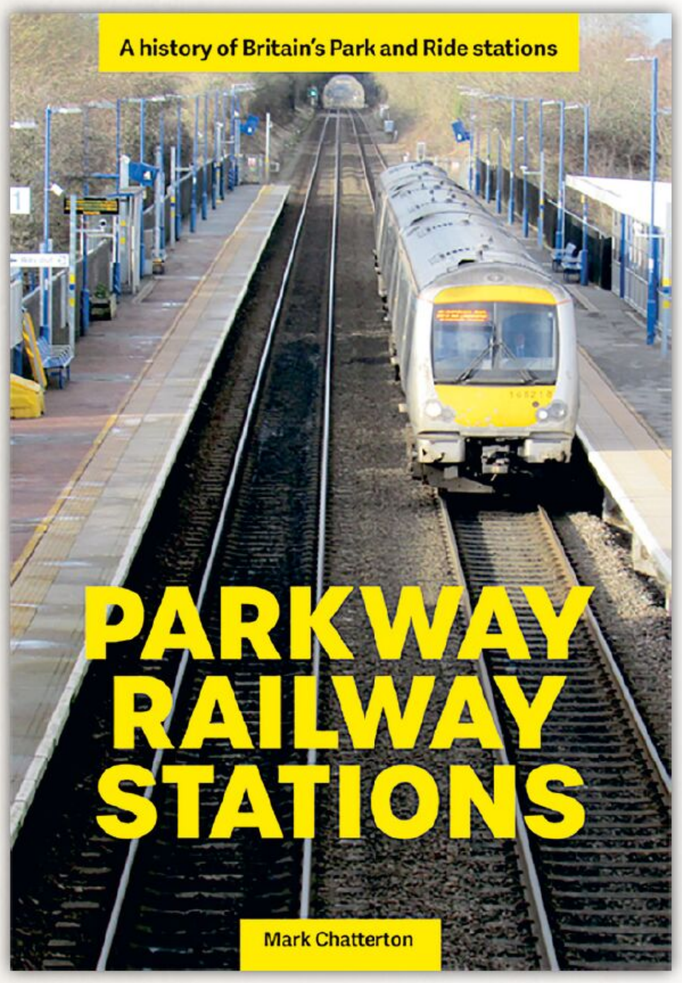
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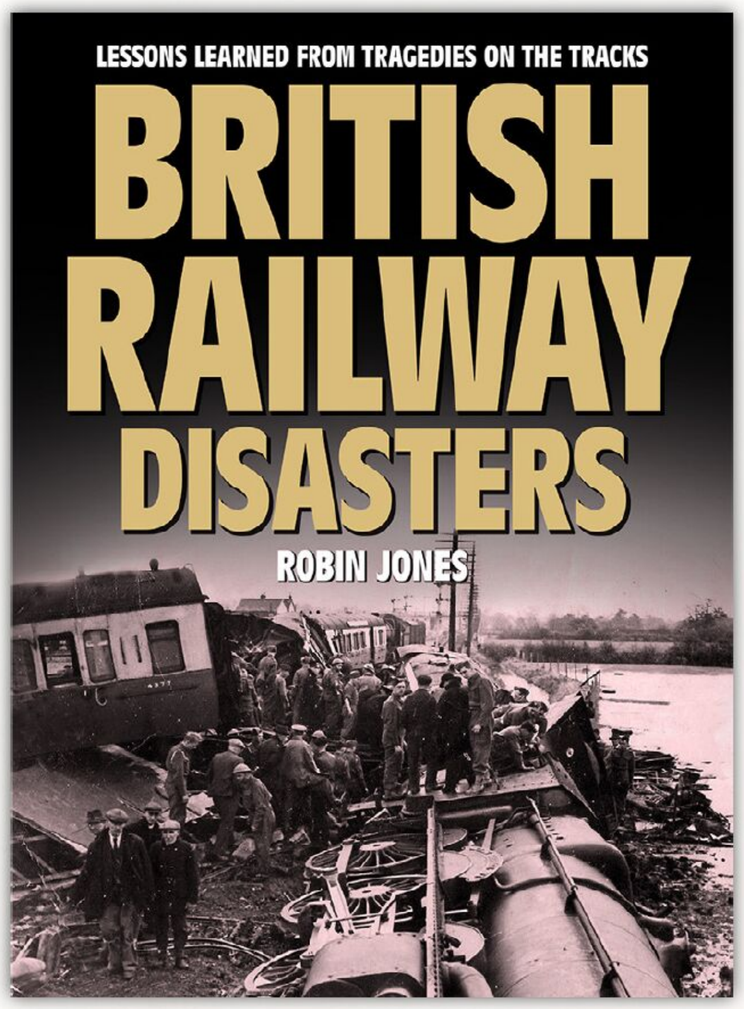
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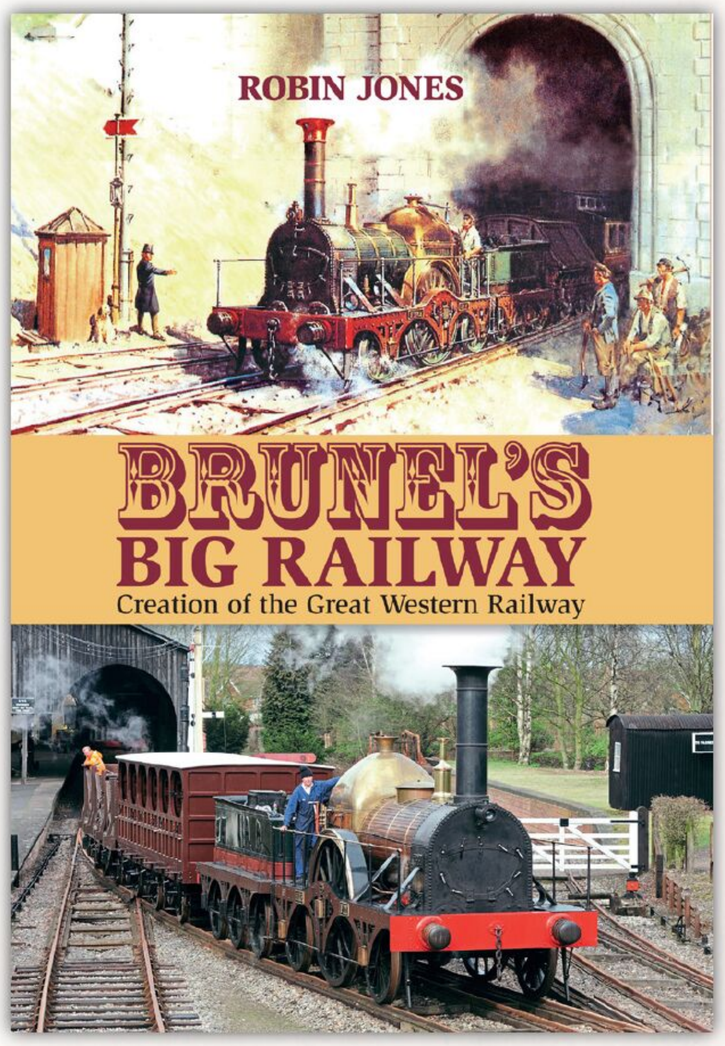
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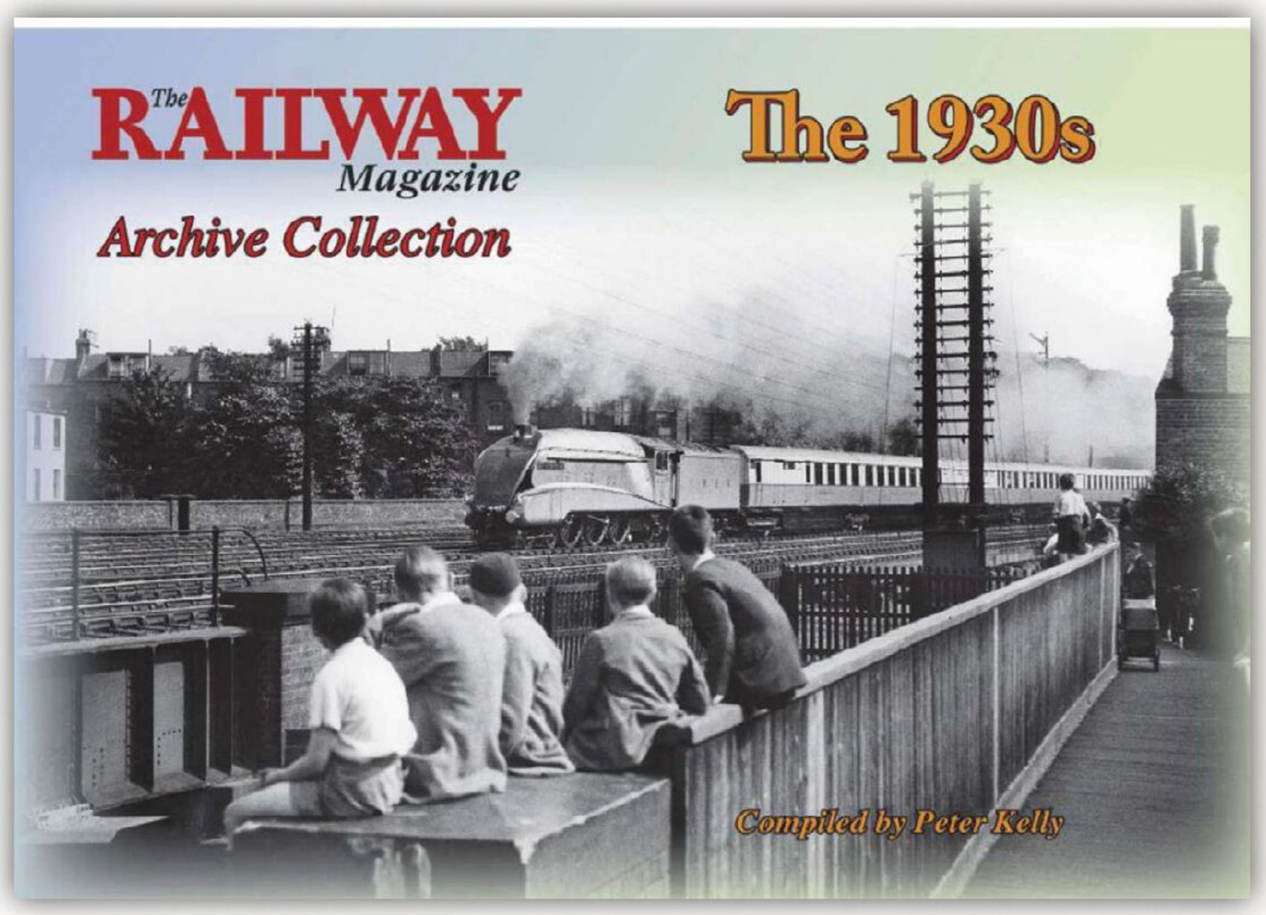
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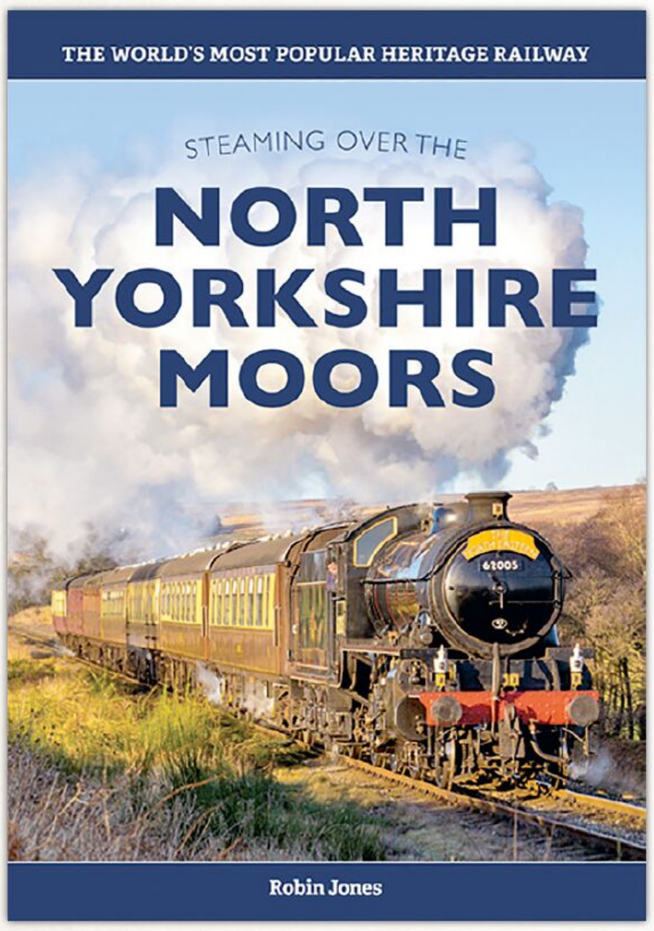
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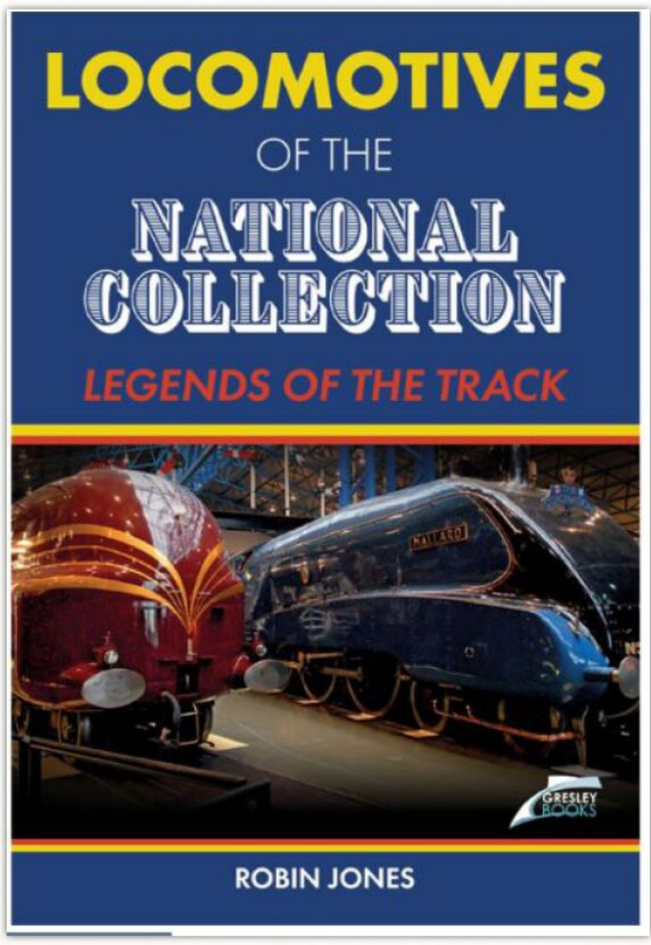
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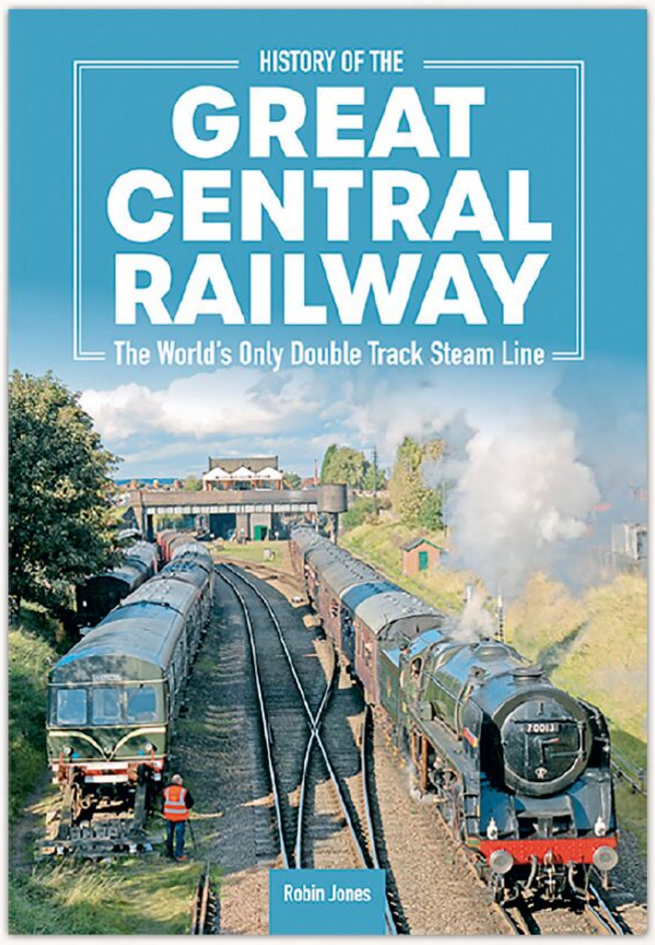
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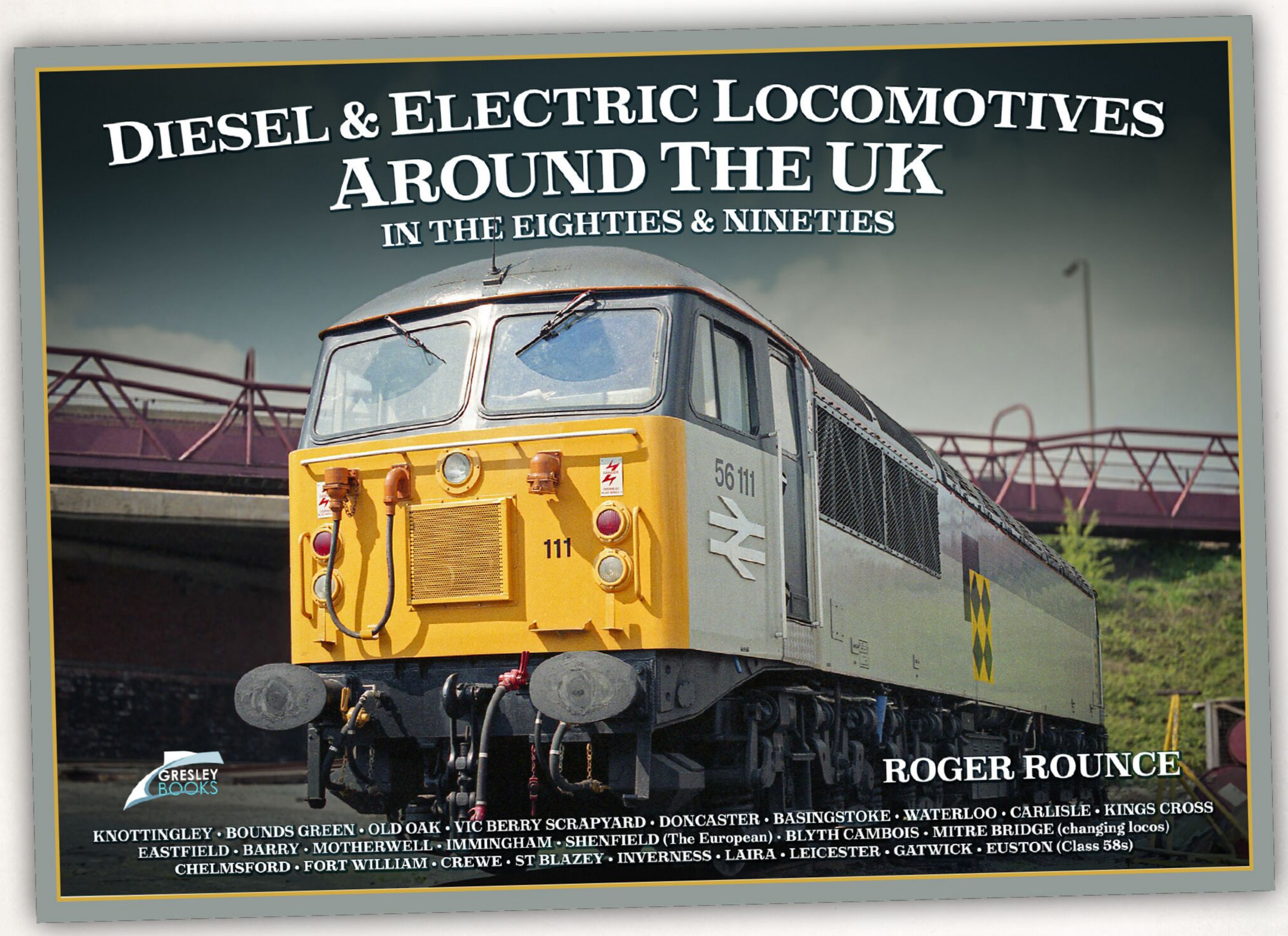
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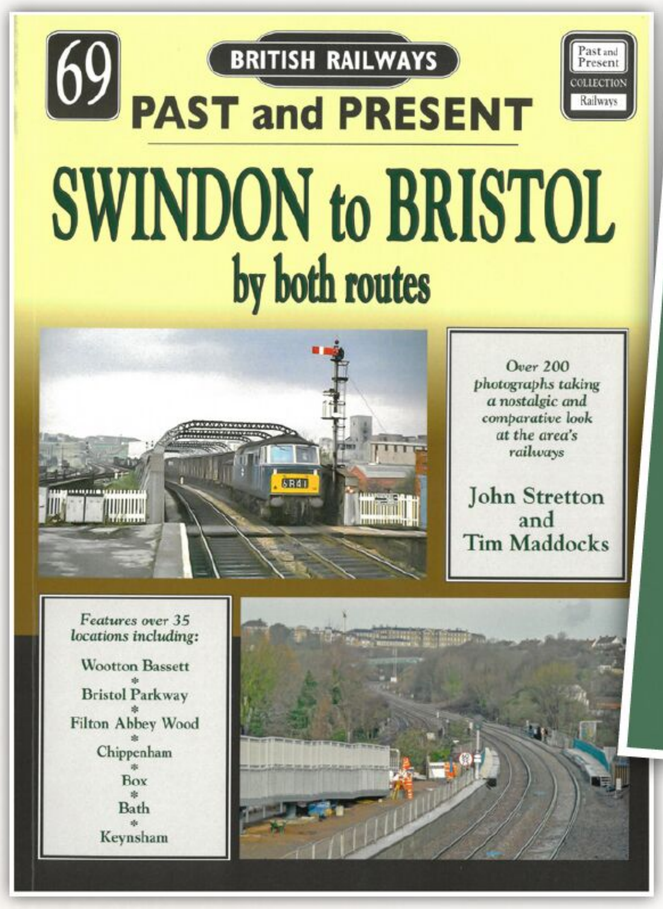
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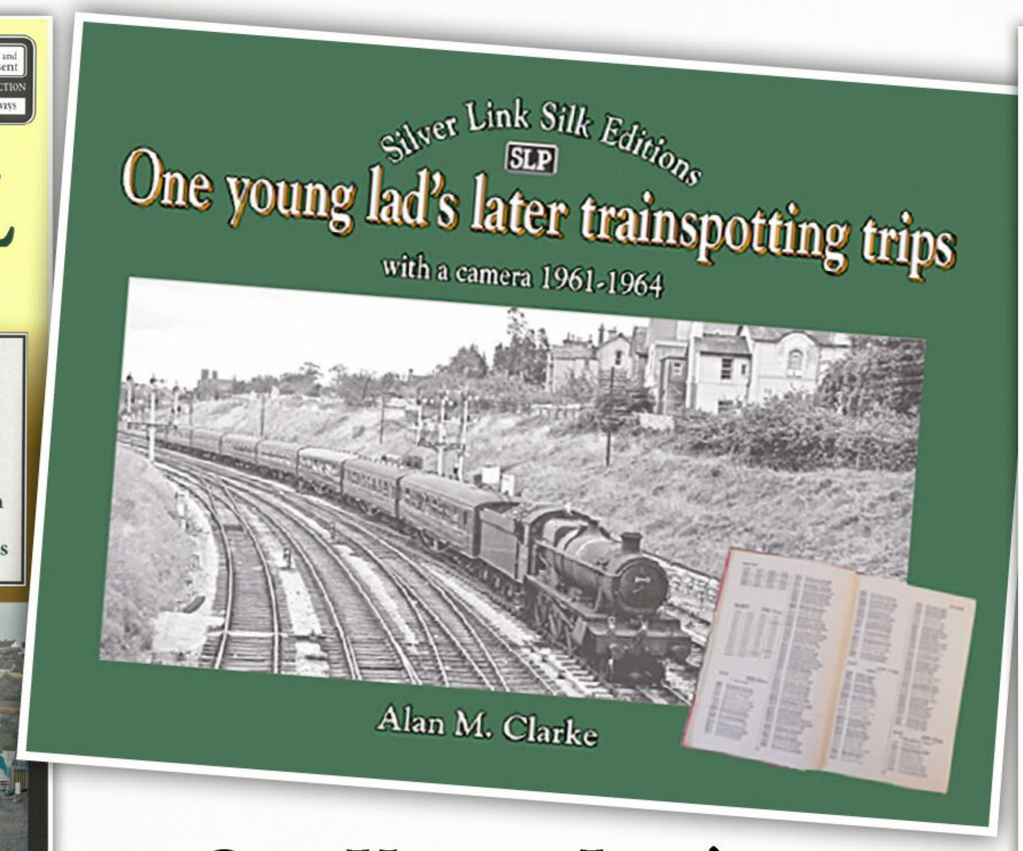
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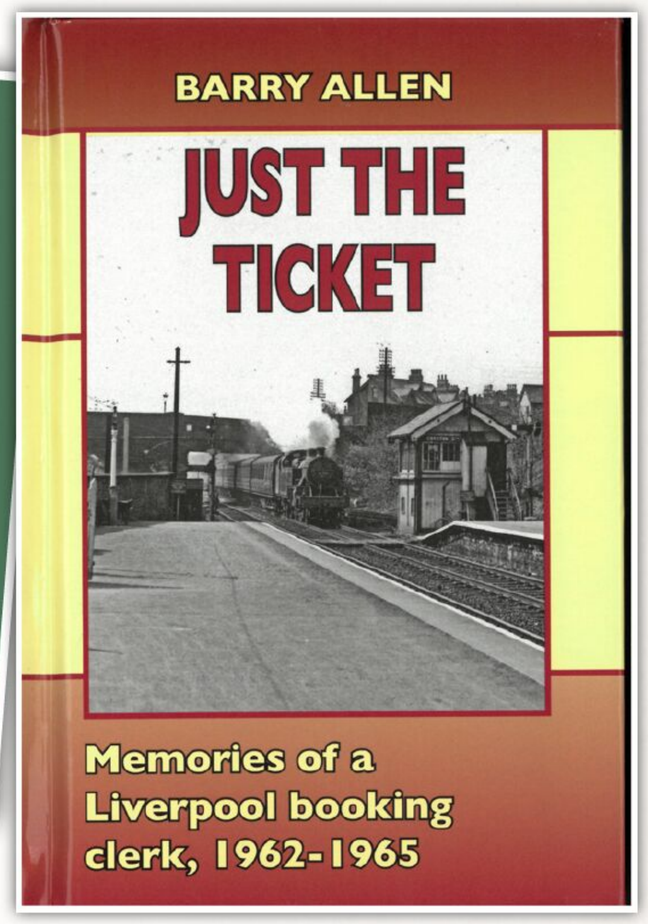
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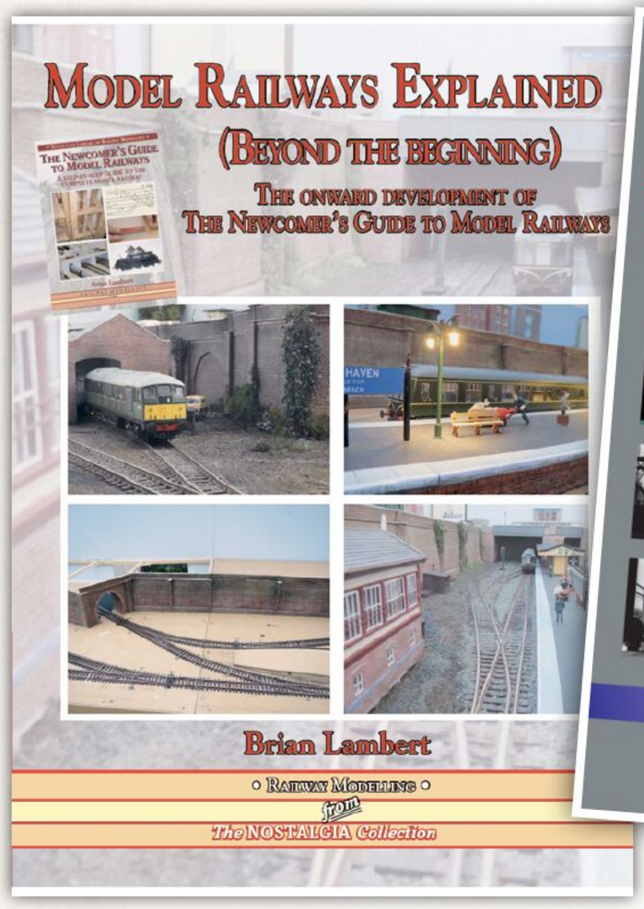
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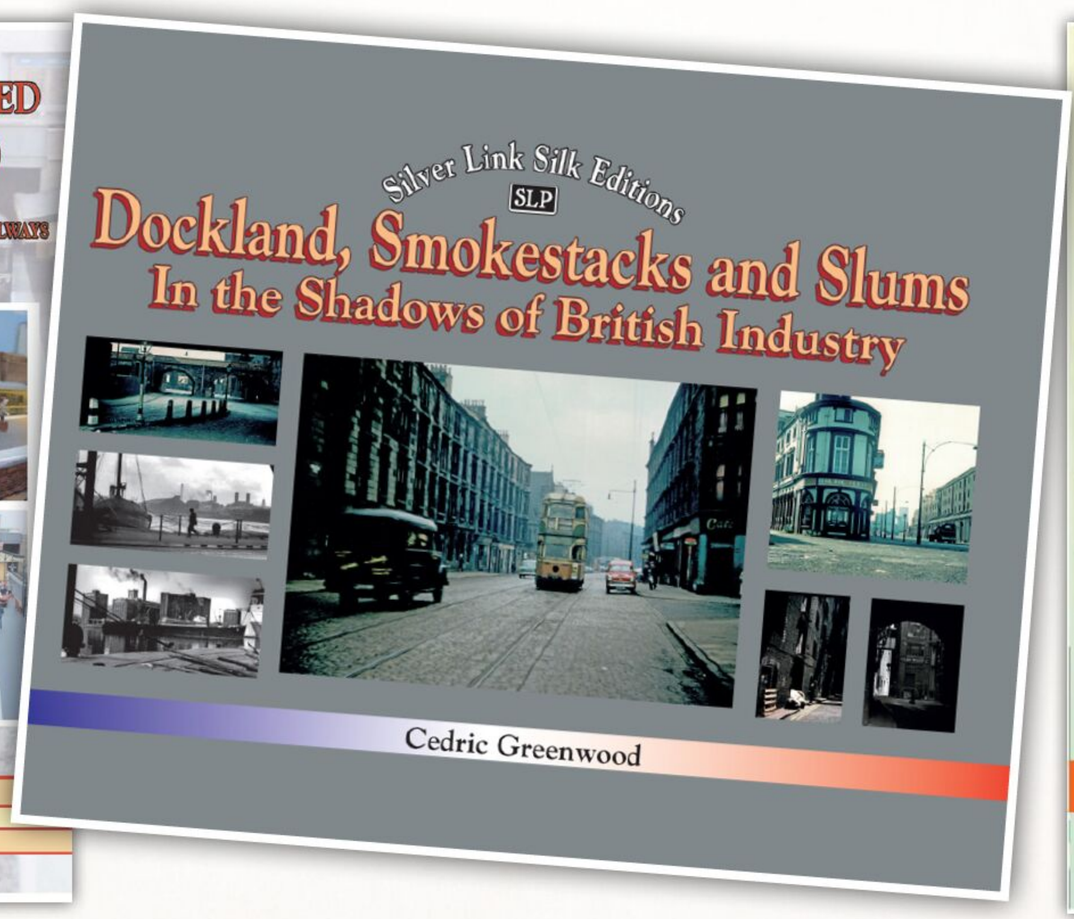
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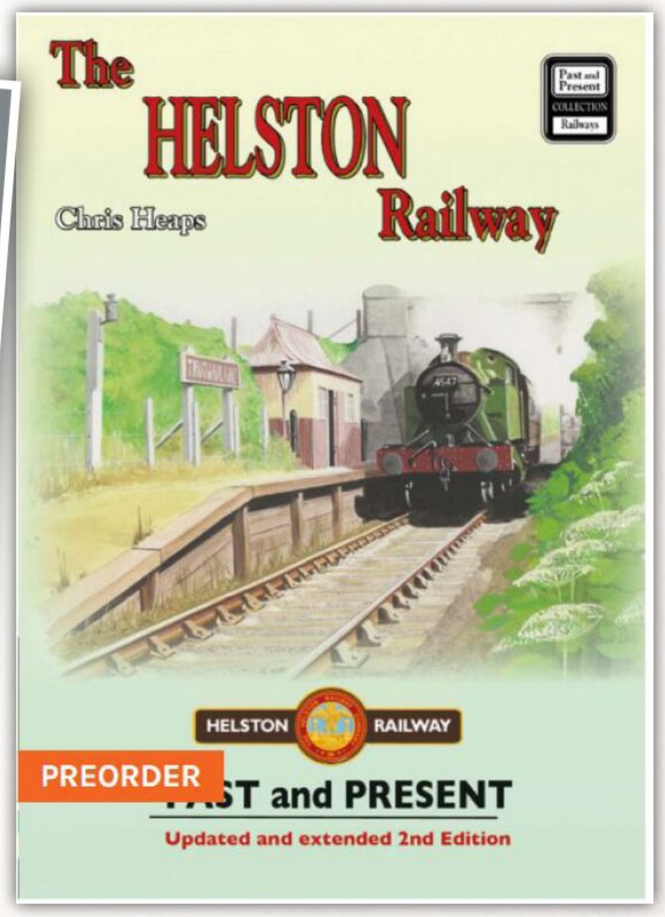
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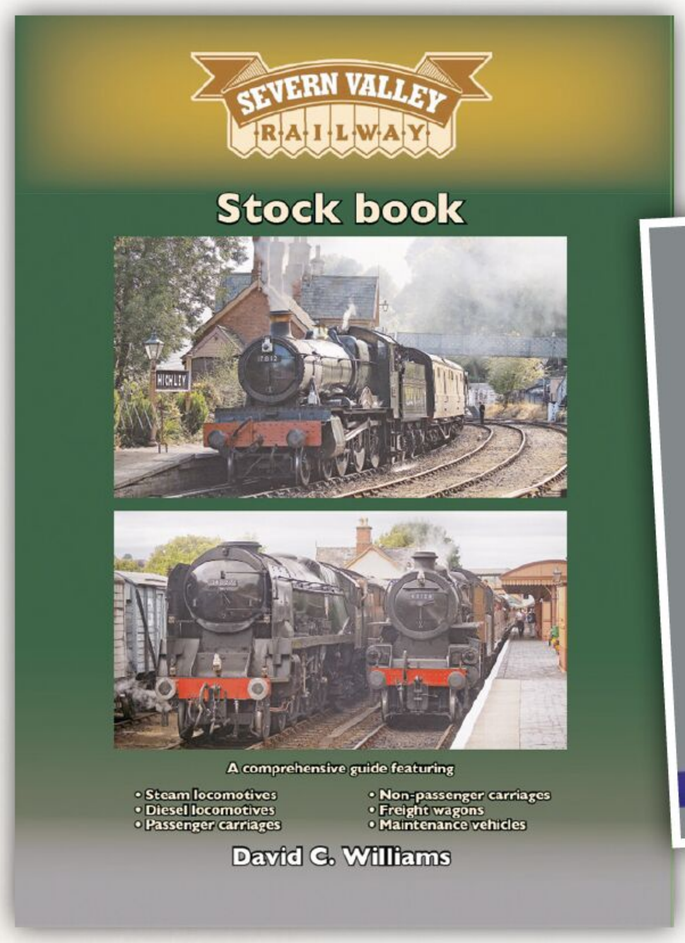
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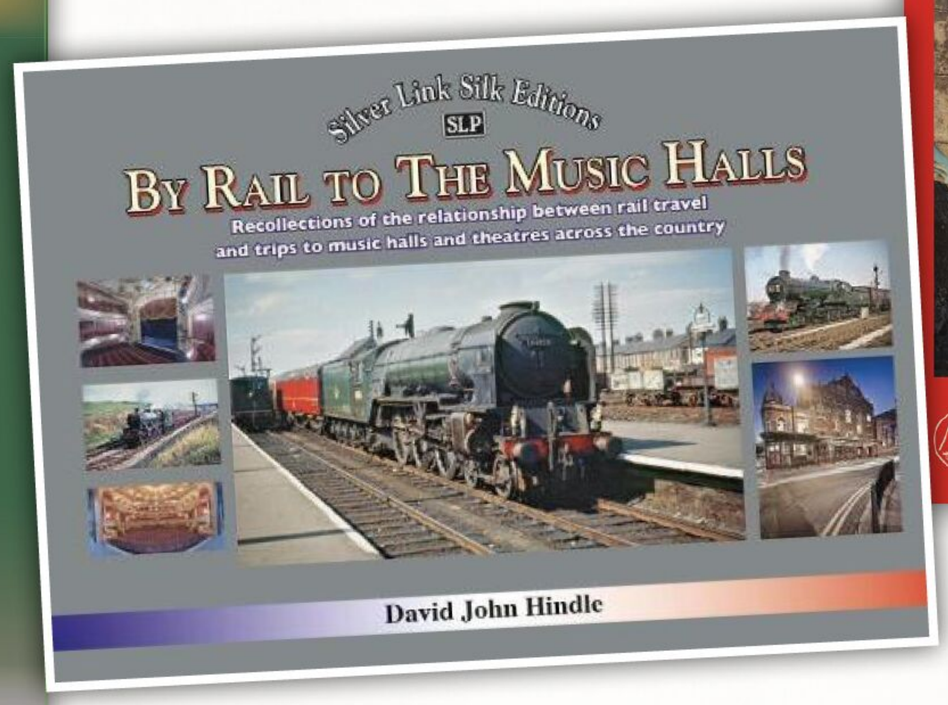
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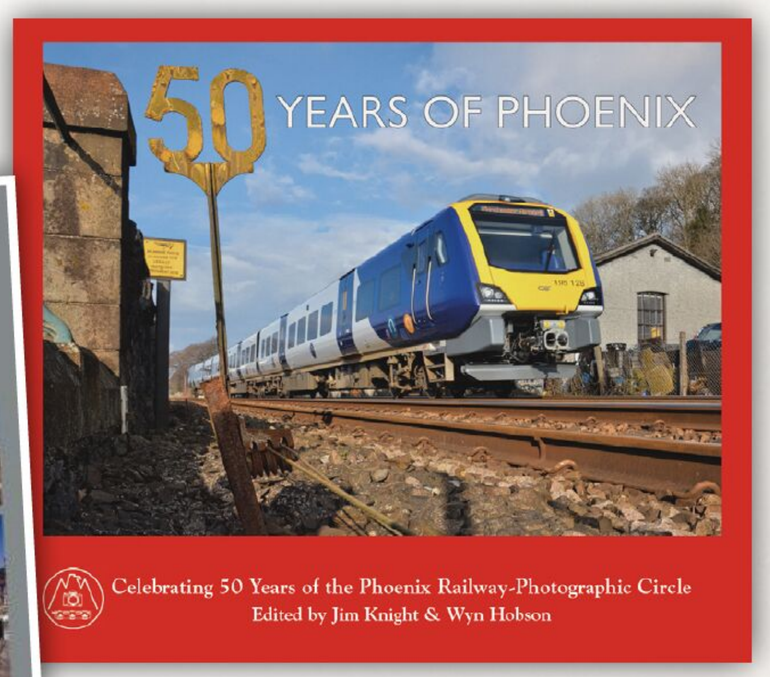
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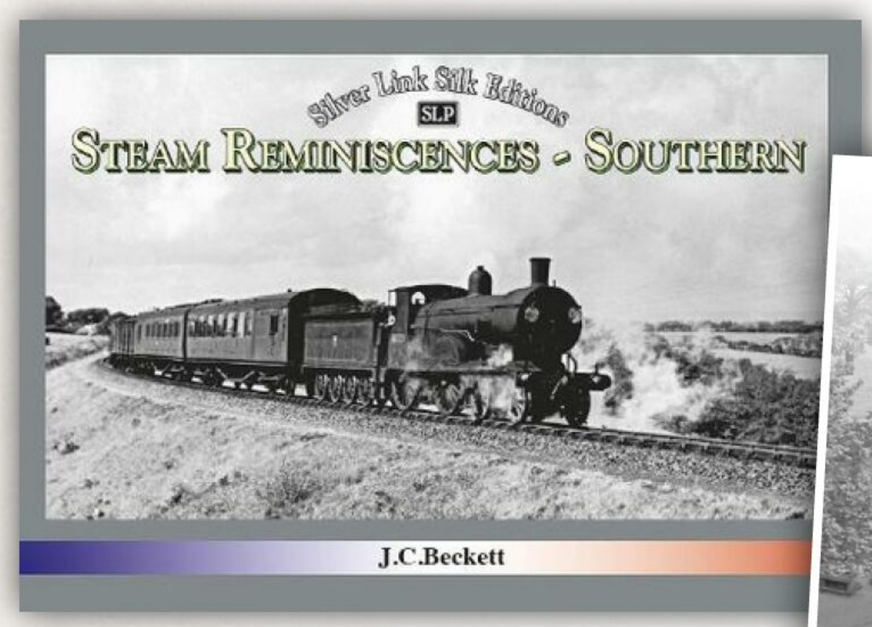
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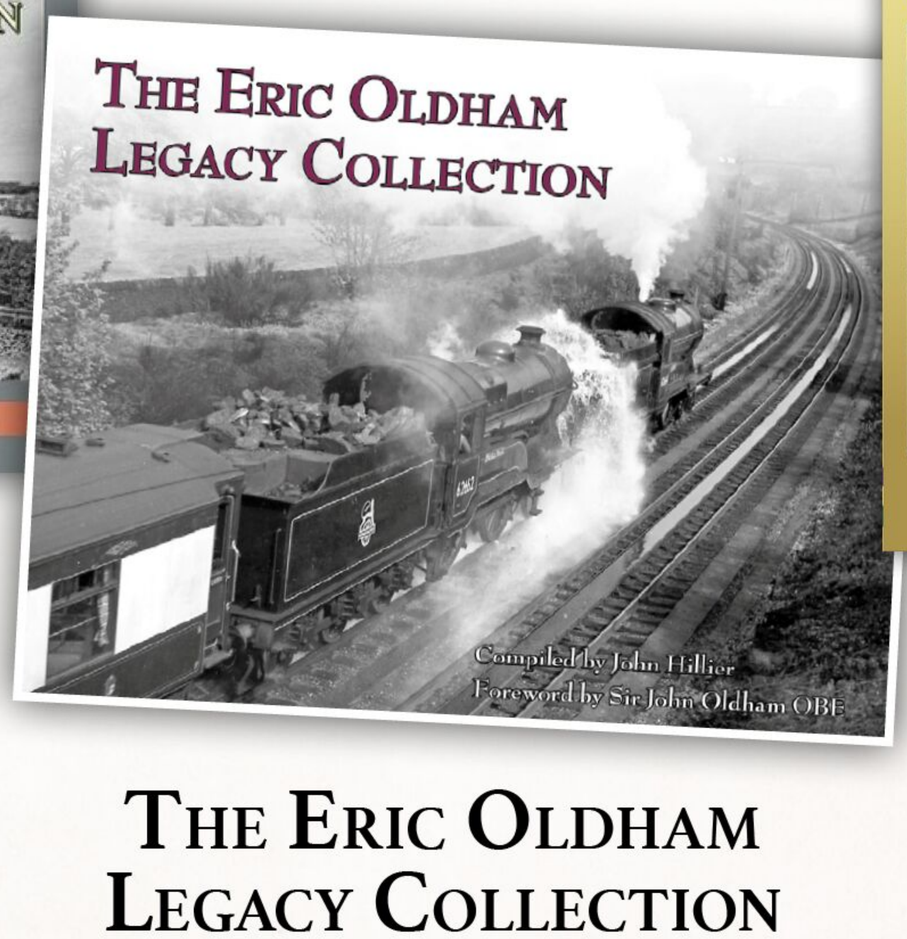
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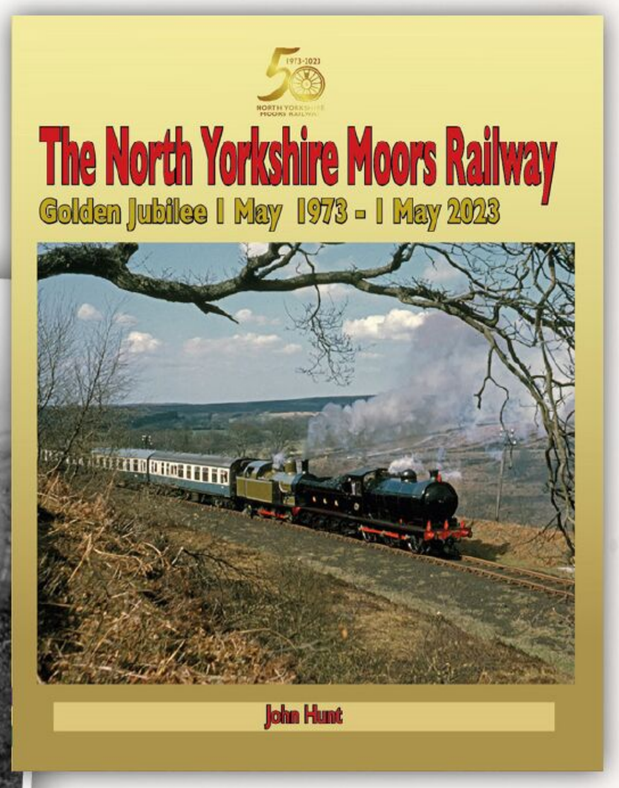
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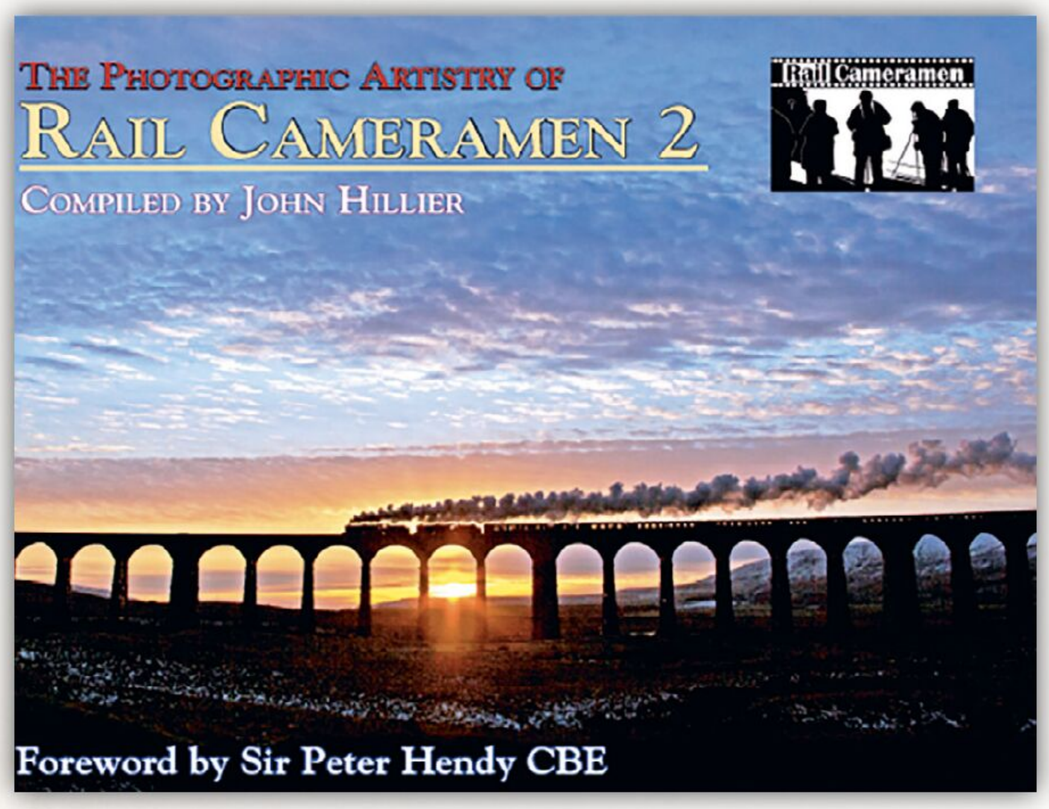
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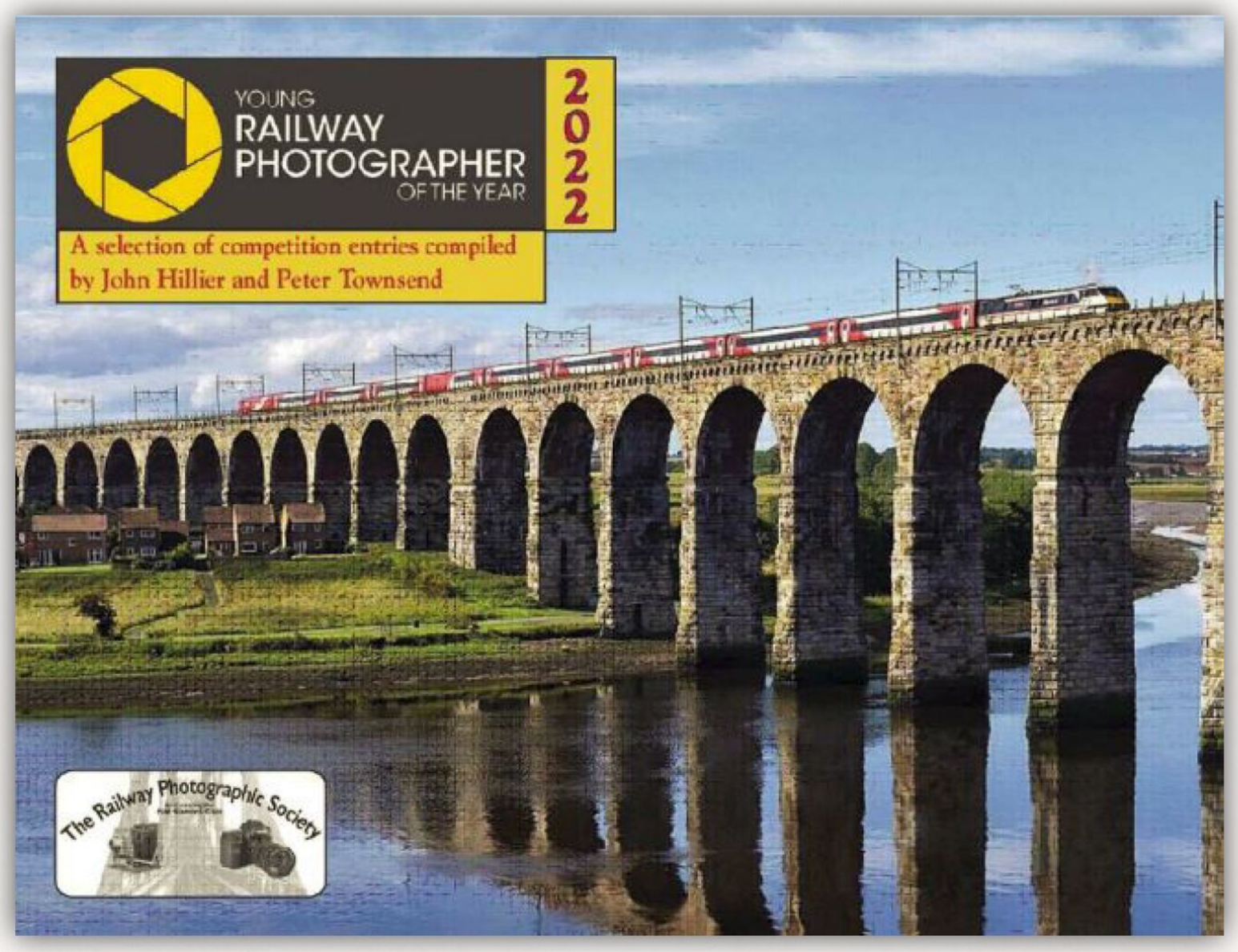
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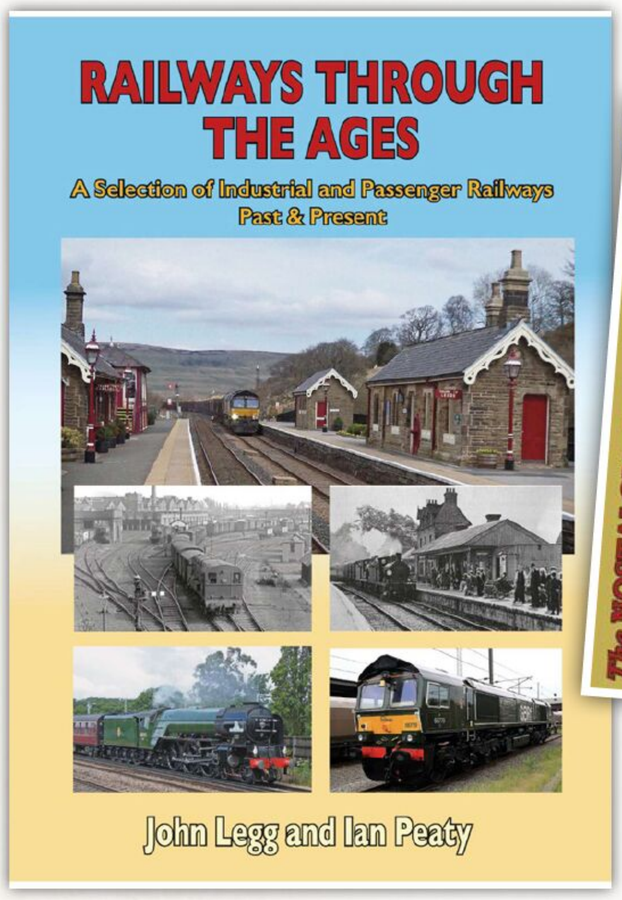
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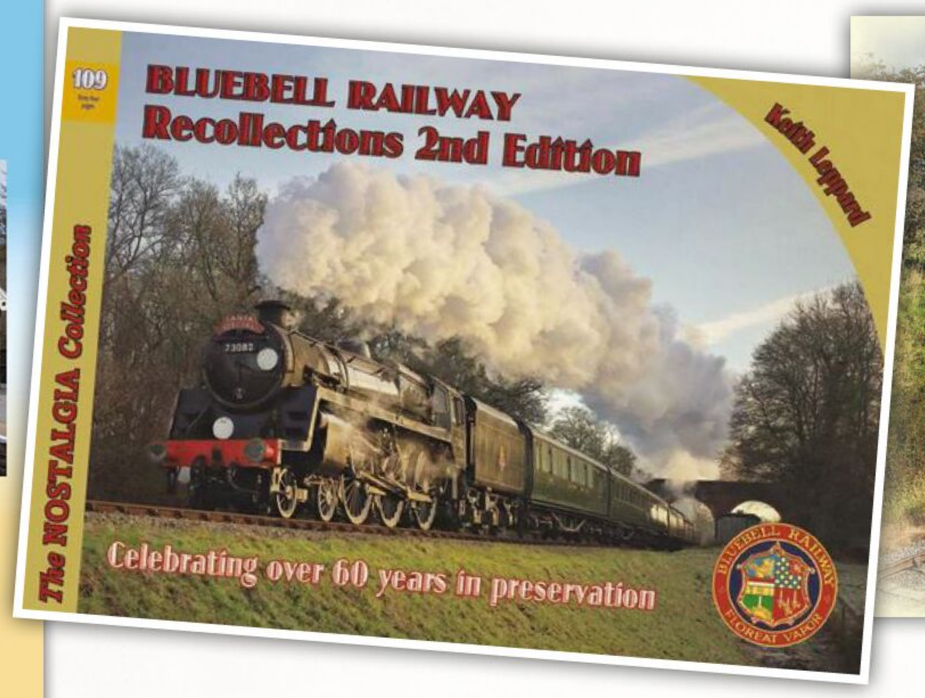
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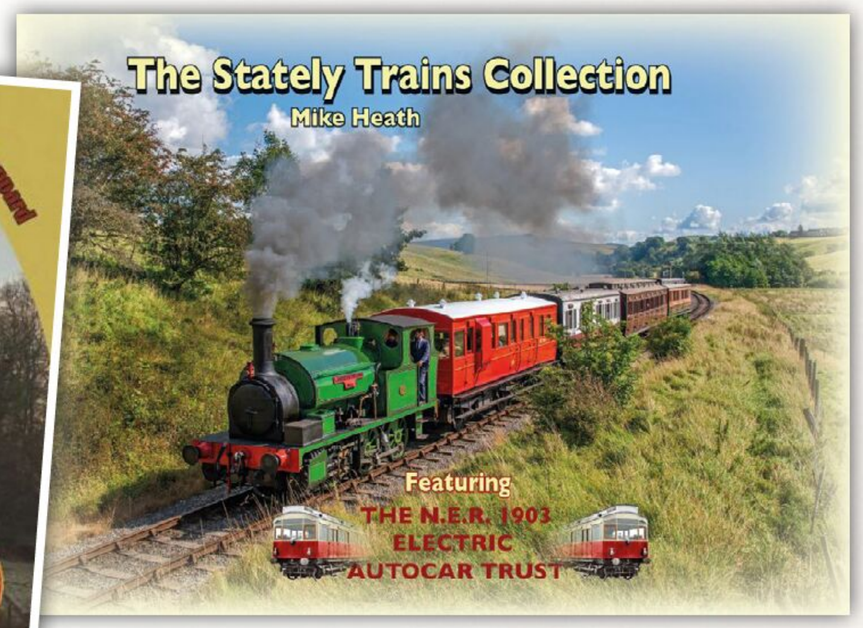
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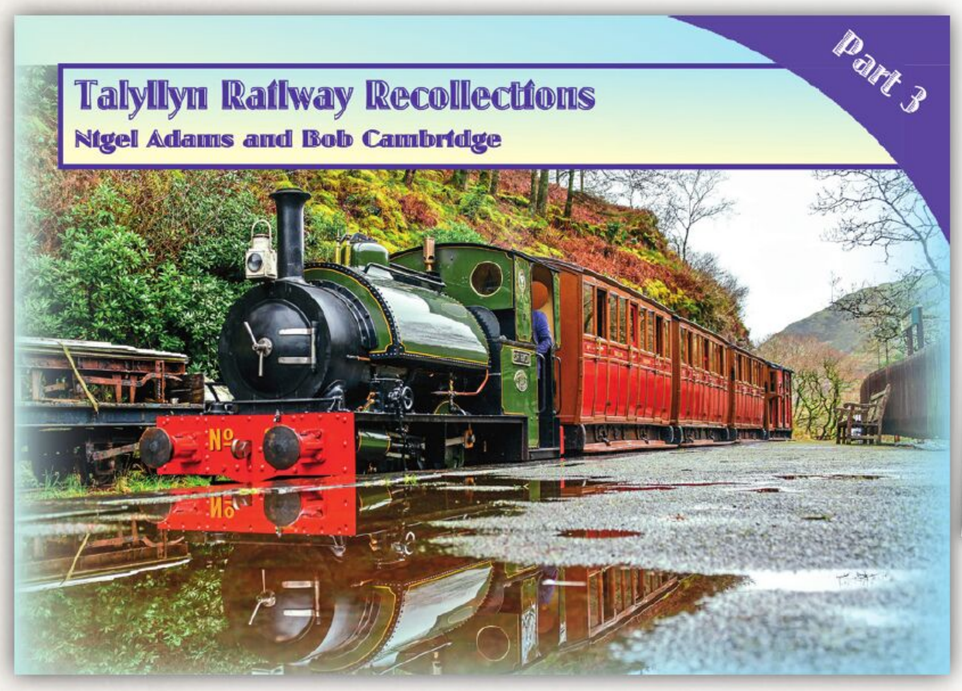
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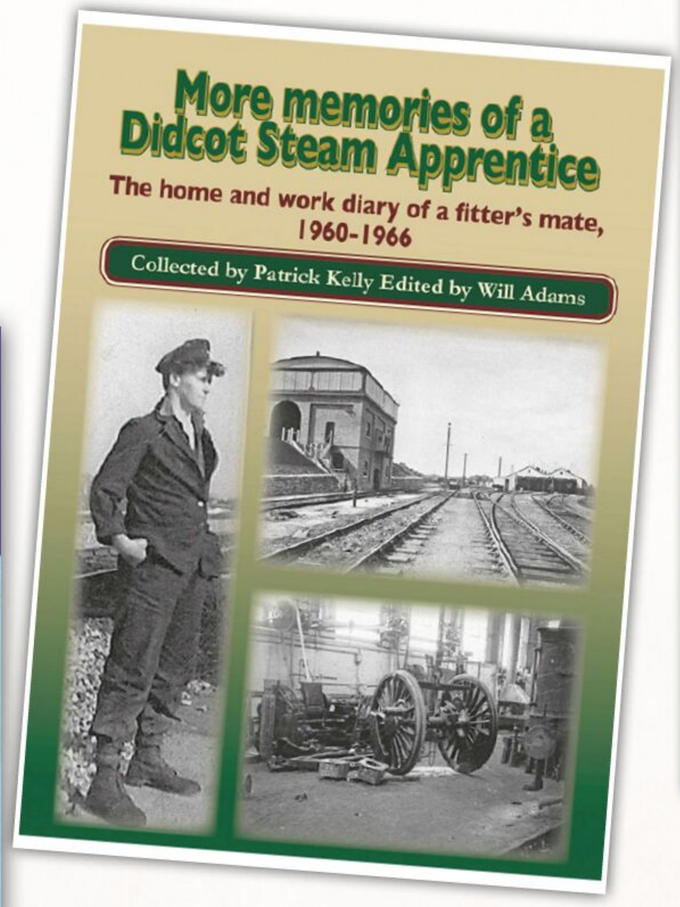
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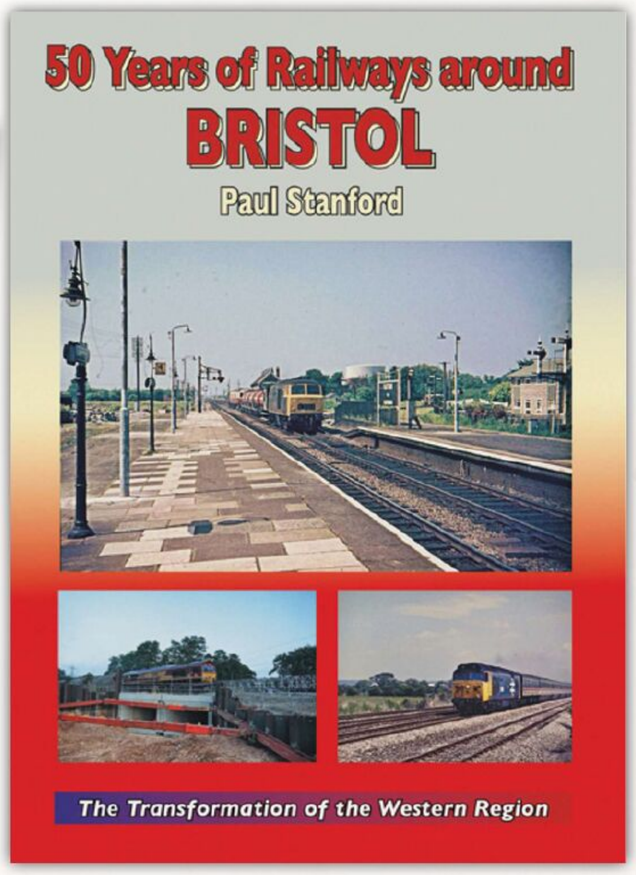
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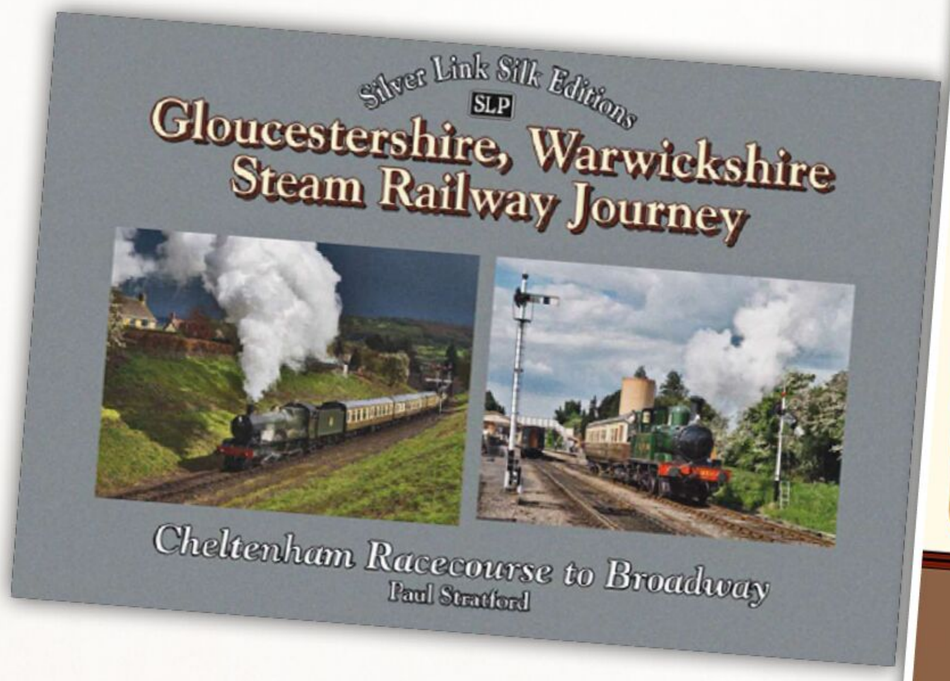
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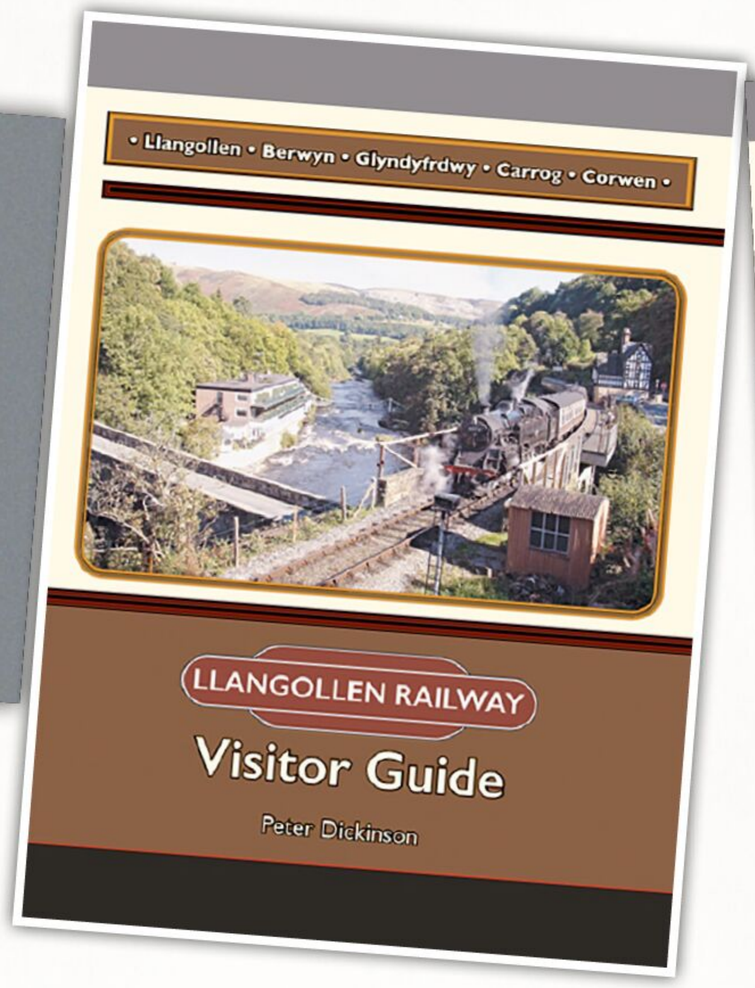
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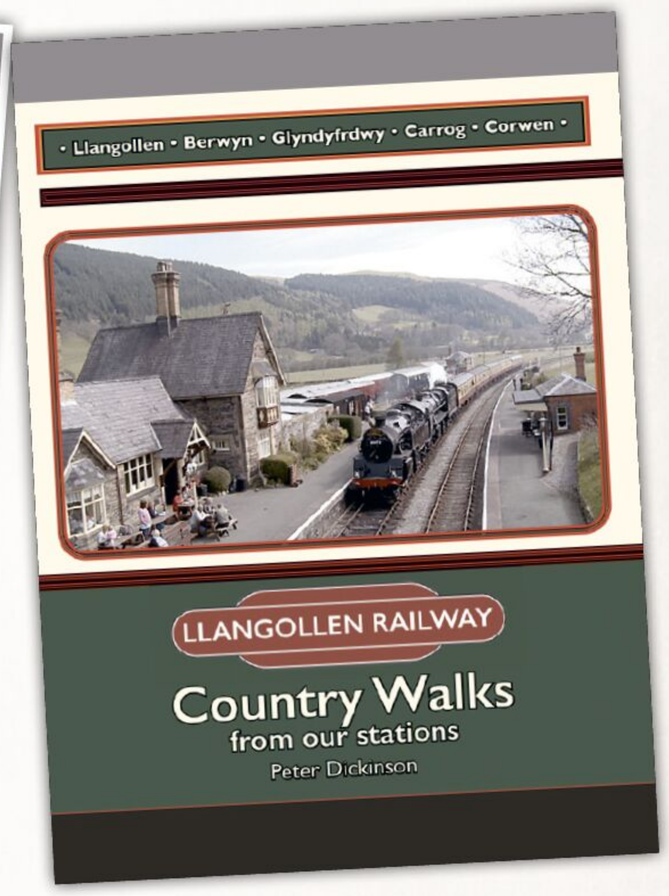
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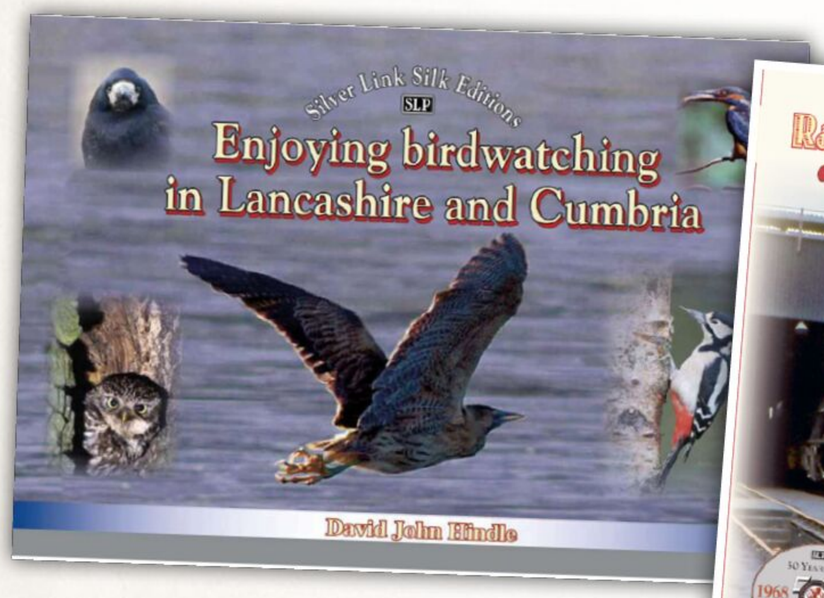
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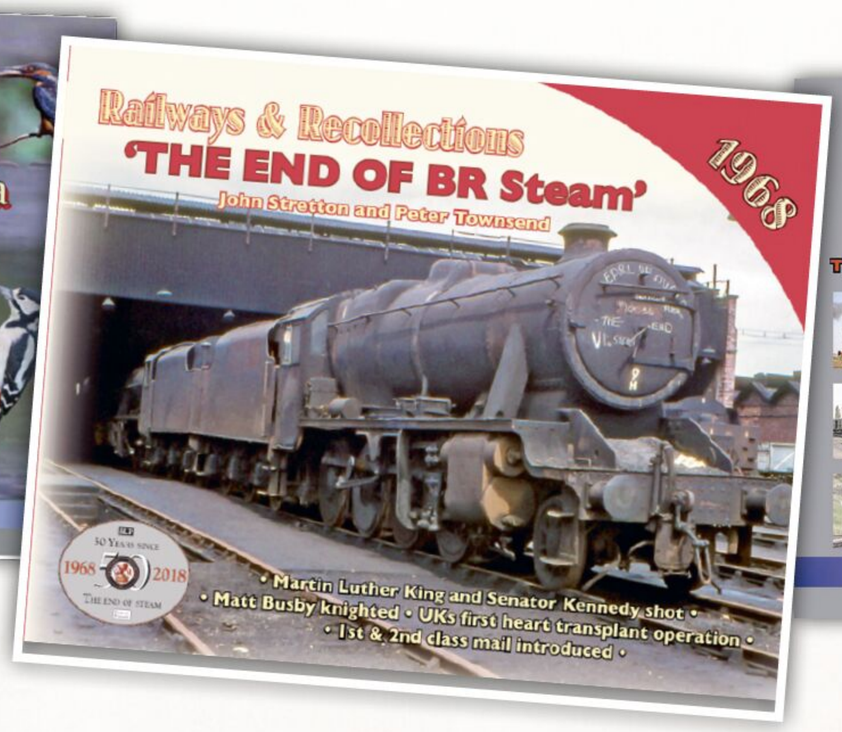
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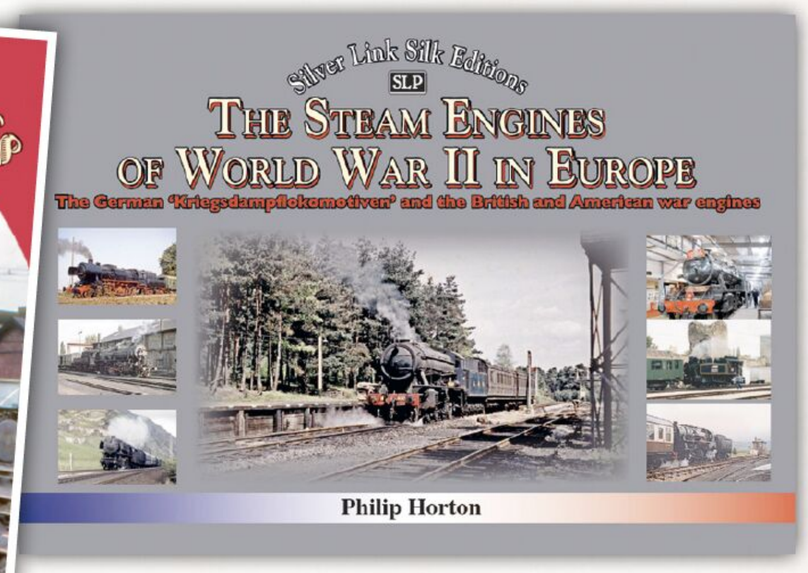
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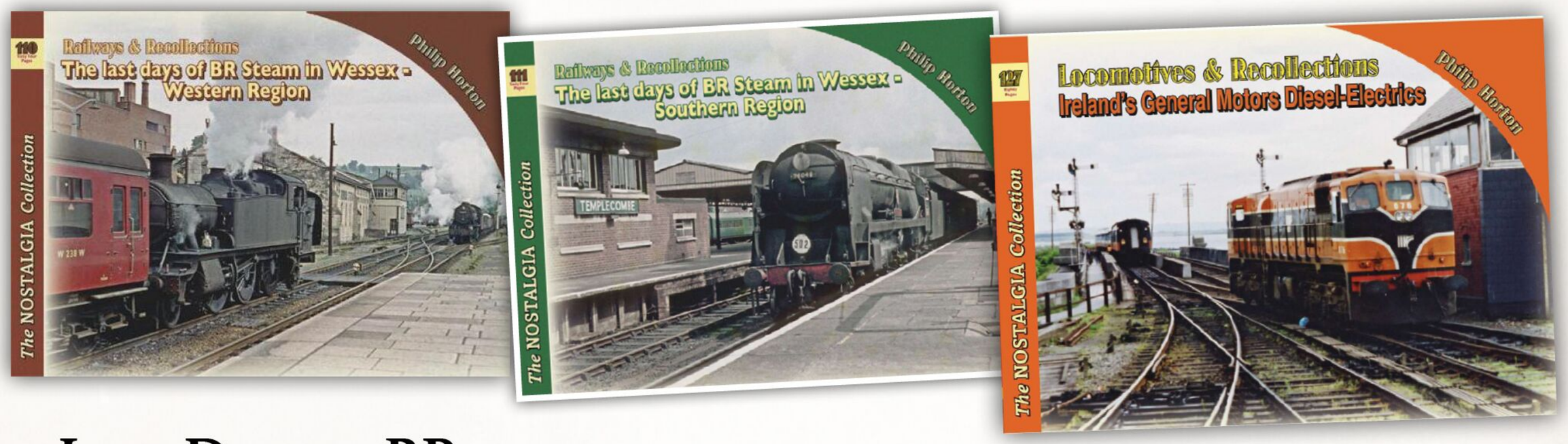
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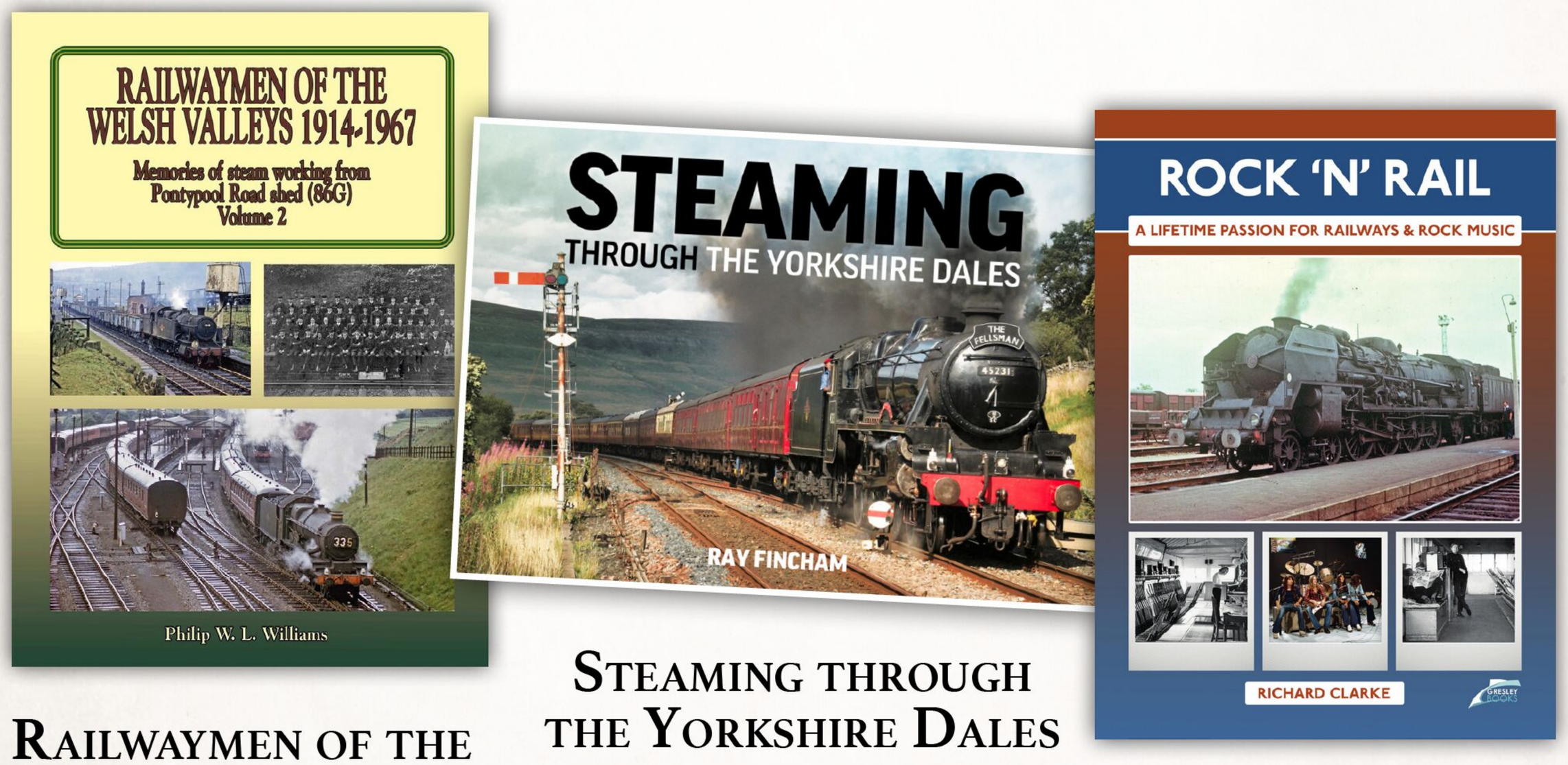
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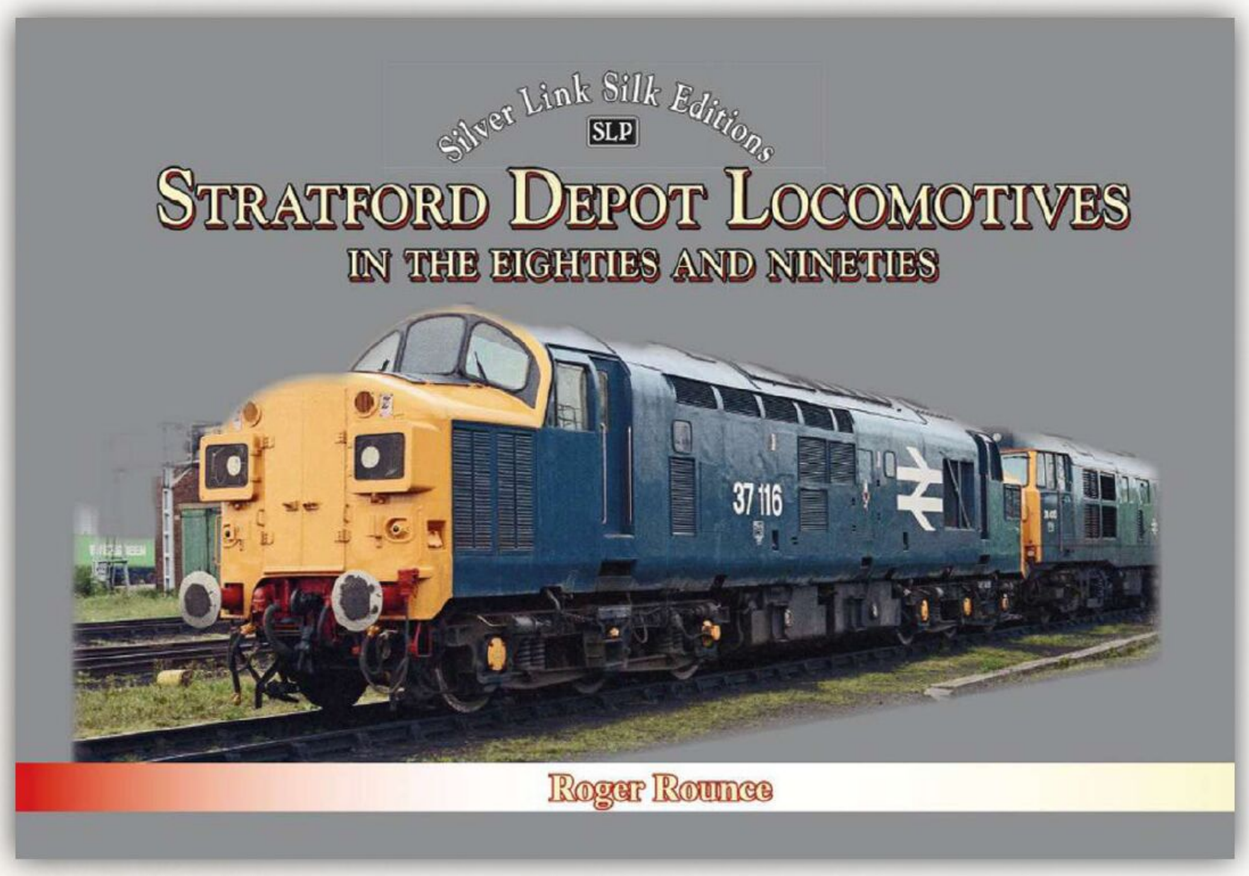
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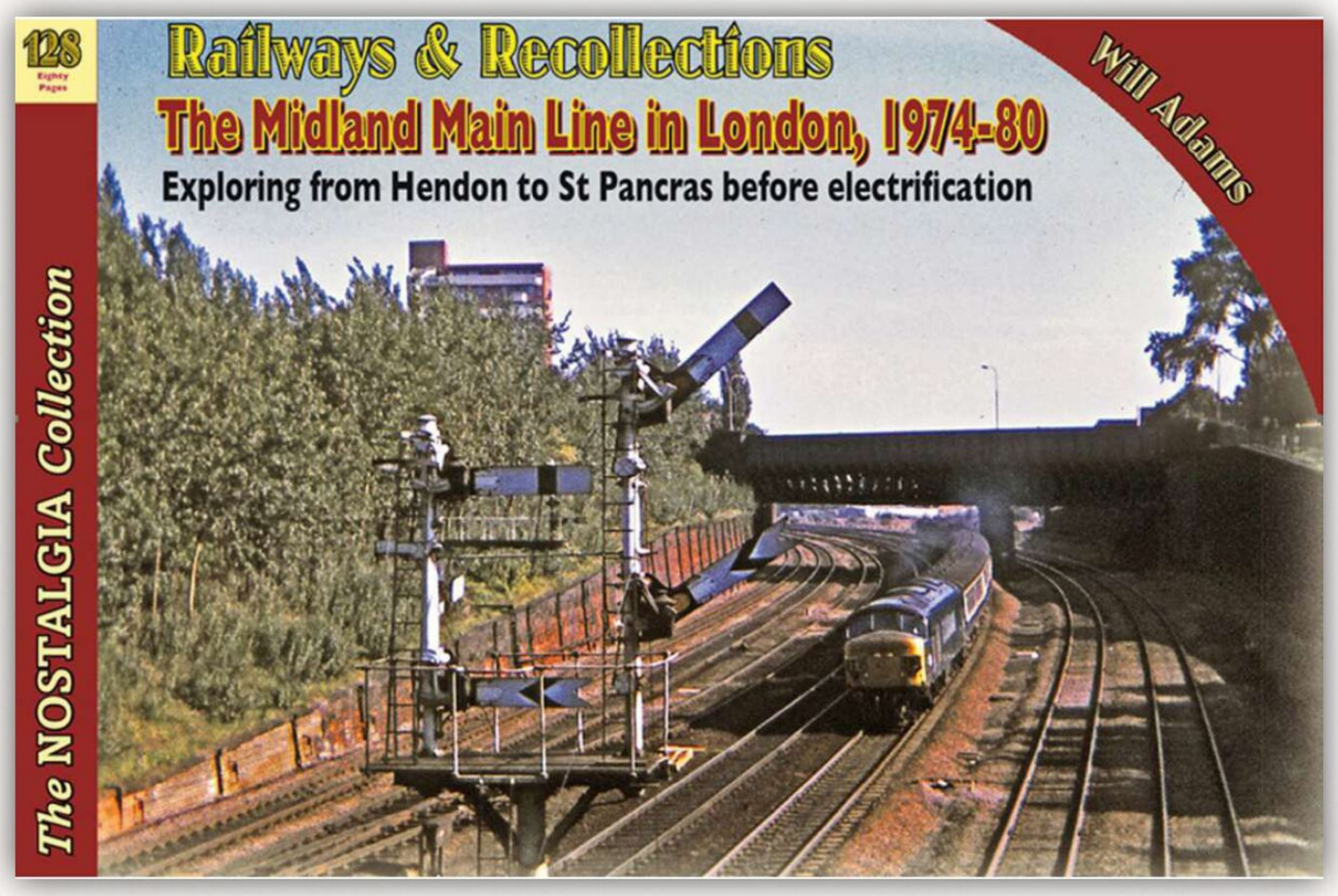


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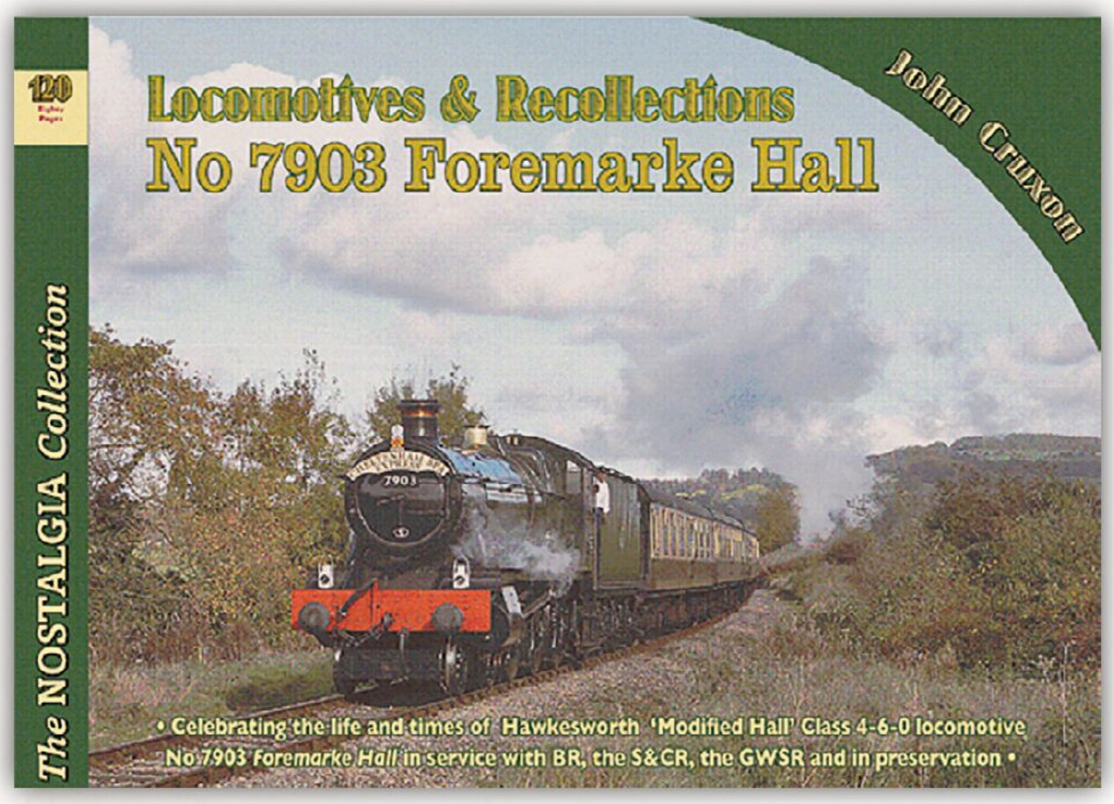


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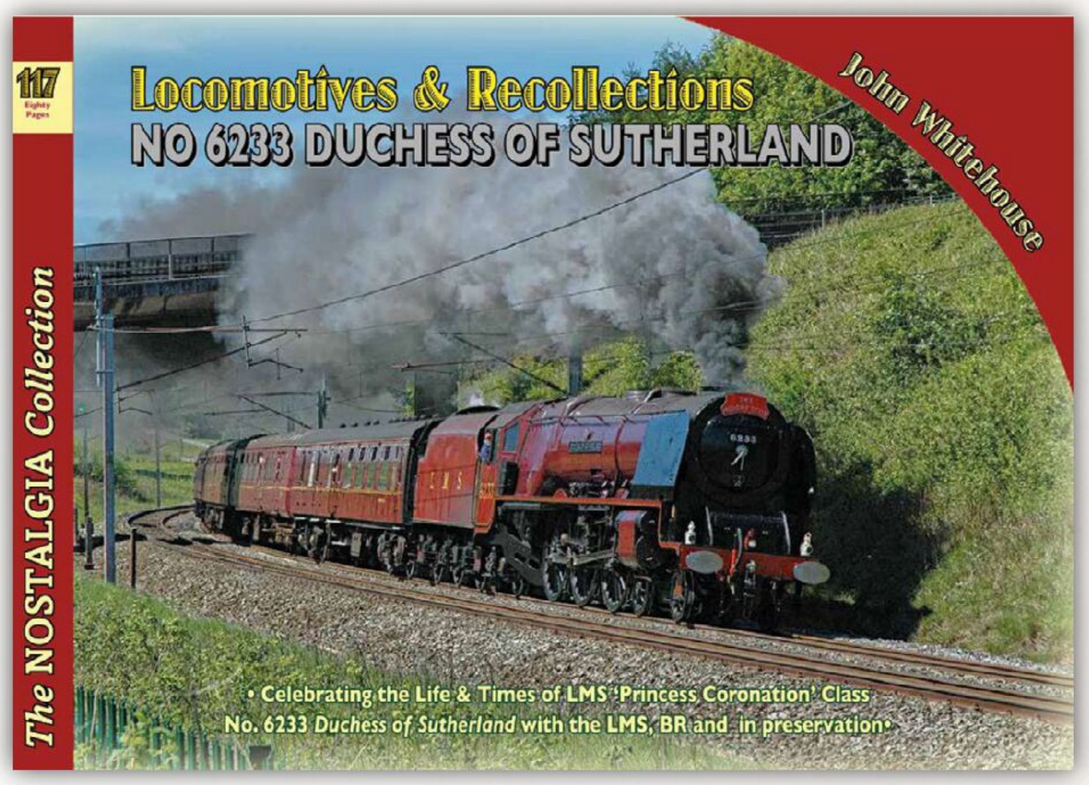
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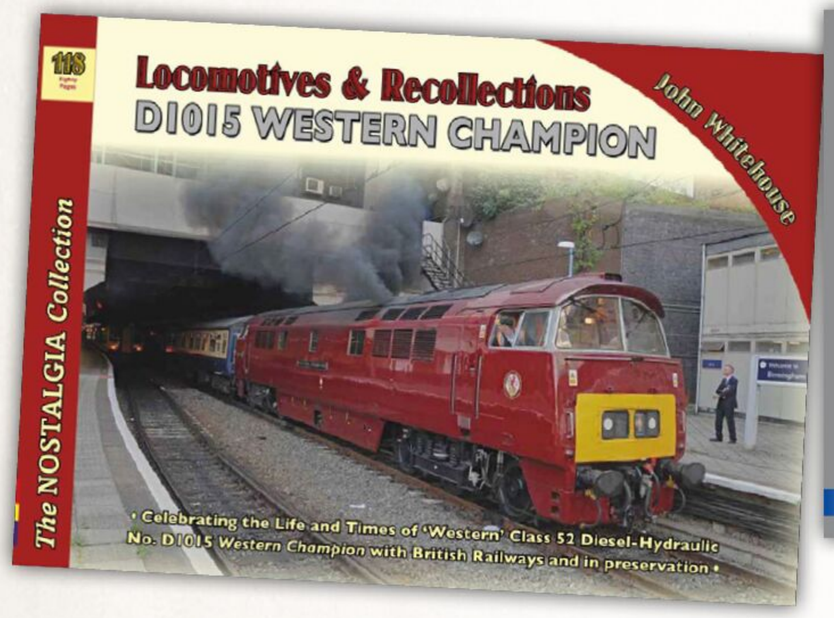
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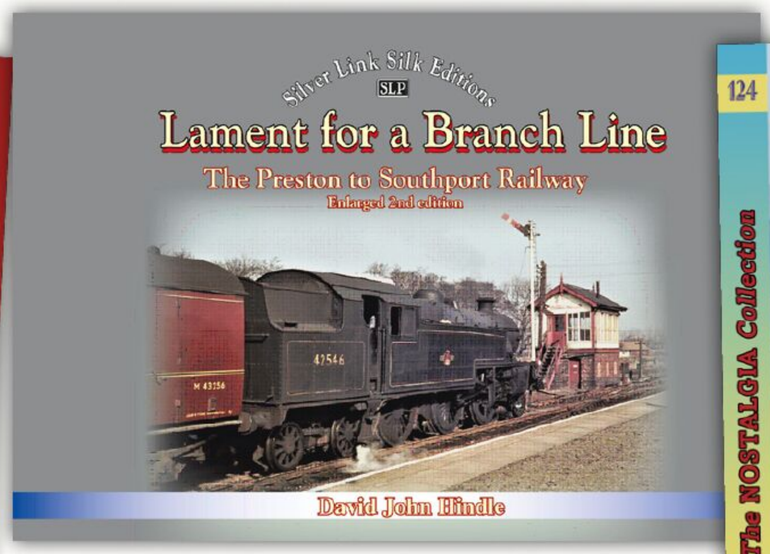
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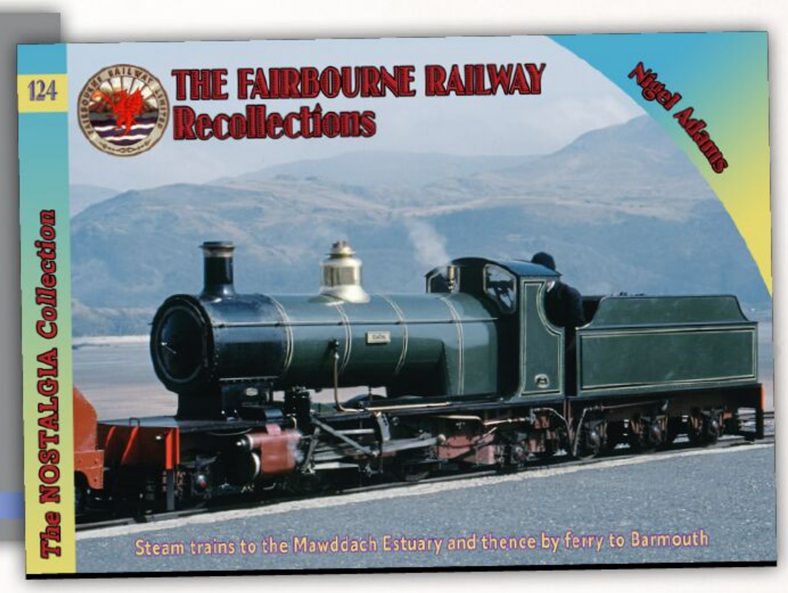
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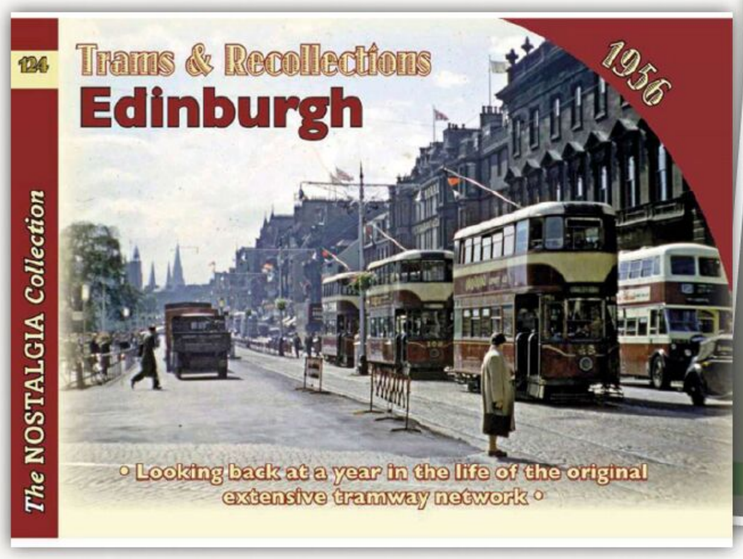
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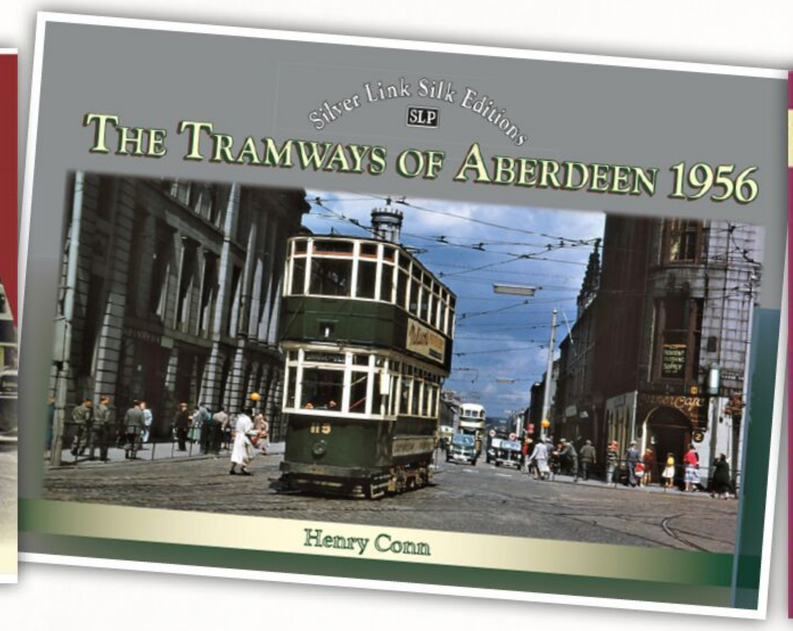
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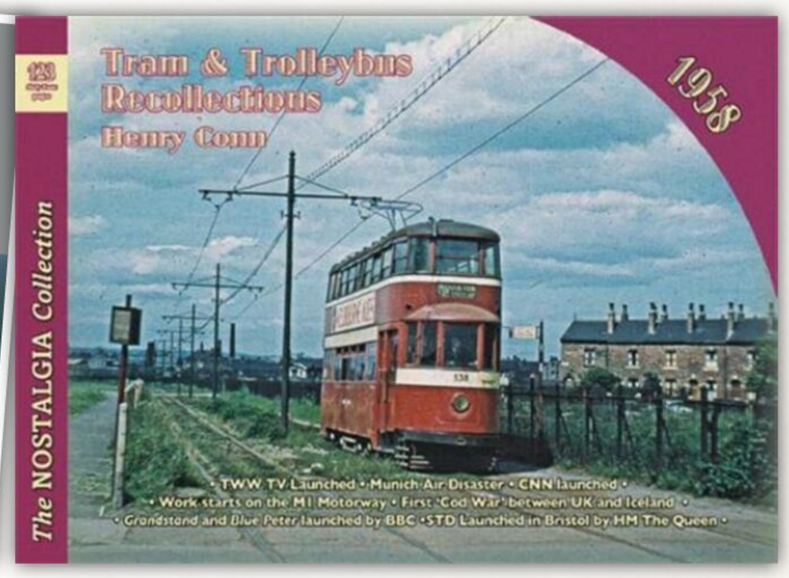
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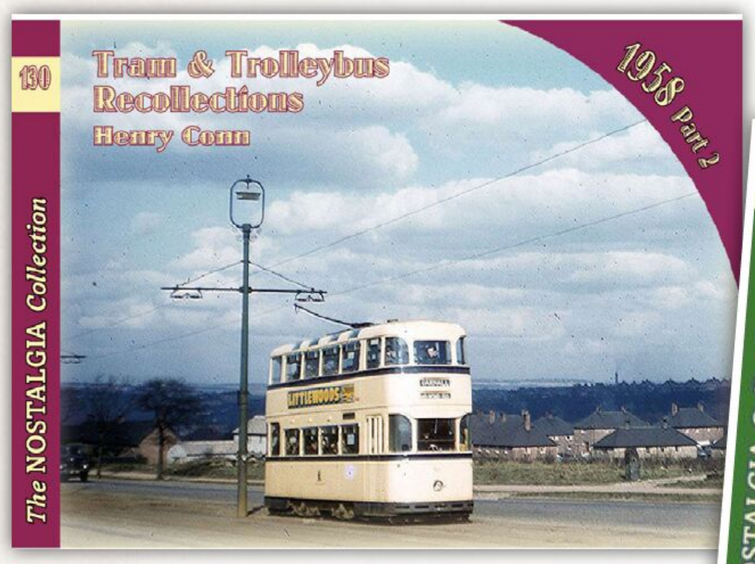
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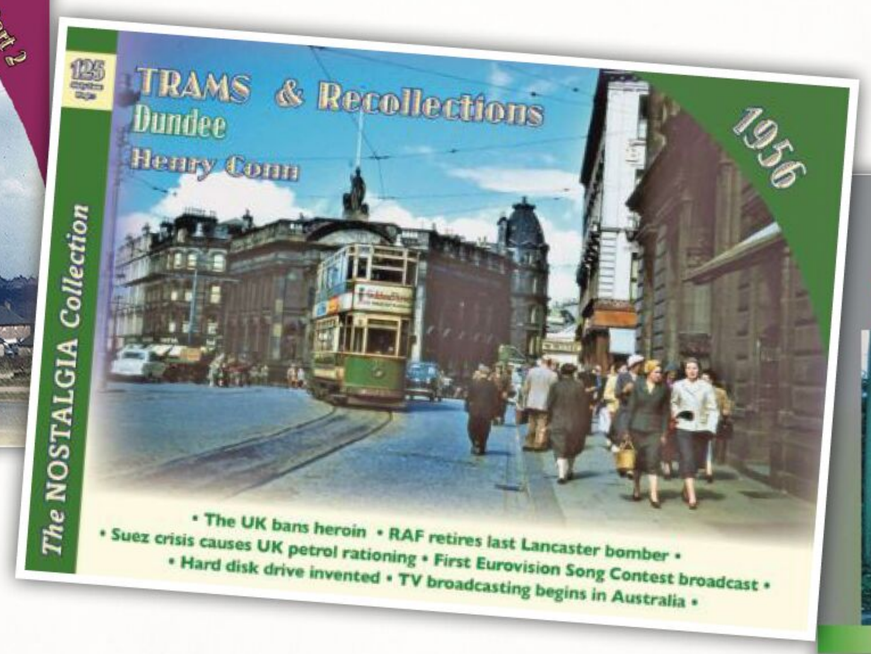
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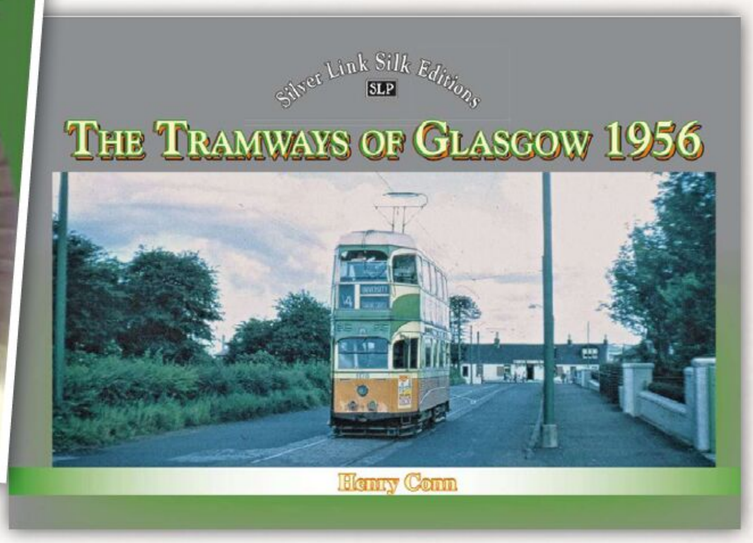
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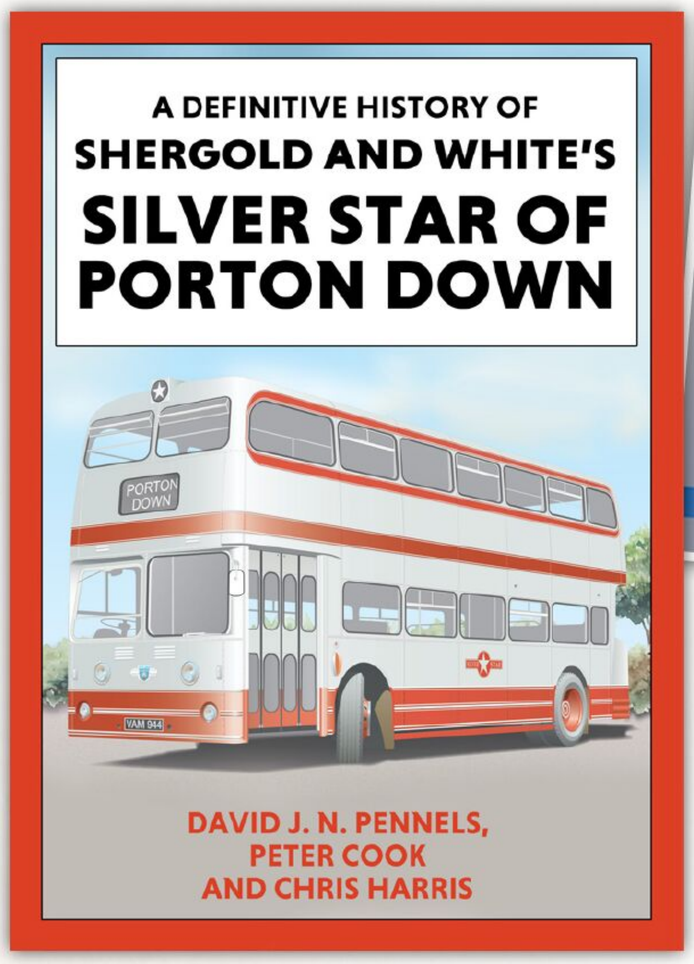
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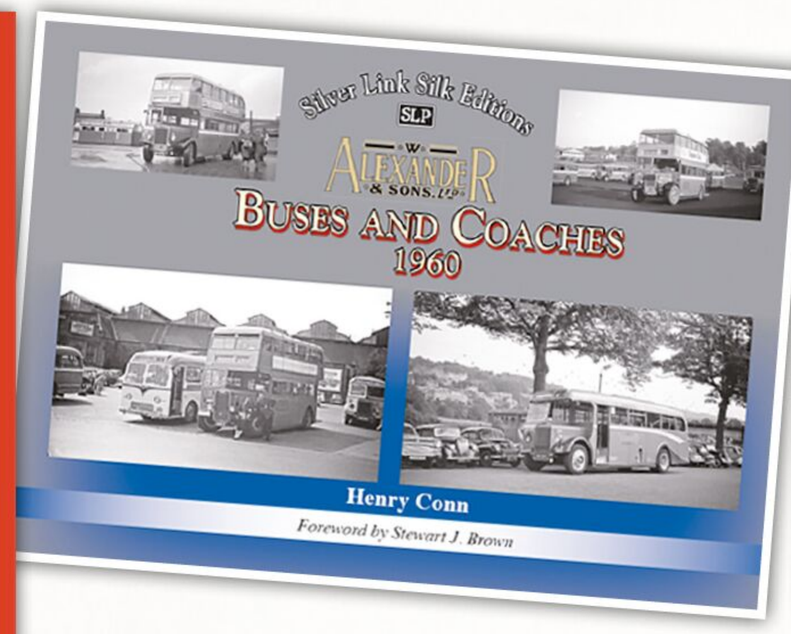
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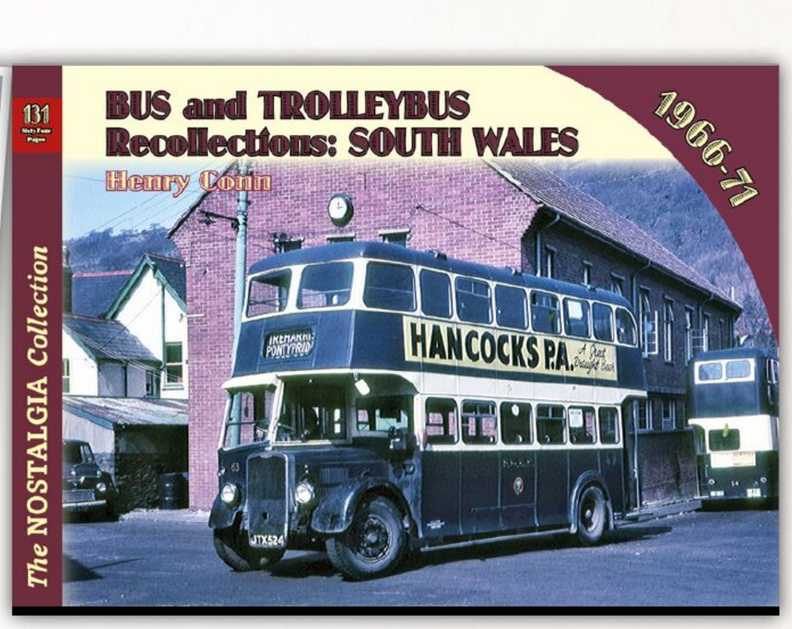
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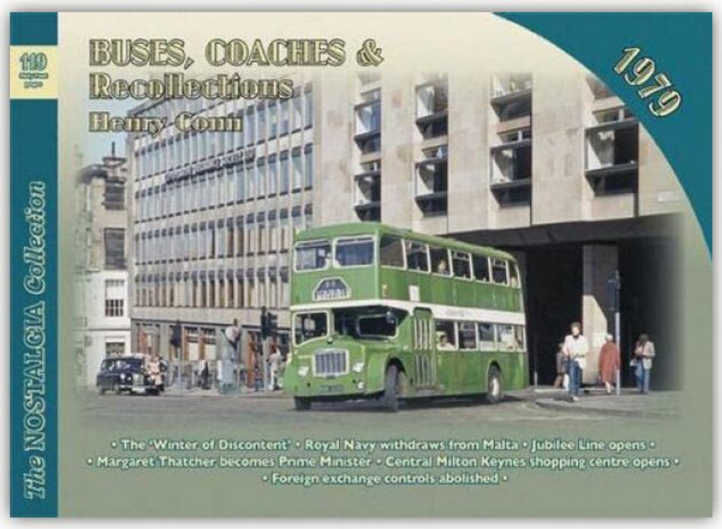
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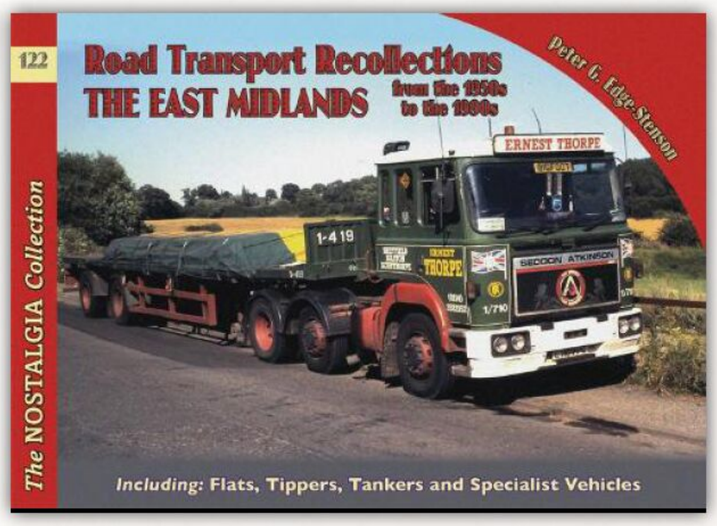
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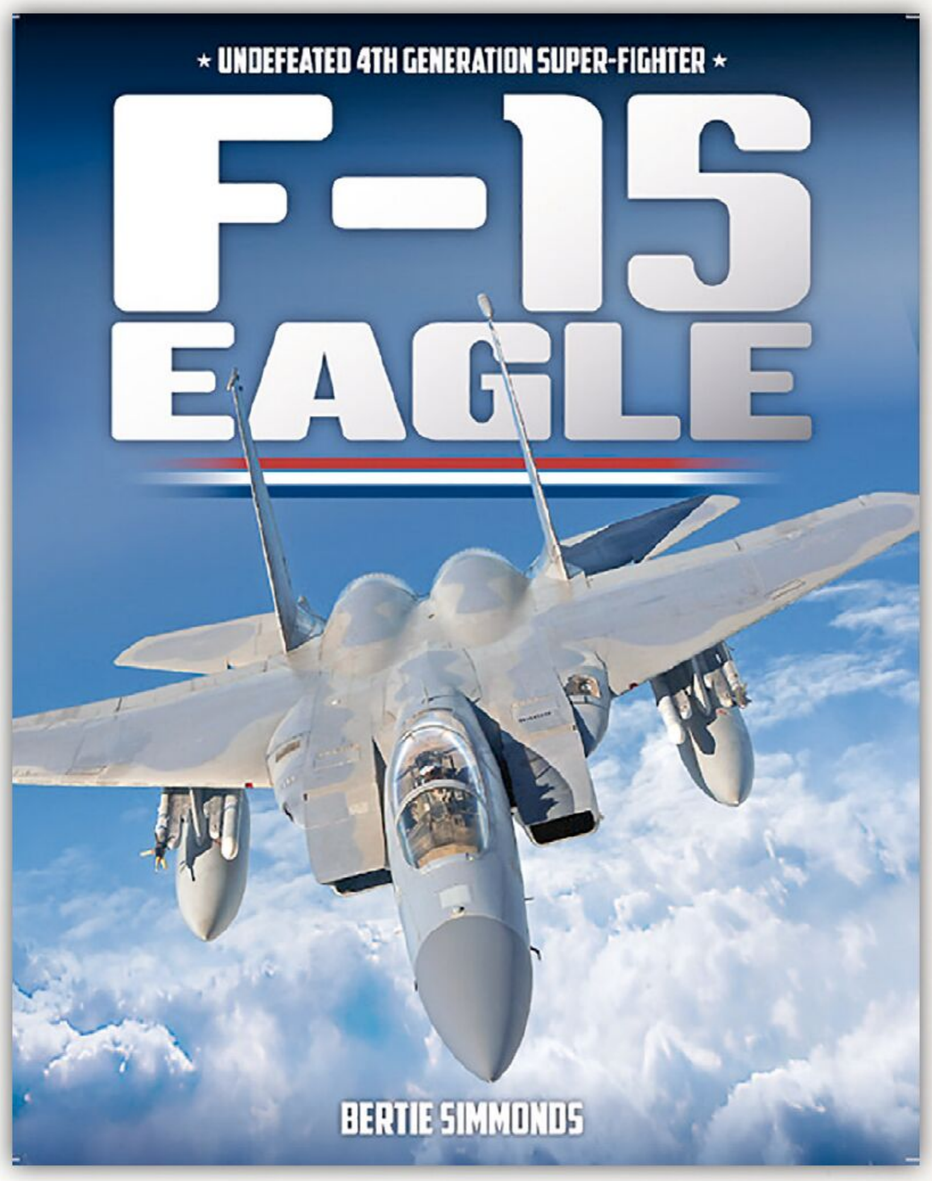


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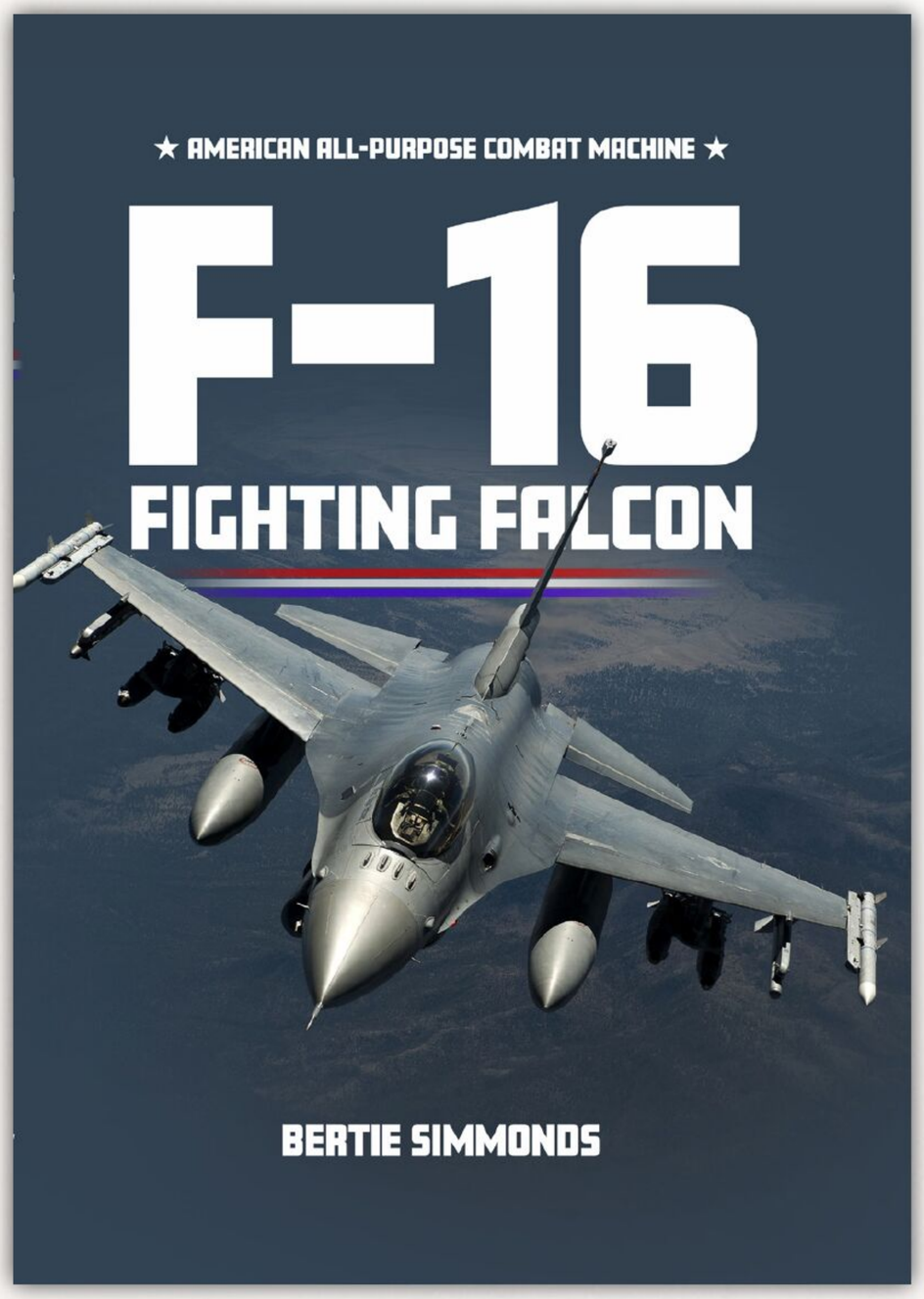


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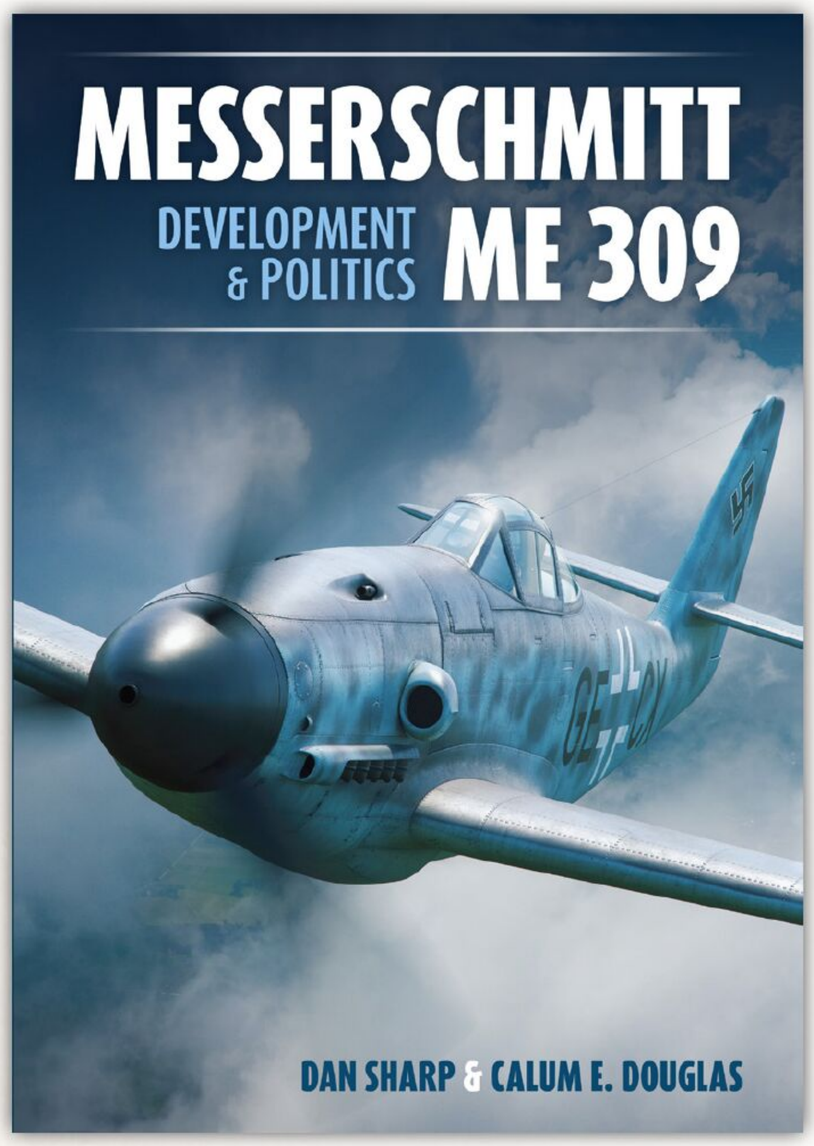
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Messerschmitt Me 309 Development & Politics

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Chosen in 1941 to replace the Bf 109 as the Luftwaffe's standard front-line fighter, Messerschmitt's innovative Me 309 embodied a wealth of hard-won experience from the Battle of Britain. Its sturdy tricycle undercarriage would make landings safer, its capacious wings could accommodate much heavier weaponry, its retractable radiator would make it aerodynamically clean, its pressure cabin would allow high-altitude operations and its ejection seat would help preserve the Luftwaffe's most precious asset – its pilots.

All of this was made possible by a fuselage specifically tailored to accommodate Germany's newest and most powerful fighter engines: Daimler-Benz's DB 603 and Junkers' Jumo 213. Production of up to 800 Me 309s a month had been planned by May 1942 – more than all other German fighter types combined. Yet the type's advancement from prototype to full series production was reduced to a crawl, not by technical difficulties but by political in-fighting, deception and manipulation behind closed doors.

The Me 309 was set up to fail – doomed to join a lost generation of mid-war Luftwaffe combat aircraft alongside types such as Focke-Wulf's Fw 190 C and Junkers' Ju 288 – but why and by whom? Messerschmitt Me 309 Development & Politics, the first book ever written solely about this aircraft, sets out its full history – from its forerunners and commissioning to its eventual cancellation and sale to the Japanese military.

Using contemporary documents, authors Dan Sharp and Calum E. Douglas explain and explore the development and eventual failure of this fascinating 'secret project'.



The Secret Horsepower Race

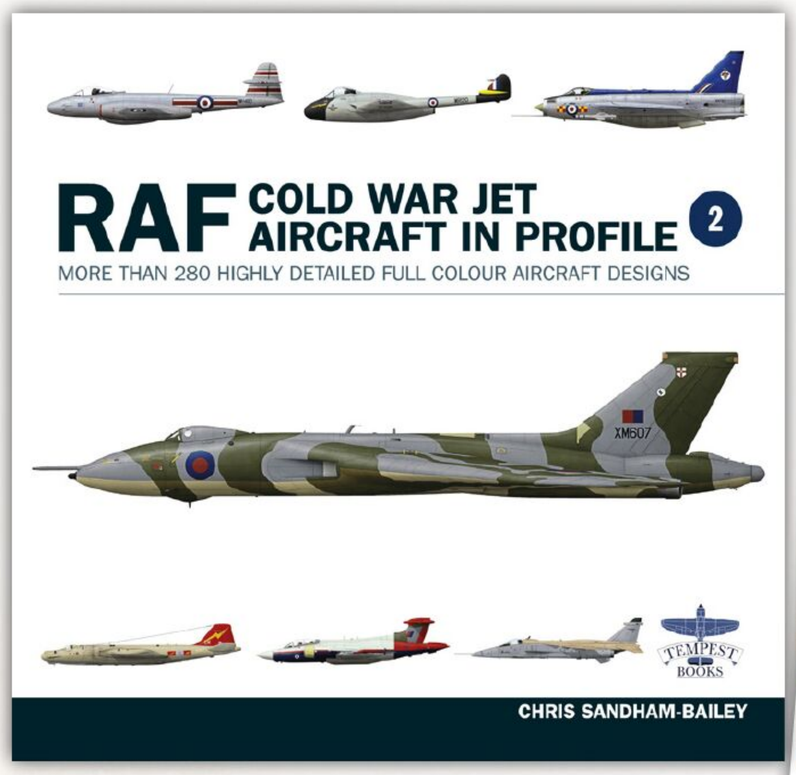
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The piston engines that powered Second World War fighters, the men who designed them, and the secret intelligence work carried out by both Britain and Germany would determine the outcome of the first global air war. Advanced jet engines may have been in development but every militarily significant air battle was fought by piston-engined fighters.

Whoever designed the most powerful piston engines would win air superiority and with it the ability to dictate the course of the war as a whole. This is the neverbefore- told story of a high-tech race, hidden behind the closed doors of design offices and intelligence agencies, to create the war's best fighter engine. Using the fruits of extensive research in archives around the world together with the previously unpublished memoirs of fighter engine designers, author Calum E. Douglas tells the story of a desperate contest between the world's best engineers – the Secret Horsepower Race.



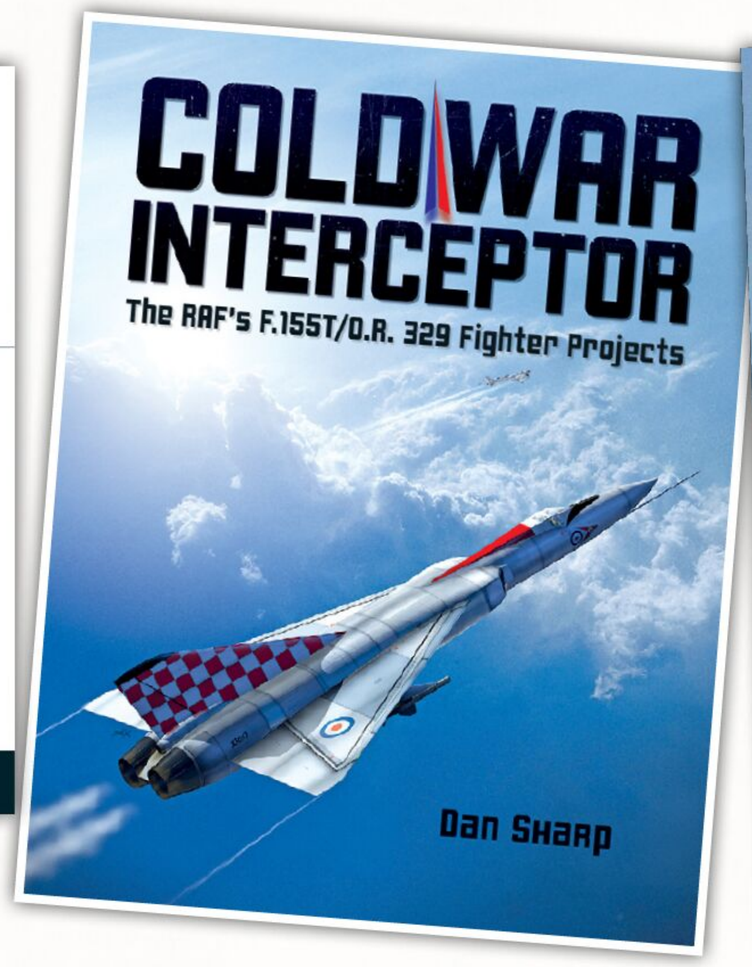
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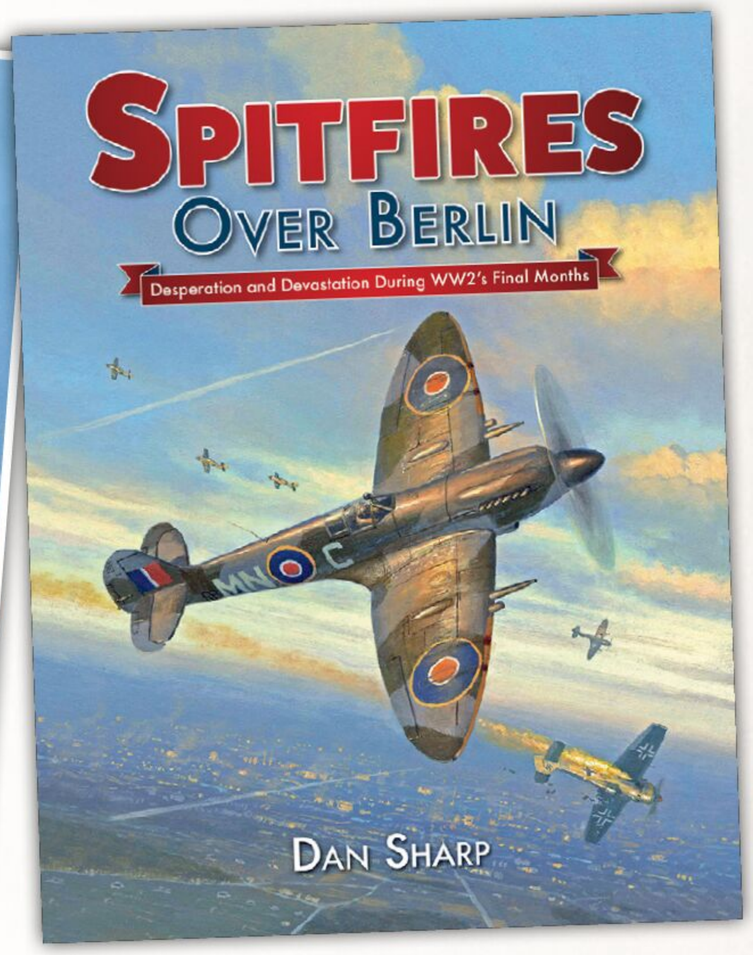
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The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) is a standing reminder of the heroism and sacrifice of countless British and Commonwealth aircrew who flew and fought during the Second World War.
Formed at RAF Biggin Hill on July 11, 1957, as the Historic Aircraft Flight, today the BBMF's incredible collection of aircraft includes six Spitfires, two Hurricanes, one of only two airworthy Avro Lancaster bombers in the world, a Douglas C-47 Dakota and two de Havilland Chipmunks.
The Flight's Second World War aircraft have survived against the odds to exist in flying condition today and this book charts each of their careers over the last seven decades or more. Author and illustrator Chris Sandham-Bailey has meticulously reproduced every known paint scheme worn by each of the aircraft – as well as gathering together an unrivalled collection of photographs to show how the appearance of the aircraft has changed. Never before have all of the BBMF aircraft liveries from the war's end to the present day been catalogued and illustrated in one publication. This book is a must for anyone with an interest in the BBMF aircraft and their histories.



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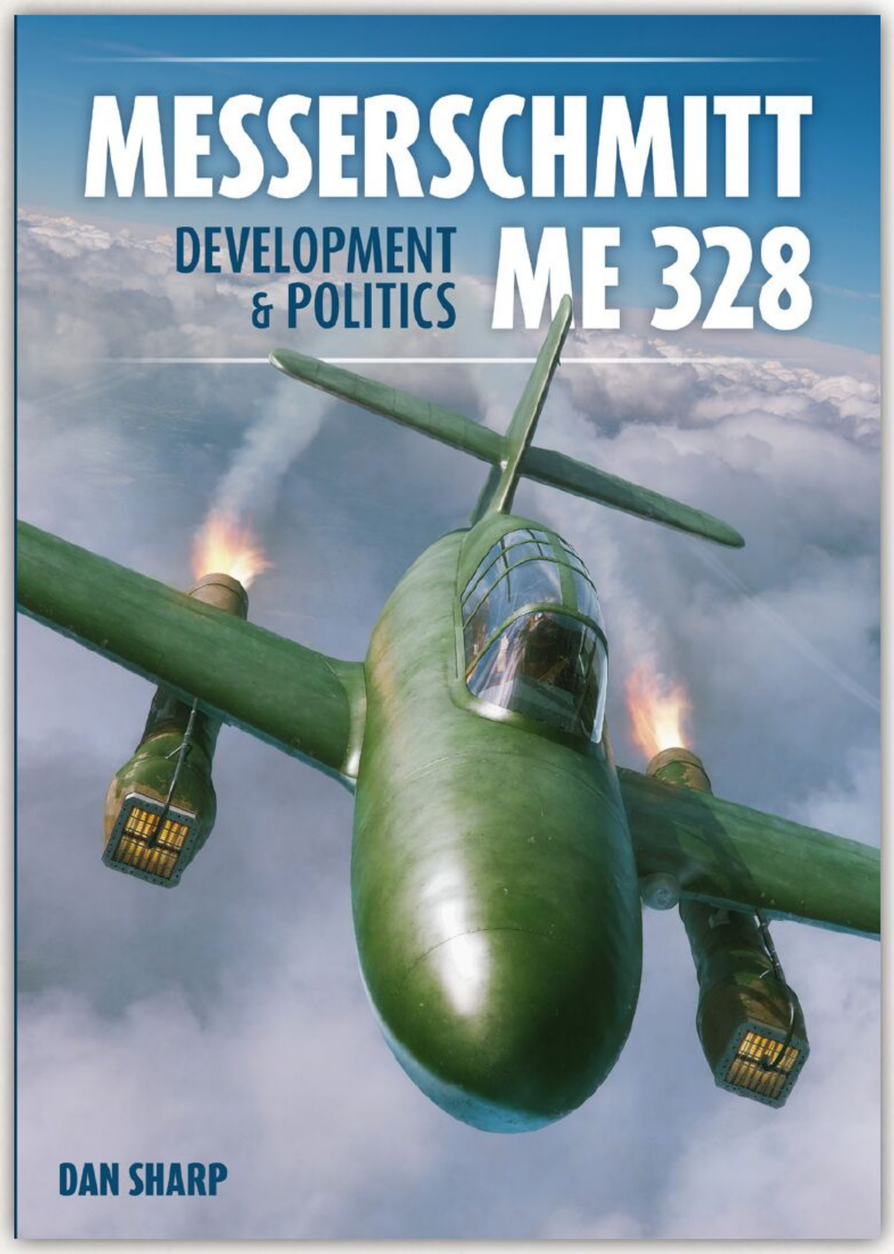
The first jet fighter to enter service and see combat anywhere in the world, the Messerschmitt Me 262 was a deadly technological marvel – yet it was also difficult to produce, dangerously unreliable and extremely vulnerable during takeoff and landing. Despite these flaws, its graceful swept wings, aggressive shark-like profile and undoubted combat abilities made it a legend. The aircraft underwent rapid development during its short front line career and numerous unusual variants were designed and produced. German Secret Projects: Messerschmitt Me 262 Versions examines unusual production models alongside one-offs and drawing board projects. More than 30 designs are detailed, including the Me 262 A-1a/U1-5, Me 262 A-1b, Me 262 A-2a/U1-2, Me 262 B-1a, Me 262 B-1a/U1, Me 262 B-2a, Me 262 C-1a-3a, Me 262 D-1, Me 262 E-1 and E-2, Me 262 HG I-III, Me 262 W, Me 262 Mistel, P 1099A-B, P 1100, Me 262 Interzeptor I-III, Aufklärer I-II and Schnellbomber I-III.

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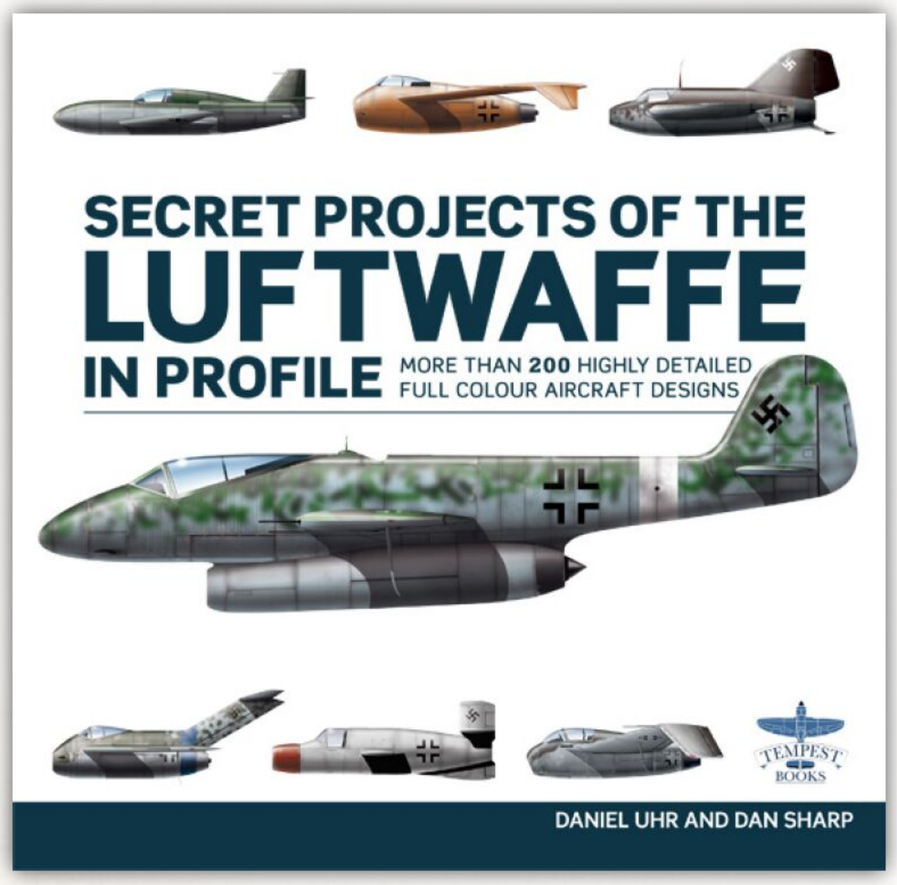
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Conceived as a multirole combat aircraft based on promising early data from pulsejet tests, the Me 328 was arguably Messerschmitt's most controversial wartime project. Early projects imagined the compact machine as a fighter, a bomber, a reconnaissance platform or even a parasite aircraft – detaching from large bombers in mid-air to conduct operations before returning to the mothership. Enthusiasm was high, prototypes were built and extensively flight tested, with and without pulsejets, but it soon became clear that the airframe, the pulsejets and even the operational procedures mapped out for the Me 328 were proving far more troublesome than anticipated.

The type was cancelled – but then revived with a darker purpose: as a suicide bomber. Famous test pilot Hanna Reitsch and her cadre of fanatics chose the Me 328 as their vehicle for 'self-sacrifice' missions, where idealistic young pilots, plied with drugs to remove their inhibitions, would fly the aircraft, laden with bombs, directly into high-value Allied targets such as warships, bridges or command posts.

In Secret Projects of the Luftwaffe: Messerschmitt Me 328, German WW2 aircraft development specialist Dan Sharp presents the first ever book dedicated to the type and explores its history and purpose as far as surviving documentation allows.



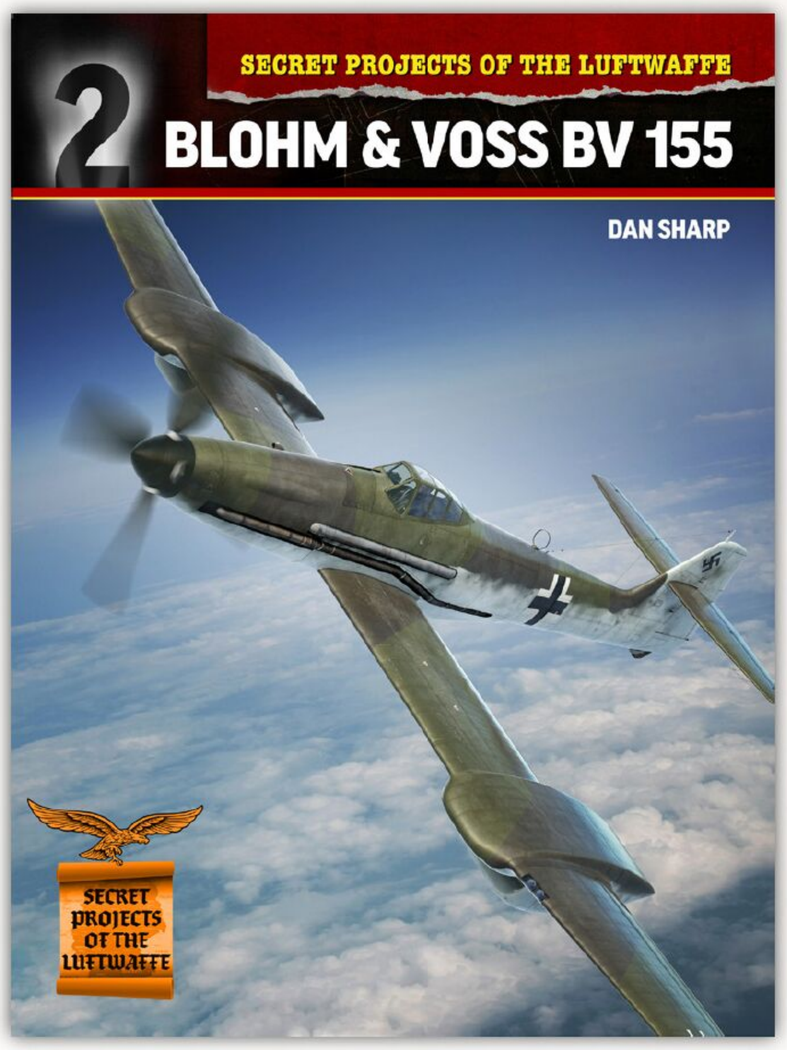
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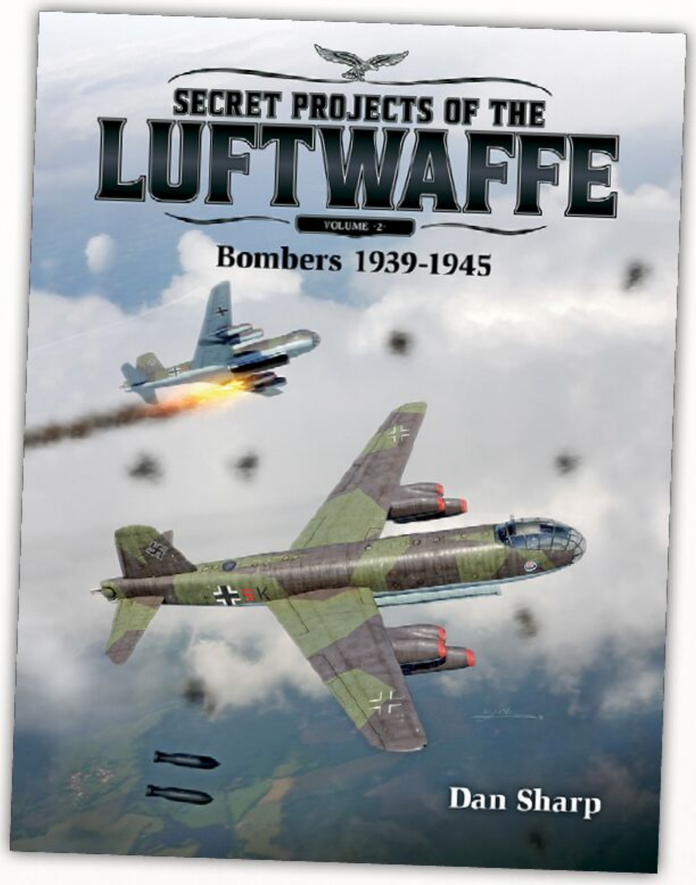
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HOTOL: Britain's Spaceplane

DAN SHARP

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The start of Space Shuttle operations in 1981 marked a new era in spaceflight – with the five orbiters launching numerous satellites, interplanetary probes and the Hubble Space Telescope. But Shuttle was only partially reusable, its external fuel tank being expendable and its solid rocket boosters having to be recovered from the ocean and refurbished. Putting a satellite into orbit using a rocket was even more wasteful – with boosters such as Ariane being one-shot only. The costs were astronomical.

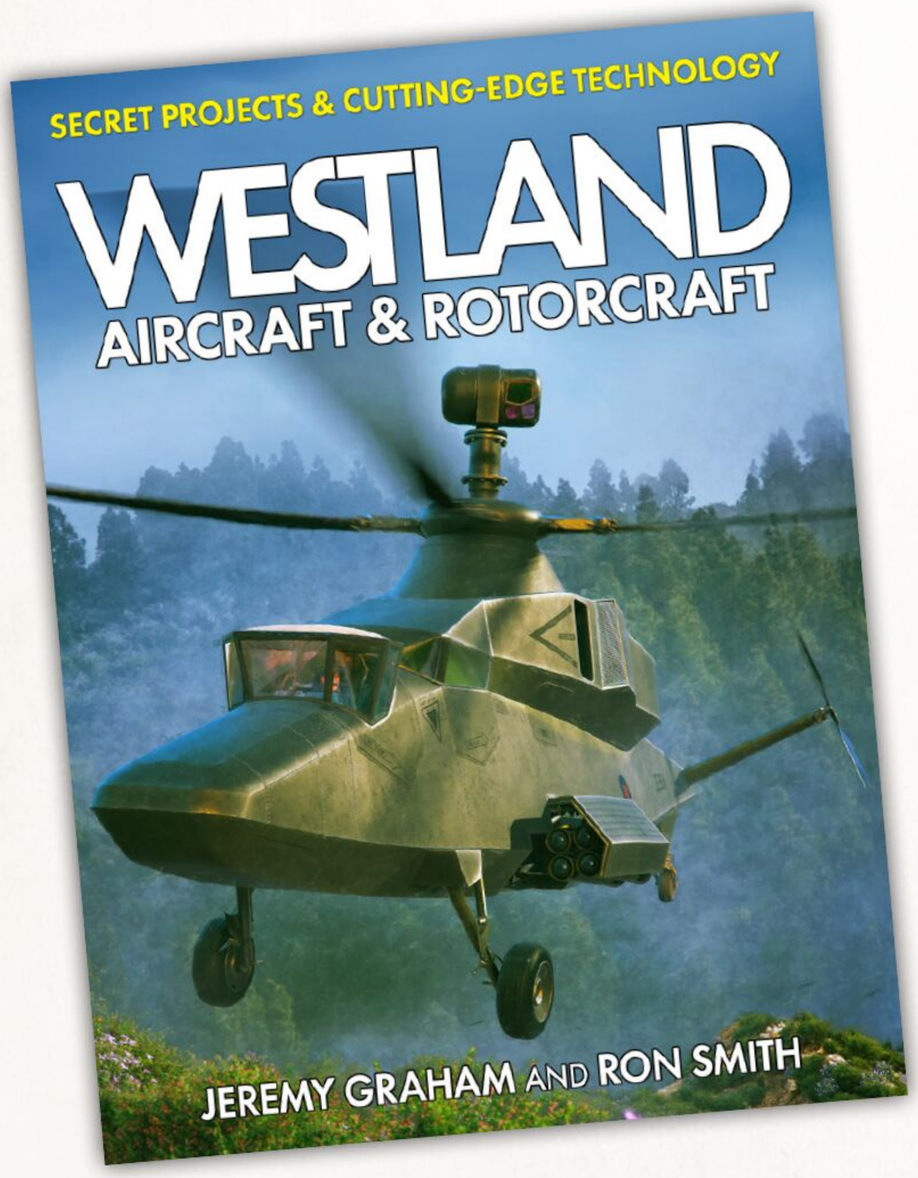
So when rocket scientist Alan Bond and aerospace engineer Bob Parkinson attended a British Interplanetary Society lecture on the proposed non-reusable Ariane 5 rocket in 1982, they began to discuss possible alternatives and concluded that the best solution was... an aerospaceplane.

The concept was deceptively simple – a vehicle able to take off from a conventional runway using airbreathing engines, switch to pure rocket propulsion at high altitude, fly up into space, complete its mission, then fly back down and land. Bond and Parkinson believed it could be done and HOTOL – HOrizontal Take-Off and Landing – was born.

By 1983 both British Aerospace and Rolls-Royce were backing the project. A broadcast on ITN's New at Ten in 1984 made HOTOL famous overnight, with the whole nation now aware of its existence. The Government agreed to match-fund the companies' financial commitment in 1985 and the work ramped up into high gear, with some of Britain's best engineers engaged in making this remarkable vehicle a reality.

Two years later, Minister of State of Trade and Industry Kenneth Clarke withdrew funding – signalling the beginning of the end of HOTOL, though there were attempts to revive it as an air-launched vehicle atop an Antonov An-225 as Interim HOTOL.

HOTOL: Britain's Spaceplane by Dan Sharp covers the full story of HOTOL's development in detail from beginning to end, drawing on the BAE Systems archive, the personal archives of the project's creators and extensive interviews with those involved. It includes new artwork plus hundreds of contemporary diagrams and illustrations, ranging from full colour brochures and publicity material – both used and unused – to previously unseen diagrams and schematics of HOTOL's numerous configurations.



Westland Aircraft & Rotorcraft: Secret Projects & Cutting-Edge Technology

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Half Century, Baby! marks the 50th anniversary of the first two Grumman F-14A fleet squadrons (VF-1 and VF-2) receiving their first Tomcats during the summer of 1973. This lavishly illustrated volume tells the story of the aircraft from the beginning to its sunset of service with the US Navy in 2006; the longest operational career of any Naval Fighter to date. Preeminent Tomcat historian and former Tomcat RIO Dave Parsons explains the history of the F-14 decade by decade through the words of the aircrew who flew it. Artist Mads Bangsø brings his superlative illustration talents to the forefront with more than 120 F-14 profiles as well as highly accurate fully rendered recreations historical events featuring the Tomcat, highlighting the interesting markings of the aircraft (including helmets) as well as other aircraft associated with the Tomcat Community. The book features pertinent colour photography throughout, interwoven with the illustrations to complement the text.

Half Century Baby Volume II

DAVID PARSONS, MADS BANGSO.

On sale: SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

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ISBN: 9781911704232



Bomber Command Gardening Operations - The Invisible Campaign 1940-1945

JANE GULLIFORD LOWES

On sale: OCTOBER 18, 2024

Softback **£19.99** ISBN: 9781911704287



Aerial mining by RAF Bomber Command was a vital part of the Allied war effort – claiming far more tonnage of Axis shipping destroyed than direct attack by either Coastal or Bomber Command itself. Minelaying operations commenced in April 1940 and expanded dramatically as the war progressed, yet today this vital campaign and its wide-ranging achievements against Axis merchant vessels, Kriegsmarine ships and U-boats are virtually unknown. Invisible Campaigns, based on Air Ministry and Admiralty archival material, together with squadron records, veteran accounts and logbooks as well as contemporary publications and press releases, provides the most detailed account of Bomber Command's minelaying operations and their effects ever written.

Historian Jane Gulliford Lowes looks at the aims of the campaign and how it was implemented, together with the measure of its success and how it compared against the mining operations implemented by the Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine. The role of Arthur 'Bomber' Harris in overseeing minelaying operations is assessed and the experiences of the men who delivered the campaign, particularly the hazards they faced, are explored.

Invisible Campaigns sheds new light on a little-discussed but important and ultimately highly successful aspect of Bomber Command and is a must-read for anyone interested the RAF's in wartime bombing operations.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight in Photos

LISA HARDING

AVAILABLE NOW Softback **£39.99**

ISBN: 9781911704249

This collection of more than 150 high-quality images offers a unique perspective on the historic aircraft and hard-working personnel of the unique Battle of Britain Memorial Flight based at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire.

Photographer Lisa Harding has spent many years photographing the flight and now presents some of her finest work – chronicling winter maintenance, when the aircraft undergo extensive checks and repairs if required; out-of-season practice displays and some spectacular 'hot starts'. Ground crew can be seen performing their duties both indoors and out while pilot training provides views rarely seen by the public.

A collection of notable displays showcases memorable moments from the past decade, including the gathering of three Lancaster bombers at East Kirkby, the last two airworthy Lancasters flying together down the Derwent Valley, the RAF100 Buckingham Palace flypast and the Dambusters 80th anniversary.

The images are presented with commentary from the author, providing both background and technical details on how the shots were taken.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight in Photos offers a wealth of previously unseen views of the flight in incredible colour, detail and clarity – a must for any warbird enthusiast.



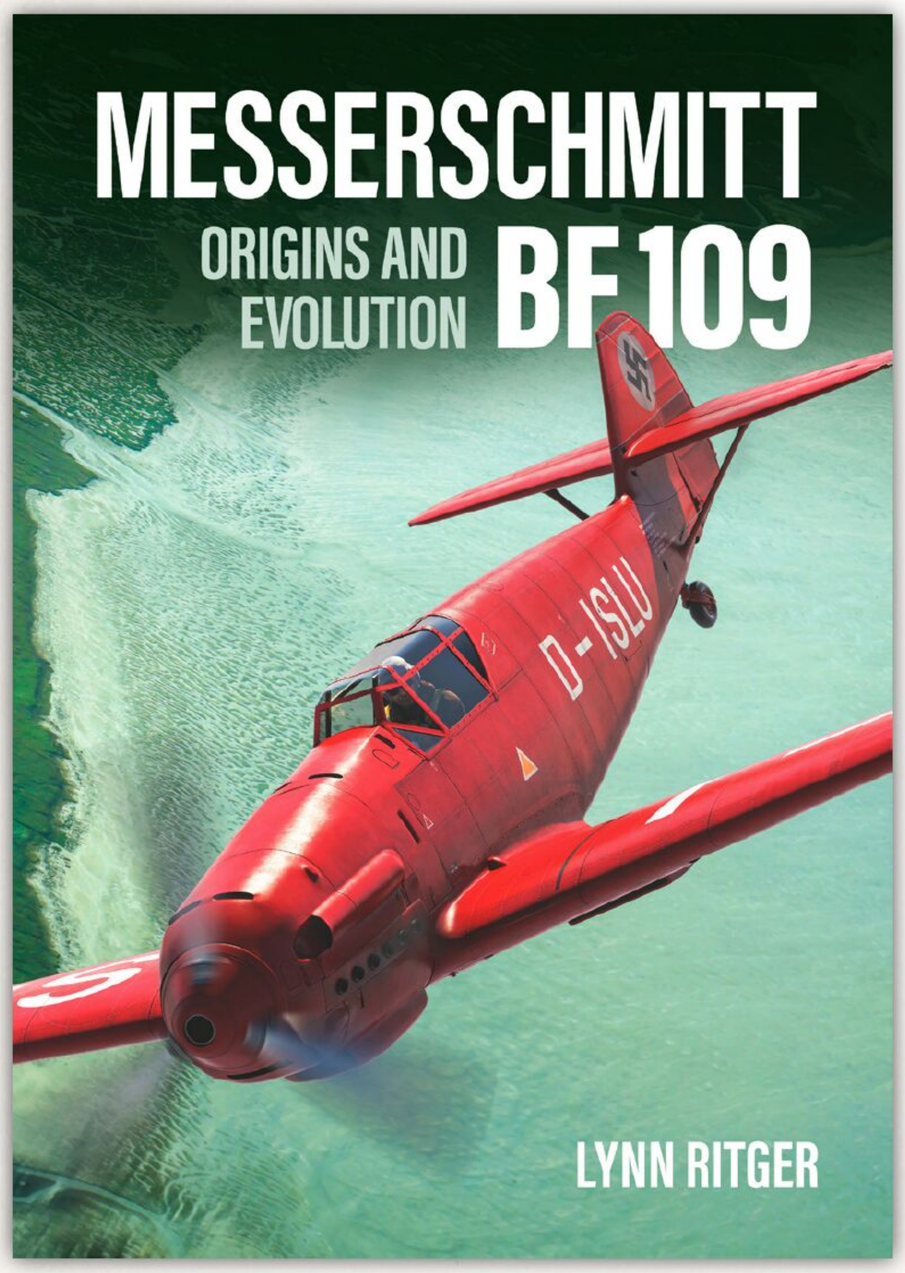
Messerschmitt Bf 109 Origins and Evolution

LYNN RITGER

On sale: SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

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The most produced fighter aircraft in history, and arguably the single most important German aircraft of the Second World War, the Messerschmitt Bf 109 was unquestionably the most advanced fighter in the world when it first flew in May 1935. The scale of the development and production effort by Messerschmitt and its subcontractors over the next ten years to fulfil the operational needs of the Luftwaffe resulted in a seemingly endless variety of modifications to every aspect of the aircraft, from engines and weapons down to radios and tailwheels. Political gamesmanship and often heated discussions between Luftwaffe leaders and Messerschmitt company representatives, striving to keep their most successful product relevant in the face of ever-increasing Allied threats, also had a role to play in the developmental history of the Bf 109.

In Messerschmitt Bf 109 – Origins and Evolution, historian Lynn Ritger examines in detail the development of the Bf 109 family across its entire lifespan, from the first flight of the Bf 109 V1 to the last operational flight of a Spanish Hispano Ha 1112 M in 1965. Drawing upon original documentation from archival sources, including RLM meeting minutes and planning documents, intelligence reports, production records, factory handbooks, and front-line unit reports, Ritger traces the technical history of the Bf 109, illustrating prototype and service variant development, production batch differences, internal and external equipment and ordnance fitment, factory specific equipment and finish details, postwar variants developed in Czechoslovakia and Spain, and unrealised design proposals.



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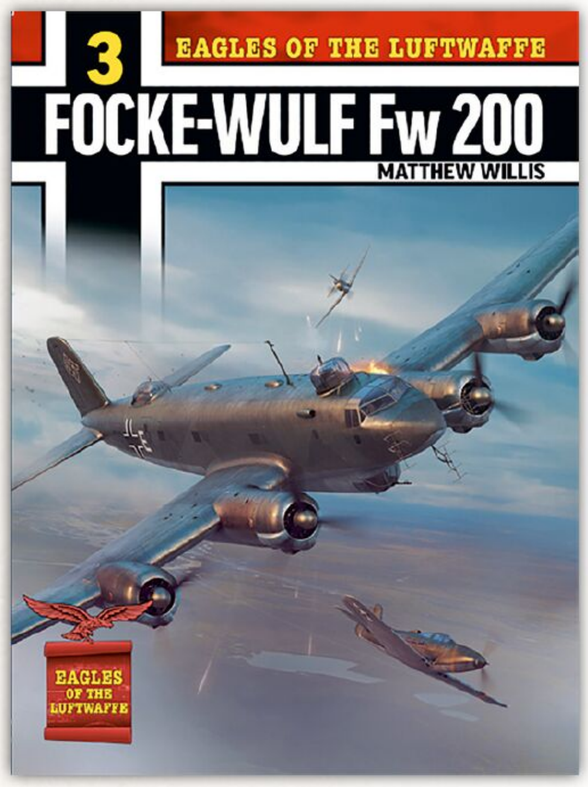
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Snooperbase Waddington

MICHAEL HILEY

On sale: AUGUST 23, 2024
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ISBN: 9781911704218



The air base at Waddington has been home to the RAF's most valuable surveillance, intelligence-gathering, communications and electronic warfare assets for more than three decades.

During the 1990s, Boeing E-3D Sentry AWACS and Hawker Siddeley Nimrod R1 signals intelligence platforms became familiar sights in the skies over Lincolnshire as ISTAR (Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) assets were brought together at RAF Waddington.

The Raytheon Sentinel R1 followed and more recently the base has become home to the RAF fleet of Beechcraft Shadow R1s, Boeing RC-135W Rivet Joints and General Atomics MQ-9 Reapers – as well as the Red Arrows aerobatic team and units experimenting with future drone technology.

Most recently, the base has received its first General Atomics Protector RG Mk 1s to take up the roles performed by the now 15-year-old Reaper fleet.

In Snooperbase Waddington, author and photographer Michael Hiley chronicle's the history of the RAF's ISTAR hub – including the aircraft flown, their known equipment and their operational use as far as the Official Secrets Act will allow.



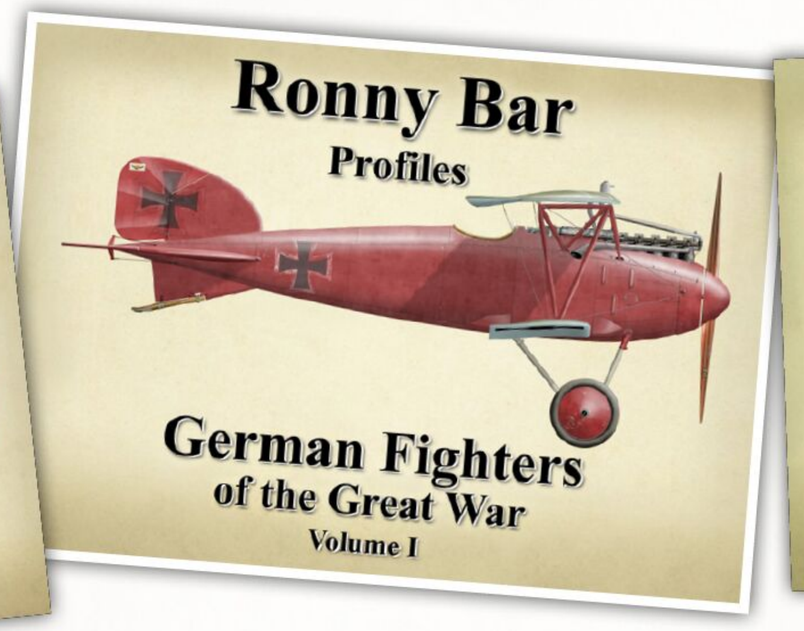
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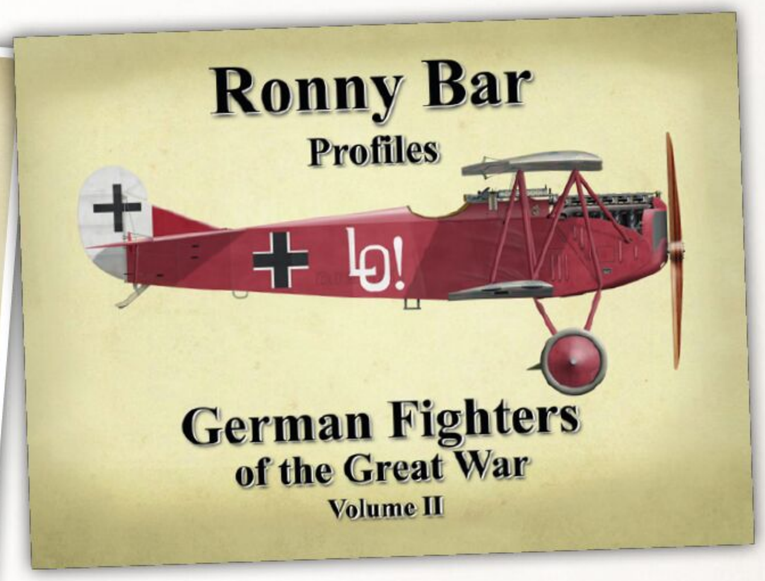
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Supermarine's iconic Spitfire needs little introduction – its graceful lines and remarkable combat record during the Second World War speak for themselves. Rolls-Royce Merlin-powered Spitfire Mk Is fought their way through the Battle of Britain during the summer and autumn of 1940 with the Mk II, incorporating a more powerful Merlin, being introduced in the meantime.

As the war progressed, the Spitfire underwent an intensive programme of upgrades and enhancements as well as modifications to expand its capabilities. Unarmed Merlin-powered photo reconnaissance Spitfires flew hazardous missions over occupied Europe and Germany, while the Seafire, a navalised Spitfire, was operated from Royal Navy carriers in the Far East. In Europe, the Mk Is and IIs gave way to the Mk V and then the world-beating Mk IX before the last major Merlin-powered Spitfire, the Mk XVI, was introduced. While some later marks of Spitfire would receive Rolls-Royce Griffon engines, it is undoubtedly the Merlin variants that bore the brunt of the action and which are the most fondly remembered today.

In Ronny Bar Profiles – Spitfire The Merlin Variants, renowned profile artist Ronny Bar presents an exciting and colourful selection of more than 350 highly detailed artworks, most created specifically for this book, showcasing the full range of Rolls-Royce Merlin-powered variants from the original Type 300 prototype, K5054, to the late-war Seafires. Aircraft of RAF aces including Robert Stanford Tuck, Alan Deere, 'Sailor' Malan and Douglas Bader are included as well as colour schemes worn by Spitfires in service with Allied forces around the world. Bar's love of Spitfires clearly shines through in his incredible attention to historical accuracy throughout this fascinating and illuminating collection.



Ronny Bar Profiles - Spitfire the Merlin Variants

RONNY BAR

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Boeing B-47 Stratojet and B-52 Stratofortress: Origins and Evolution

SCOTT LOWTHER

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Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-31 Foxhound

SERGIO SANTANA

On sale: AUGUST 30, 2024

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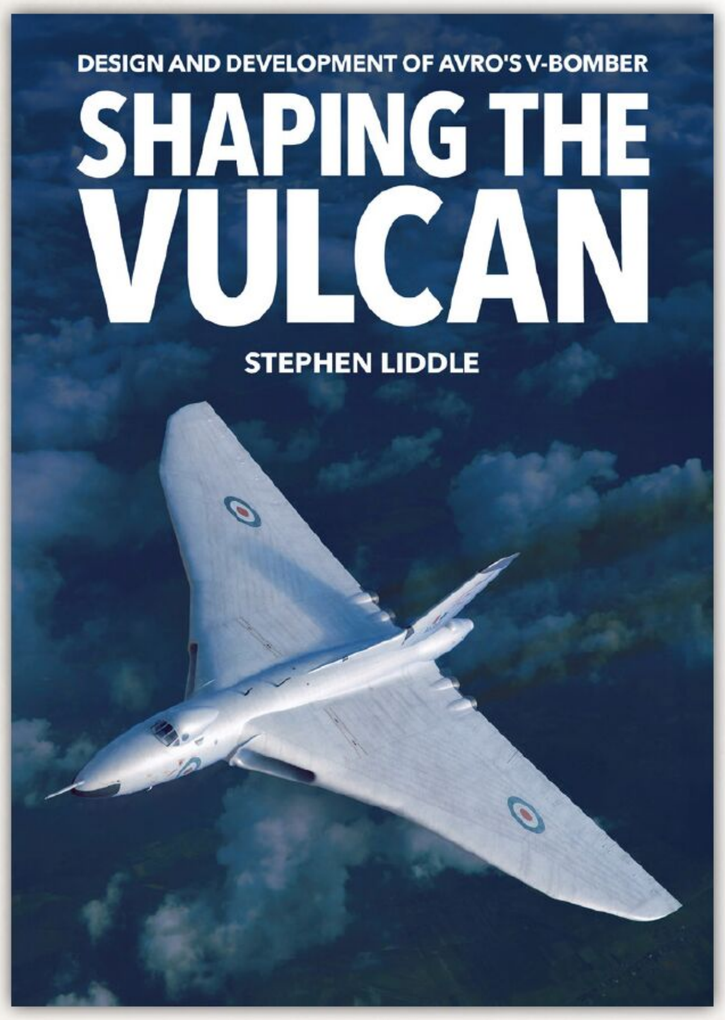
With a top speed approaching Mach 3 and equipped with both powerful sensors and air-to-air weaponry, the two-seater MiG-31 interceptor has proven to be one of the Cold War's most formidable survivors – finally coming into its own during the Ukraine War. Development began in 1975 with a design based on that of the MiG-25 Foxbat and progressed to the point where, although it bore a superficial similarly to its forebear, it was largely a new aircraft. The MiG-31, NATO reporting name Foxhound, entered service in 1981 and more than 500 were built.

Several dozen examples remain in service today with both the Russian and Kazakh air forces – and throughout 2022 and 2023 Foxhounds using R-37M long-range AAMs operated virtually unopposed against Ukrainian fighters, which lacked the speed, range, altitude and firepower to engage them. MiG-31s have also provided a valuable platform from which to launch Kh-47M2 Kinzhal hypersonic missiles against Ukraine while remaining within Russian airspace.

Author Sergio Santana details the aircraft's early development, its long operational history and its most recent operations in this all-new look at one of the world's deadliest combat aircraft.

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Shaping the Vulcan

STEPHEN LIDDLE

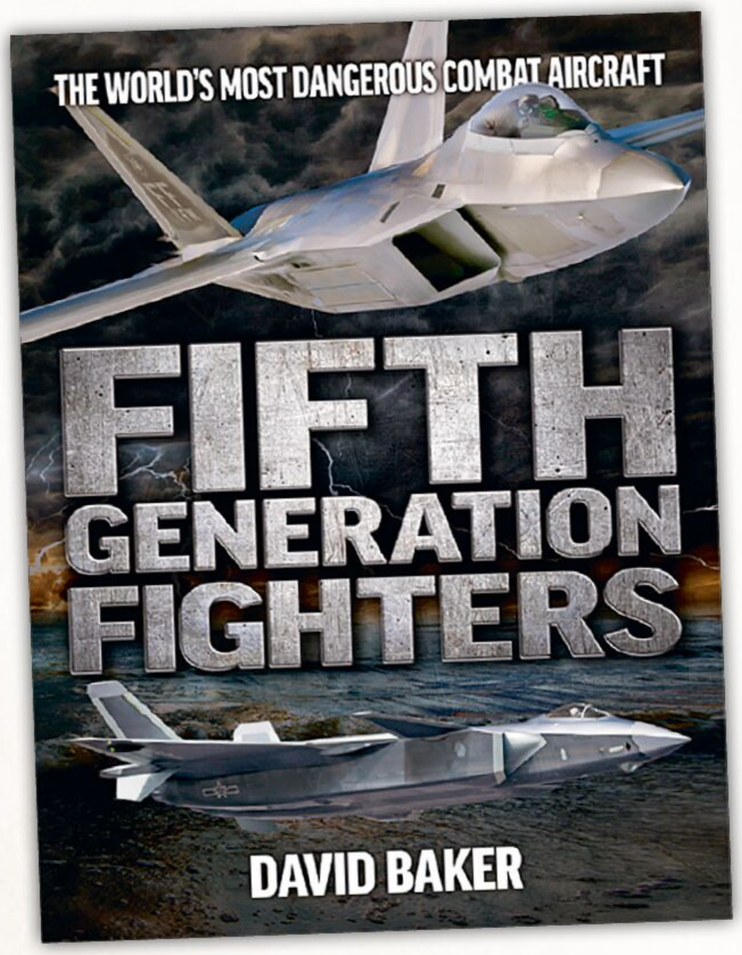
On sale: AUGUST 30, 2024 Hardback **£35.00**

ISBN: 9781911704072

The Avro Vulcan is one of the most striking aircraft ever made – its enormous wing stretching back from an improbably thick leading edge marked by cavernous wing root engine intakes. Perhaps even more incredible, its first flight was made just over ten years after the introduction of the piston-engined Lancaster during the Second World War. Within a decade, technology had taken a giant leap from straight-winged slow-moving conventional bombers to this vast delta designed to carry a nuclear payload.

But what led to such a radical configuration and what was the technology that enabled such an ambitious design? What possessed Avro to offer the Air Ministry such a futuristic aircraft and what prompted the Ministry to approve its development and entry into service?

Formula 1 racing team aerodynamicist and Vulcan to the Sky trustee Stephen Liddle presents a full history of the Vulcan's development and assesses the technological and engineering breakthroughs which underpinned the construction of this unparalleled aircraft.

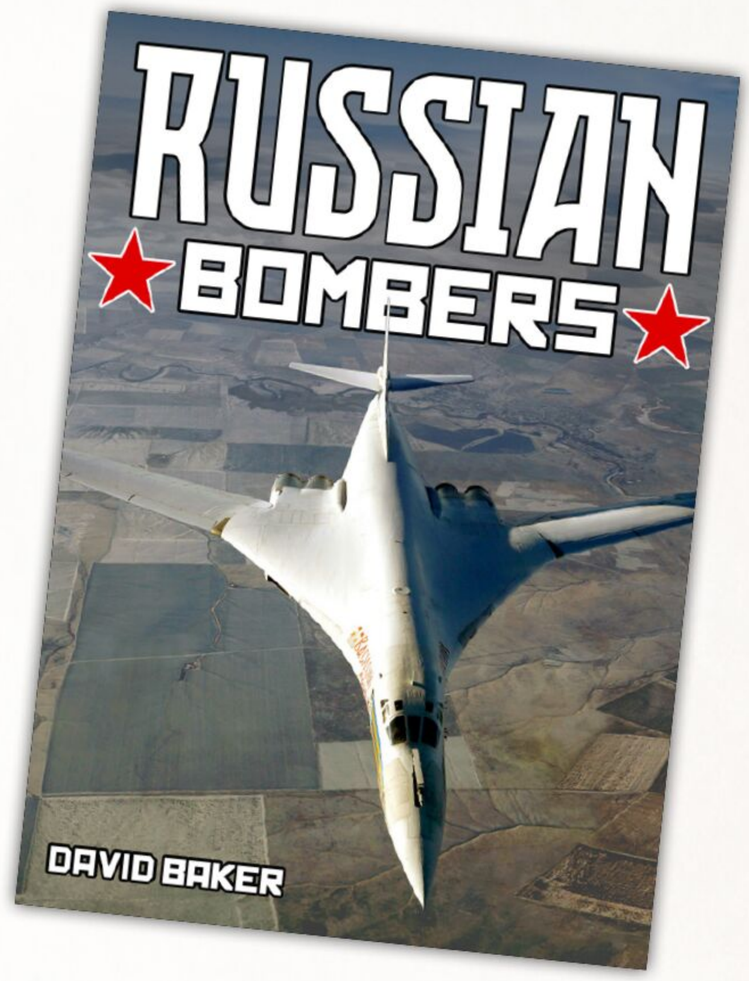


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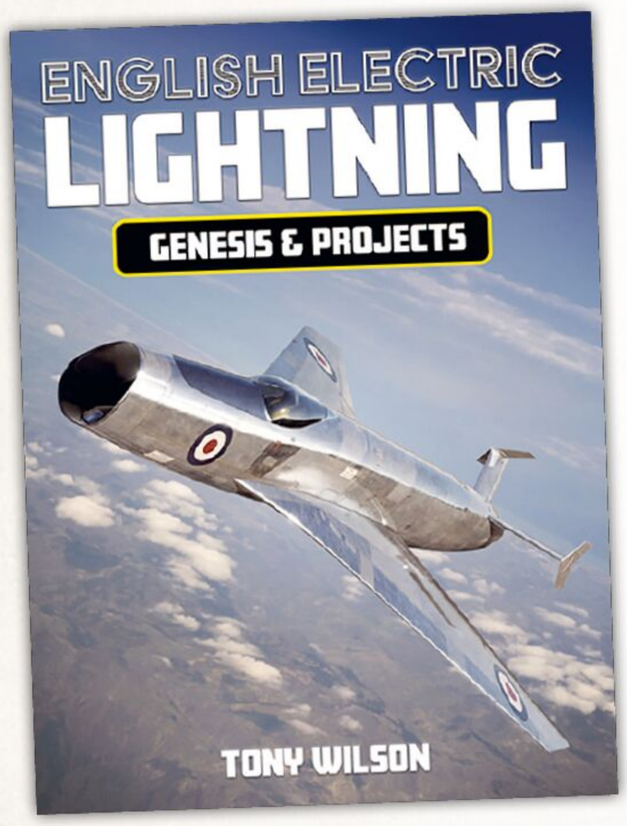


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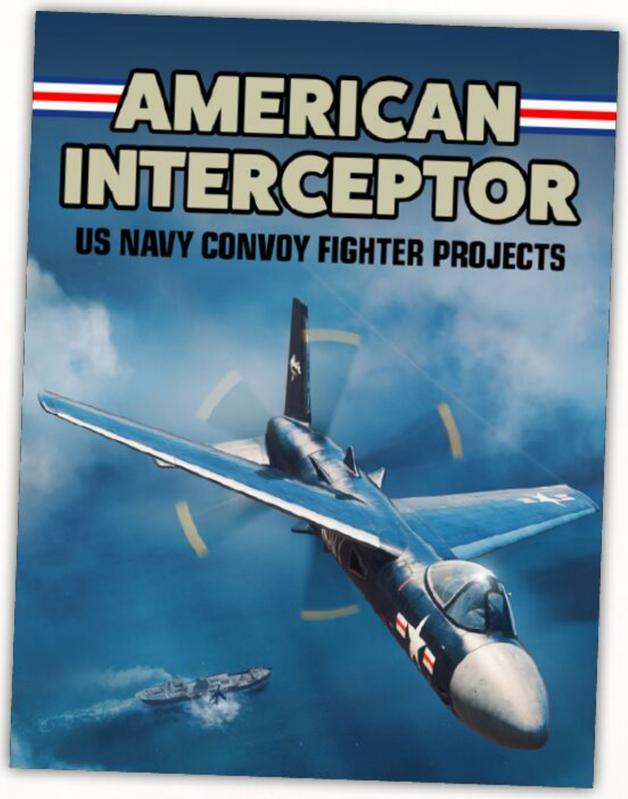
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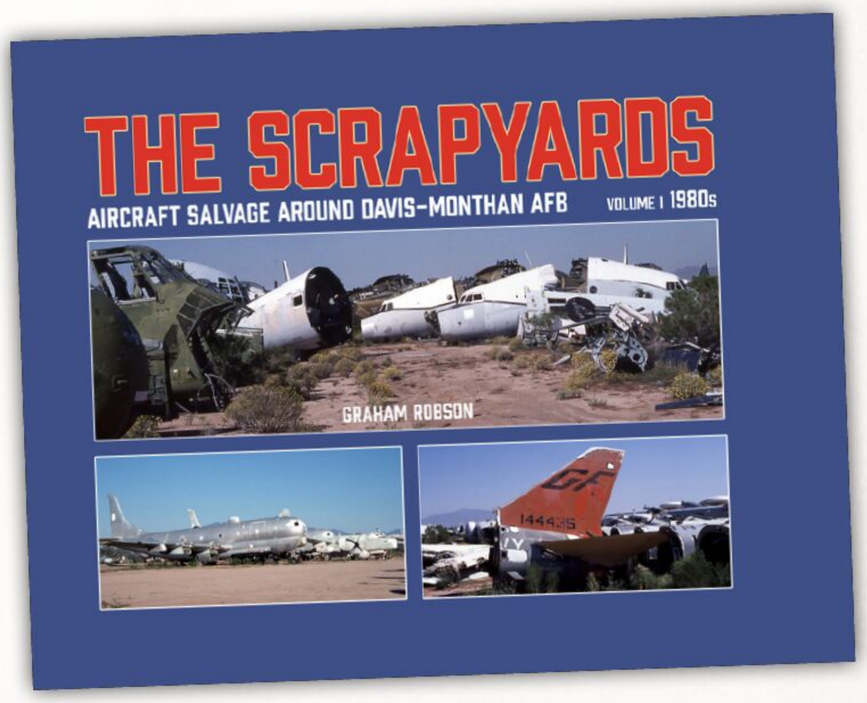
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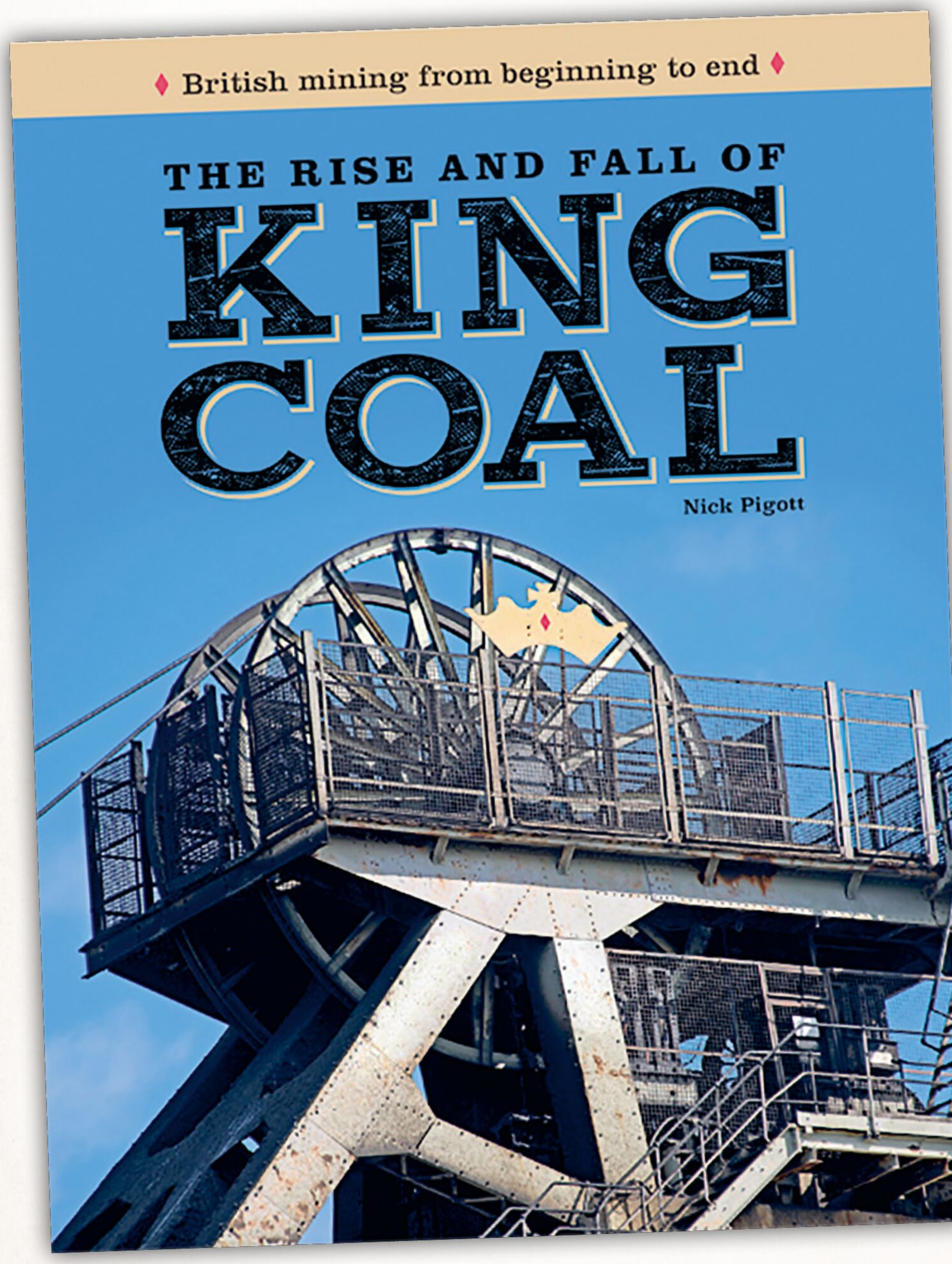
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