



# SAN DIEGO SHIP MODELERS GUILD

## Show and Tell Information Form

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**Ship's Name: USS JOHN D. FORD (DD 228)**

Model Builder: Frank Dengler

### 1. Ship's History

a. Type/Class: Destroyer/CLEMSON (DD 186)

b. Namesake: RADM John Donaldson Ford, USN (19 May 1840 - 17 April 1918) was Baltimore, MD native who distinguished himself in the West Gulf Blockading Squadron and in engagements on the Mississippi River and the Battle of Mobile Bay during the 1861-65 Civil War. He was cited for "eminent and conspicuous conduct in battle" aboard the cruiser BALTIMORE (C 3) during the Battle of Manila Bay and operations at Cavite, Sangley Point, and Corregidor during the 1898 Spanish-American War.

c. Shipbuilder & Location: William Cramp & Sons, Philadelphia, PA

d. Date Commissioned/In-Service: 30 December 1920

e. Characteristics Displacement: 1,190 tons, Length: 314' 5", Beam: 31' 9", Draft: 9' 3", Armament: 4 x Mark (Mk) 9 4"/50 gun mounts, 1 x Mk 13 or 14 3"/23 gun mount, 2 x .30 cal. MG., 12 x Mk 8 or 15 21" torpedo tubes, 2 depth charge roller racks, Propulsion: 4 x boilers, 2 x steam turbines, 26,500 shaft horse power, Speed: 35 kts, Complement: ≈100

f. Operations: FORD began service with the Asiatic Fleet in 1921 operating from the Philippines, Japan, and China evacuating or protecting Americans from opponents in the Chinese Civil War of the 1920s, bandits in the '20s and '30s, and Japanese opposing Chiang Kai-Shek's government from 1928 until the early 1940s. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, HI on 7 December 1941, JOHN D. FORD was moored at the Cavite Navy Yard in the Philippines.

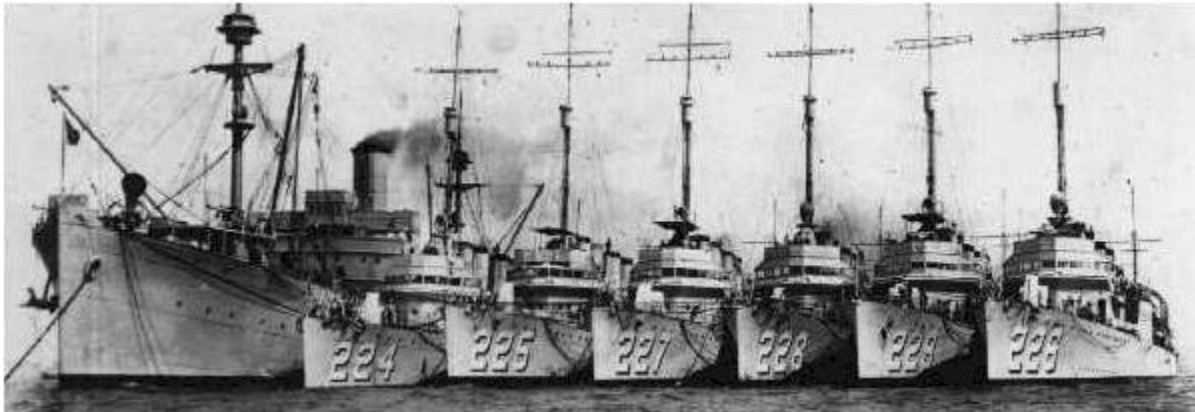
World War I vintage weapons put FORD at a significant disadvantage opposing Japanese air and surface units as they advanced through the Philippines and into Indonesia. Nevertheless, FORD got underway from Surabaya 11 January 1942 to lead similar destroyers PAUL JONES (DD 230), PARROTT (DD 218), POPE (DD 225) in a torpedo and gunfire attack on Japanese invasion shipping off Balikpapan 24 January 1942 sinking four enemy ships. On 18 February 1942 FORD got underway with other American and Dutch for Badoeng Strait where they fought Japanese destroyers during the night of 19-20 February. On 25 February FORD and other American, British, Dutch, and Australian (ABDA) ships got underway from Surabaya and engaged the Japanese in the Battle of Java Sea on the 27th during which 5 ships were sunk and the ABDA ceased to exist as a fighting force. JOHN D. FORD and 3 other three other destroyers steamed undetected through Bali Strait on the night of 1 March and arrived in Freemantle Australia on 4 March.

JOHN D. FORD shepherded convoys around Australia and from June 1942 to May 1943 escorted nine convoys between San Francisco and Pearl Harbor before transiting the Panama Canal the Atlantic. There FORD escorted convoys from New York and Charleston to Casablanca, French Morocco and Recife, Brazil. FORD joined a hunter-killer group built around the escort carrier USS GUADALCANAL (CVE 60), famous for involvement in the capture of the German submarine U-505 and now displayed by a museum in Chicago, IL, in January 1944 and supported the destruction of the German submarine U-554 west of the Azores that month. FORD returned to convoy escort duty from East Coast ports to the Mediterranean, the Canal Zone, Recife, Reykjavik, Iceland, and Casablanca.

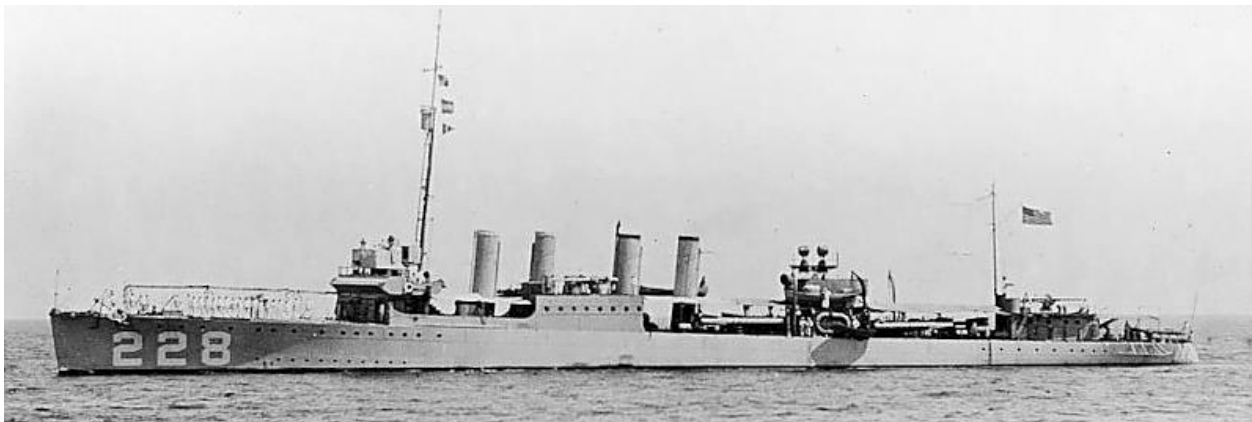
From late May to the end of June 1945 FORD served as escort and plane guard for the carrier USS BOXER (CV-21) during shakedown in the Caribbean. FORD was converted to a general auxiliary (AG I19) in Boston and served in that capacity until decommissioned in Norfolk on 2 November 1945.

g. Fate: The old destroyer was sold for scrap 5 October 1947 to Northern Metals Co and was dismantled where it was built in Philadelphia, PA.

h. Awards / Accomplishments: JOHN D. FORD merited the Presidential Unit Citation for "extraordinary heroism in action during the Java Campaign, 23 January - 2 March 1942, Navy Unit Commendation, China Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, American Defense Service Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, and Philippine Defense Medal with a total of 4 Battle Stars for World War II service. Although not shown in the shadow box below, FORD also, in effect, merited the Combat Action Ribbon that did not exist during World War II,



USS JOHN D. FORD (DD 228) was the only one of the destroyers, including STEWART (DD 224), POPE (DD 225), PILLSBURY (DD 227), TRUXTUN (DD 229), and PEARY (DD 226) nested alongside USS BLACK HAWK (AD-9) pictured here in the 1930s off Chefoo (now Yantai), China, to serve in the U. S. Navy through World War II. STEWART was captured in dry-dock when demolition charges failed & served in the Imperial Japanese Navy. TRUXTON was wrecked on Newfoundland. The others were sunk in combat by Japanese aircraft and warships that the destroyers' World War I vintage gun batteries and fire control systems were inadequate to defeat. Photo from Navsource.org at <http://www.navsource.org/archives/05/pix1/0522406.jpg>



USS JOHN D. FORD (DD 228) circa 1920-21. Note the early O2 level configuration above the bridge and un-shaded hull numbers. The ship is probably in the Philippines or South China Sea during summer given the canvas awnings.

## 2. Model Fabrication

- a. Materials: Revell kit with Gold Medal Models photo etched brass parts.
- b. Scale: 1:240
- c. Era & Configuration Depicted: Circa 1940-41

d. Model Construction Period: 3 months

e. Techniques: Kit hull, 4"/50 and 3"/23 guns, bridge superstructure, lights, crow's nest, stacks, raised galley extension and enclosure, ships boats, torpedo tubes, rafts, depth charge racks, and other fittings were modified or entirely fabricated to correct or replace inaccurate kit components. After I finished the model Shapeways.com offered computer printed 1:240 4"/50 gun mounts.

f. Issues & Solutions: The navsource.org web page for the ship at <http://www.navsource.org/archives/05/228.htm> depicts the ship as configured in the 1920s and 1930s, but not during the 1941 to early 1942 period of tension in the Far East and initial Japanese invasion of the Philippines and Dutch East Indies when JOHN D FORD rendered distinguished service against formidable odds. Although photos of contemporary ships of the same class in the same location are available to suggest the configuration and color of some items, lack of color photography leaves exterior deck paint, which was in transition from red to deck gray at the time, in question. Some photos of contemporary ships show peacetime light gray vertical surfaces were painted with darker "Cavite blue" camouflage.



Model of USS JOHN D. FORD (DD 228) in shadow bow with chart of Balikpapan, Badoeng Strait, and Java combat areas, envelope postmarked aboard JOHN D. FORD, service ribbons, poster depicting 4"/50 gun crew, ship's history in lower left, and photo. The model is mounted on bolts inside aluminum tubing sleeves protruding from the back plane. The shadow box avoids the need for shelf space and encapsulates the ship's history and historical context.



USS JOHN D. FORD (DD 228) Model Detail. The most obvious inaccuracy of the Revell kit is the misrepresentation of the “point forward “V” cross section” WICKES (DD 75) and/or CLEMSON (DD 186) Class muzzle blast deflector below the pilot house windows on the bridge face. The Revell model, initially marked as BUCHANAN (DD 131) when released in 1960 and later marketed as AARON WARD (DD 132) and WARD (DD 139) was a significant improvement over 1950’s kits, but “mixed eras” by depicting the short (fore and aft) and open raised galley structure of World War I (later lengthened and enclosed as in the FORD model) but the enlarged aft deckhouse surmounted by 4”/50 Mount 44, rather than the World War I small aft deckhouse surmounted by a search light and “Y-gun” depth charge thrower, a tall mainmast, and Mount 44 on the main deck.