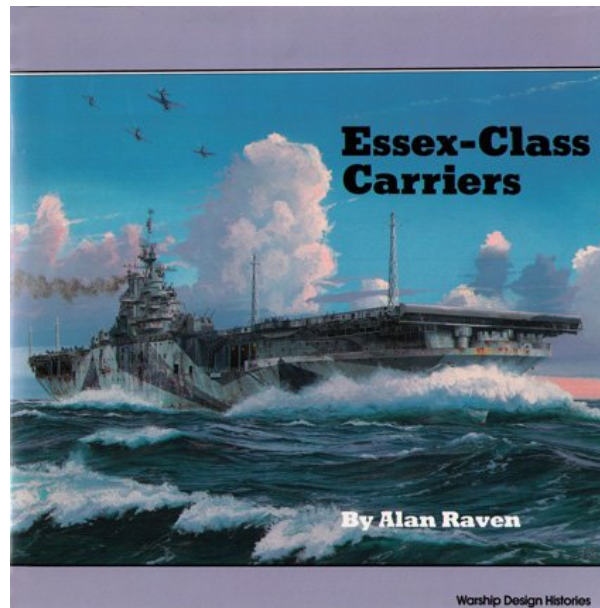
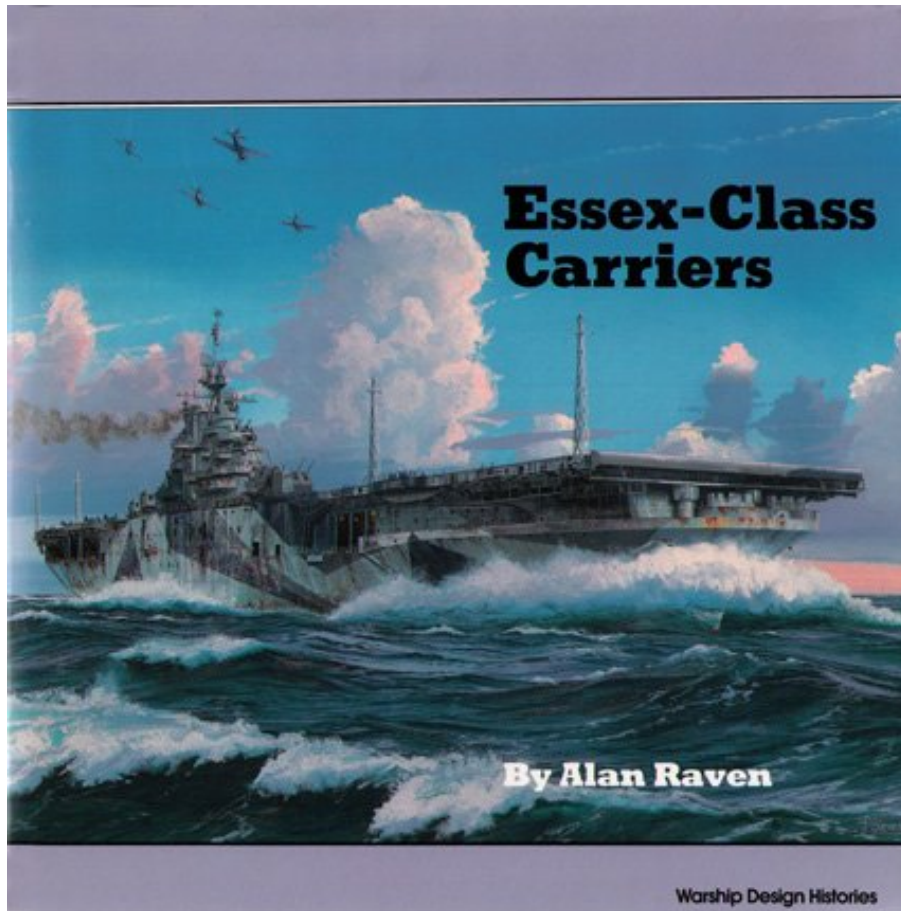


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Features

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Yup, it's that good

By M. Flegal

If you are a model builder or are just interested in the technical details of the Essex class, this is the book for you. While there are a fair number of good, clear photos of the class from WW2 to their retirement, it is the plans that make this book so valuable. A few representative carriers are given full 3 page wide side and top views. For the rest, you get plans of each deck, plans of the different islands, plans of all of the armaments fitted and the radar installations, etc. For the modeler, this is the best resource out there. The Anatomy of the Ship book on the Intrepid is a close second but suffers in that it only represents one specific carrier. If you're interested in excellent and thorough plans of the wartime Essex carriers, this is your book. Add the Intrepid book and you're thoroughly covered. If you're interested in the post-war modifications than this book will also serve your purposes.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

What you get/don't get

By David C. Nilsen

I was curious about how thorough this book was in 192 pages. Other reviews said vague and unlikely things like, "it includes island profiles of all the ships," but given the size of this class, the length of their service, the number of modification programs and roles in which they served (CV, CVA, CVS, LPH, CVT/AVT) and the size and complexity of aircraft carriers and the number of ways they can be made to differ, no 192-page book can cover it all. I was particularly interested to see if it focused on WW2 configurations at the expense of 1950s/60s or vice versa. So I bought it to find out, and this book does a pretty good job. So you can decide if it has what you want, here are some of the high points.

Lots of good photos of the early ships (CVs 9, 10, 11, 12) in their as-built configurations with only very limited numbers of quad 40s, and it is very interesting to see them without the familiar paired 40mm tubs on the stern. However, a number of these photos are not new. It includes, for example the famous "Murderers Row" group shot at Ulithi among others.

Line drawings:

- \* Fold-out full plans of CV 9 (short-hull) in August 1943, including full internal decks.
- \* Plans of CV 15 (long-hull) in late 1944, external only.
- \* Fold out plans of CV 16 (short-hull) in May 1944, including some internal decks.
- \* Full or ½-page island views of CV 9 '43, CV 9 Apr '44, CV 16 late '44,
- \* Lots of detail views of mast rig, radar mounts, elevators, boats, directors, guns, JBDs, flight deck tractors, cranes, etc.
- \* B/W camouflage plans for the various Measure 32 and 33 schemes worn by the class in 1944: CV 9, 12, 14, 20
- \* Diagrams of CV 13's bomb and fire damage, and a great photo of her being rebuilt afterwards with her flight deck cut away all the way down to the hangar deck
- \* Many annotated shipyard photos detailing electronic upgrades, mostly islands: CV 9, 11, 21, 33
- \* Fold out plans of CV 33 in July '54 after SCB-27A, including island decks
- \* Plans of CV 36 in 1954 with prototype angled deck, external only
- \* Fold-out full plans of CV 11 in 1969/70, full external plus gallery, hangar, island, and some other decks.
- \* Plans of CV 34 in 1975, external only.

No 192-page book can cover everything, and this one doesn't. For example, it doesn't appear to be aware of the fact that the first three 27Cs (CVs 11, 14, 19) had their starboard elevator located farther aft than the other eleven modified under SCB-125. While it DOES clearly document this, in the plans of CVs 11 and 34, it also uses the aft (early 27C) elevator position on two generic graphics, one of which is incorrectly marked as CVS 9.

The significant thing that it does not include is any plans for the seven 27A/125s, nor any plans for the LPHs (CV 21, 37, 45/LPH 4, 5, 8), which had an interesting variety of island configurations (nor the unique Lake Champlain, though Kearsarge '54 is similar). It also includes nothing about CV 17's long test career, but no books do. So while it is nice to have two plans of angle-deck 27 Charlies, which were after all the rock-stars of the class, in an ideal world the book would be 50 pages longer and include the CVS and LPH configurations. You can't have everything. So think of this book as mostly about the members of the class in their service as first-line/attack carriers, rather than the entire class in all its roles.

Note, it is copyright 1988, and at this time only CVs 10 and 11 were museum ships, 12, 20, 31, 34, 38 were still laid up, and AVT 16 was still in service.

It's a good book, buy it. Even if you suffer from the delusion that carriers are not interesting, it will make you a better person.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Double Yup: It's that GOOD and more....

By cat5fred

This may sound like an echo, but not everyone has a need to know maritime engineering facts about a historically significant vessel(s) such as the Essex class. Of course, I wouldn't want a superficial treatise, at this price and volume, there is far too many of those. This one is clearly a pictorial with more than enough of

the essential facts to go along with. This book is a GEM!!!! Far better than any of the books I've seen that are addressed to the modeling community.

First, let me describe the book visually, printed in good quality satin paper, text in medium (equivalent to 11 pt I'd think)sized typeface, easy to read, very well edited, didn't catch a single syntax error, which aids in reading pleasure; proportion of text to photos is in favor of photos, about 1 photo / diagram a page or better. The jacket has an annoying habit of sliding out of position, which can be easily solved if you decide to tape it in place or better yet, get a mylar cover.

Now, for the content. Basic design guidelines with an explanation of war-time pressures start the book, followed by a medium in-depth coverage of the ship's development and wartime service. Some very useful tables showing differences between ships of the class regarding displacement, beam, speed, draft levels, etc. Author explains very clearly which set of official blueprints he used, plus the ones he nor anyone else could get a hold of. Then we are treated to the main section, the wartime photographs. To dub it excellent is, in my mind, not quite adequate. I've never seem these photos in such clarity and size. I'm tired to resorting to a magnifying glass just to be able to appreciate the details, don't have to with this book. Most of the photos occupy the whole page, some the full spread, at most 2 photos per page. Every, and I do mean every aspect of the ship is covered pictorially, from the rudder to the radar antennas, and of course, everything in between. No combat photos, which you shouldn't expect in a book of this kind.

Then, the final icing, the drawings and in this case the author has done one better than most books, in that you get up-close photographs right next to the diagrams. For modeler's that is the ultimate value of the book, as it will teach novices how to read naval blueprints. I know I did.

In short, I can't recommend this book highly enough. Well worth the price I paid (a little over \$50). Any lower and it would for sure be a bargain.

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