

impressions should not be off-putting when picking up the book. The drawings are cartoonish in appearance, more suited to a child's colouring book. Nonetheless, the drawings are seriously rendered and accurately depict the aircraft, ships, and weapons under discussion. In effect, each aircraft has its own picture, even those less known or that never made it beyond prototype. That ensures a certain uniformity throughout the book. The French aircraft carrier *Béarne*, despite its inherent limitations in design and propulsion as a naval treaty conversion, is shown from a very pleasing front angle. Lepage invested considerable time and effort in the illustrations, which are as much of the book as the text. *Torpedo Bombers 1900-1950* is recommended for readers interested in twentieth-century naval warfare, aviation, and scale modelling.

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**Leo Marriott. *Images of War: Essex Class Aircraft Carriers, 1943-1991*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen and Sword, [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk), 2020. 176 pp., illustrations, table. UK £15.99, paper; ISBN 978-1-52677-214-5.**

Number 231 in the Images of War series, this is a photographic history of the twenty-four completed Essex-class aircraft carriers of the United States Navy from their introduction in 1943 to the final decommissioning of USS *Lexington* in 1991. Arranged chronologically, the text and photographs trace the development of the Essex design, describe life aboard the vessels, and detail a near-half-century of service. A brief abbreviation guide and bibliography bookend the primary contents, with the majority of the space depicting various carriers through half-page black and white photographs.

Author Marriott begins his work with a brief introduction, accompanied by a table of the planned Essex carriers, their builders, and the key dates in their construction. This leads into a chapter on pre-Essex carrier development in the United States, including a brief background on American Naval Aviation, the effects of the international interwar naval treaties on carrier designs, and the situation America found itself in leading up to the commissioning of the Essex on 31 December 1942. The next four chapters cover the construction, deployment, and operation of the wartime Essex carriers from 1943 through 1945. Following the format of the Image of War series, independent textual information takes a backseat to selected period images and their detailed captions. Of particular interest are the images of below-deck activities and operations in chapter four, a perspective often overlooked in favour of the more iconic exterior views of the massive carriers or on-deck operations.

Chapters six through eight cover the post-war evolution of Essex carriers, showcasing periods of mothballing and decommissioning, the modification of

vessels to accommodate the advent of jet aircraft, and combat operations in the Pacific during both the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Essex-class carriers also participated in the US space program, recovering astronaut capsules. One of the most interesting images is a 1961 drawing of a proposed Essex conversion into a mobile Atlas rocket launch pad (146). Depiction of several carriers in the final stages of their service as helicopter laden amphibious assault ships is an interesting addition that is not often seen in general histories on the subject and is appreciated.

The postscript offers a rather brief glance into the late service history of the last active Essex, USS *Lexington*, from 1976 to 1991. This section also addresses surviving museum ships of the Essex-class, illustrated with relatively recent black and white photographs. Finally, a useful table of 'Fates' documents the decommissioning and striking dates of all hulls. When a ship was scrapped, preserved, or, in the case of the *Oriskany*, sunk as an artificial reef, that is also noted.

In common with the rest of the Images of War series, photographs are all rendered in black and white, even several that were originally in colour (25, 143). Given the prevailing use of colour photography throughout the entire Essex time period, and the way it would have improved the visual understanding of applied camouflage patterns, for example, the inclusion of coloured images would have greatly increase the work's effectiveness. An index would facilitate referencing images for a specific carrier. Although the nominal time period covered is 1943 to 1991, it appears to largely taper off at 1976. The USS *Lexington's* 1976 to 1991 career as the sole remaining commissioned Essex carrier is briefly mentioned in the postscript chapter accompanied by only two images before Marriott delves into the locations of the four surviving museum ships. Given the *Lexington's* nearly two decades of unique service as a training carrier for a score of naval aviators, this section deserves to be expanded. Finally, some of the non-caption text seems to run on, with a lack of punctuation and spacing to help delineate thoughts. Better editing would improve this situation in a future edition.

Nevertheless, this is an interesting image repository, particularly for those interested the Essex class ships at the end of the Second World War and the early Cold War. The accompanying text offers a decent summation of key points in the carriers' service lives along with both the typical equipment and experiences of the crews. While improvements can be made, the work operates well within the constraints of the Images of War format and does offer a range of imagery for carriers, crews, and aircraft. As such, it makes for a good introductory resource into photographic archives and sources for further research.

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**Alfred Scott McLaren. *Emergency Deep. Cold War Missions of a Submarine Commander*. Tuscaloosa, AB: University of Alabama Press, [www.uapress.ua.edu](http://www.uapress.ua.edu), 2021. xvi+280 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. US \$34.95, cloth; ISBN 978-0-8173-2092-8. (E-book available.)**

In his book, *Emergency Deep. Cold War Missions of a Submarine Commander*, author McLaren provides an overview of both his time as a submarine commander and various submarine missions and activities during the Cold War. He balances the tension of dangerous missions with the mundane day-to-day issues that submarine commanders had to deal with in the course of their duties. Students of Cold War history should consider this an introductory text, but readers unfamiliar with the subject will also find it useful.

McLaren's memoir explores his time as commanding officer of the USS *Queenfish*. He also discusses the full cycle involved in preparing for, executing, and recovering from a submarine mission during this period. This includes crew training related to the mission at hand as well as other training necessary for conducting regular operations on a submarine. He also mentions the maintenance activities and duties of the crew while the submarine is in port, as well as at sea. Finally, he addresses disciplinary issues and the consequences of an assignment that is poorly handled or a job not properly executed. This provides the reader with a realistic view of a submariner's life during the Cold War, both the humdrum and the dramatic. Those familiar with submarine activities during this period might not find it particularly ground-breaking, but the less-informed should view this work as a solid introduction to the subject and investigate the author's suggestions for further reading.

While specific missions are not explicitly described, McLaren does cover the full spectrum of submarine activity. Since it is primarily a personal memoir, some topics are more fully discussed in his other books. This time, the author focuses on ordinary missions that some might consider less strategic, such as environmental surveys and the mapping of ice flows or the ocean floor. While not as glamorous as some more well-known missions, they were useful and necessary during the Cold War era. Readers looking for an in-depth explanation of the technical aspects of submarines, tactics or the technology used to accomplish their missions should look elsewhere.

McLaren explains what was expected of submariners and points out that not everybody was suited to working in submarines. He avoids deep technical discussions, and any issues that he feels might violate or compromise security, including referring to some of his fellow sailors only by name and last initial. While extensively referenced, the work does pull a considerable amount of