

# Castle Class Corvette H.M.S. PORTCHESTER CASTLE 1943

Resin & Photo Etched Metal Kit in 1/350 scale

## History

Laid down on 17th March 1943 at Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson's Yard at Wallsend on Tyne, Launched on 21st June 1943 and completed on 8th November 1943, one of the fastest builds of her class. *HMS Portchester Castle* was one of the first Castle class Corvettes to be commissioned, and she completed her trials and work up by the end of December 1943.

It isn't clear what the ship was doing during January of 1944, but in February *HMS Portchester Castle* was allocated to the B7 Escort Group on trans Atlantic convoy duty. She remained with that group until April, when she was transferred to the B4 Escort Group escorting convoys to Gibraltar.

Later in the year there were enough Castle class Corvettes available to make up single class Escort Groups that would provide anti submarine patrols and convoy escorts in the Western Approaches and around the coasts of the UK. *HMS Portchester Castle* was absorbed into the 30th Escort Group as a result. Two days after joining the 30th Escort Group *HMS Portchester Castle*, sank **U-484** near Tory Island. This was the first occasion that a U-Boat had been sunk entirely by a ship using a Squid Mortar unit. Two months later she and other members of the group sank **U-1200** off Cape Clear.

*HMS Portchester Castle* was taken in hand by the dockyard for a lengthy refit from January until the 1st of May 1945 and saw no further action. Later in June 1945 she was transferred to the West Africa command where she performed Air Sea Rescue duties until October. During her time off West Africa she was involved with the sinking of the liner **Edinburgh Castle** that had been used as a base and accommodation ship in Freetown. To avoid the cost of returning the ship to the UK she was towed out to sea and sunk using gunfire and depth charges.

From there *HMS Portchester Castle* moved to Gibraltar to perform similar duties until early in 1946 where she was withdrawn from service and laid up in reserve at Harwich.

In April 1951, *HMS Portchester Castle* was brought out of reserve and re-commissioned on 15th May 1951 for service in the 2nd Training Squadron based at Portland. While there she took on one of her most famed roles as the fictional frigate *HMS Saltash Castle* in the film *The Cruel Sea*. She continued to display her pennant number F362 during the filming, which was done at Portland and in the English Channel.

*HMS Portchester Castle* was again withdrawn from service in June 1956 and laid up until 1958 when she was sold for scrap. She resisted to the last, breaking away from her tow from the tug *Brigadier* on the night of 15th-16th May, but having re-established the tow *HMS Portchester Castle* arrived at Troon on the 17th May 1958 for breaking.

## Specifications

Length. 252 feet Overall Beam. 36.5 feet Draft. 13 feet 2 inches Displacement. 1010 tons Complement. 110 Officers and Men Propulsion. 4cylinder triple expansion of 2,980 IHP driving a single propeller. Cruising Speed 15 kts Max Speed 17 kts

## Armament

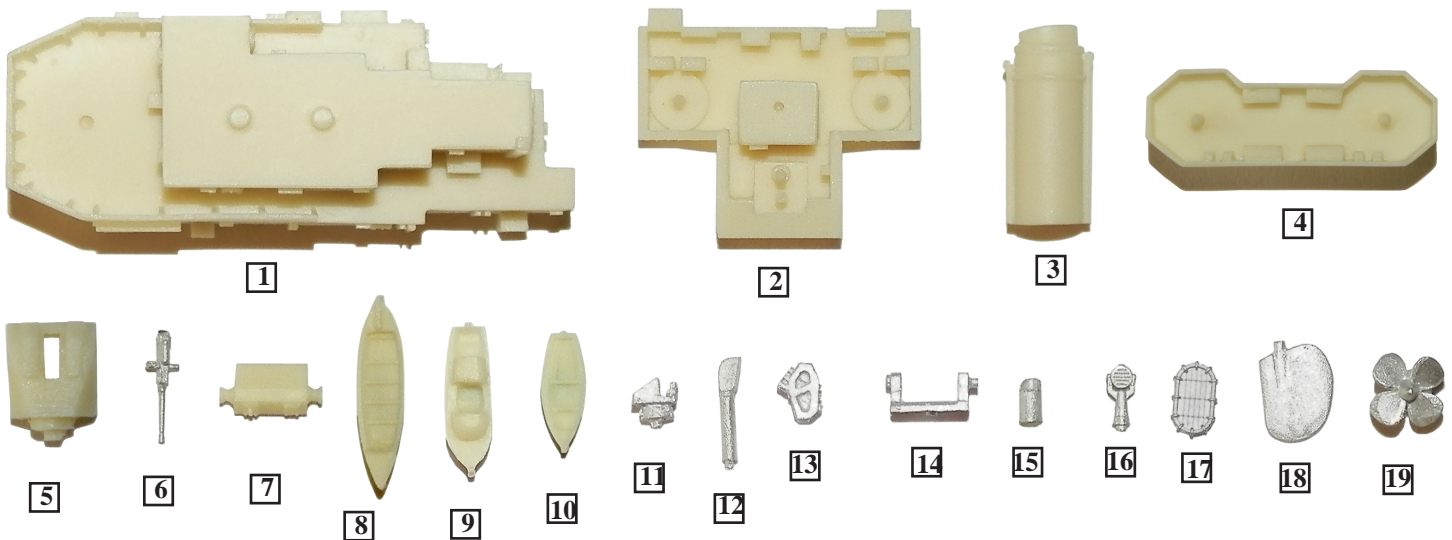
1 x 4" HA/LA Gun Mounting 2 x Twin 20mm Oerlikons in Powered Mountings 2 x Single 20mm Oerlikons on Pedestals  
1 x Triple Barrelled Squid Mortar Mk1 with 81 Projectiles 1 Set of Stern Mounted Depth Charge rails and  
2 x Depth Charge Throwers for which only 15 Depth Charges were carried on deck at the stern.

## General Precautions

When assembling a Resin / Photoetched metal kit, certain precautions must first be taken.

1. Resin dust can be harmful if inhaled. It is recommended that you wear a suitable dust mask when drilling or sanding resin parts.
2. Cyano adhesives (super glues) are generally used to assemble this type of kit. Care must be taken when using this type of adhesive as it will bond in seconds. Follow the advice on the container.
3. Wash resin parts in a solution of warm soapy water before assembly. This will remove any residual mold release agents and ensure a good key for painting.
4. Soak photoetch parts in a suitable solvent, such as white spirit, to degrease the surfaces prior to painting.

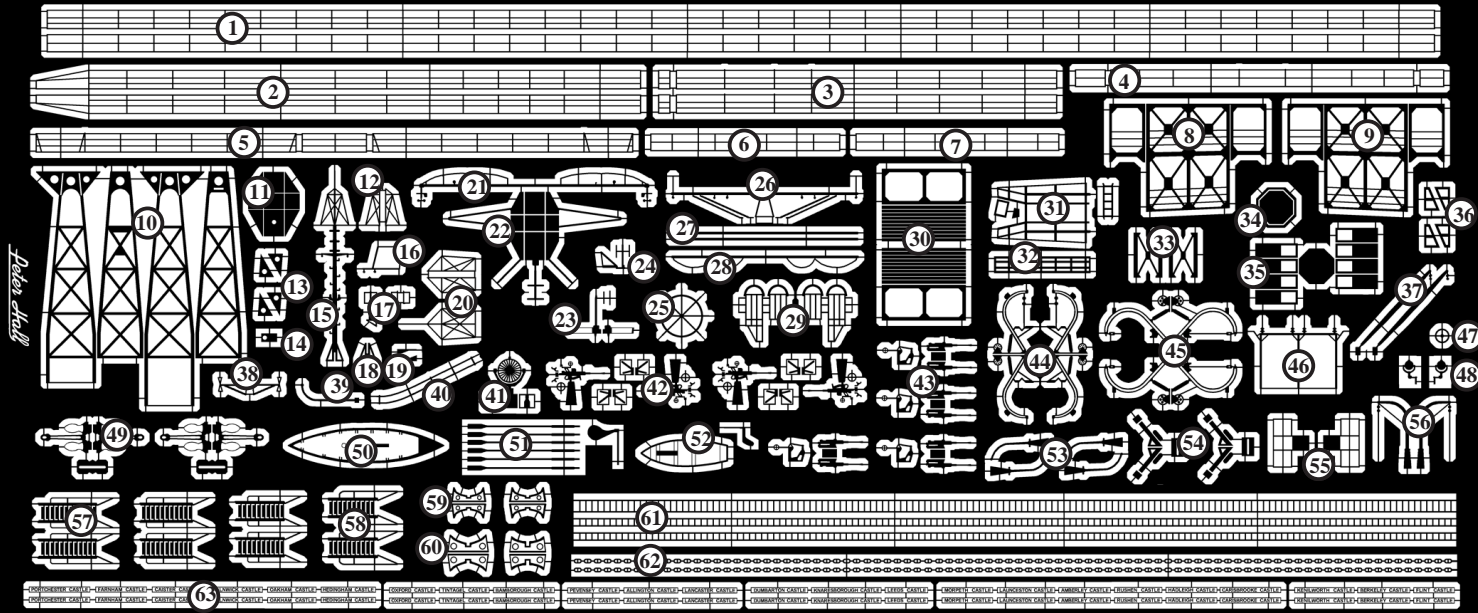
## Resin and White Metal Parts Identification



- |                        |                        |                                     |                       |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Main Superstructure | 6. 4" HA/LA Gun Barrel | 11. Twin 20mm Oerlikon Mounting x 2 | 16. Searchlight       |
| 2. Bridge              | 7. Anchor Windlass     | 12. Cowl Vent x 4                   | 17. Carley Floats x 6 |
| 3. Funnel              | 8. 27' Whaler          | 13. Squid Barrel Cluster            | 18. Rudder            |
| 4. AA Gun Platform     | 9. 20' Motor Cutter    | 14. Squid Mounting Base             | 19. Propeller         |
| 5. 4" Gun Shield       | 10. 16' Dinghy         | 15. Crows Nest                      |                       |

Photo Etched Parts Identification

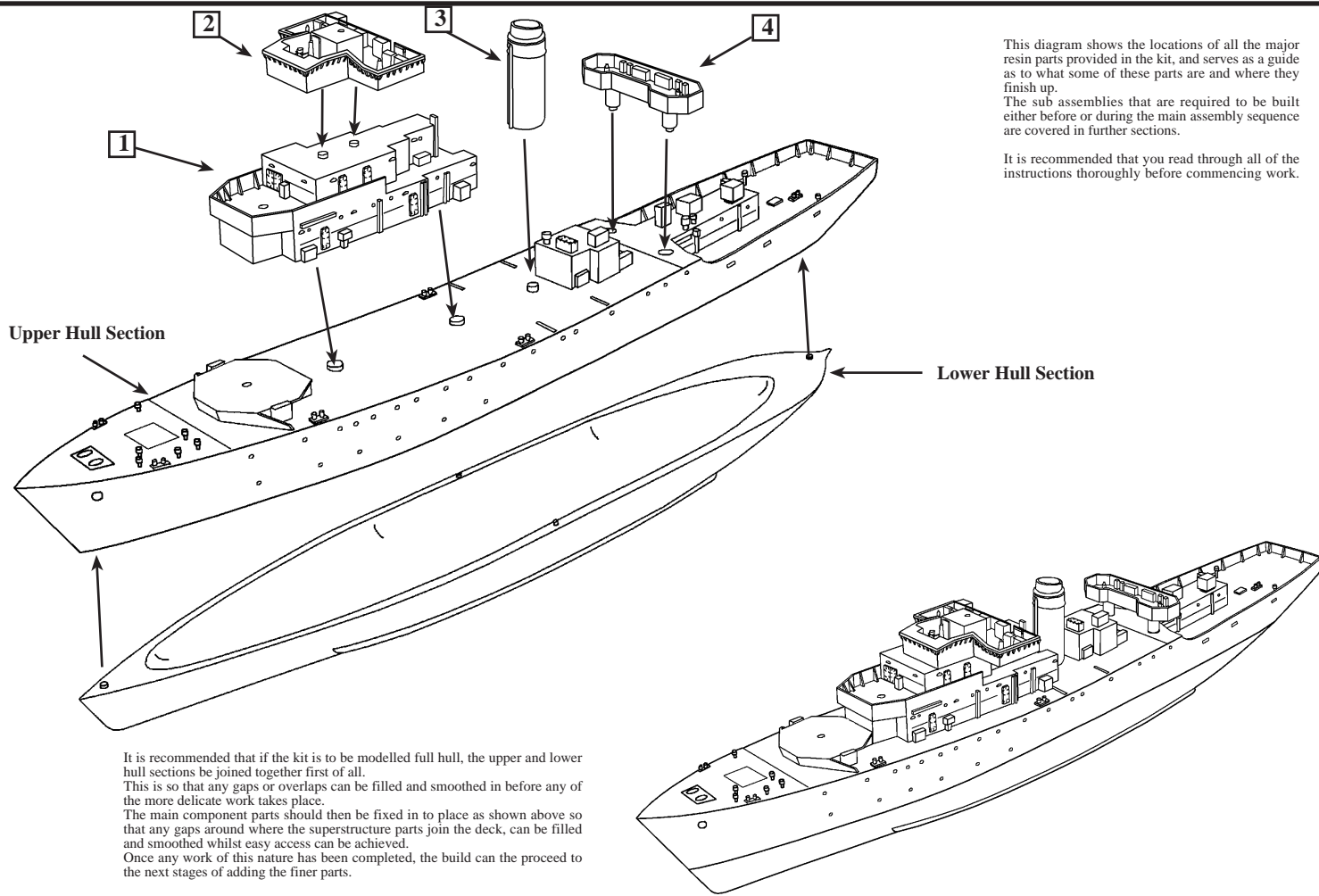
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CASTLE CLASS CORVETTES 1/350 SCALE

- |  |                                   |                                |                                       |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Stock Railings                      | 16. Ensign Gaff                   | 32. Depth Charge Rails         | 48. Signal Lamps                      |
| 2. 3 Bar Railings (Focsle Deck)        | 17. Bridge Front DF Antenna       | 33. Gun Platform Cross Braces  | 49. Ancors                            |
| 3. 3 Bar Railings (Focsle Deck Aft)    | 18. Top Mast Array Braces         | 34. Radar Lantern Base         | 50. 27' Whaler Thwarts                |
| 4. 2 Bar Railings (4" Gun Deck)        | 19. Type 25/M Aerial              | 35. Radar Lantern Assembly     | 51. Whaler Oars and Rudder            |
| 5. 3 Bar Railings (Aft Superstructure) | 20. Mast Top DF Antenna (Early)   | 36. Carley Float Racks         | 52. 16' Dinghy Thwarts and Rudder     |
| 6. Railings Mast Platform (Early)      | 21. Yardarm (Late Platform)       | 37. Loading Booms              | 53. Loading Davits                    |
| 7. Railings Mast Platform (Late)       | 22. Mast Top Platform (Late)      | 38. Type 253 Aerial            | 54. Depth Charge Throwers             |
| 8. Bridge Platform Support (Stbd)      | 23. Type 242 Antenna              | 39. Squid Loading Davit        | 55. Leadsman Platforms                |
| 9. Bridge Platform Support (Port)      | 24. ESM Antenna (Late)            | 40. Squid Loading Rails        | 56. Depth Charge Davits               |
| 10. Lattice Mast Assembly              | 25. Funnel Cap Grill              | 41. Type 277 Radar Antenna     | 57. Inclined Ladders (Superstructure) |
| 11. Mast Top Platform (Early)          | 26. Yardarm (Early)               | 42. Single 20mm Oerlikons      | 58. Inclined Ladders (Hull Step)      |
| 12. Mast Top DF Antenna                | 27. Yardarm Doublers              | 43. Twin 20mm Oerlikons        | 59. 16' Dinghy Cradles                |
| 13. Mast Platform Braces               | 28. Yardarm Footropes             | 44. 27' Whaler Davits          | 60. 27' Whaler Cradles                |
| 14. Top Mast Pole Base                 | 29. Flare Rocket Launchers        | 45. 25' Motor Cutter Davits    | 61. Vertical Ladder Stock             |
| 15. Top Mast Array (Late)              | 30. Superstructure Side Platforms | 46. Wire Antenna Spreader Mast | 62. Anchor Chain                      |
|  | 31. Depth Charge Rail Frame       | 47. Squid Mounting Handwheel   | 63. Ships Name Plates                 |

Main Component Location

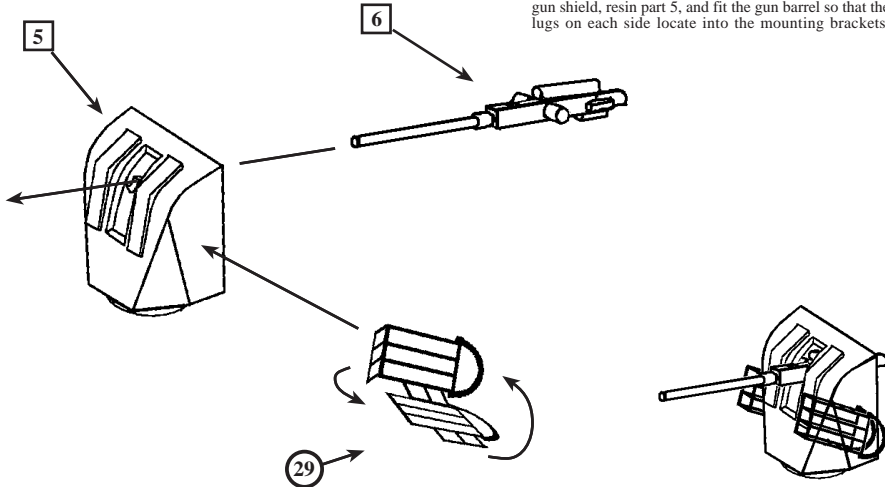


This diagram shows the locations of all the major resin parts provided in the kit, and serves as a guide as to what some of these parts are and where they finish up. The sub assemblies that are required to be built either before or during the main assembly sequence are covered in further sections. It is recommended that you read through all of the instructions thoroughly before commencing work.

It is recommended that if the kit is to be modelled full hull, the upper and lower hull sections be joined together first of all. This is so that any gaps or overlaps can be filled and smoothed in before any of the more delicate work takes place. The main component parts should then be fixed in to place as shown above so that any gaps around where the superstructure parts join the deck, can be filled and smoothed whilst easy access can be achieved. Once any work of this nature has been completed, the build can proceed to the next stages of adding the finer parts.

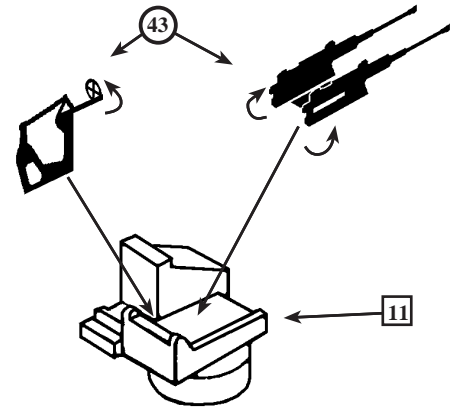
### 4" Single HA / LA Gun Mounting

Clean out any remaining flash from the gun port on the gun shield, resin part 5, and fit the gun barrel so that the lugs on each side locate into the mounting brackets.



Fold the Flare Rocket Racks, etched parts 29, to shape as shown above. Fit the completed assemblies to each side of the gun shield as shown.

### Twin 20mm Oerlikon Details



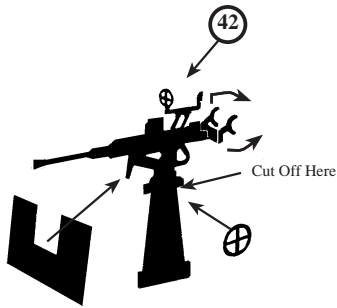
Fold up the twin gun bodies on etched part 43 to 90° so that they are parallel as shown above, then fit to the gun mounting, resin part 11. Fit the gun sight mechanism to the rear of the shield box as shown. Make two of these gun mountings.

### Single 20mm Oerlikon Details

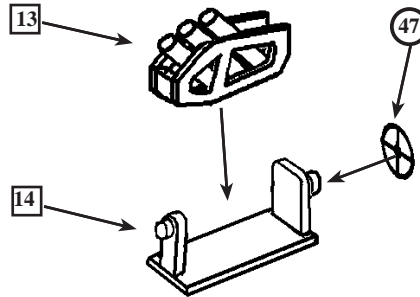
Assemble the single 20mm Oerlikons, etched parts 42, by first twisting the shoulder braces around to 90° then bending the arms back so that they are parallel.

Fit the shield into position centrally on the spigot below the barrel. As there are mounting pintles cast onto the deck of the gun platforms, the lower part of the assembly will need to be removed. This should be done first before any of the assembly steps are done. Cut the etched pintle at the point shown below.

At a later stage of the ship's career a pair of single 20mm Oerlikons were mounted on each side of the deck at the stern. For this option the etched mounting pintles will need to be retained.

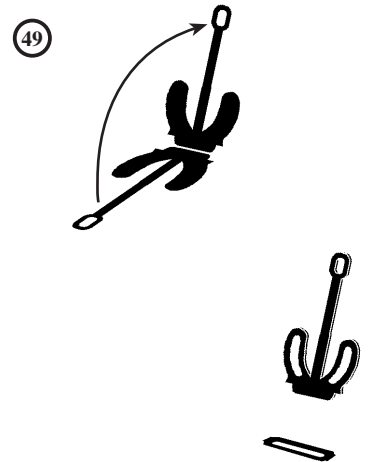


### Squid Mortar Assembly



Fit the triple-barrelled squid mortar unit, white metal part 13, into the mounting base, white metal part 14, as shown above. The barrel unit may be rotated to the desired angle before securing into place. Fit the hand wheel, etched part 47, to the spindle on the broader end of the mounting base.

### Anchor Assembly



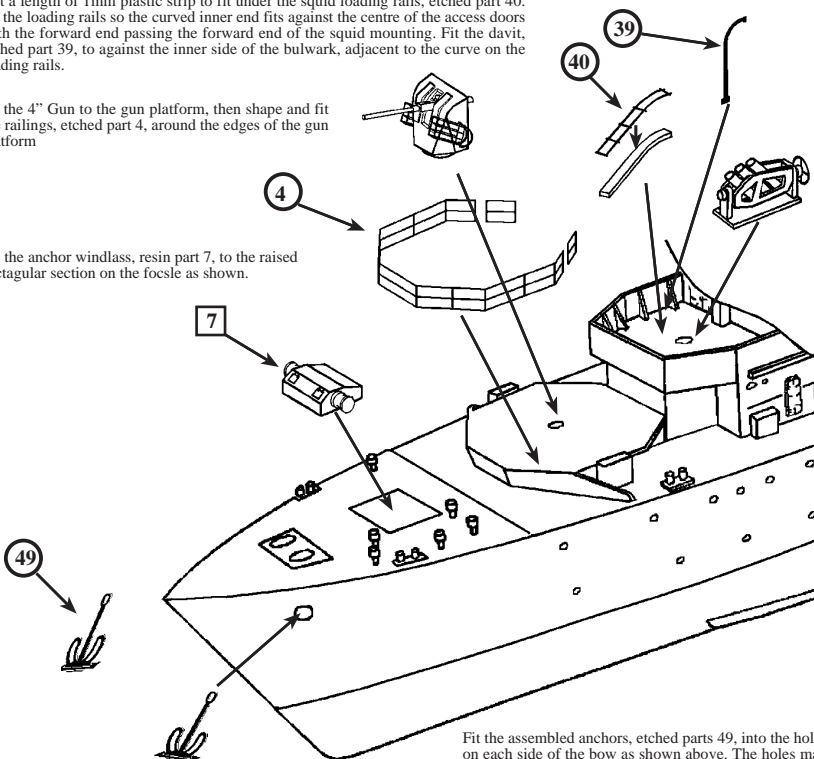
Fold the anchors, etched parts 49, in half as shown above and secure into place, with the relief etched detail outermost. Fit the lower part of the anchor through the slot in the tripping plate and secure into place. Make two of these.

### Fo'c'sle and 4" Gun Platform Fittings

Cut a length of 1mm plastic strip to fit under the squid loading rails, etched part 40. Fit the loading rails so the curved inner end fits against the centre of the access doors with the forward end passing the forward end of the squid mounting. Fit the davit, etched part 39, to against the inner side of the bulwark, adjacent to the curve on the loading rails.

Fit the 4" Gun to the gun platform, then shape and fit the railings, etched part 4, around the edges of the gun platform

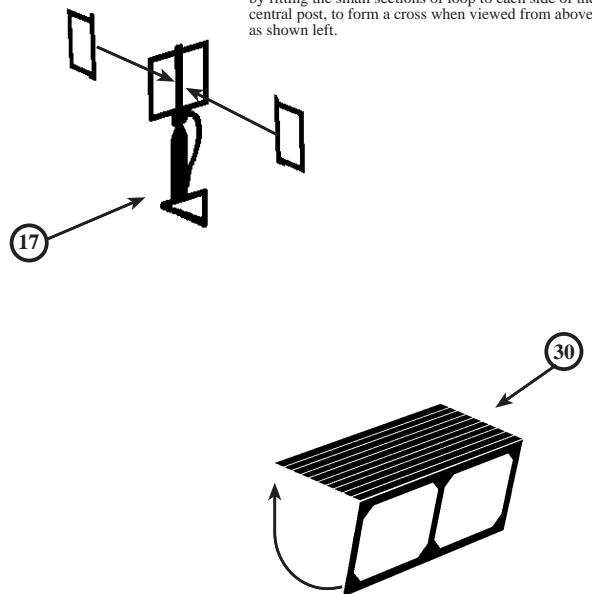
Fit the anchor windlass, resin part 7, to the raised rectangular section on the focsle as shown.



Fit the assembled anchors, etched parts 49, into the holes on each side of the bow as shown above. The holes may need to be drilled out further, to meet the hawse pipes cast onto the deck.

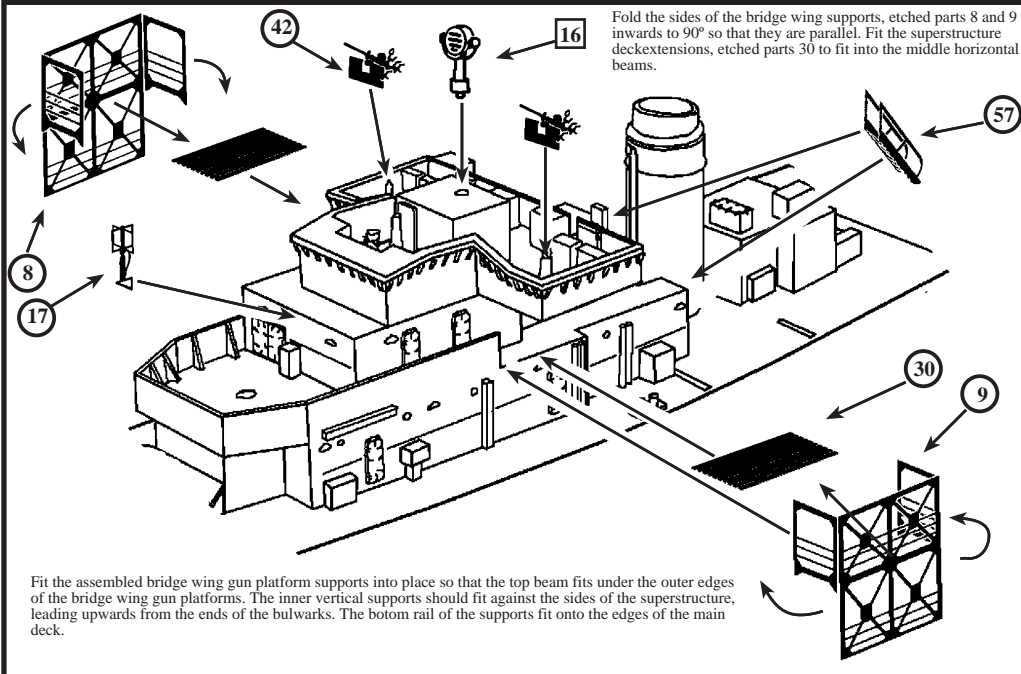
### Bridge Antenna and Platforms

Assemble the bridge front DF antenna, etched part 17 by fitting the small sections of loop to each side of the central post, to form a cross when viewed from above, as shown left.



Fold the platform support frame on etched parts 30 completely underneath and secure into place on the plain side of the platform. Make two of these.

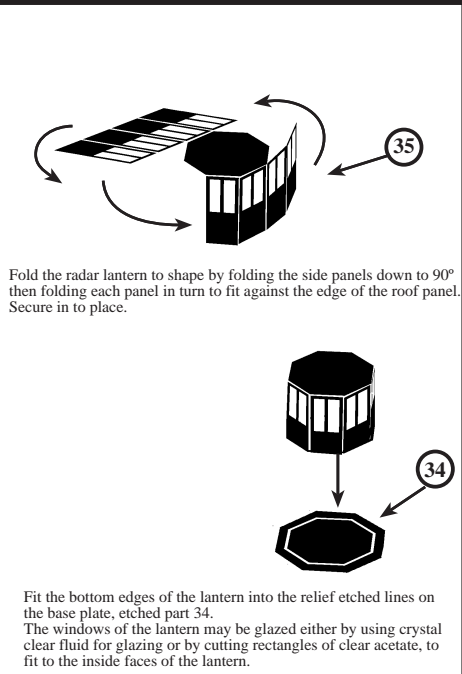
### Bridge Wing Gun Platform Support Assembly



Fold the sides of the bridge wing supports, etched parts 8 and 9 inwards to 90° so that they are parallel. Fit the superstructure deck extensions, etched parts 30 to fit into the middle horizontal beams.

Fit the assembled bridge wing gun platform supports into place so that the top beam fits under the outer edges of the bridge wing gun platforms. The inner vertical supports should fit against the sides of the superstructure, leading upwards from the ends of the bulwarks. The bottom rail of the supports fit onto the edges of the main deck.

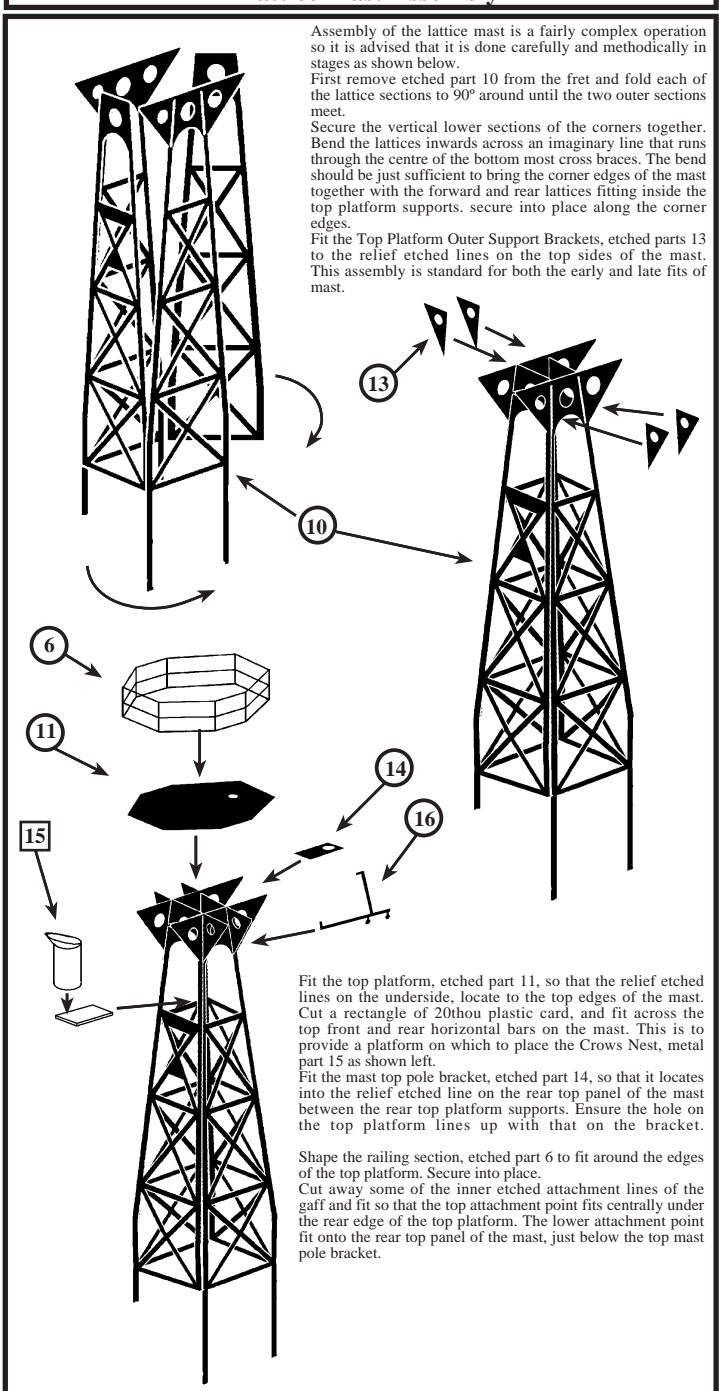
### Radar Lantern Assembly



Fold the radar lantern to shape by folding the side panels down to 90° then folding each panel in turn to fit against the edge of the roof panel. Secure in to place.

Fit the bottom edges of the lantern into the relief etched lines on the base plate, etched part 34. The windows of the lantern may be glazed either by using crystal clear fluid for glazing or by cutting rectangles of clear acetate, to fit to the inside faces of the lantern.

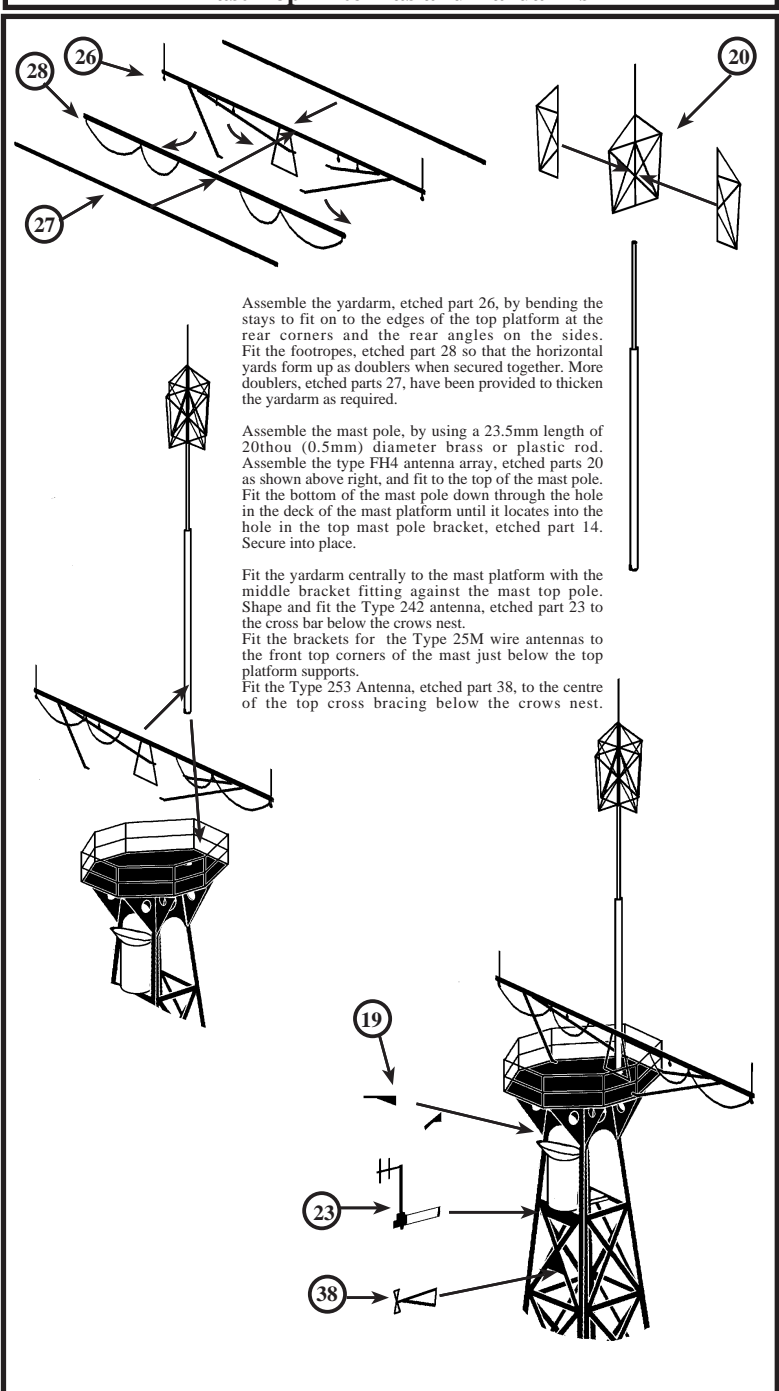
### Lattice Mast Assembly



Assembly of the lattice mast is a fairly complex operation so it is advised that it is done carefully and methodically in stages as shown below.  
 First remove etched part 10 from the fret and fold each of the lattice sections to 90° around until the two outer sections meet.  
 Secure the vertical lower sections of the corners together. Bend the lattices inwards across an imaginary line that runs through the centre of the bottom most cross braces. The bend should be just sufficient to bring the corner edges of the mast together with the forward and rear lattices fitting inside the top platform supports. secure into place along the corner edges.  
 Fit the Top Platform Outer Support Brackets, etched parts 13 to the relief etched lines on the top sides of the mast. This assembly is standard for both the early and late fits of mast.

Fit the top platform, etched part 11, so that the relief etched lines on the underside, locate to the top edges of the mast. Cut a rectangle of 20thou plastic card, and fit across the top front and rear horizontal bars on the mast. This is to provide a platform on which to place the Crows Nest, metal part 15 as shown left.  
 Fit the mast top pole bracket, etched part 14, so that it locates into the relief etched line on the rear top panel of the mast between the rear top platform supports. Ensure the hole on the top platform lines up with that on the bracket.  
 Shape the railing section, etched part 6 to fit around the edges of the top platform. Secure into place.  
 Cut away some of the inner etched attachment lines of the gaff and fit so that the top attachment point fits centrally under the rear edge of the top platform. The lower attachment point fit onto the rear top panel of the mast, just below the top mast pole bracket.

### Mast Top Antennas and Yardarms

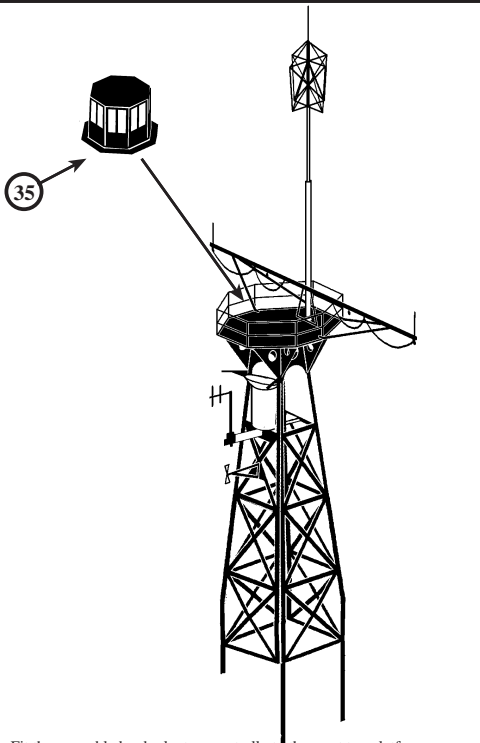


Assemble the yardarm, etched part 26, by bending the stays to fit on to the edges of the top platform at the rear corners and the rear angles on the sides. Fit the footropes, etched part 28 so that the horizontal yards form up as doublers when secured together. More doublers, etched parts 27, have been provided to thicken the yardarm as required.

Assemble the mast pole, by using a 23.5mm length of 20thou (0.5mm) diameter brass or plastic rod. Assemble the type FH4 antenna array, etched parts 20 as shown above right, and fit to the top of the mast pole. Fit the bottom of the mast pole down through the hole in the deck of the mast platform until it locates into the hole in the top mast pole bracket, etched part 14. Secure into place.

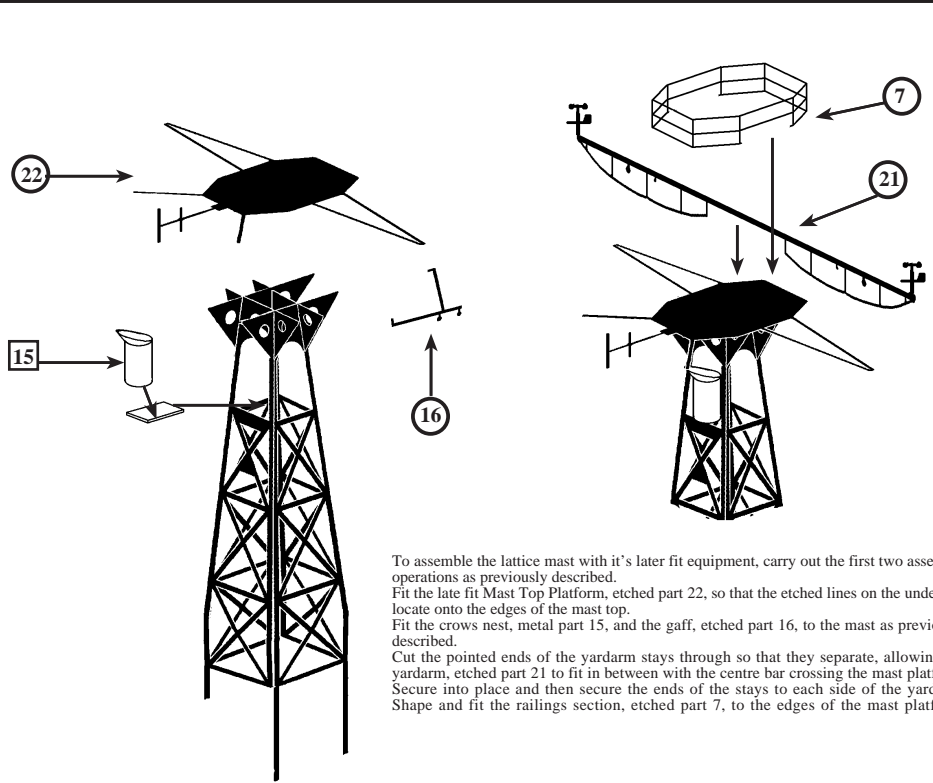
Fit the yardarm centrally to the mast platform with the middle bracket fitting against the mast top pole. Shape and fit the Type 242 antenna, etched part 23 to the cross bar below the crows nest.  
 Fit the brackets for the Type 25M wire antennas to the front top corners of the mast just below the top platform supports.  
 Fit the Type 253 Antenna, etched part 38, to the centre of the top cross bracing below the crows nest.

### Radar Lantern Location



Fit the assembled radar lantern centrally to the mast top platform as shown above. The completed mast is now ready for fitting to the top of the wireless house roof at the rear of the upper superstructure

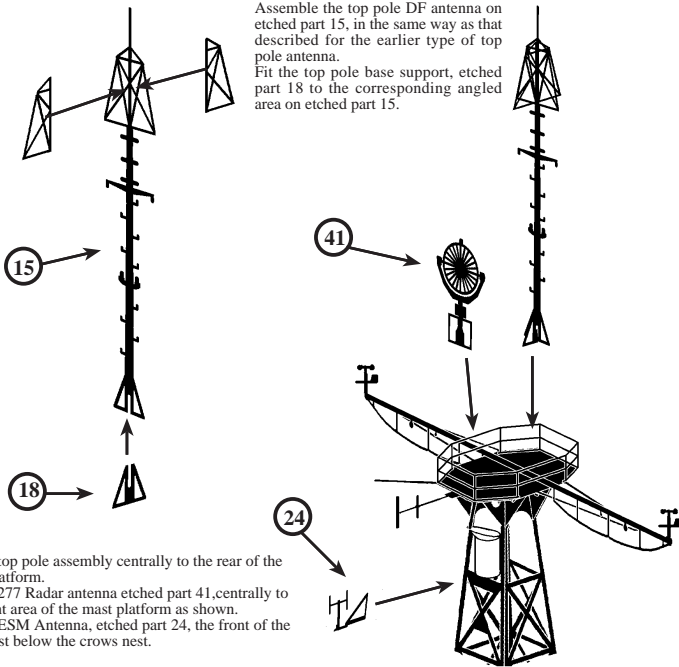
### Mast Top Platform Assembly (Late Fit)



To assemble the lattice mast with its later fit equipment, carry out the first two assembly operations as previously described.  
Fit the late fit Mast Top Platform, etched part 22, so that the etched lines on the underside locate onto the edges of the mast top.  
Fit the crow's nest, metal part 15, and the gaff, etched part 16, to the mast as previously described.  
Cut the pointed ends of the yardarm stays through so that they separate, allowing the yardarm, etched part 21 to fit in between with the centre bar crossing the mast platform. Secure into place and then secure the ends of the stays to each side of the yardarm. Shape and fit the railings section, etched part 7, to the edges of the mast platform.

### Mast Top Antennas (Late Fit)

Assemble the top pole DF antenna on etched part 15, in the same way as that described for the earlier type of top pole antenna.  
Fit the top pole base support, etched part 18 to the corresponding angled area on etched part 15.

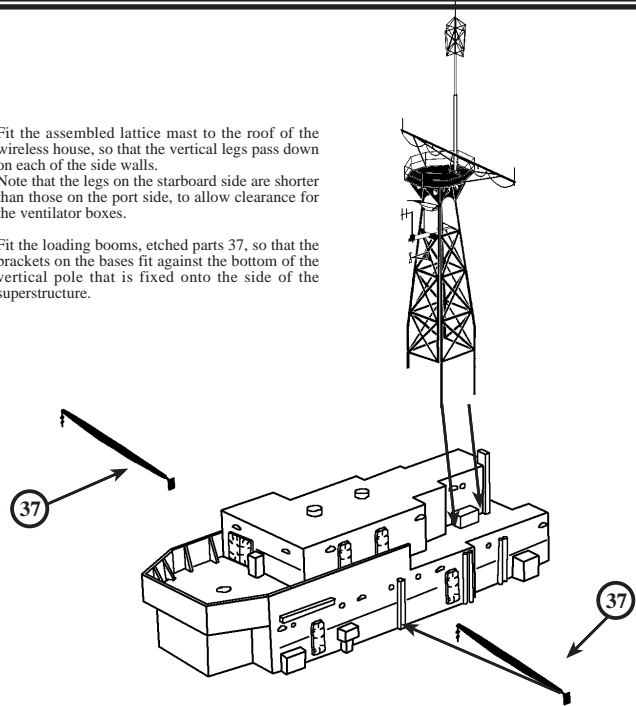


Fit the top pole assembly centrally to the rear of the mast platform.  
Fit the 277 Radar antenna etched part 41, centrally to the front area of the mast platform as shown.  
Fit the ESM Antenna, etched part 24, the front of the mast just below the crow's nest.

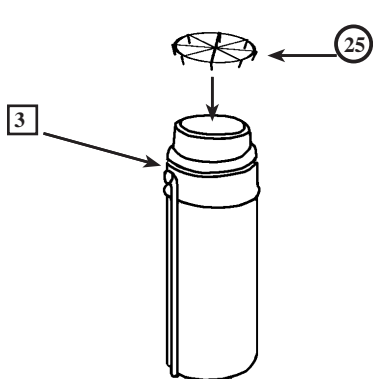
### Mast and Loading Boom Location

Fit the assembled lattice mast to the roof of the wireless house, so that the vertical legs pass down on each of the side walls.  
Note that the legs on the starboard side are shorter than those on the port side, to allow clearance for the ventilator boxes.

Fit the loading booms, etched parts 37, so that the brackets on the bases fit against the bottom of the vertical pole that is fixed onto the side of the superstructure.

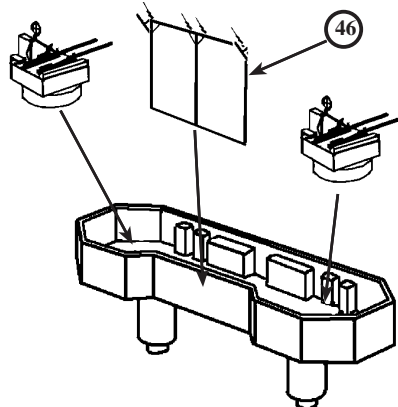


### Funnel Cap Grill



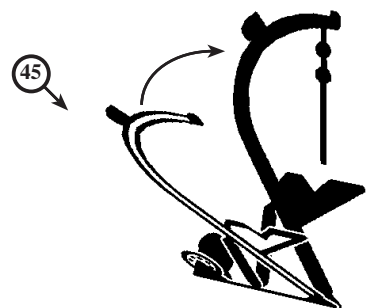
Remove the funnel cap grill, etched part 25, from the fret and trim the short outer legs so that they are equal length.  
Bend the short legs down and inwards slightly so that they become the attachment feet around the top rim of the funnel. Secure into place on the funnel as shown.

### Aft AA Gun Platform Assembly



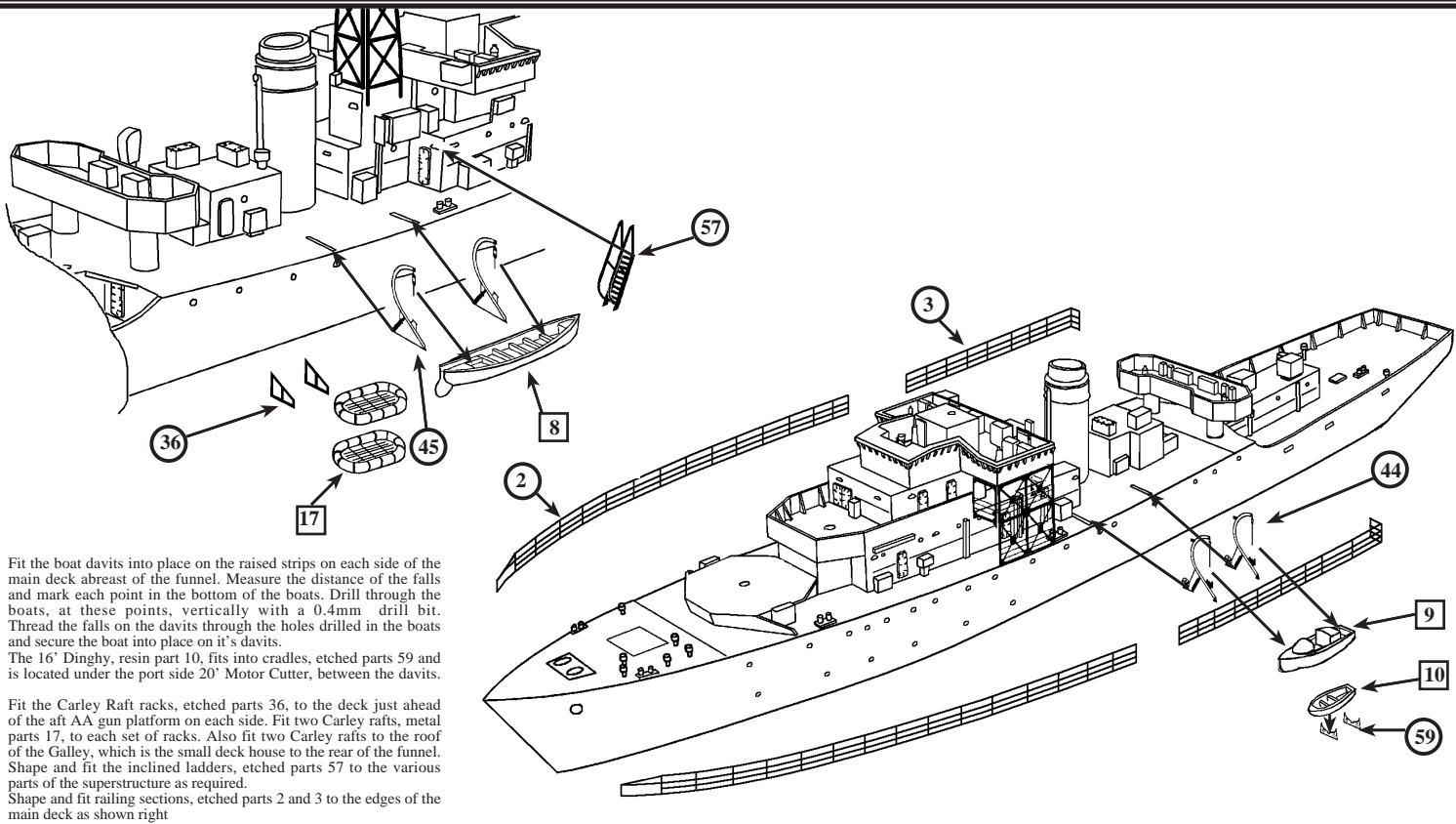
Fold the small signal yards on the outer poles of the wire antenna spreader, etched part 46, to an angle of 45° forwards. Fit the antenna spreader bottom rail to the bulwark of the aft gun platform as shown. Fold the wire insulators forwards to the required angle to fit the wires from the mast yards.

### Boat Davit Assembly



The assembly of the boat davits is quite simple. Fold the etched parts 44 and 45 in half so that they are double thickness, with the relief etched detail outer most, and secure into place.  
Cut the boat fall at the bottom so that it may be threaded into the boat when fitted.

## Main Deck Railing and Ships Boat Locations

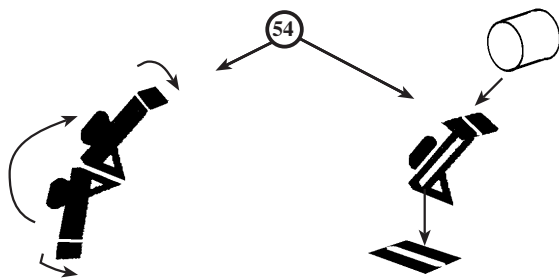


Fit the boat davits into place on the raised strips on each side of the main deck abreast of the funnel. Measure the distance of the falls and mark each point in the bottom of the boats. Drill through the boats, at these points, vertically with a 0.4mm drill bit. Thread the falls on the davits through the holes drilled in the boats and secure the boat into place on it's davits.

The 16' Dinghy, resin part 10, fits into cradles, etched parts 59 and is located under the port side 20' Motor Cutter, between the davits.

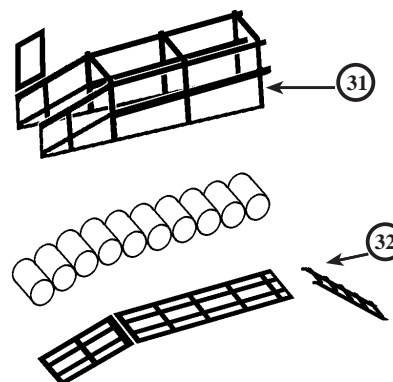
Fit the Carley Raft racks, etched parts 36, to the deck just ahead of the aft AA gun platform on each side. Fit two Carley rafts, metal parts 17, to each set of racks. Also fit two Carley rafts to the roof of the Galley, which is the small deck house to the rear of the funnel. Shape and fit the inclined ladders, etched parts 59 to the various parts of the superstructure as required. Shape and fit railing sections, etched parts 2 and 3 to the edges of the main deck as shown right

## Depth Charge Thrower Assembly



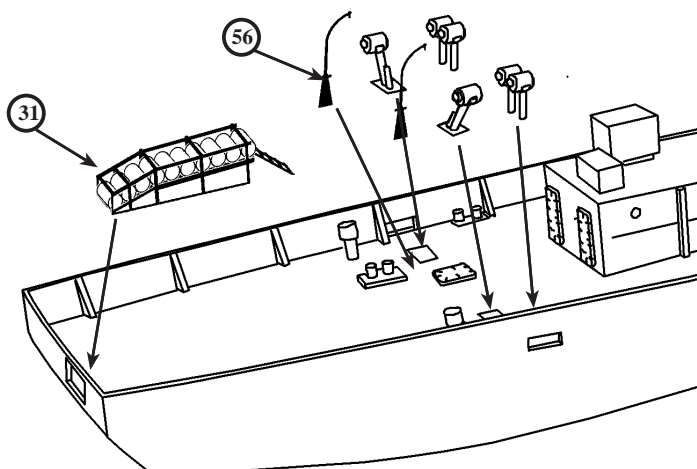
To assemble etched parts 54, fold the main body of the thrower gun in half, so that it is double thickness. Fold top plates outwards to 90° so that the depth charge can be located easily. Fit the base of the gun body to the footplate as shown above right. Make depth charges by cutting short lengths of 1.5mm (60thou) diameter plastic rod and fitting to the tops of the throwers.

## Depth Charge Rail Assembly



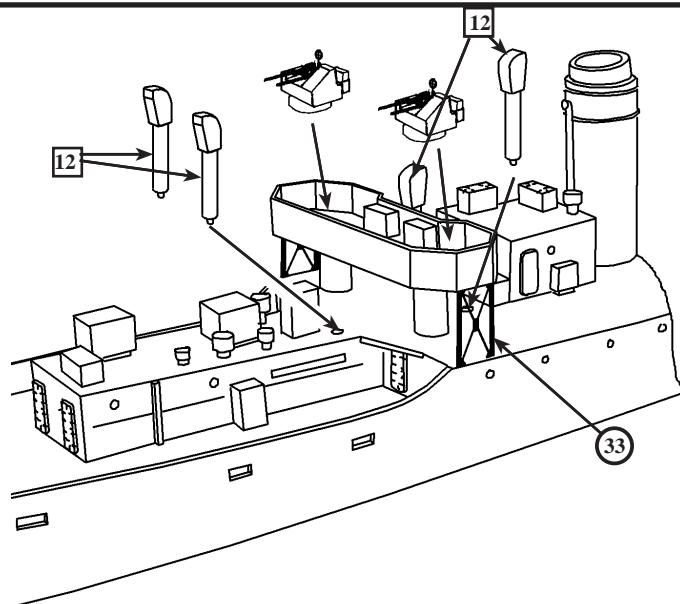
Fold the side frames of the depth charge rail to 90° so that they are parallel, then shape the rail frame to fit the lower bar on the side frames. Secure into place in between the side frames. Depth charges may be cut from short lengths of 1.5mm (60 thou) diameter plastic rod and placed on the rails as required. Fit the loading ramp to the rear edge of the depth charge rails as shown.

## Depth Charge Rails and Throwers Location



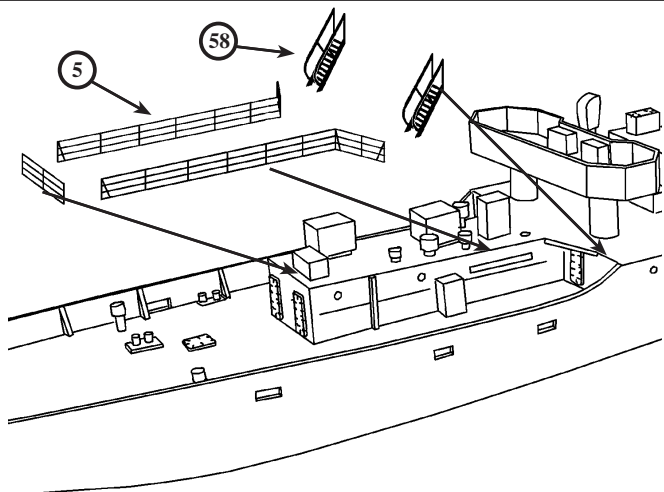
Cut a rectangular opening in the rear bulwark off centre to starboard, of a corresponding size to fit the aft opening of the depth charge rails. Fit the depth charge rails in place on the quarterdeck. Fit the depth charge throwers to the quarterdeck, outboard on a line taken across the deck hatch. Fit the depth charge davits, etched parts 56 on the inboard edge of the depth charge thrower. Spare depth charges can be made but cutting short lengths of 1.5mm (60thou) diameter plastic rod and fitting them onto lengths of stretched sprue. These can be fitted to small holes drilled in the deck if desired.

## Aft AA Gun and Cowl Vent Location



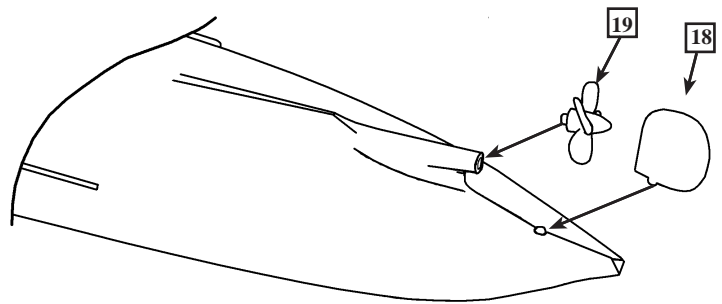
Fit the cowl vents, metal parts 12, to the locating holes in the deck forward and aft of the gun platform. The cowl vents may be positioned to face in any desired direction as they would be on an actual ship. Fit the assembled twin 20mm gun mountings to each side of the gun platform after first removing the cast on single mounting pintles.

### Aft Superstructure Railings





Shape and fit the railings, etched parts 5, to the edges of the aft superstructure deck as shown. Note that there should be a gap between these railings and those etched parts 3 as fitted earlier, to allow for access of the quarterdeck step ladders, etched parts 58.

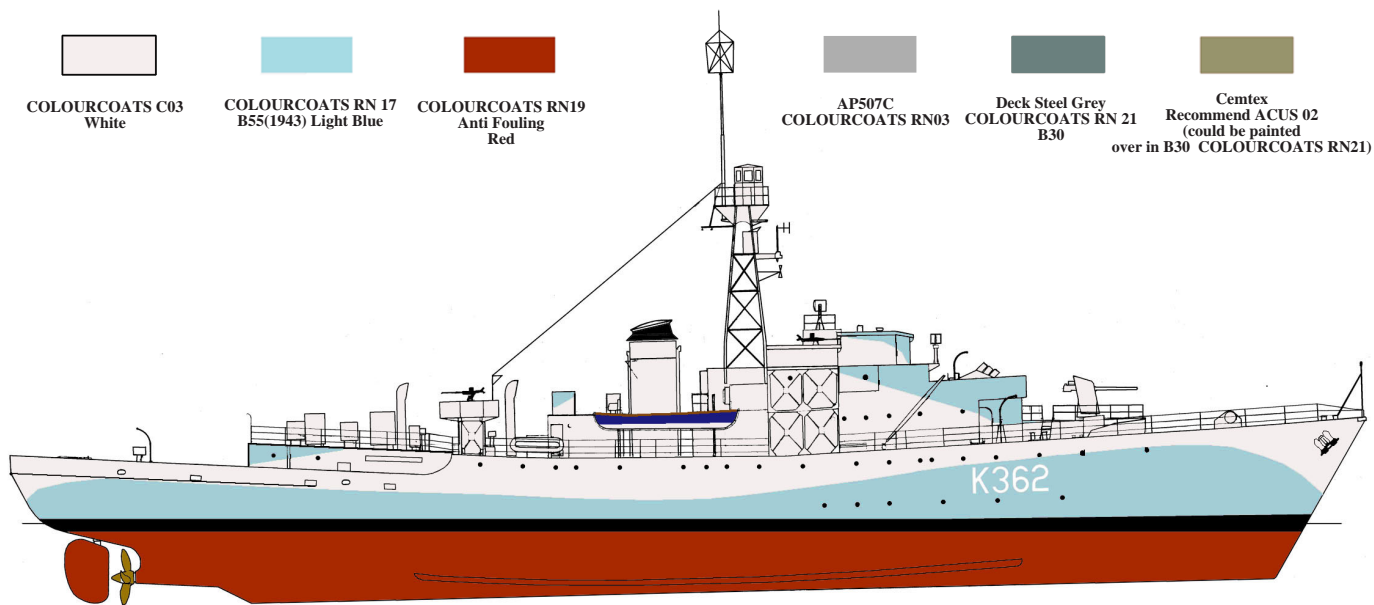
### Propeller and Rudder Fitting



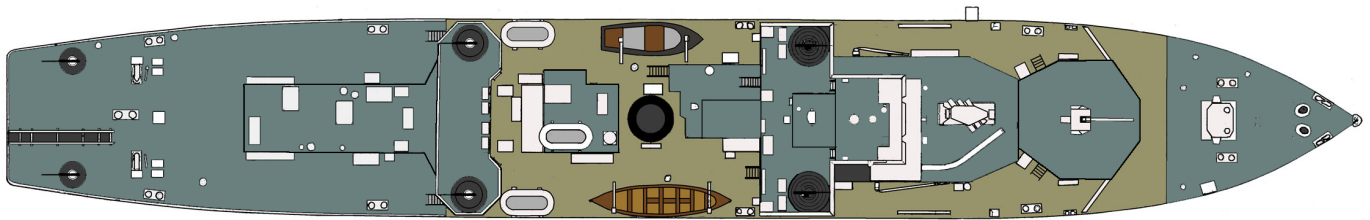
If the lower hull is being used to make a full hulled model, fit the propeller, metal part 19, into the locating hole in the rear of the skeg mounted shaft. Fit the rudder, metal part 18 to the locating hole on the centre line under the stern.

### Colour Chart and Painting Guide

					
COLOURCOATS C03 White	COLOURCOATS RN 17 B55(1943) Light Blue	COLOURCOATS RN19 Anti Fouling Red	AP507C COLOURCOATS RN03	Deck Steel Grey COLOURCOATS RN 21 B30	Cemtex Recommend ACUS 02 (could be painted over in B30 COLOURCOATS RN21)



HMS PORTCHESTER CASTLE 1943



Other colours used are as follows.

- Matt Black** Funnel Caps and Grills, Machine Guns and Light AA Weapons, Hull Boot Topping, and Anchor Chain.
- Bronze.** Propeller
- Dark Grey.** Depth Charges
- Mahogany or Natural Wood.** Decks and Thwarts of Ships Boats

Fit the smaller Pennant Numbers to the transom as shown



HMS PORTCHESTER CASTLE 1953

