

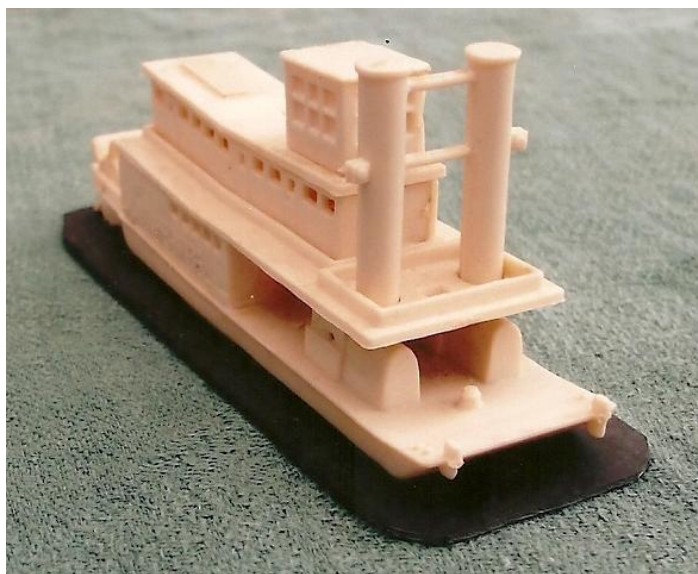
A Colonial Riverboat?

Review by Rob Morgan

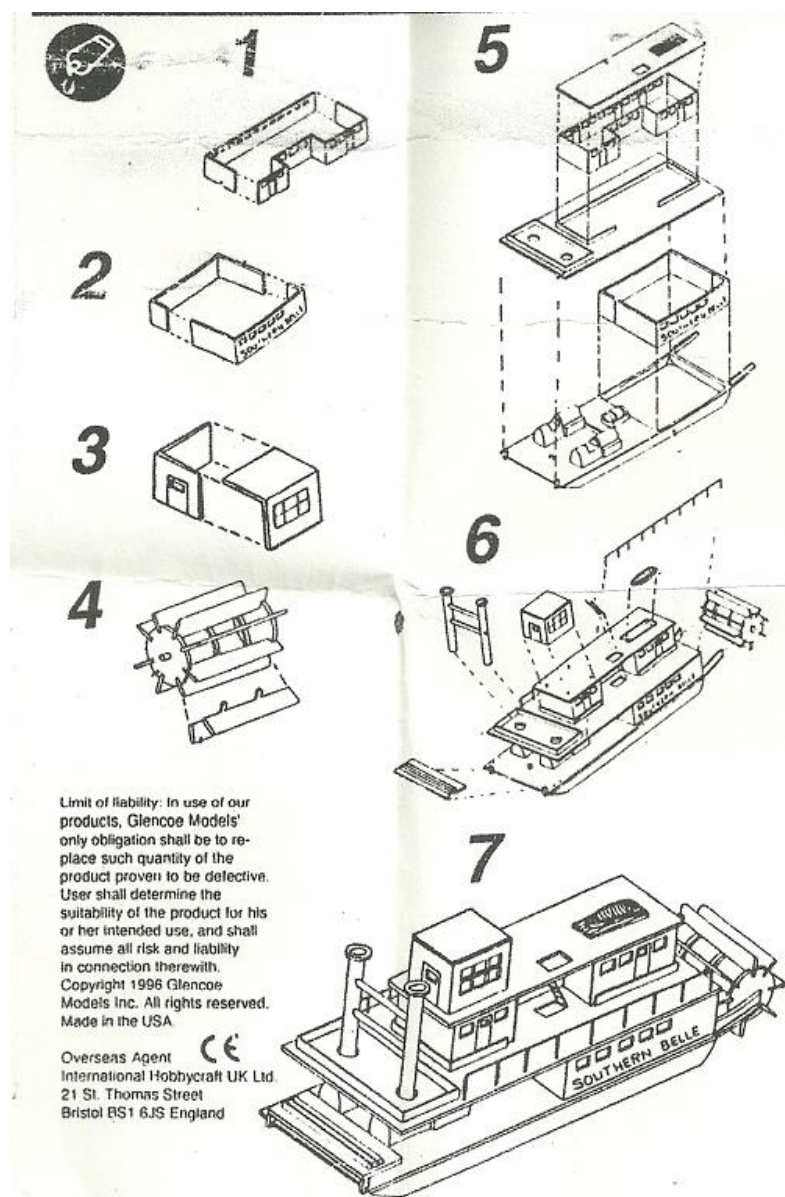
My distant relative, also called Robert, who lives in Seattle, recently sent me a packet containing three models of what I take to be an example of a Mississippi riverboat of the 1800s. The kit's called "Southern Belle," is made by Glencoe Models of the USA, marked price of \$3.50 US, and is about 20 nicely moulded parts, making up into a model about 4 inches long and 2 ½ inches high at the funnels. It's said to be 1/400th scale, but I don't take much notice of that. It fits beautifully into 1/300th scale, and I think is ideal to steam up any colonial river from South America to the Nile, Congo or selected bits of Southeast Asia, up to about the start of the Great War in 1914.



Easy to construct, I found. The photograph is of the first kit I made up, and there are a couple of slight problems. First, there's a small ship's boat which can be discarded, or used with native figures as a large canoe. Then, the wheelhouse -- well, I cemented it on the first model, but won't use it again. It's too big and too vulnerable. A block of 10mm plastic might make a better and protected pilot position. The name of the vessel's etched on the hull side, and needs to be trimmed or filed off, and that gives you the basic model. The model's perfectly flat, by the way. All that's needed to base it is to leave out one of the stern paddle wheels, and trim the roller -- perfect waterline model.



A 6mm gun can be mounted at the bows, and the sides of the upper and lower cabins painted to look like metal or sandbagged, if some light plasticard strips are added to it. You could clad the engines too. On the top deck, a second gun perhaps, or a small searchlight, and a crew from the Heroics and Ros 1/300th naval landing party, perfect for just about any nation. I think white overall with black funnels and some suitably placed flags. The Irregular range makes a delightful 1/300th rowing boat, with European crew which could accompany this model.



I couldn't find a web site for Glencoe Models, and the alleged British importer is long gone, but Robert told me that Glencoe also make a small Chinese junk, but I've not seen that yet. US readers will probably know a lot more about this range, of course.