



Confederate warship CSS ALABAMA

Im Anschluss an den Ausbruch des US-amerikanischen Bürgerkriegs im April 1861 wurden die Häfen der Konföderation durch Schlachtschiffe der Union blockiert.

Konfrontiert mit den Aussichten einer langen Blockade, die den Süden abschneiden würde, beauftragte die Konföderation die Lairds Werft in Birkenhead, England, mit dem Bau einer leistungsstarken Dampf-*Barque*, um Unionshandelschiffe anzugreifen.

Im Juni 1861 begann der Bau des als *Barquentine* getakelten Schiffes, ausgestattet mit zwei Hilfsdampfmaschinen und einer Leistung von 300 PS. Konzipiert mit einer Geschwindigkeit von mehr als 13 Knoten in der Spitze, sollte sie ein wahrhaft mächtiges Kriegsschiff werden.

Im Juli 1862 vom Stapel gelassen, wurde das Schiff Nr.290 zum Spekulationsobjekt ohne seinen wahren Charakter zu offenbaren. Der US-amerikanische Botschafter in Großbritannien behauptete, dass das Schiff ein Schlachtschiff sei und kein Handelsschiff. Am 29. Juli 1862 waren die britischen Behörden bereit, diesen Behauptungen nachzugehen. Das kurz zuvor mit dem Namen „*Enrica*“ benannte Schiff segelte allerdings bei Ebbe raus vermutlich um die Seetüchtigkeit zu prüfen - und kehrte nicht wieder zurück.

Weniger als einen Monat später, ging die „*Enrica*“ in einem abgelegenen Hafen auf den Azoren vor Anker um Ausrüstung, Proviant und einen neuen Kommandanten, Kapitän Raphael Semmes, an Bord zu nehmen. Als die Konföderierten-Flagge gehisst wurde, war das Handelskriegsschiff „*Alabama*“ zum Angriff bereit.

Schwer bewaffnet mit sechs 32 Pfund Kanonen, einer 68 Pfund Kanone und einem Schnellfeuer-Geschütz, war die *Alabama* unter Kapitän Semmes ein gefürchteter Gegner.

Die Mannschaft der *Alabama* zerstörte während einer Spanne von 22 Monaten und 75000 Meilen Seereise 57 Handelsschiffe und das Unions-Kriegsschiff „*Hatteras*“.

Unbarmherzig verfolgt durch Unionskriegsschiffe traf die „*Alabama*“ am 11. Juni 1864 in Cherbourg, Frankreich ein. Die Nachrichten über ihre Ankunft wurden dem Kommandanten Winslow von der Dampf-*Barquentine* „*Kearsarge*“ übermittelt. Am 19. Juni fand das legendäre Seegefecht statt. In internationalen Gewässern vor der Küste Frankreichs bekämpften sich die zwei Kriegsschiffe in einem harten Seekampf der mehr als 60 Minuten dauerte. Die überlegene Artilleriekunst der Kanoniere der *Kearsarge* bewirkte schließlich den Sieg über die „*Alabama*“, so daß diese aufgegeben wurde.

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Following the outbreak of the U. S. Civil War in April of 1861, the Confederate ports were blockaded by Union warships. Faced with the prospects of a blockade that would strangle the South, the Confederacy commissioned the construction of a powerful steam *barque* to serve as a commerce raiding vessel to attack Union merchant ships. In June of 1861, the Lairds shipyard of Birkenhead, England began construction of a sleek *barquentine*-rigged vessel equipped with two auxiliary steam engines capable of developing 300 horsepower. Designed to achieve hull speeds in excess of 13 knots, it would prove to be a formidable warship indeed.

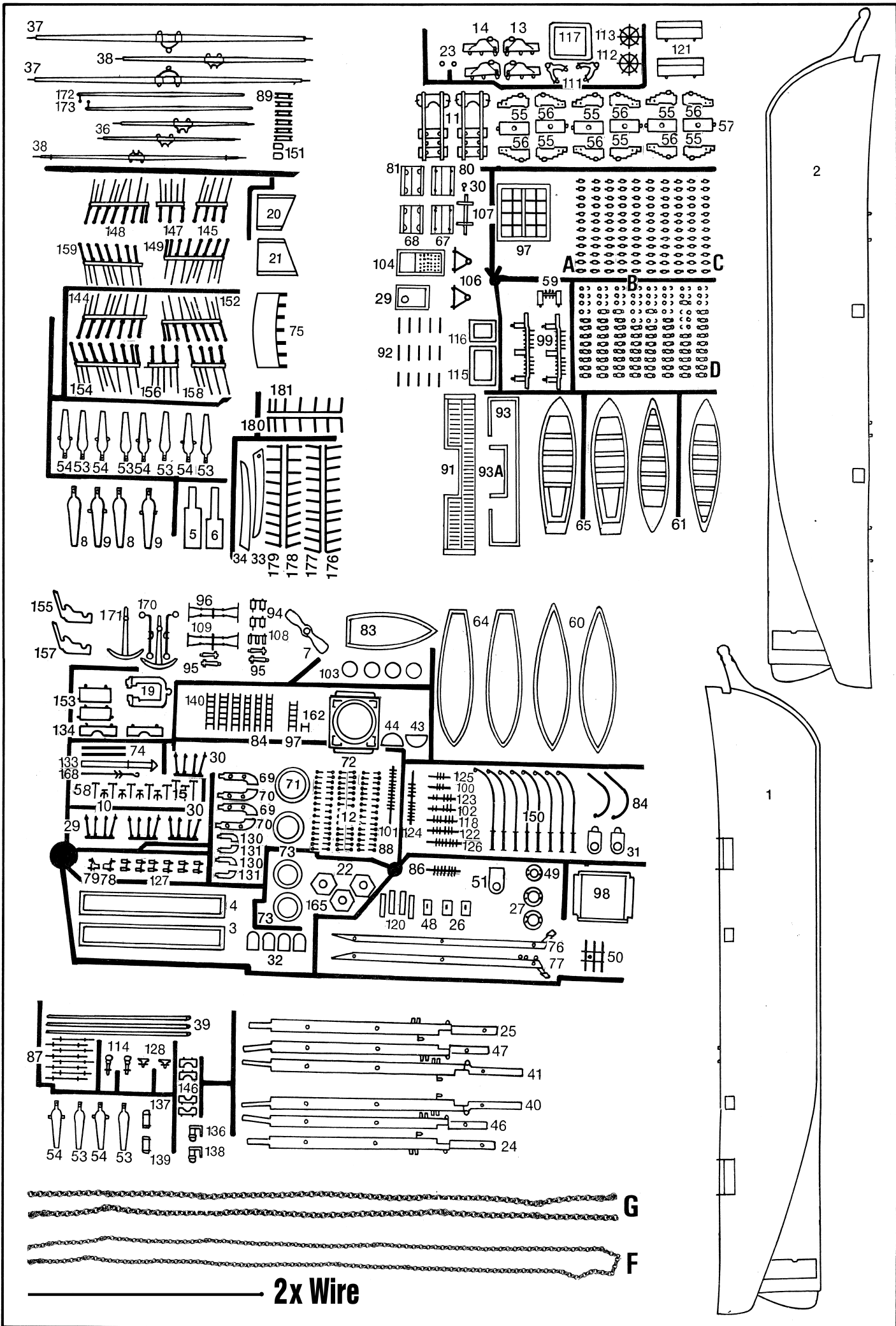
Launched in July of 1862, vessel #290 was enveloped in controversy and intrigue. The U. S. Ambassador to Great Britain charged that the vessel was a warship; not a merchantman. On July 29th, 1862, the British authorities agreed to investigate, but the newly-named „*Enrica*“ sailed on the ebbing tide supposedly on sea trials never to return.

Less than one month later, the „*Enrica*“ anchored in a secluded harbor in the Azores to be armed and provisioned and receive her new commander, Captain Raphael Semmes. With the raising of the Confederate stars and bars, the merchant raider „*Alabama*“ was ready for action.

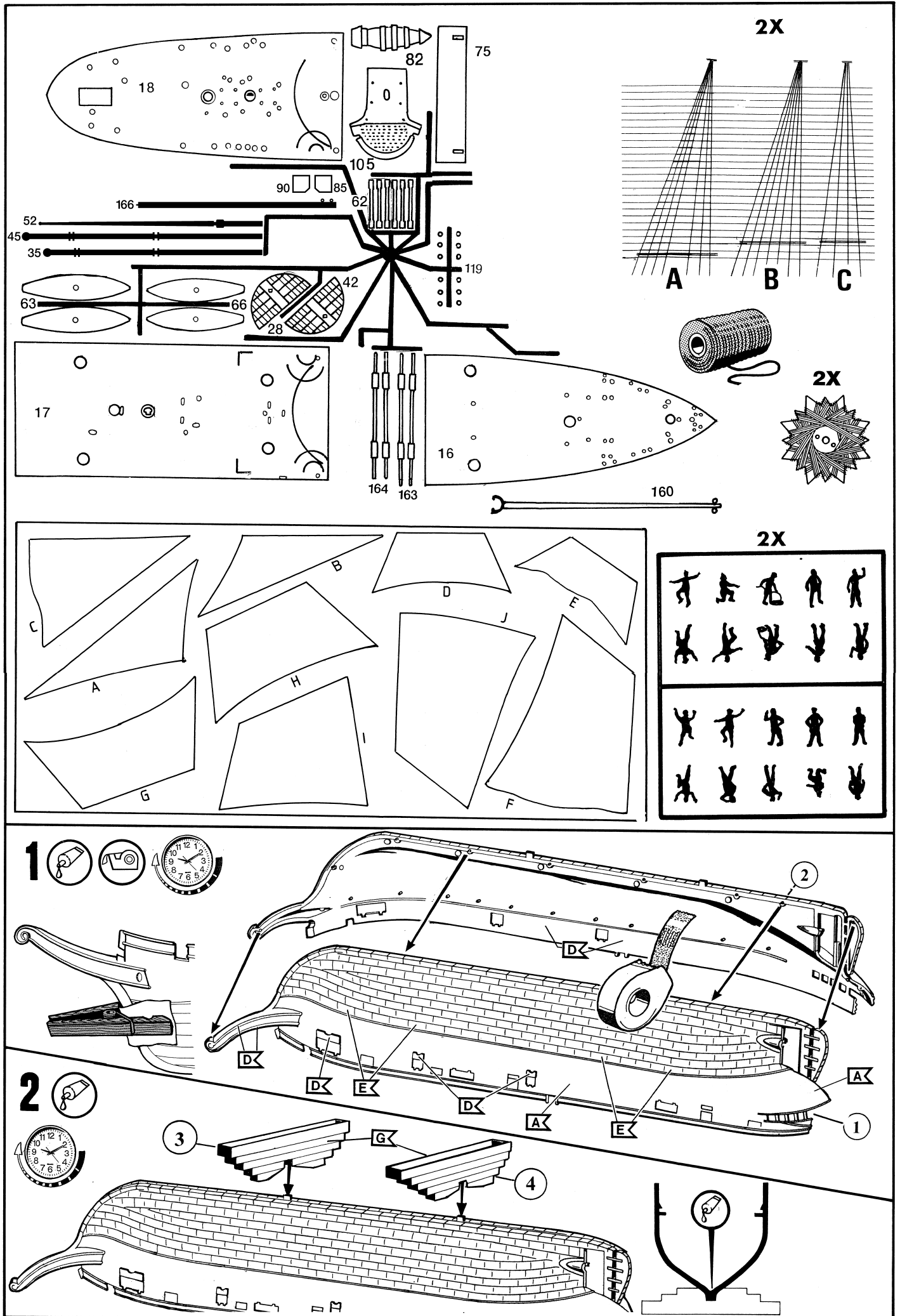
Heavily armed with six 32-pounder cannons, one 68-pounder cannon, and a high-velocity 100-pound Blakely rifle, Captain Semmes' command was a feared adversary. During a span of 22 months, the crew of the *Alabama* destroyed 57 merchant ships and the union warships „*Hatteras*“ during a 75,000 mile voyage.

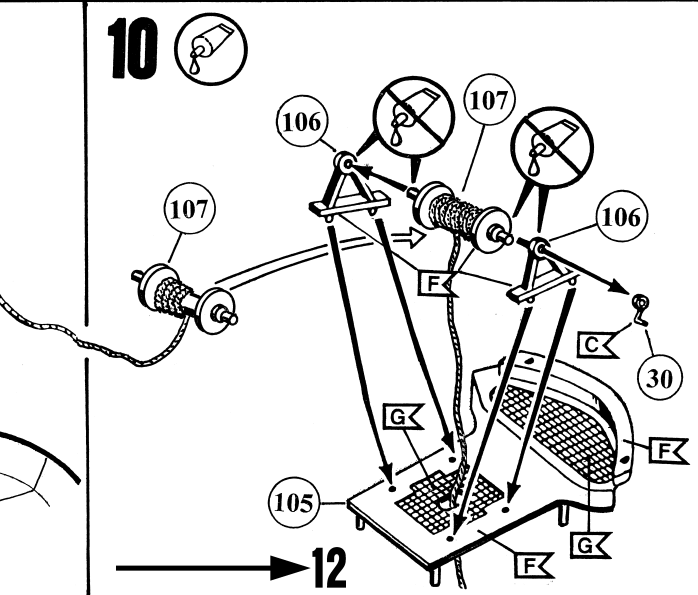
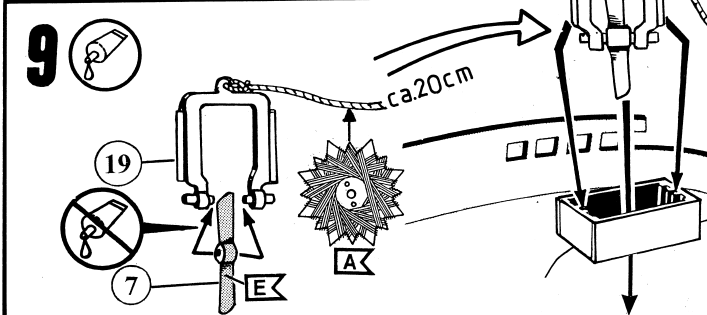
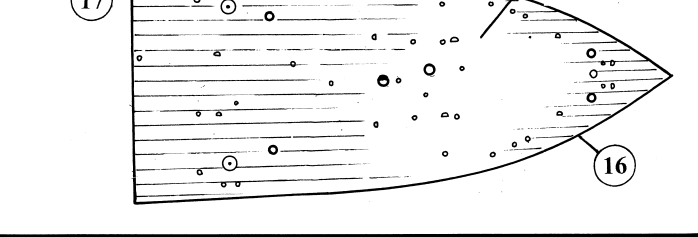
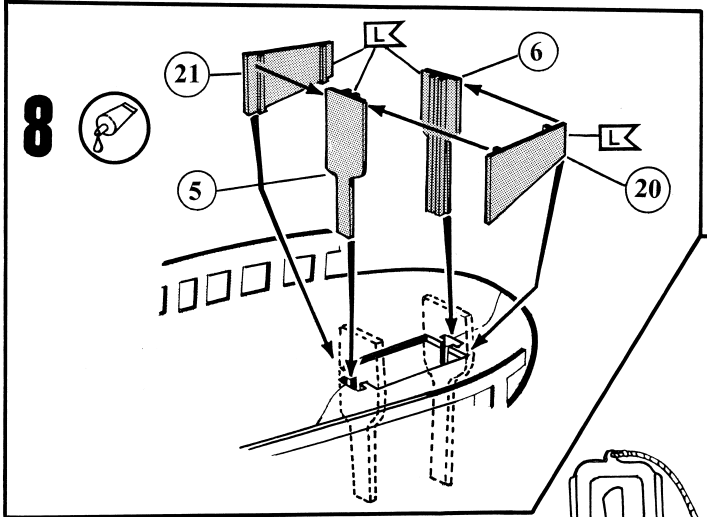
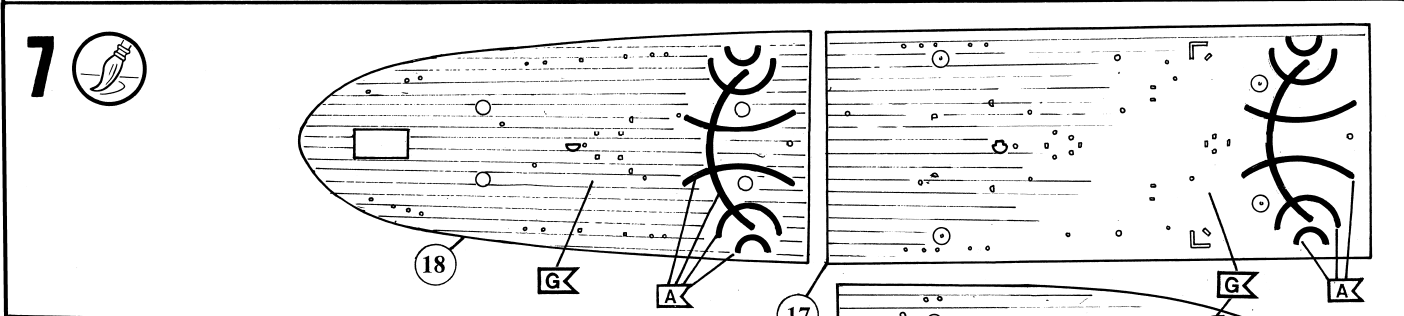
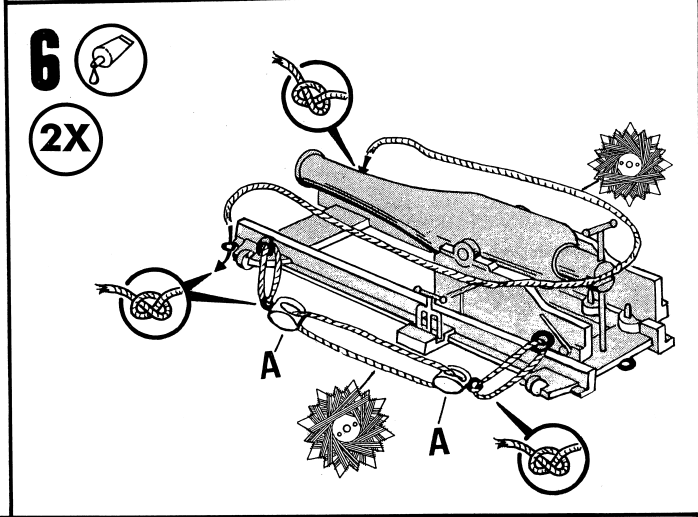
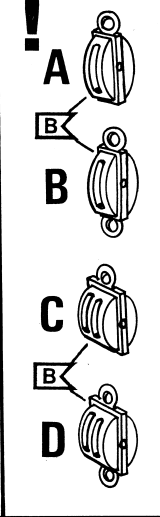
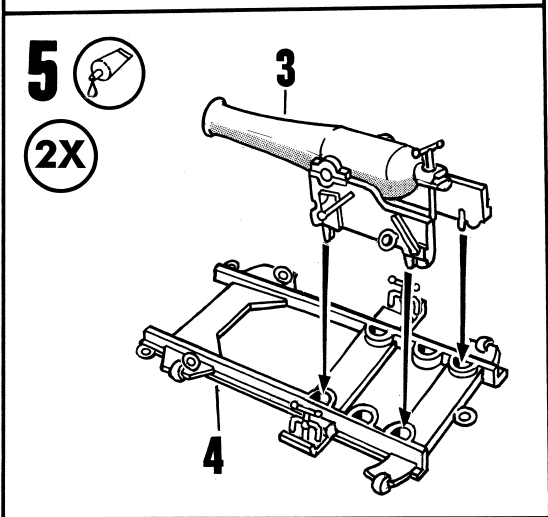
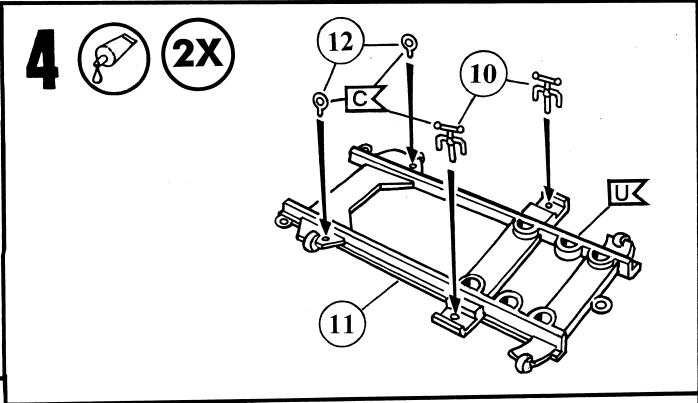
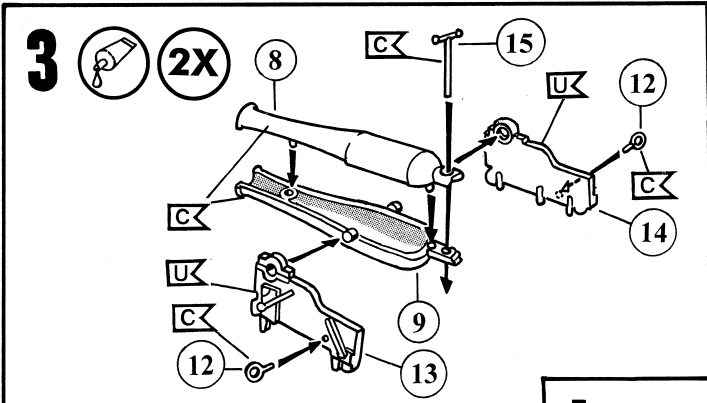
Relentlessly pursued by Union warships, the „*Alabama*“ sailed into Cherbourg, France on June 11th, 1864. The news of her arrival was transmitted to Commander Winslow of the steam *barquentine* „*Kearsarge*“; and on the 19th of June, an epic sea battle was enjoined. Sailing in international waters off the coast of France, the two vessels engaged in an epic sea battle that lasted more than sixty minutes.

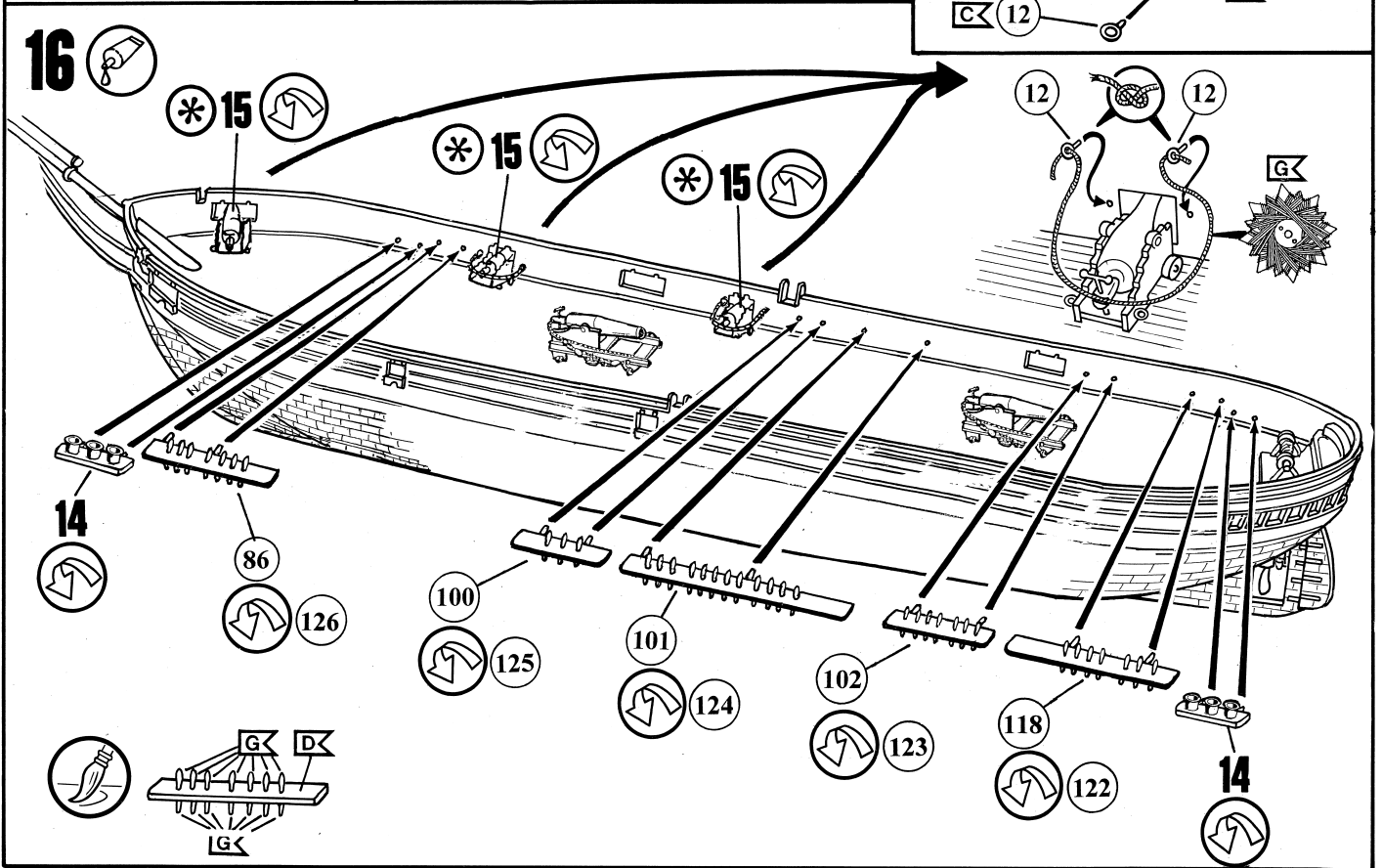
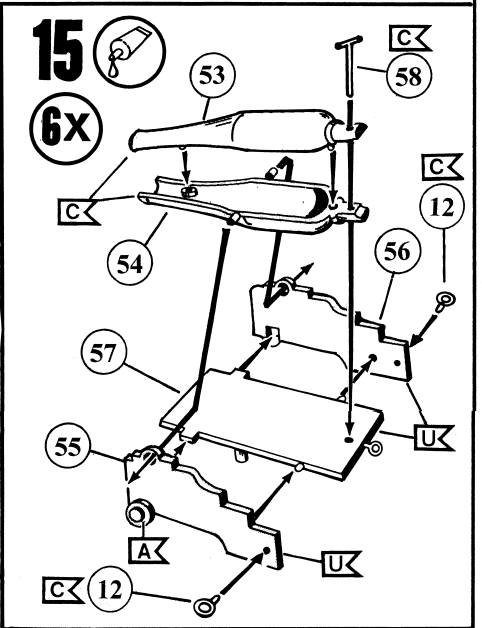
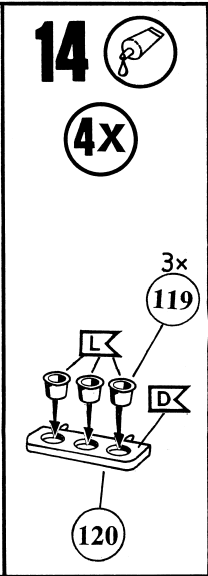
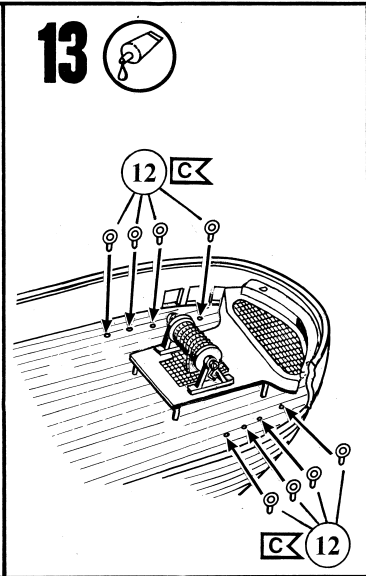
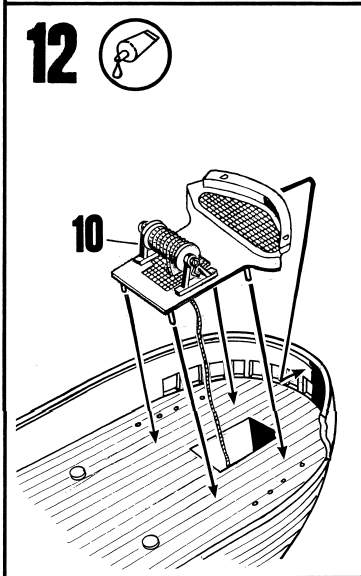
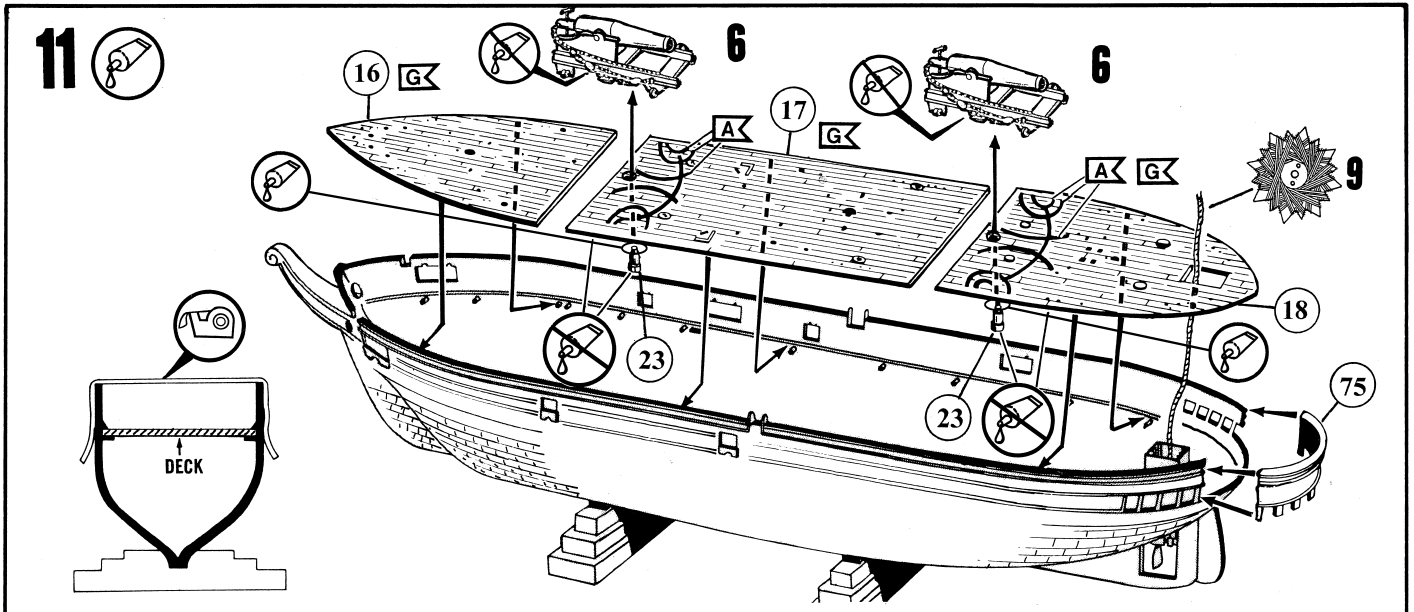
Alas, the superior gunnery of the crew of the Union vessel overwhelmed the *Alabama*, and she was abandoned. More than a century later, controversy lingers on ... rogue or valiant fighting vessel depends on your viewpoint, but, none can deny that the tale of the *Alabama* is an epic adventure of seamanship.

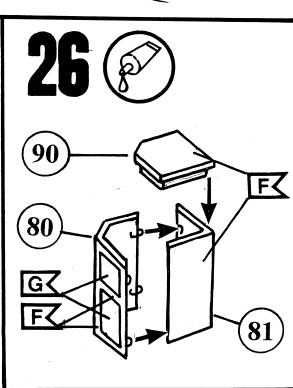
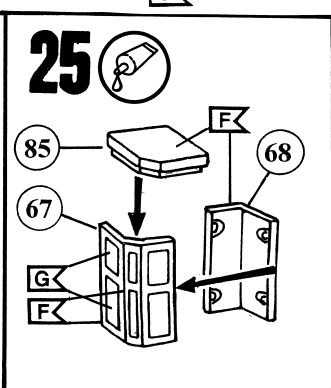
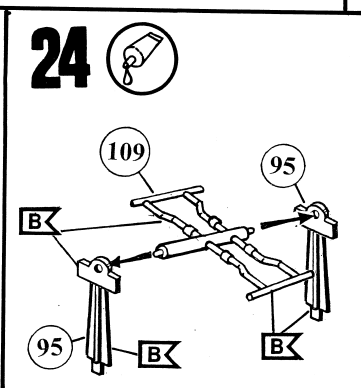
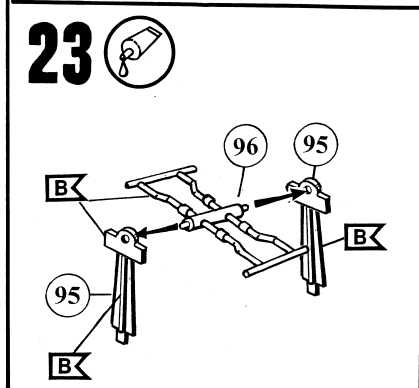
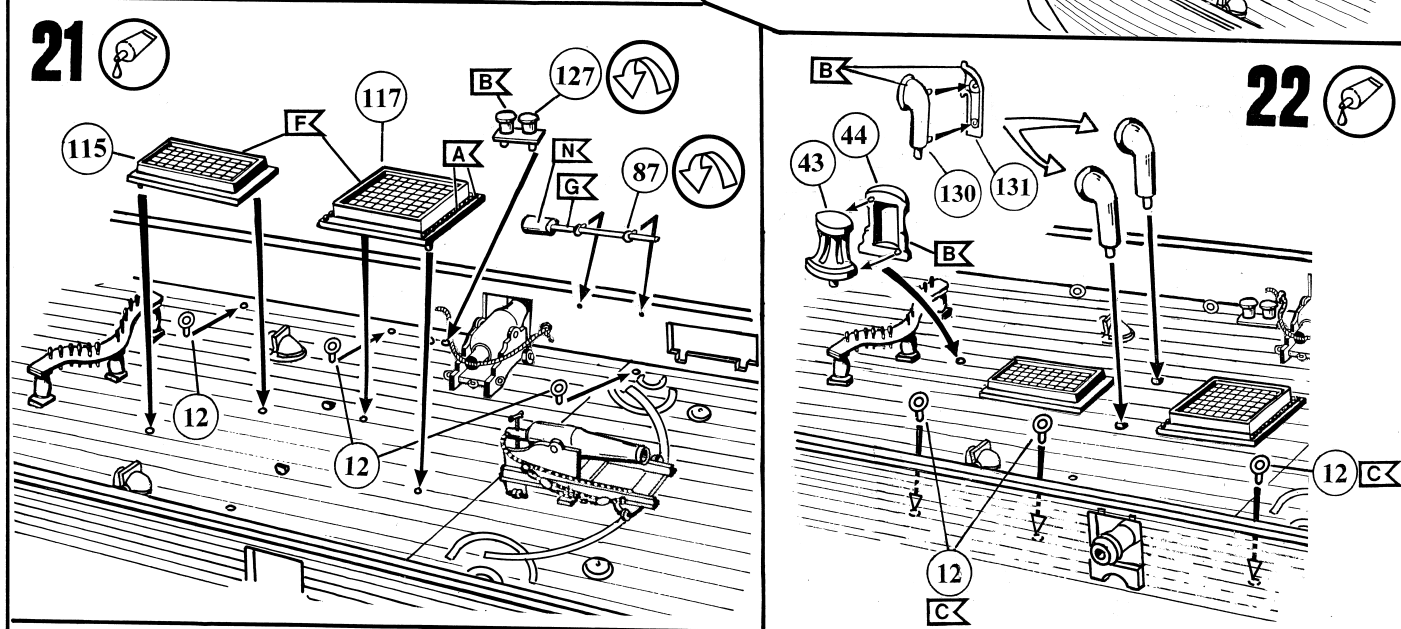
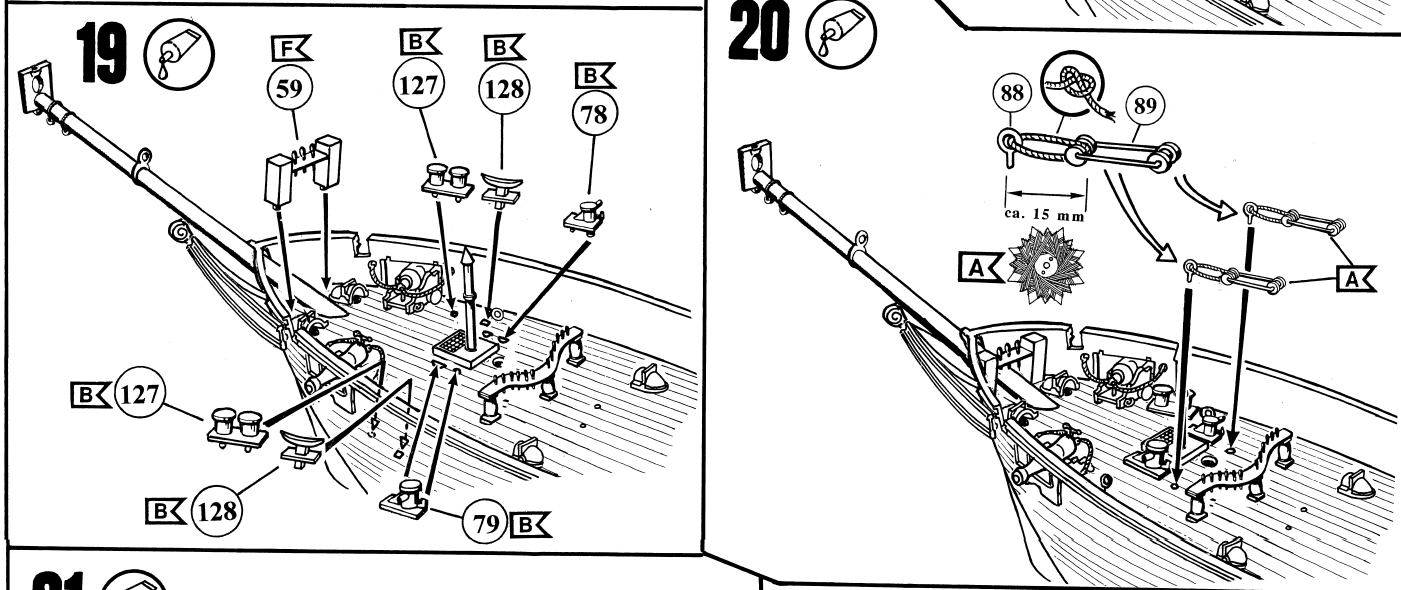
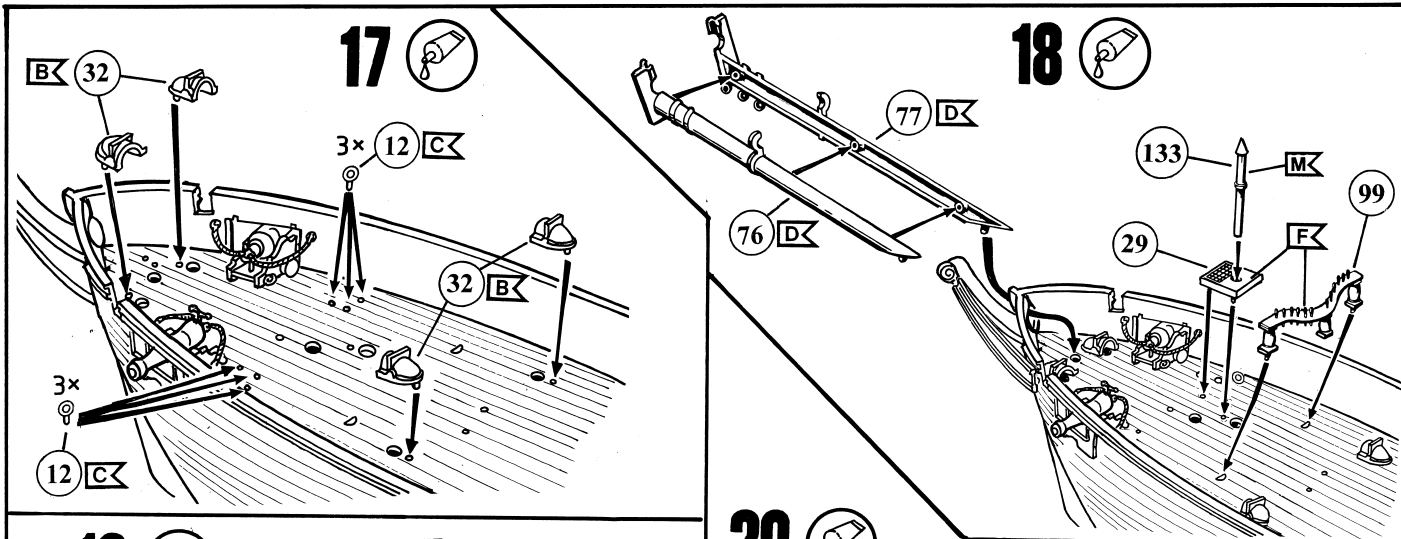


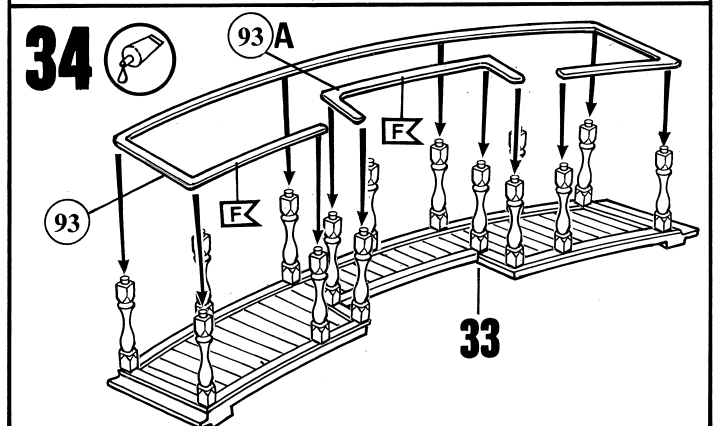
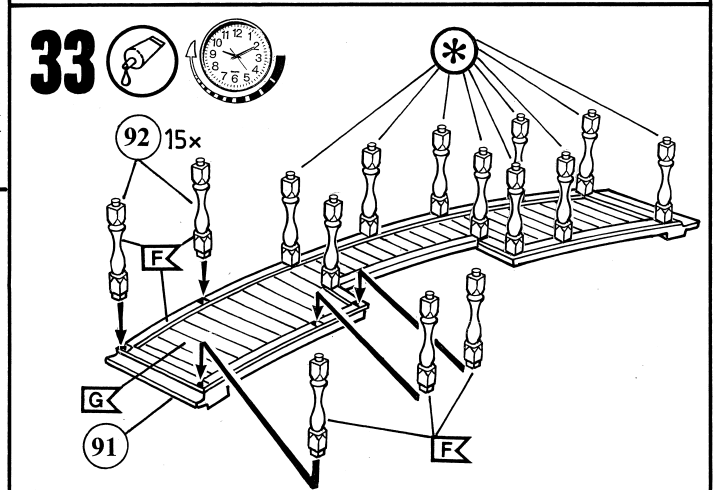
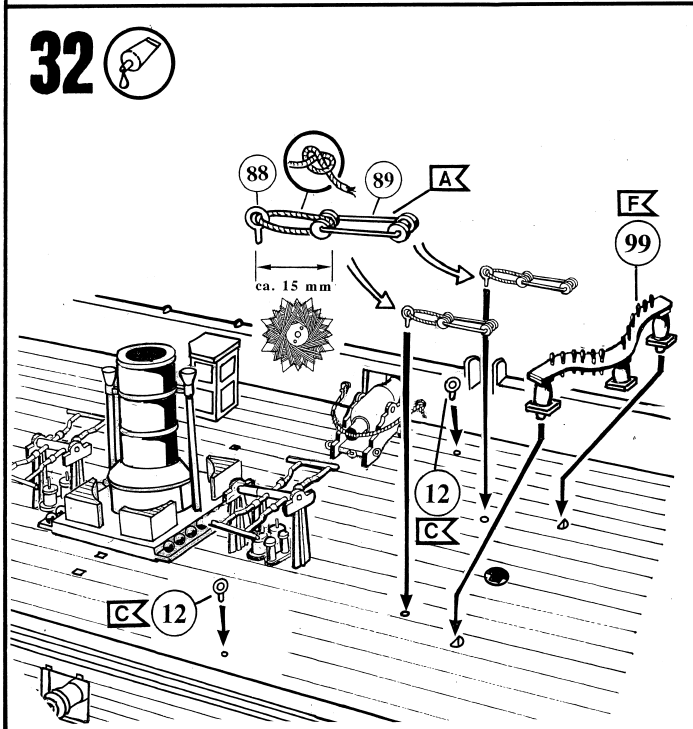
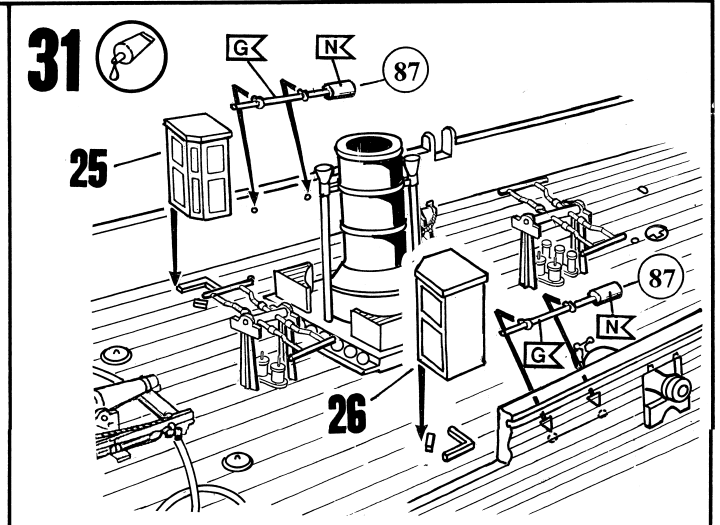
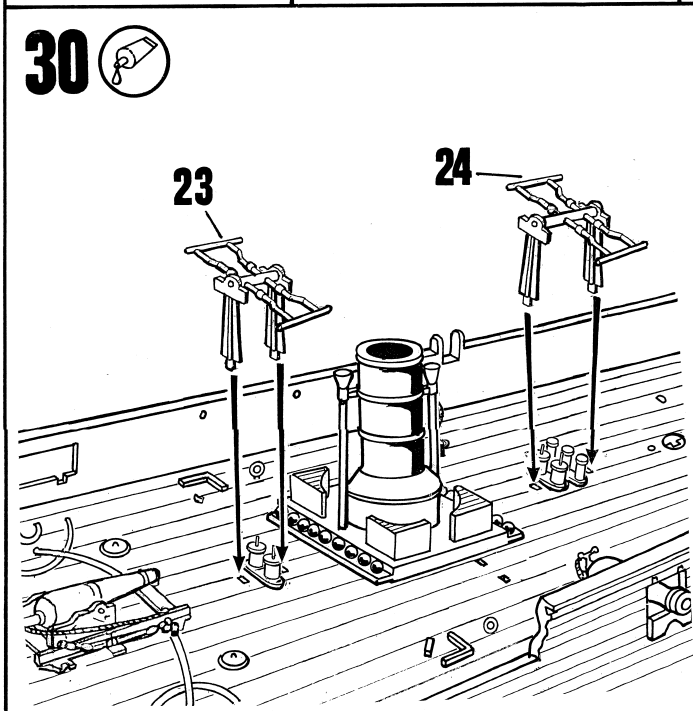
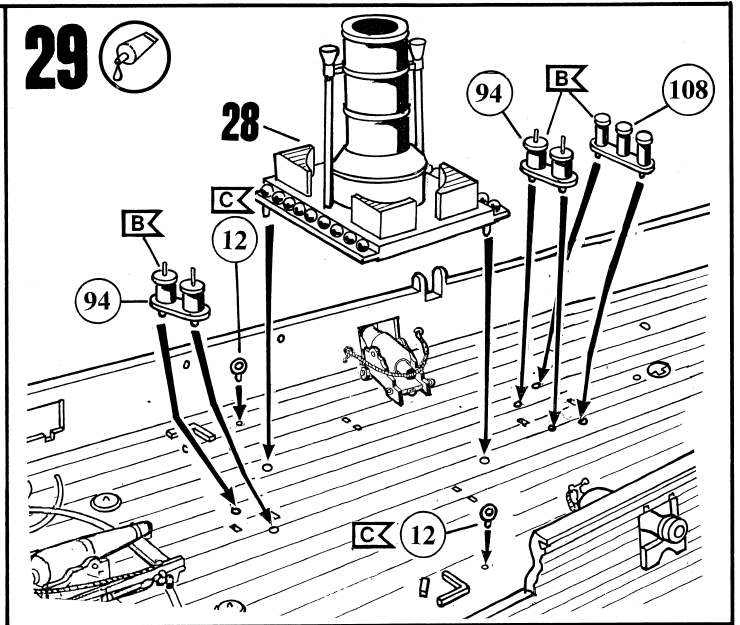
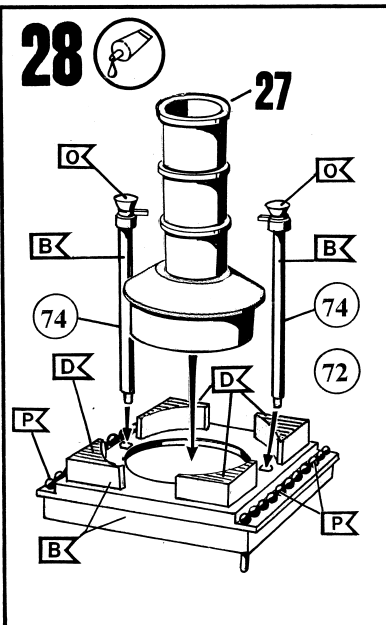
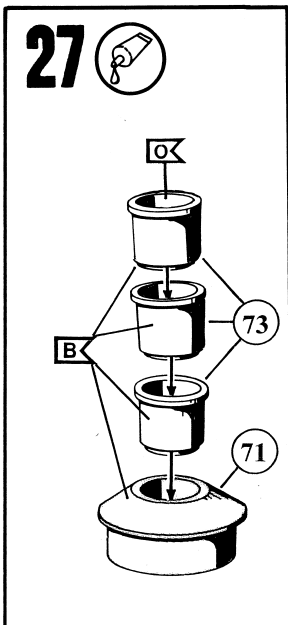
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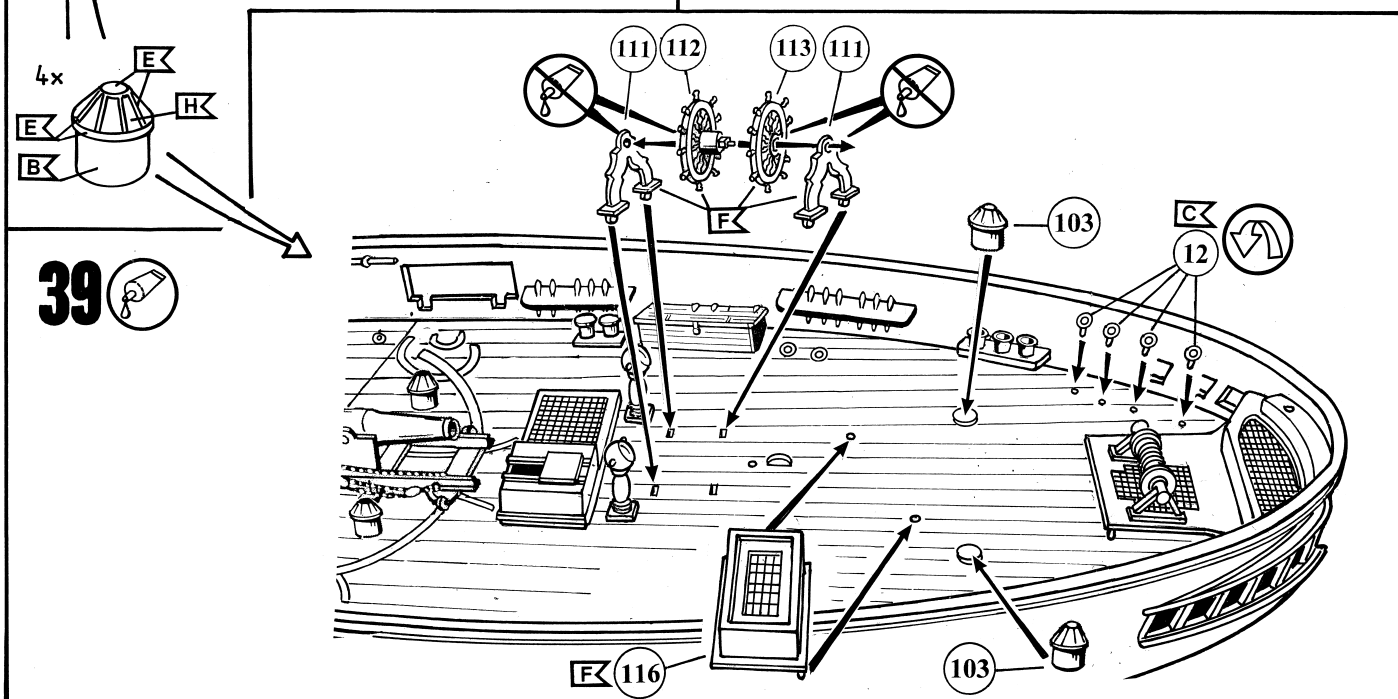
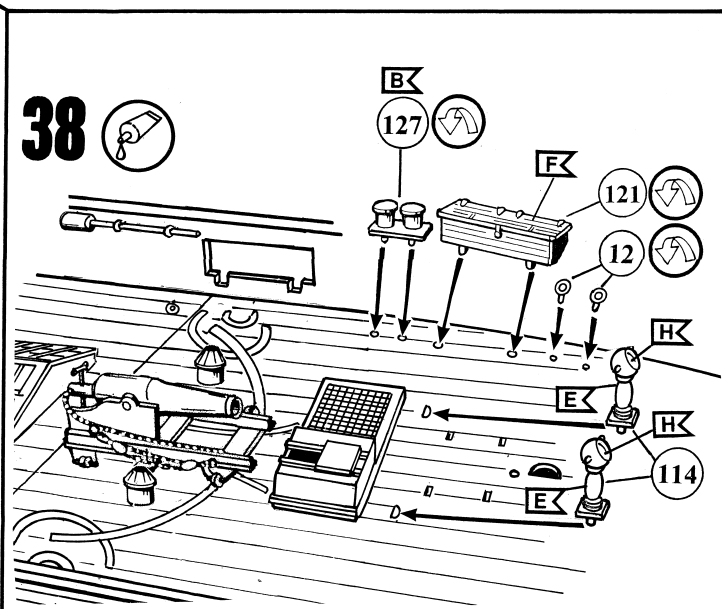
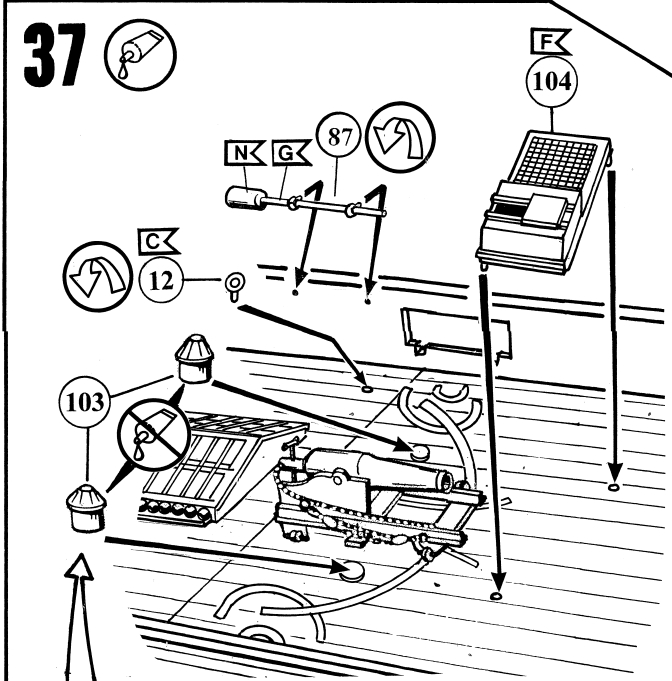
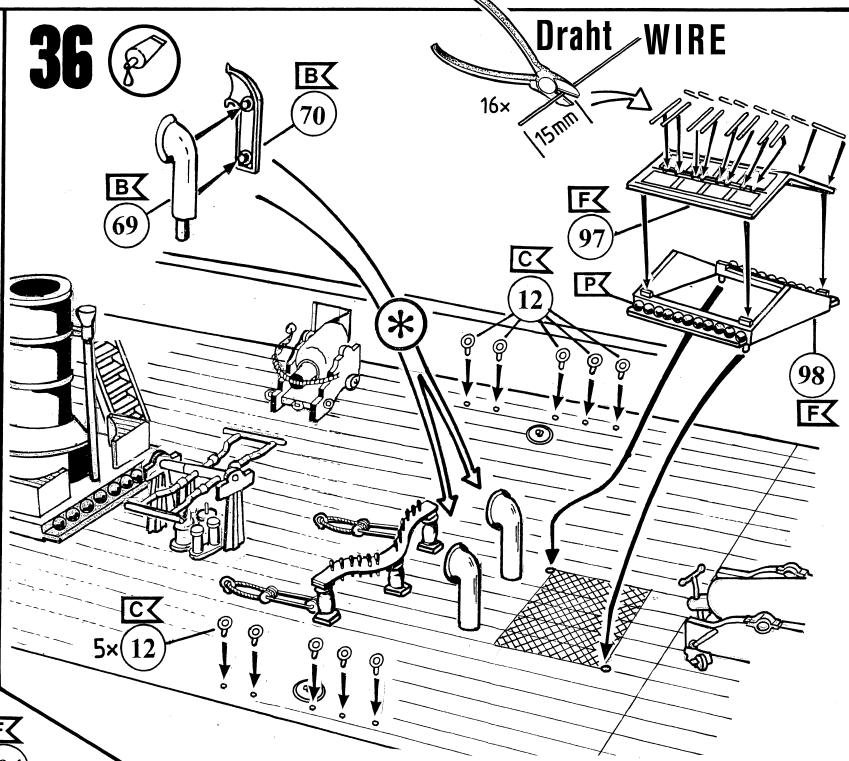
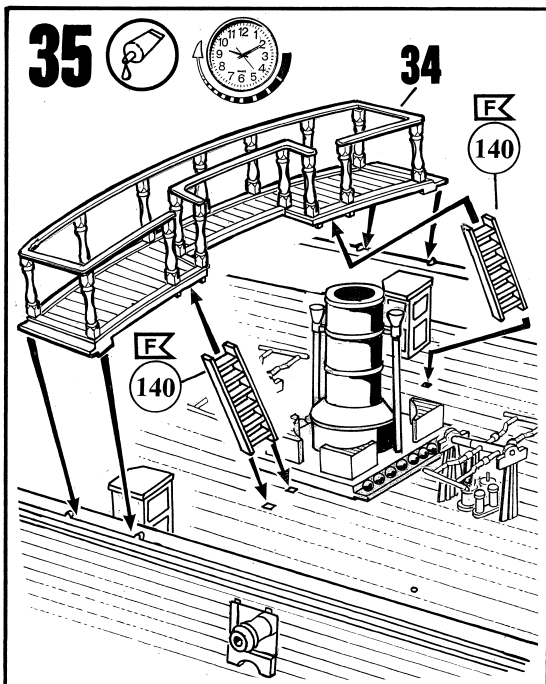


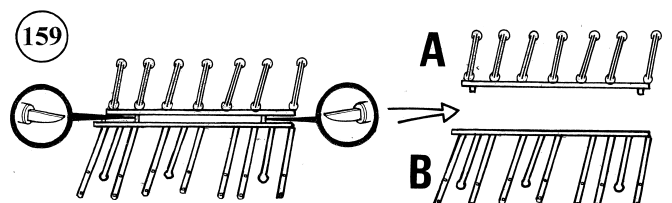
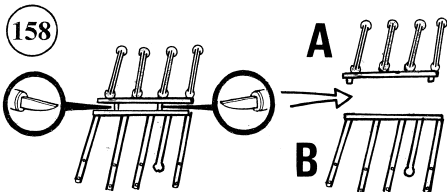
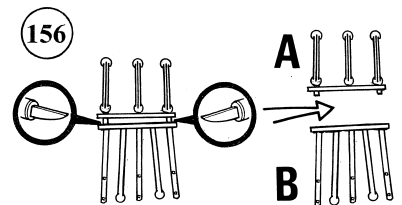
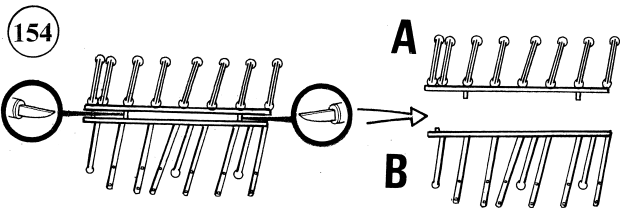
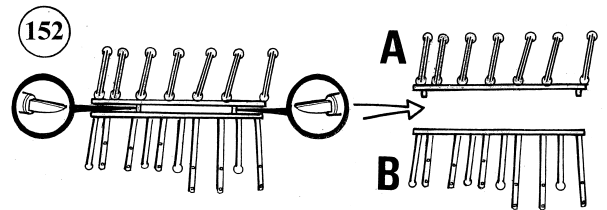
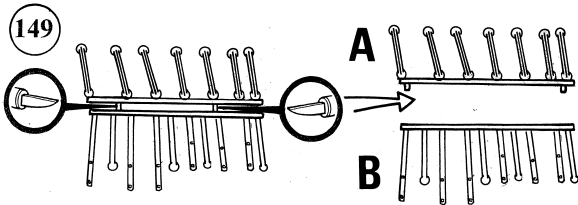
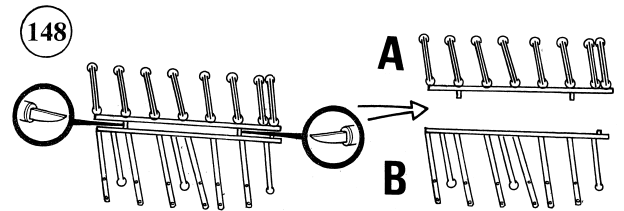
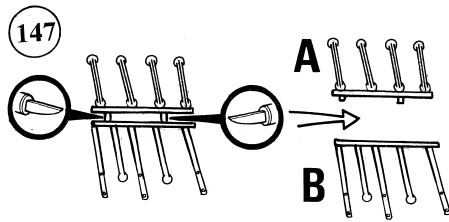
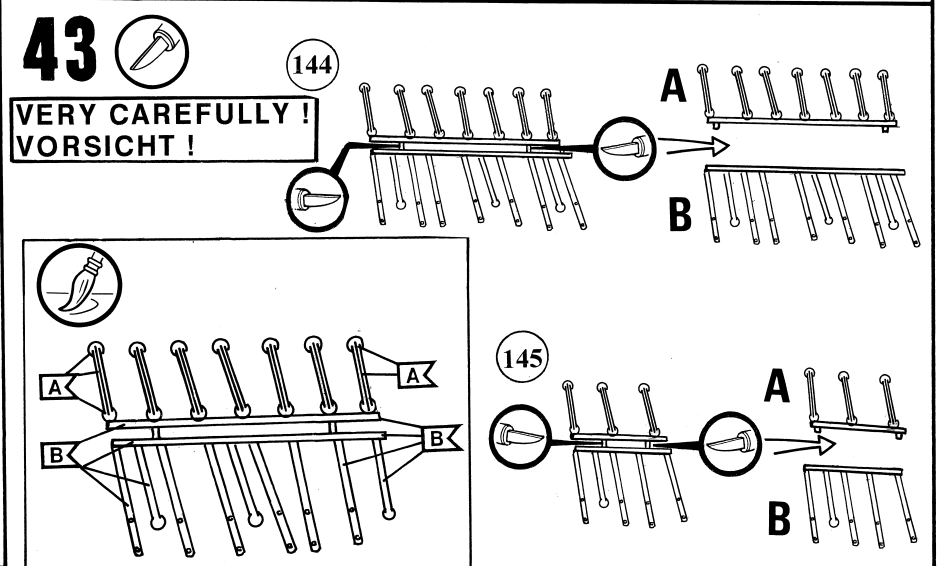
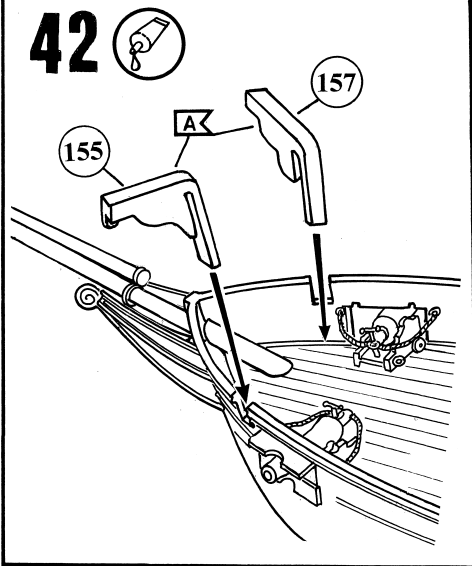
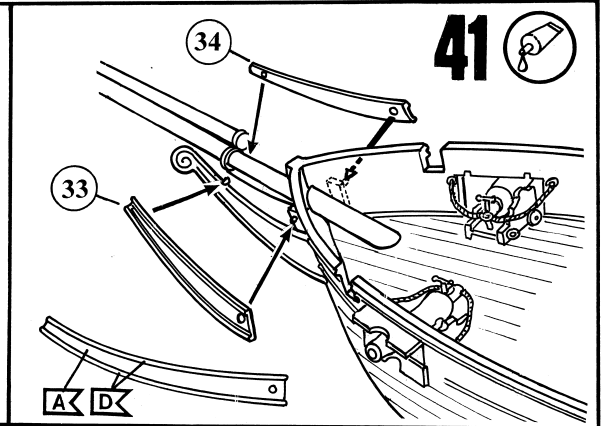
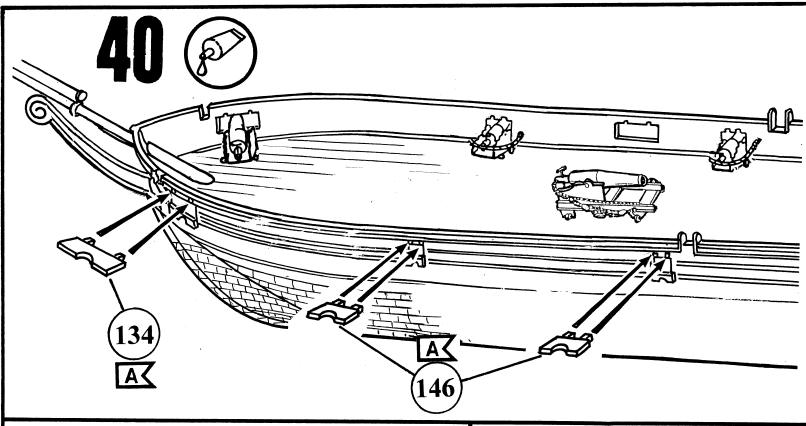


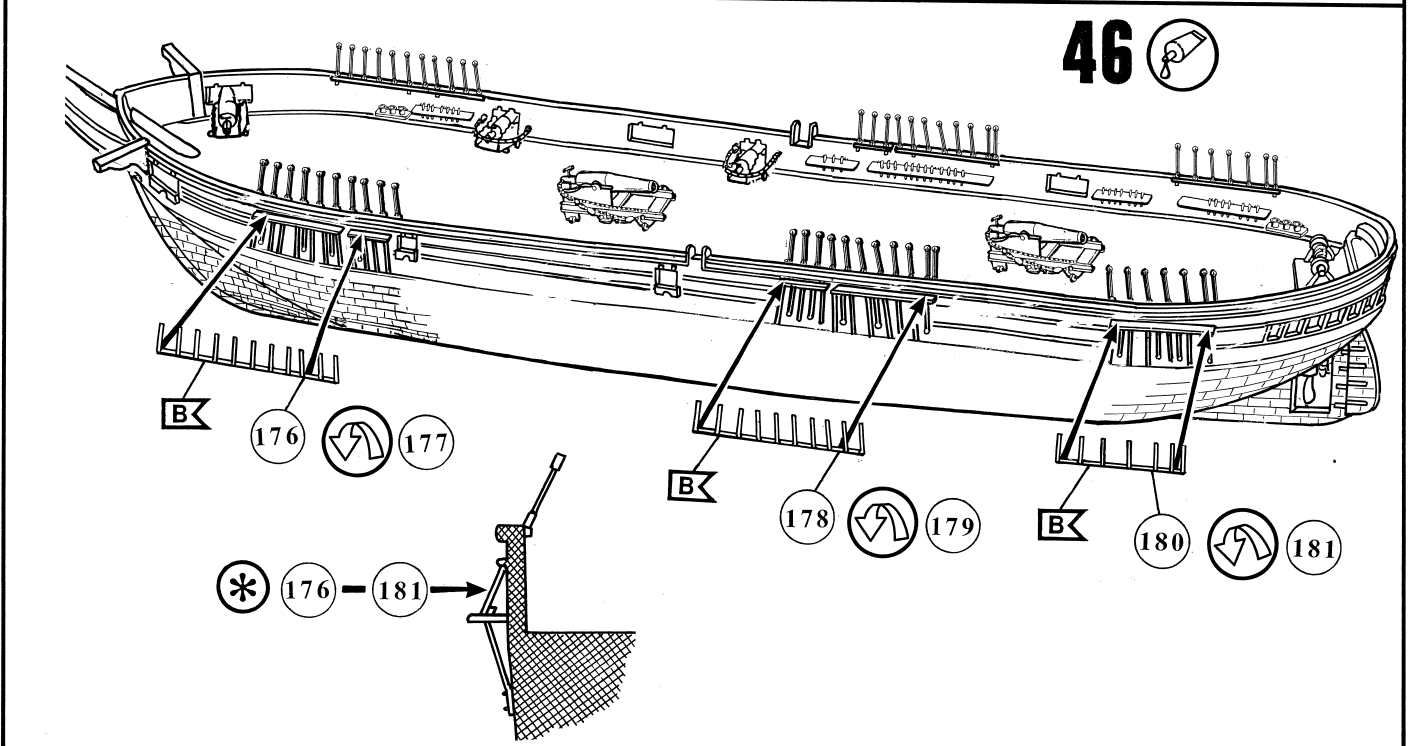
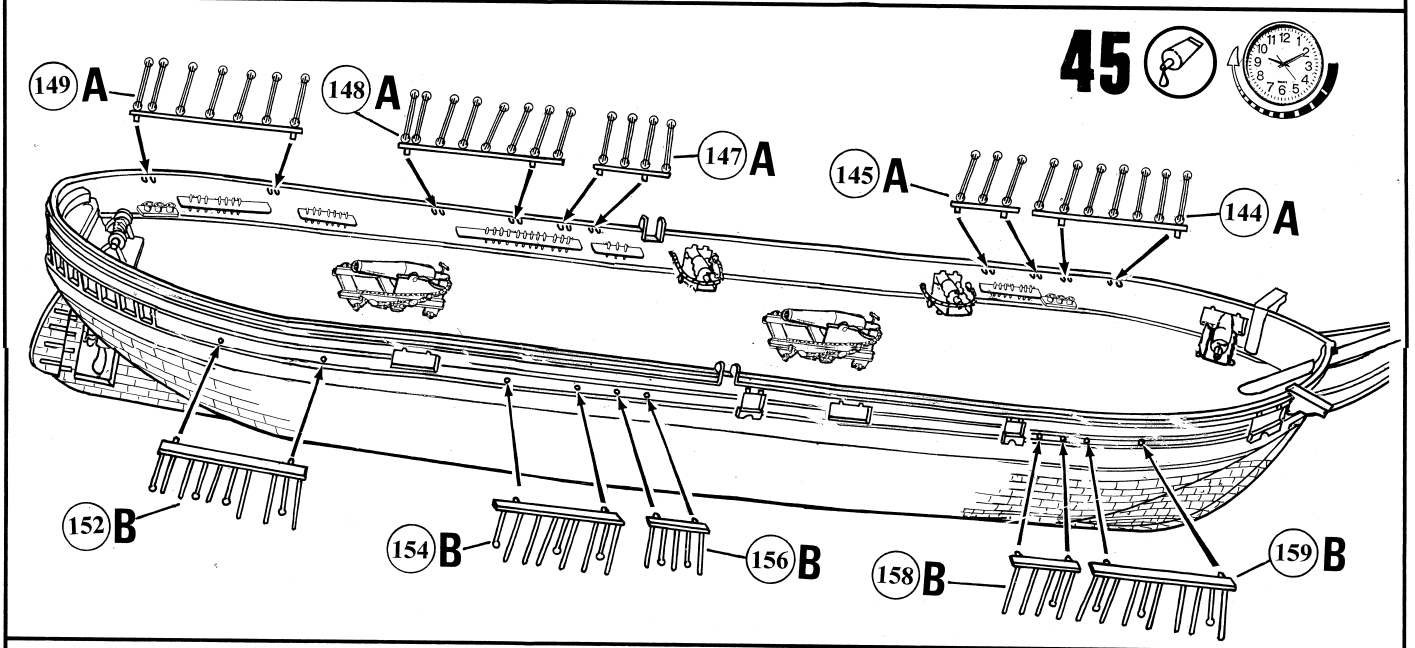
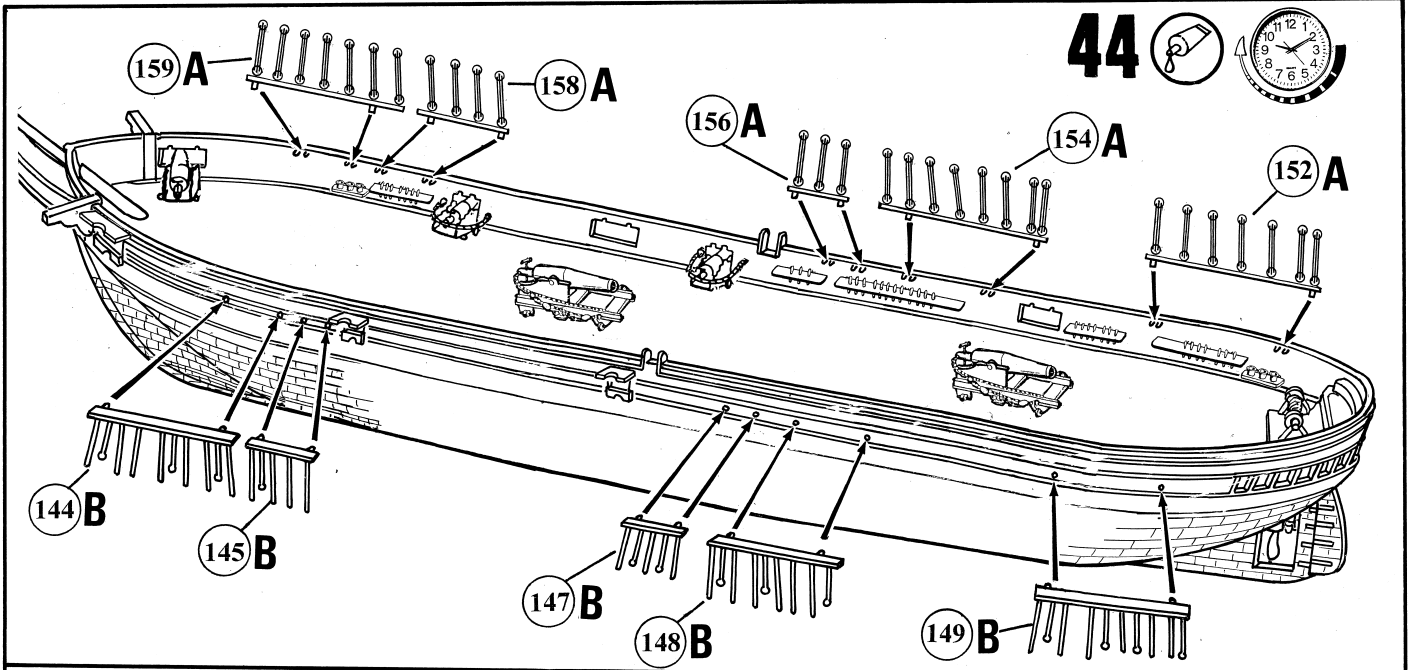




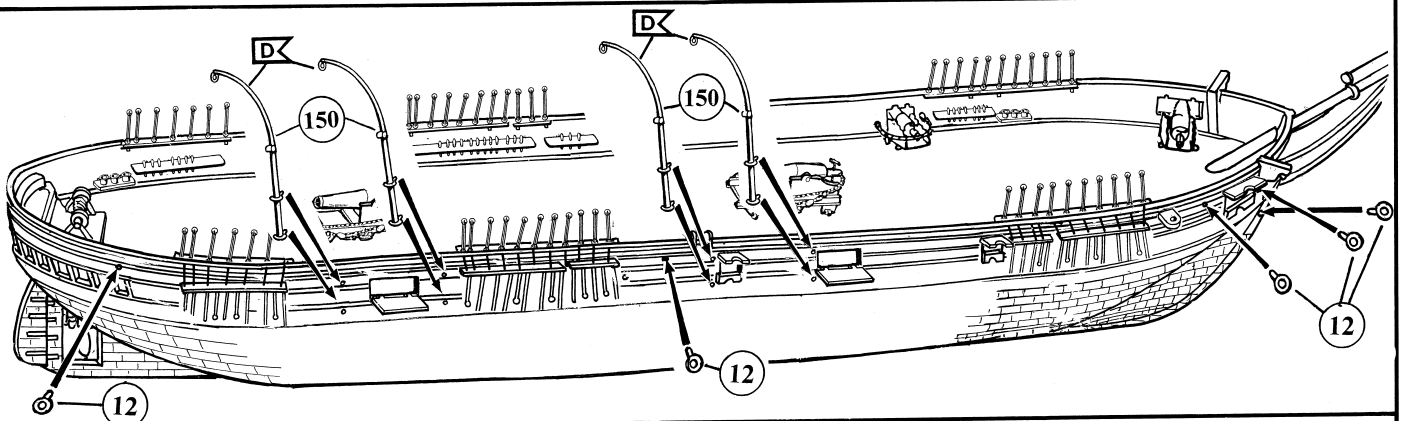
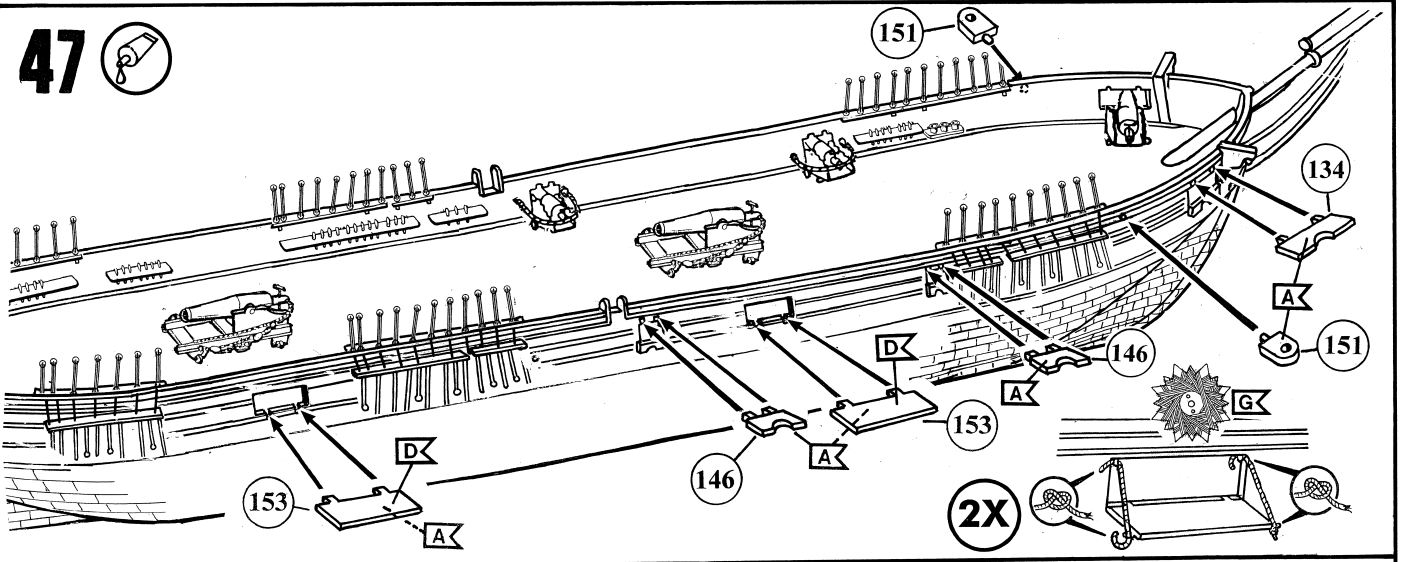




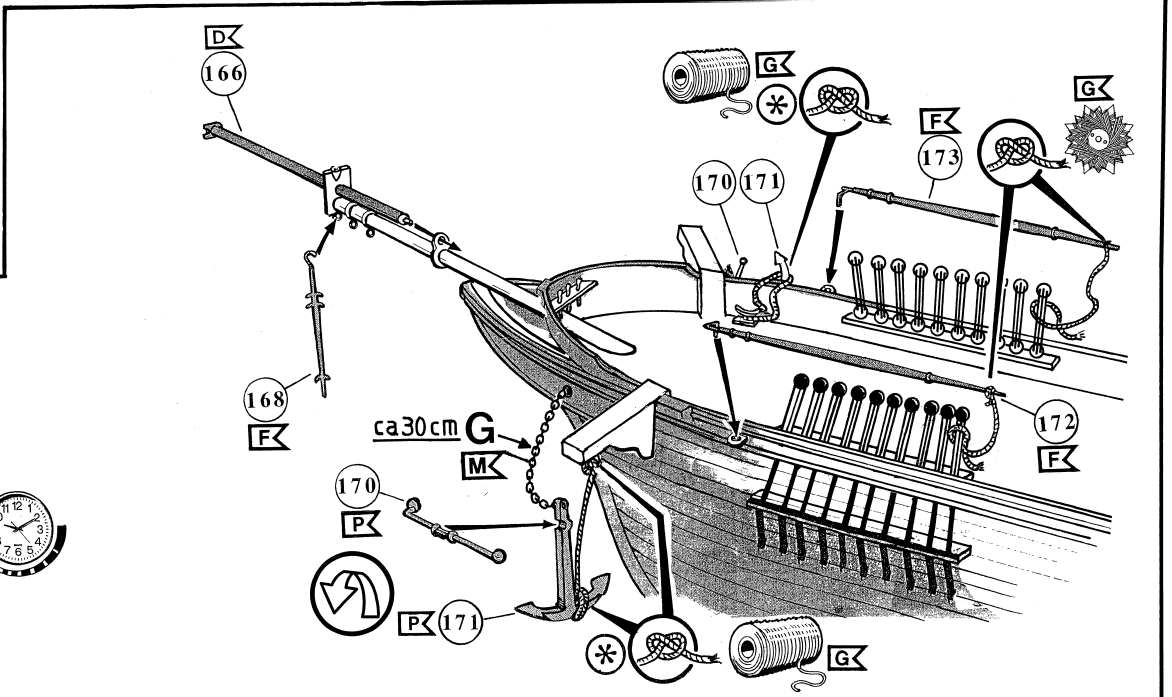
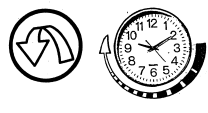




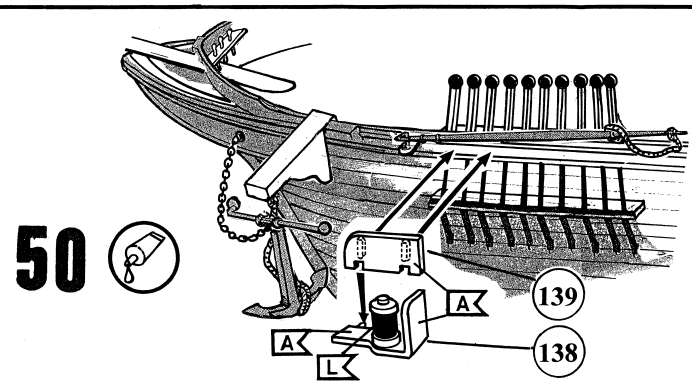
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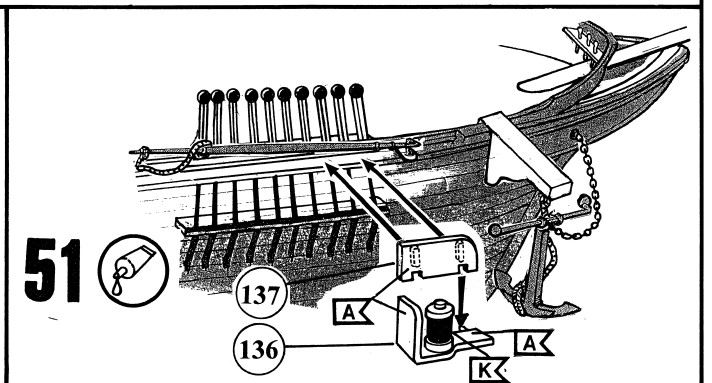
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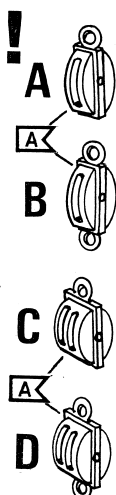
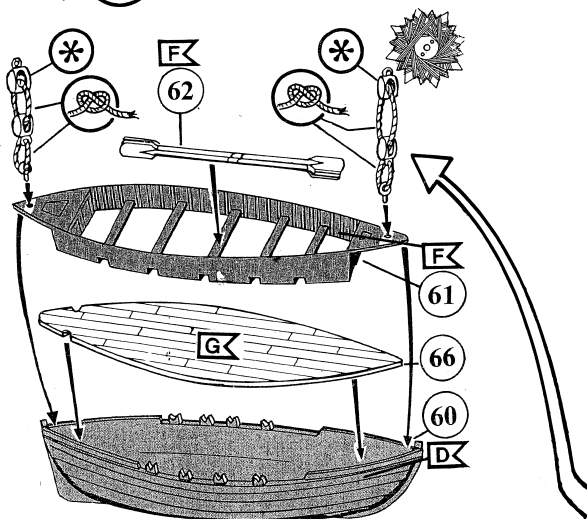


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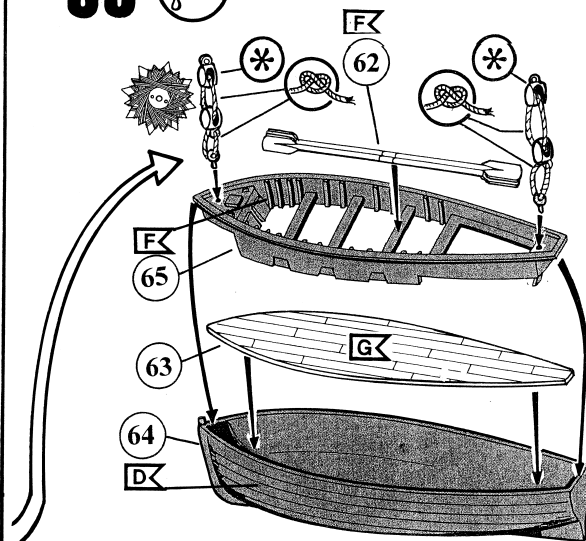


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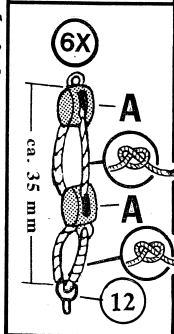
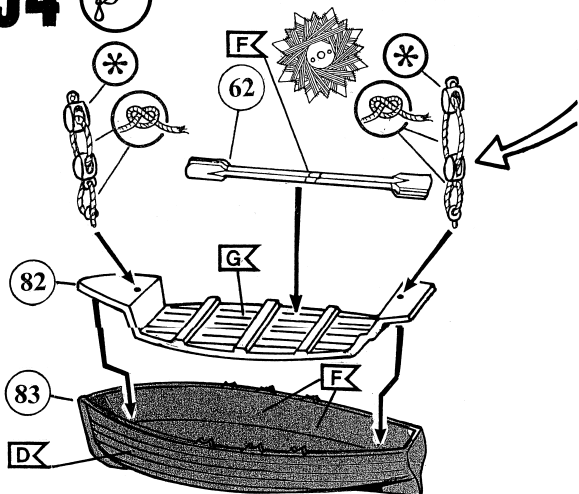
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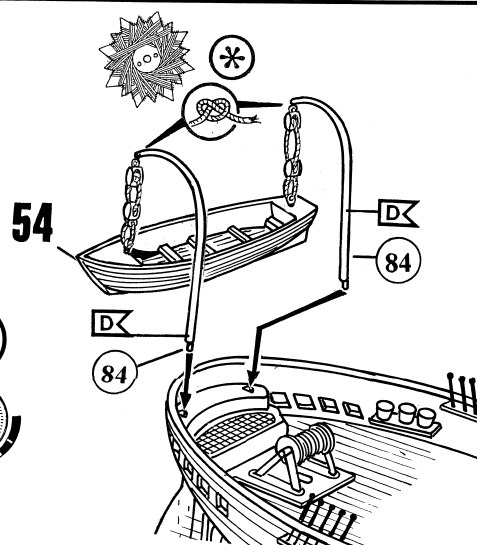
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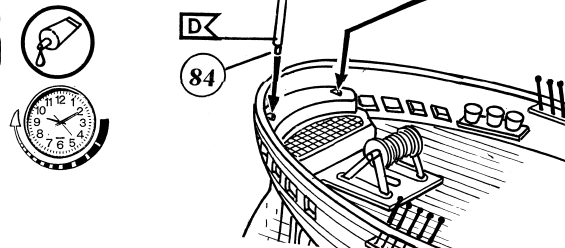
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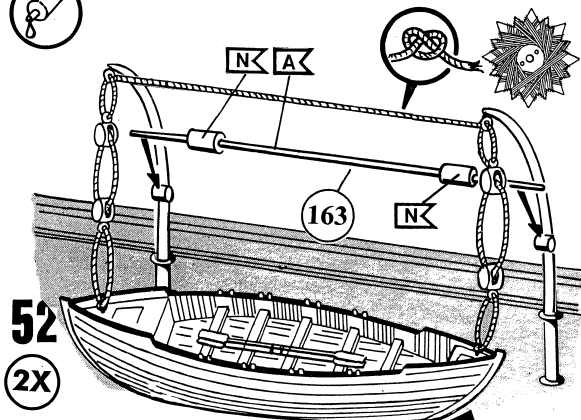
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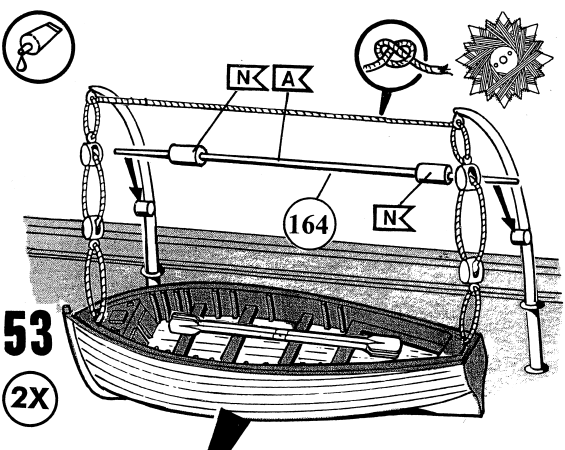
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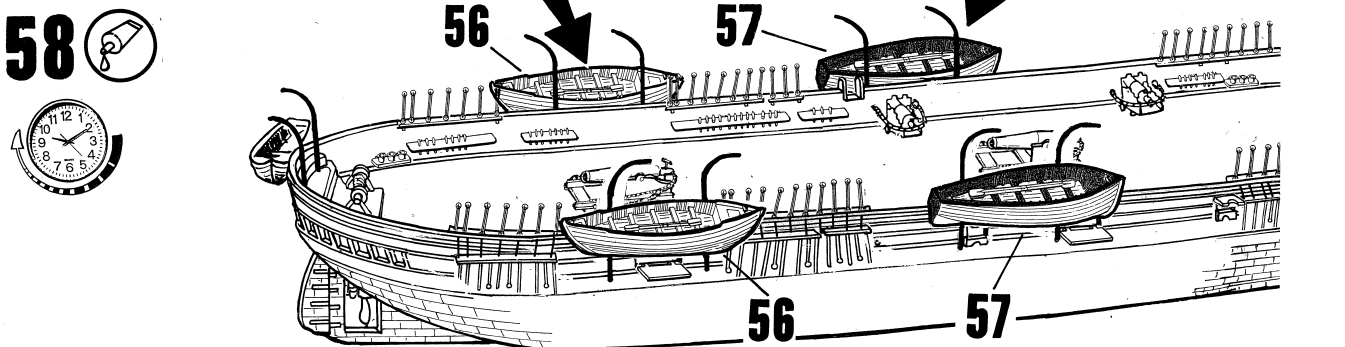
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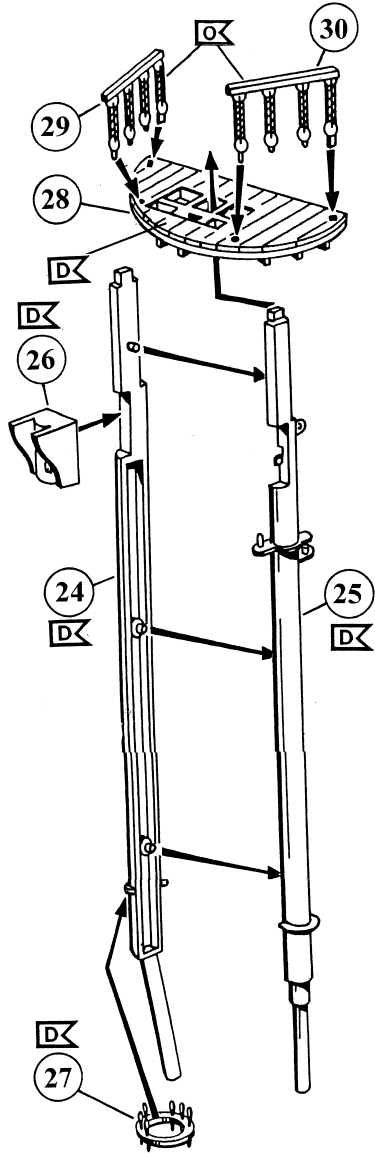
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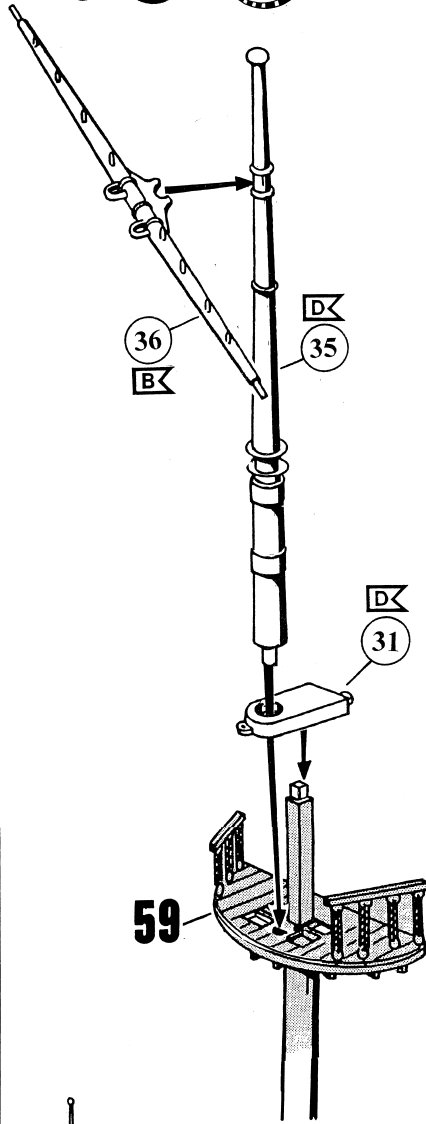


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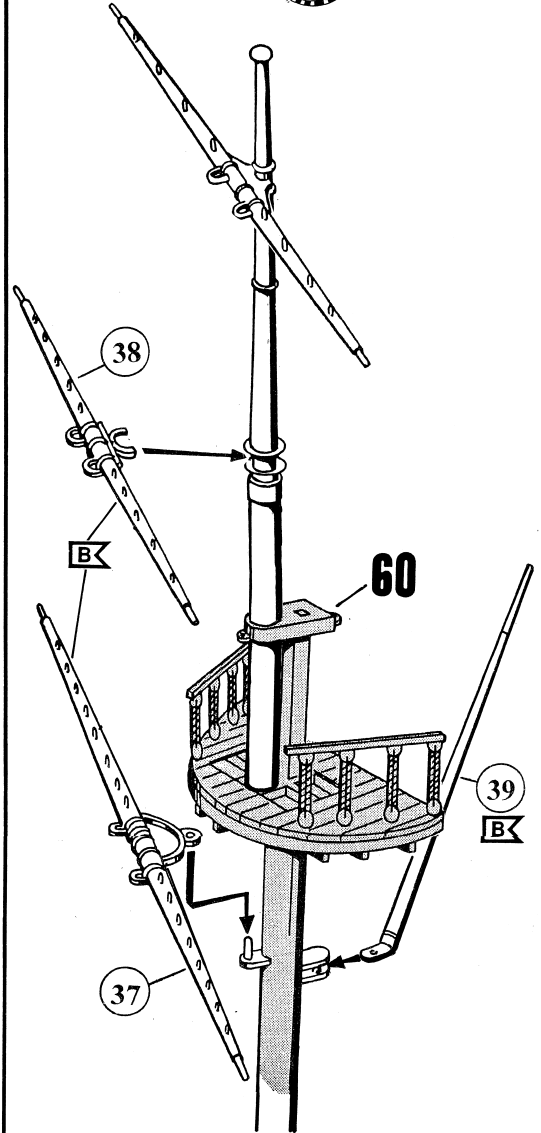


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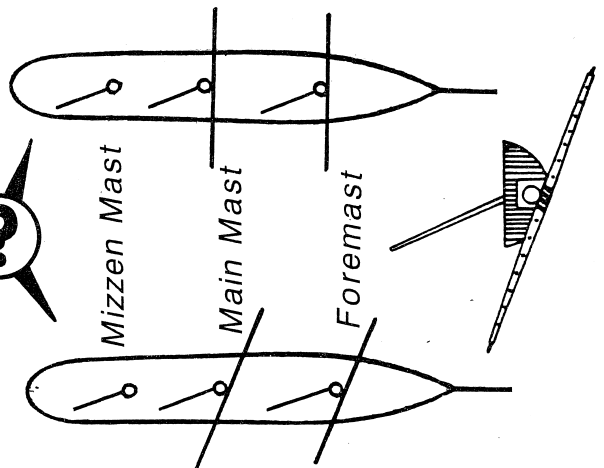
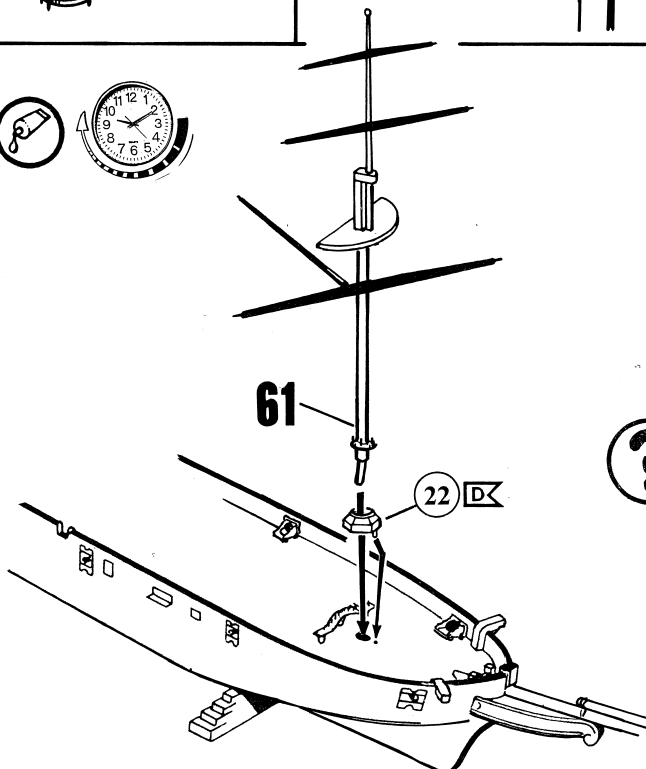
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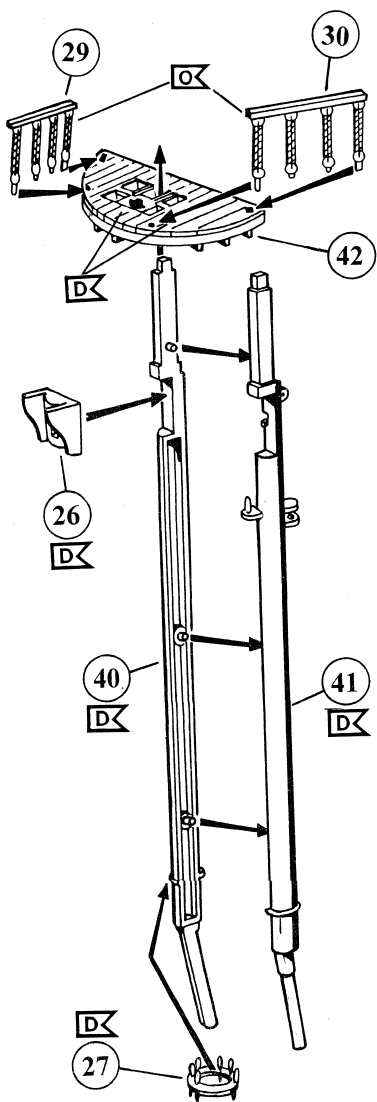
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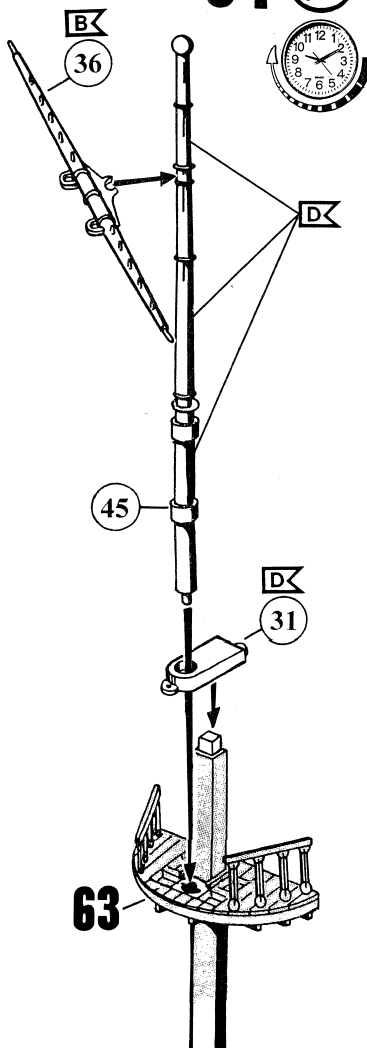


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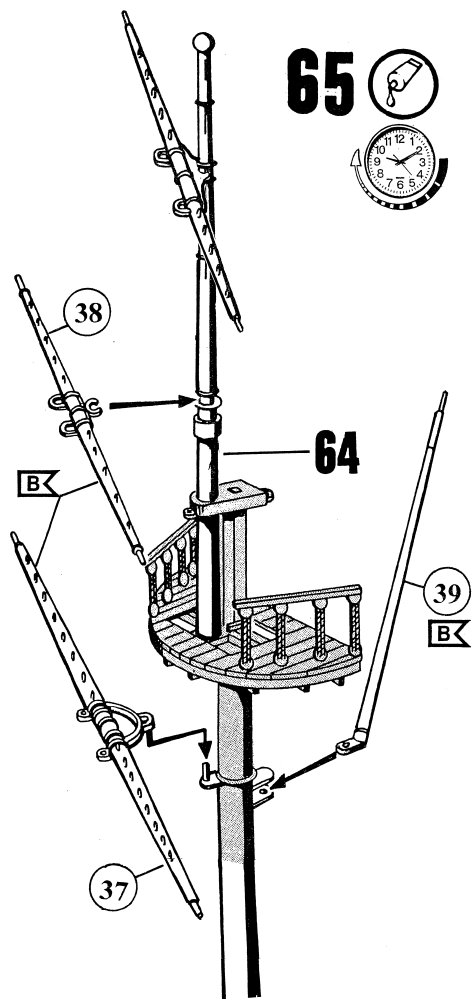


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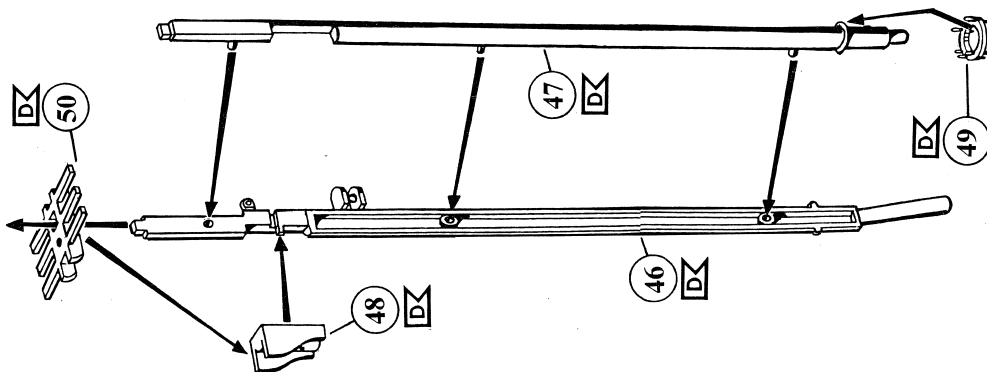


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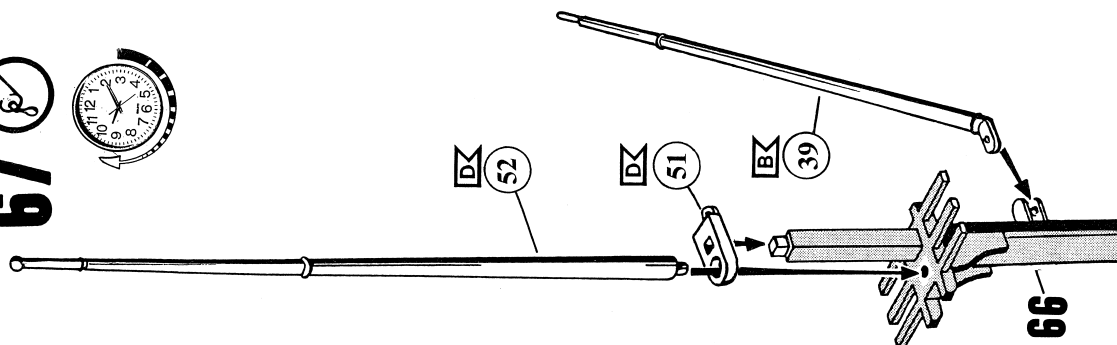


Mizzen Mast

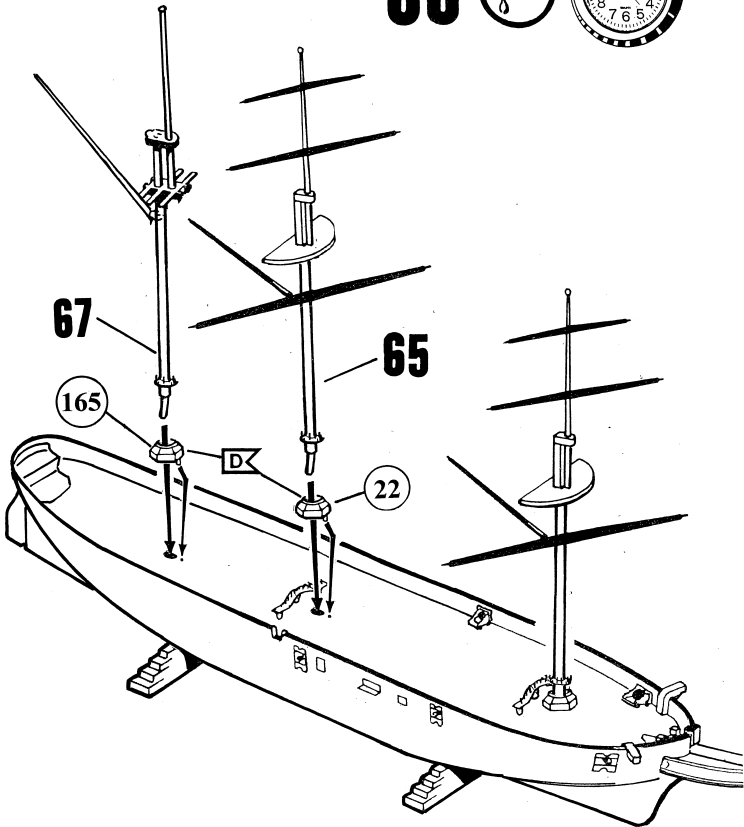
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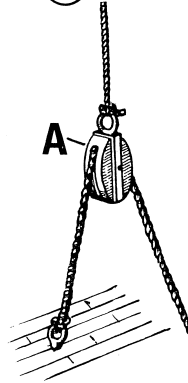
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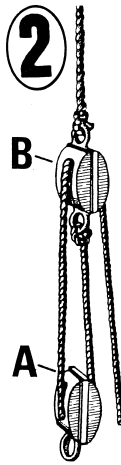
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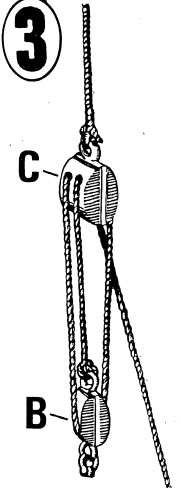
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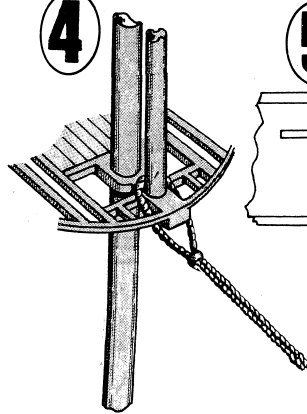
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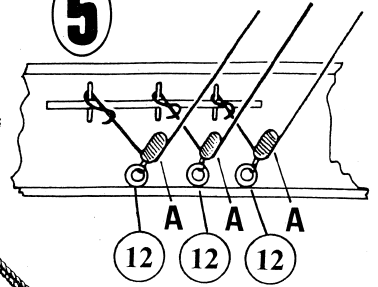
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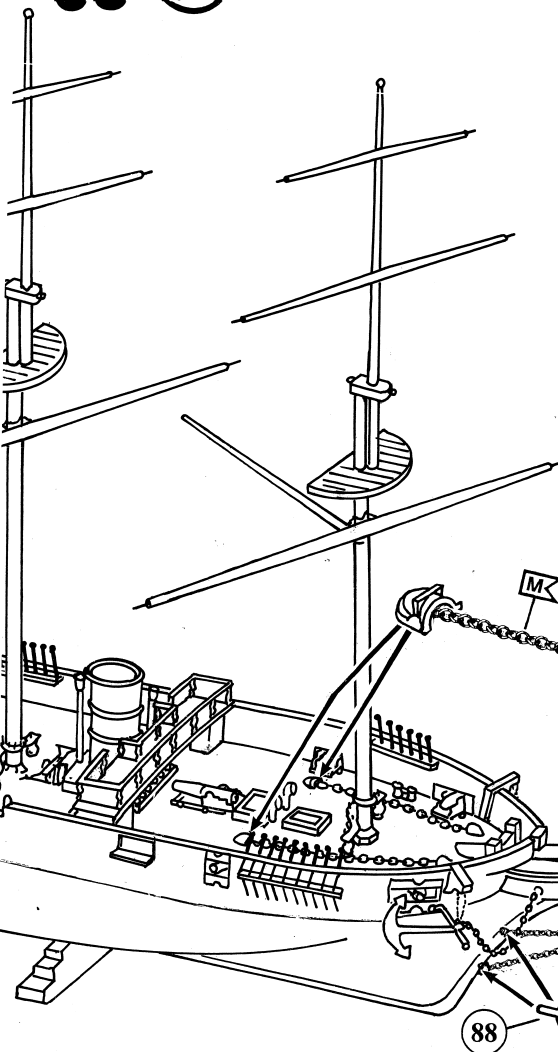
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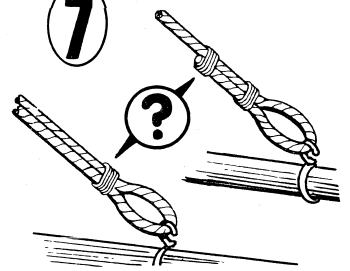
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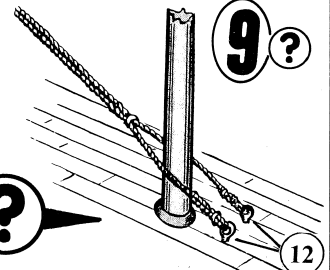
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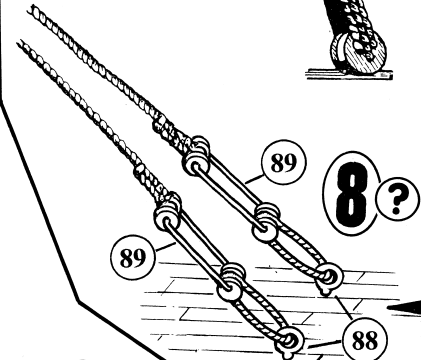
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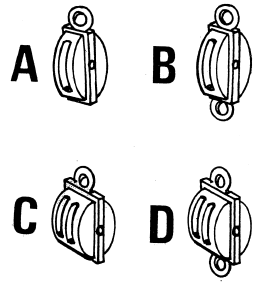
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8?



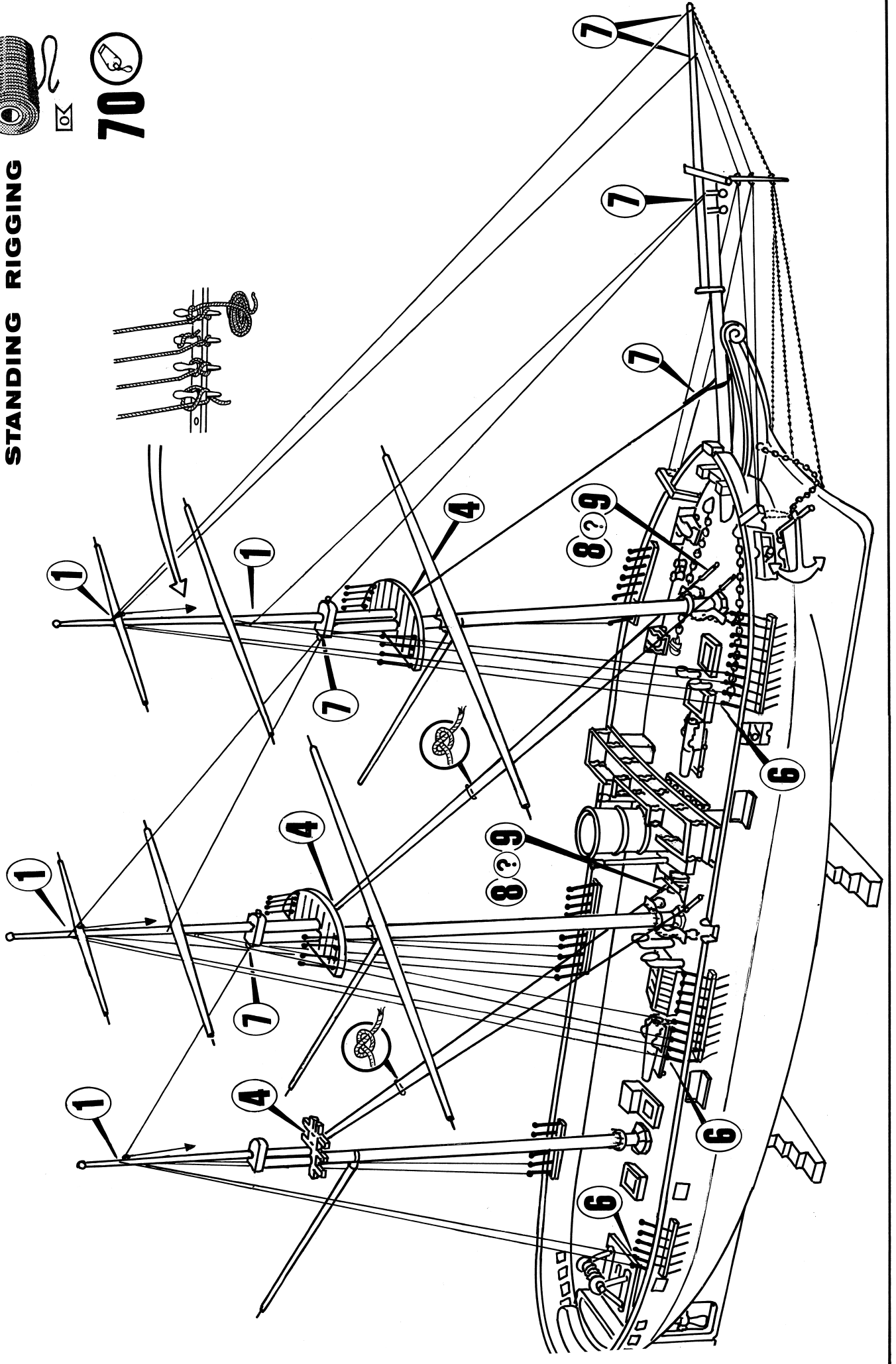
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STANDING RIGGING

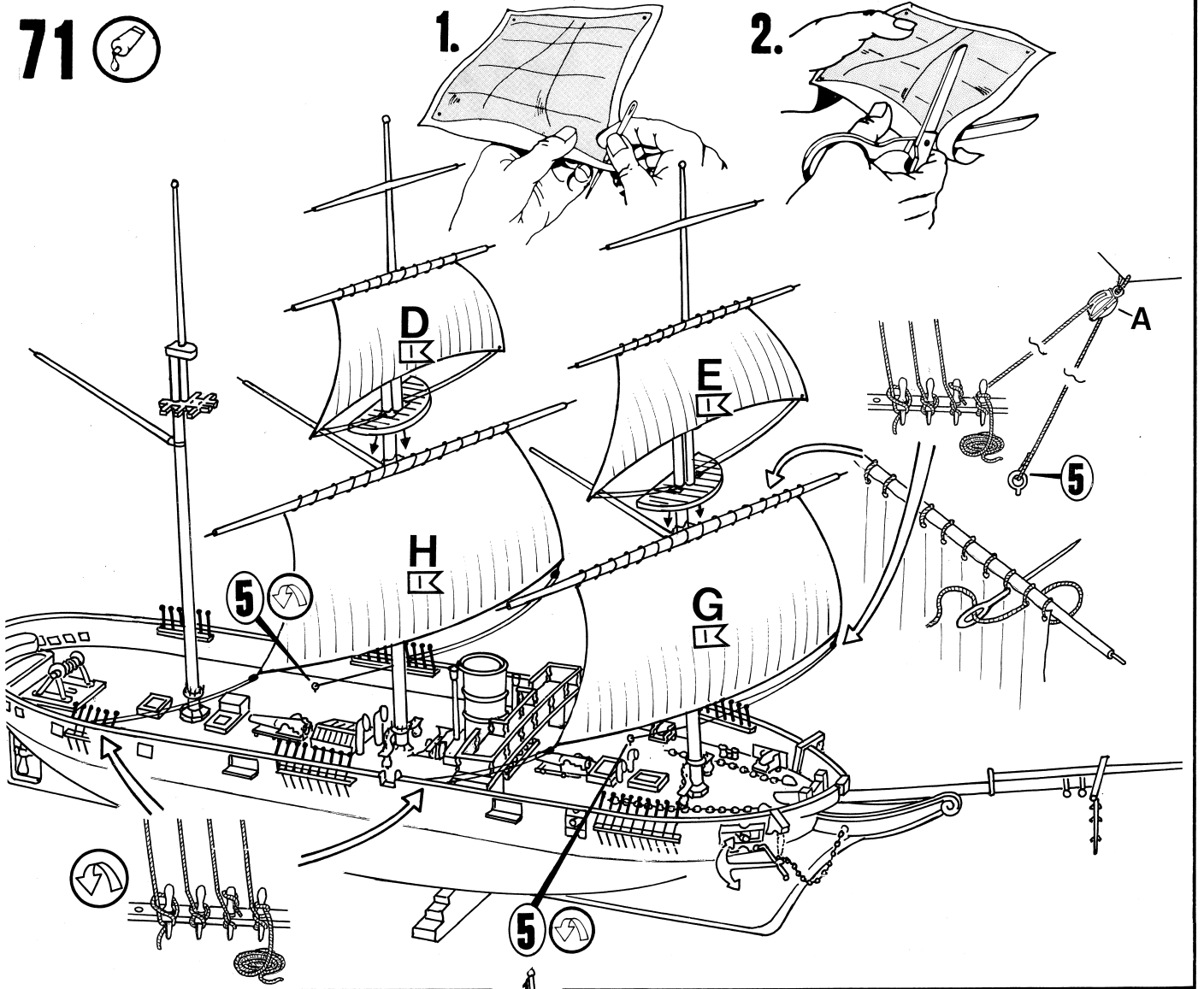


71



1.

2.



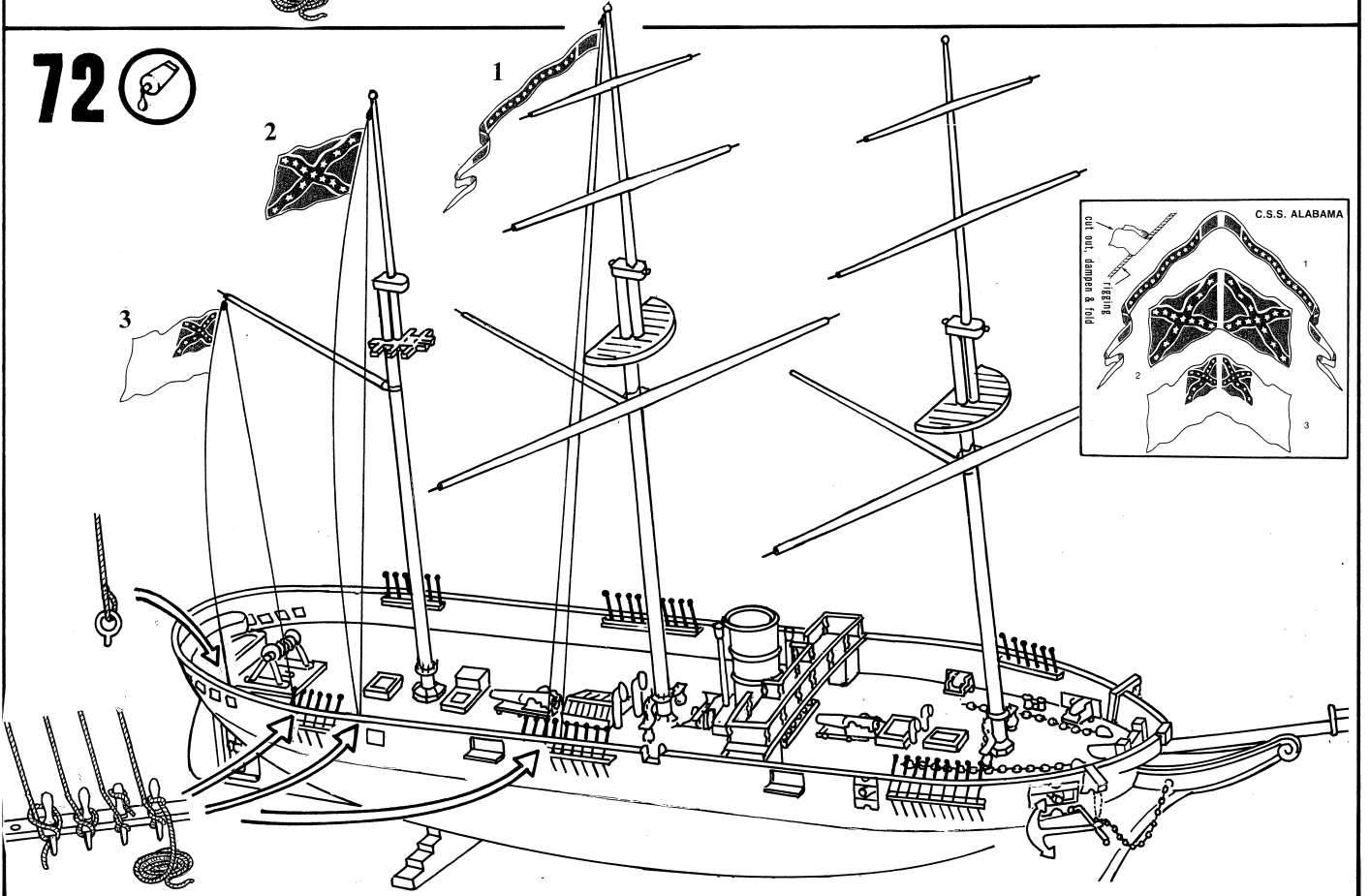
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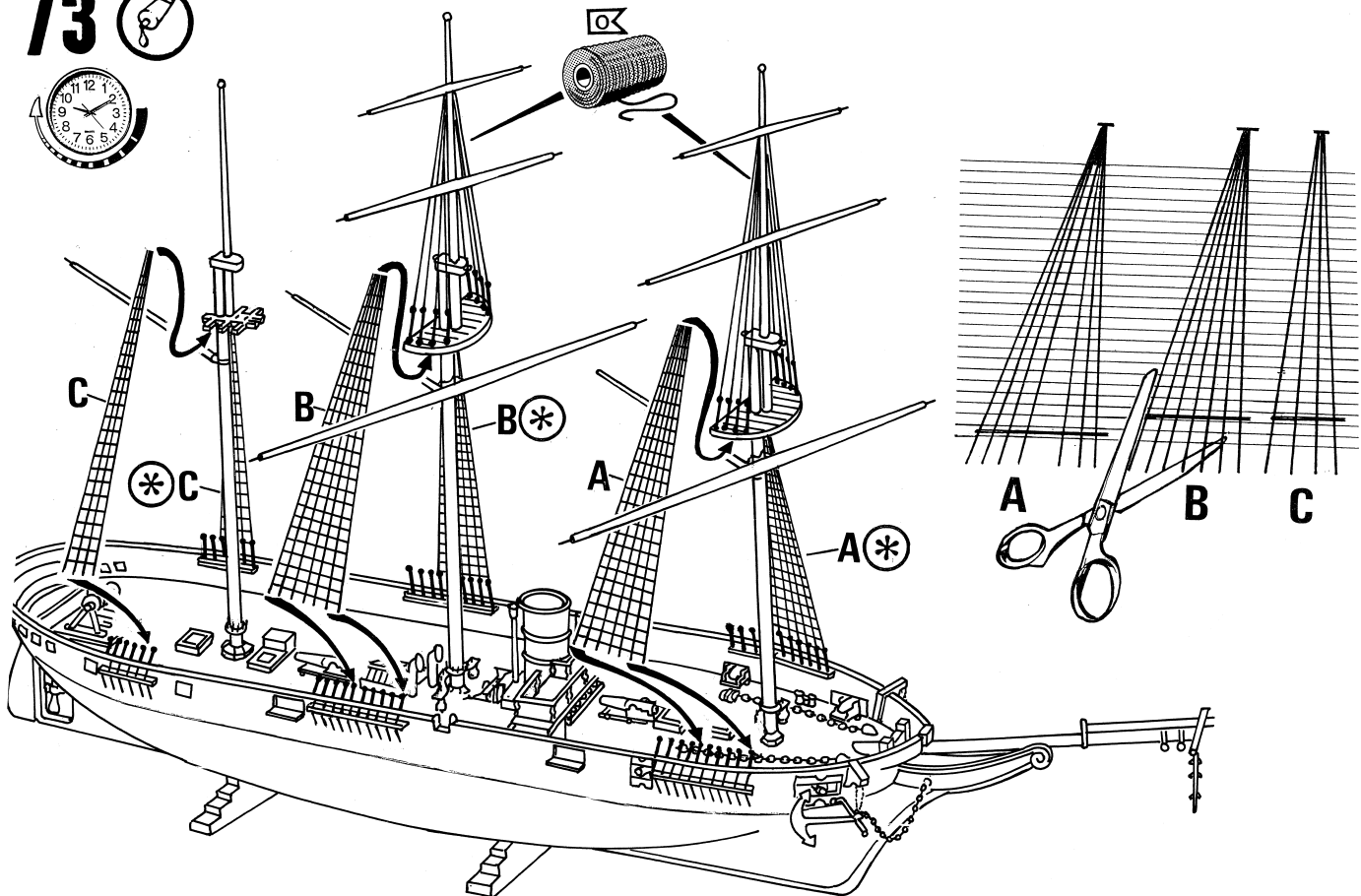
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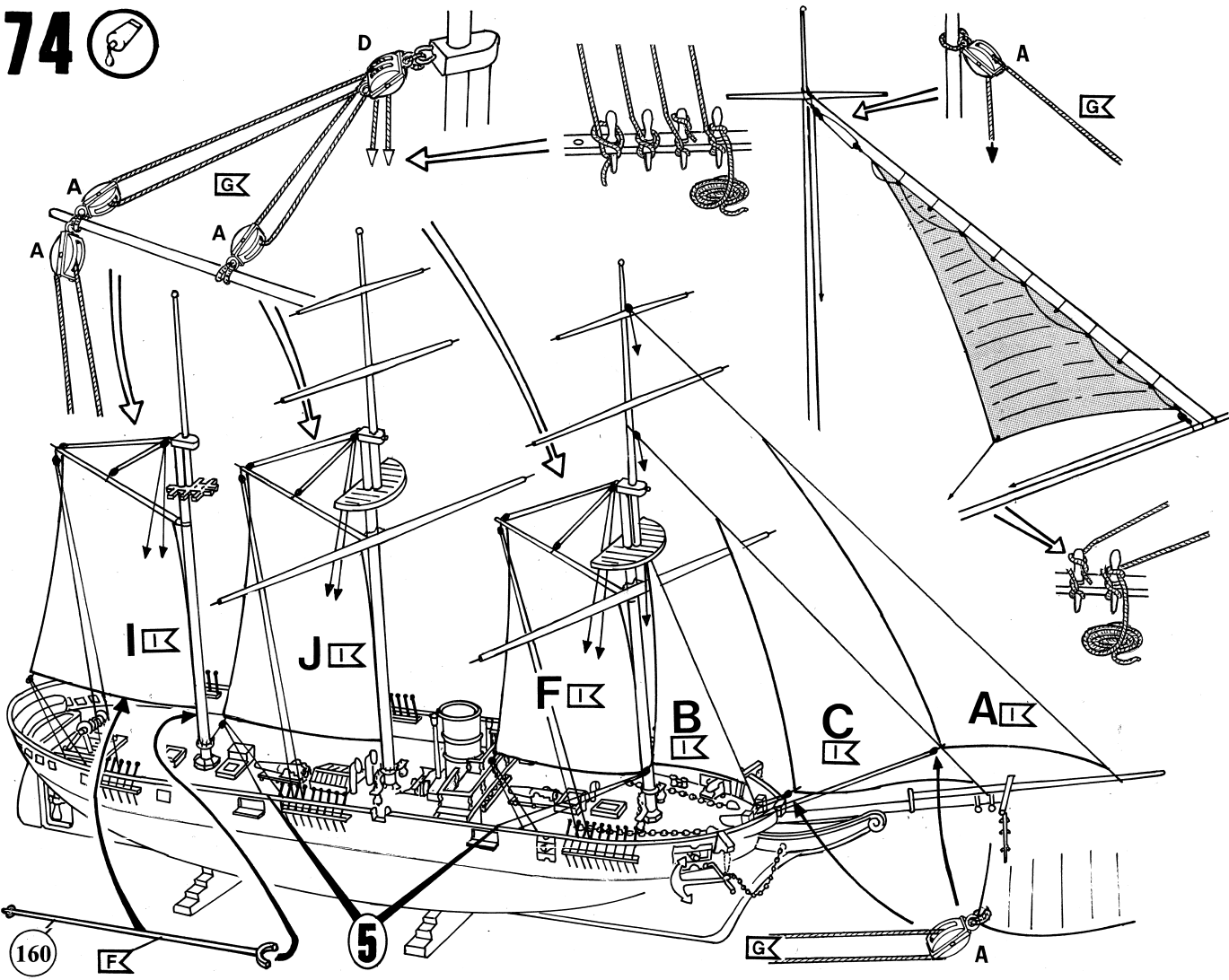
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73



74



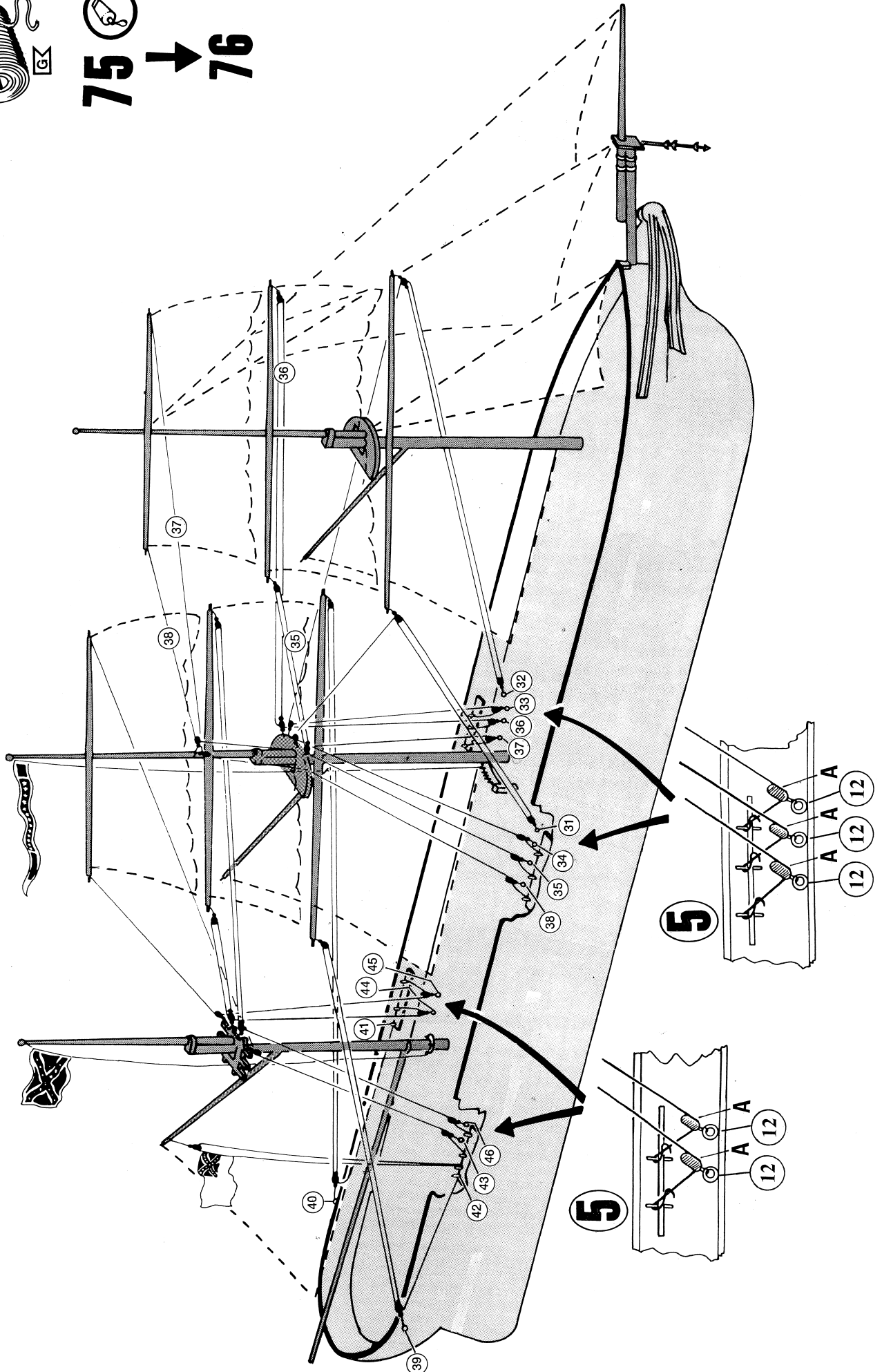


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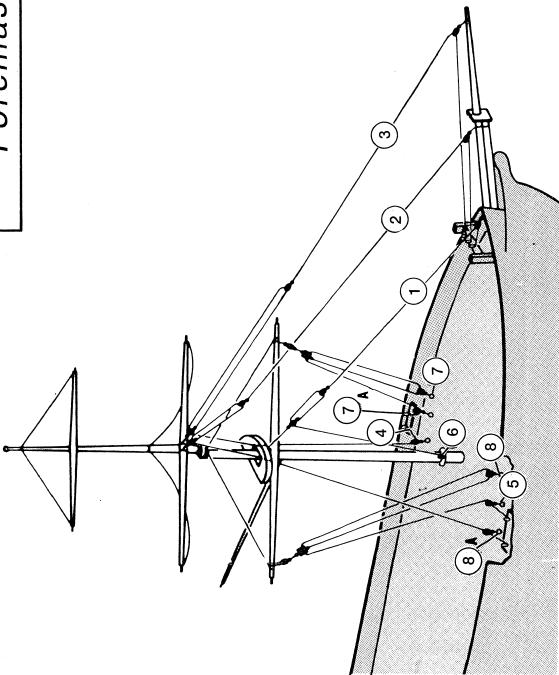


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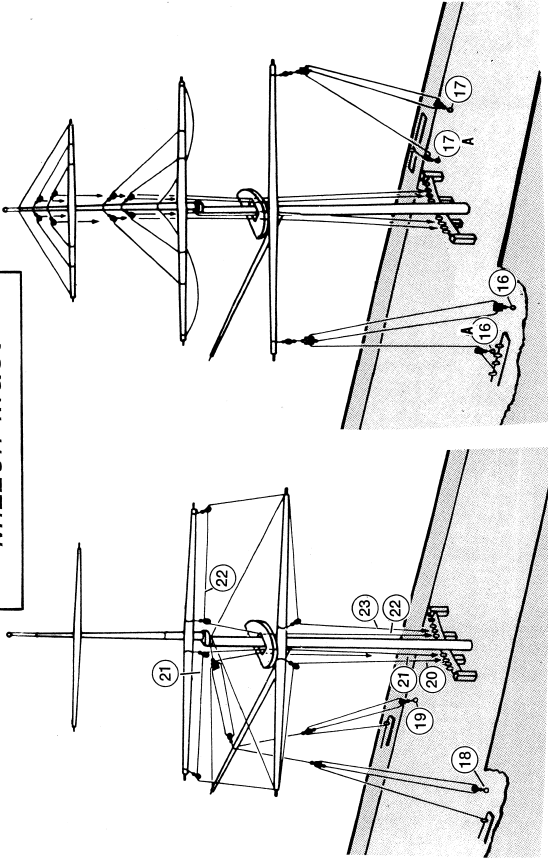
RUNNING RIGGING



Foremast

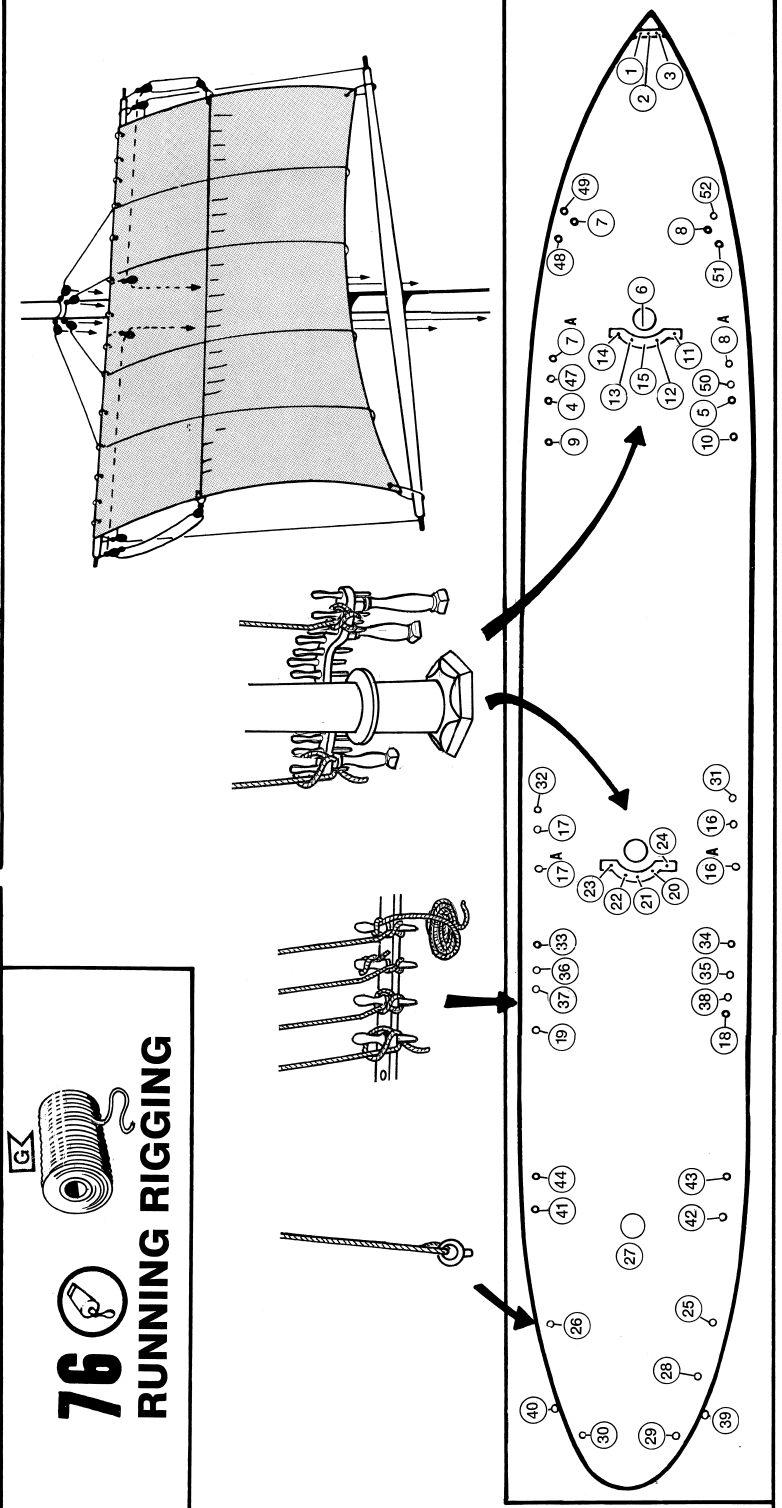
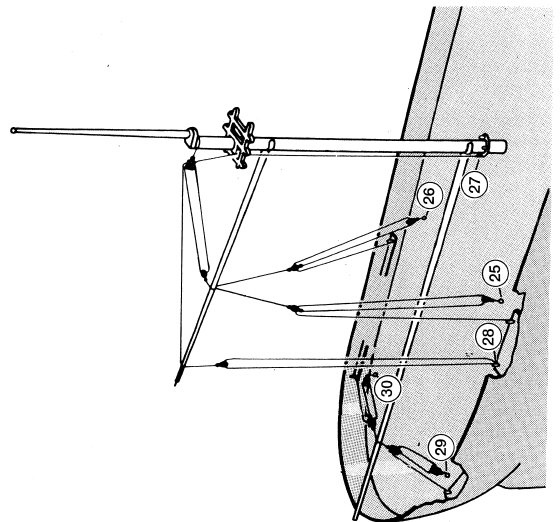


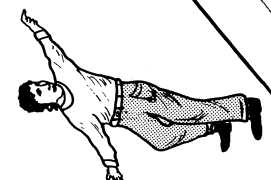
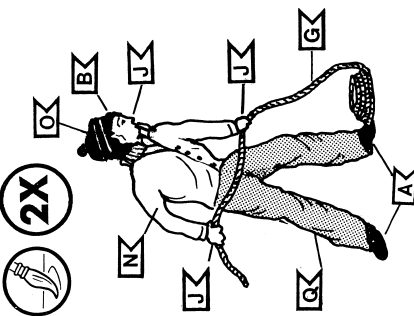
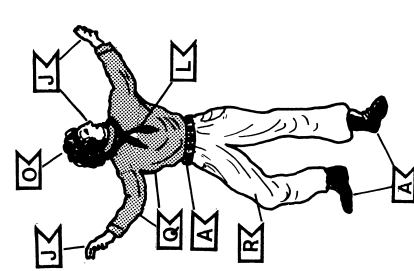
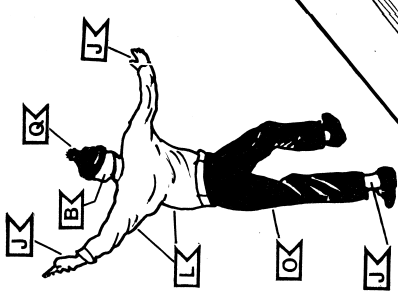
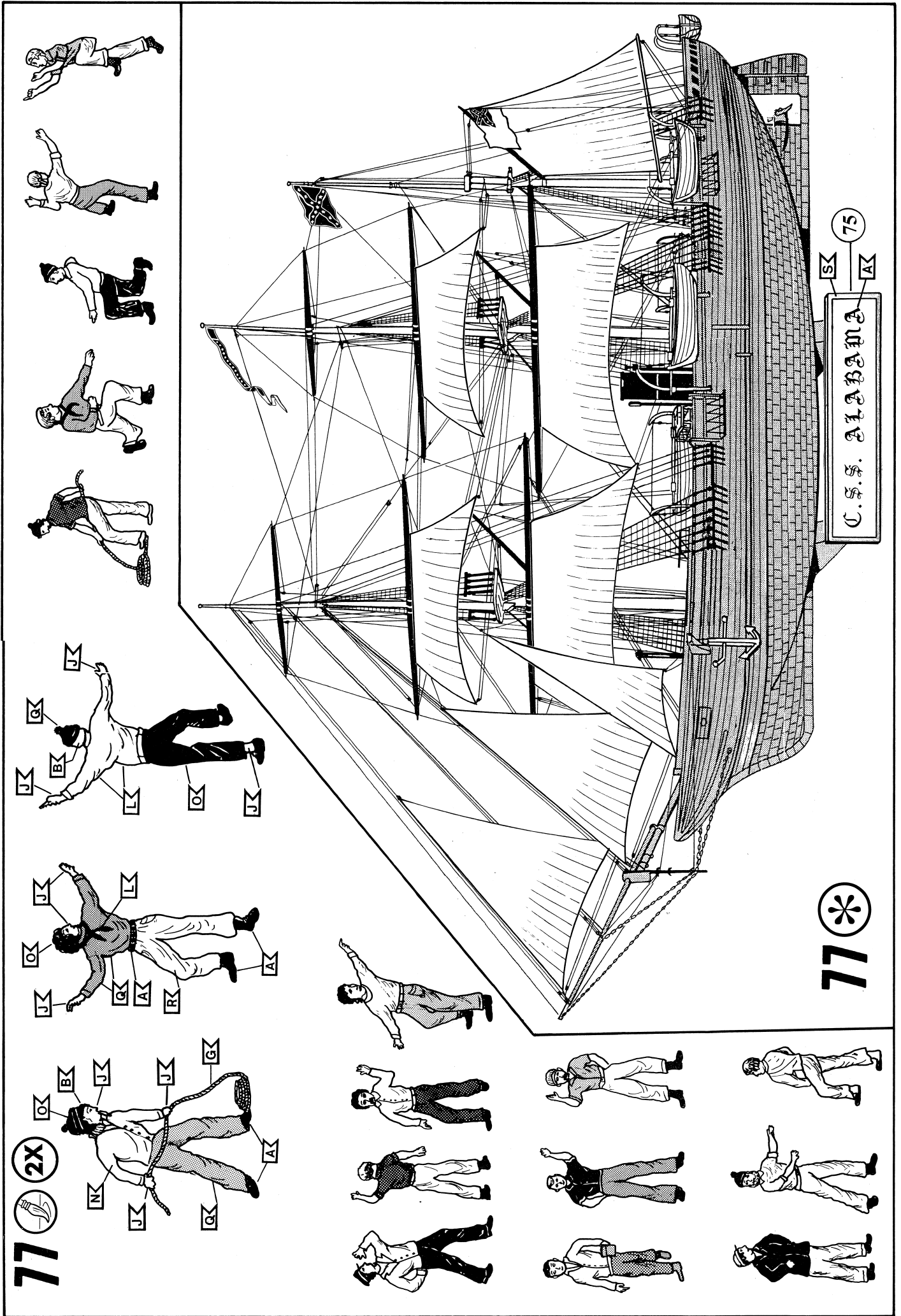
Mizzen Mast



76  **RUNNING RIGGING**

Main Mast





77 **2X**

77

U.S.S. ALABAMA
75
SK AK