

Young America

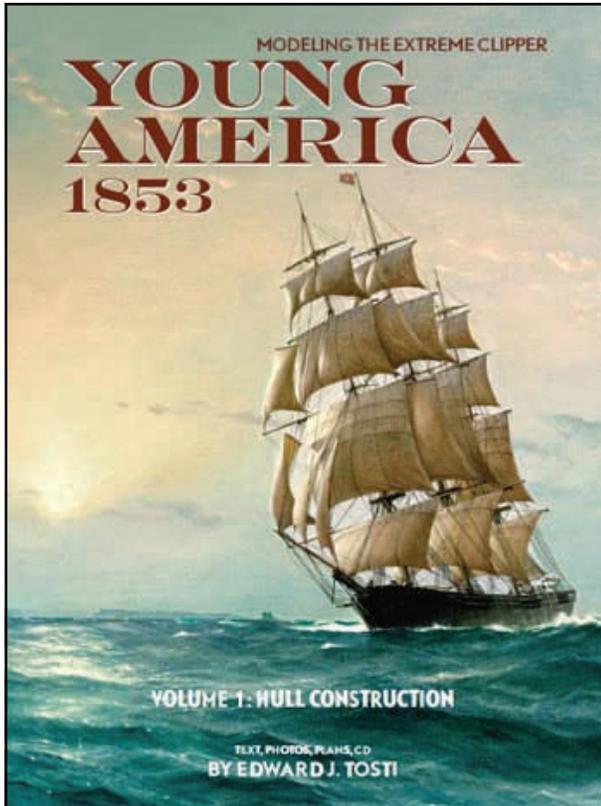
1853

Volume I: Hull Construction

Text, Photos, Plans & CD by Edward J. Tosti

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In his opening remarks, Edward Tosti, states that the drafting and construction of a fully framed extreme clipper ship can be a daunting endeavor. Unlike the meticulous documentation available for Royal Navy vessels, the



short-lived period of the extreme clipper ship provides very limited technical information. This is reflected in the scarcity of model making books dealing with this period, and the nonexistence of publications describing framed structural models. Tosti sites the works of William L. Crothers, and a number of other references listed in the bibliography, as the primary sources for *Young America 1853*.

Although the primary focus of this book is the construction of a 1:72 scale, fully framed up model, the author has made an effort to appeal to a broader range of modelers. The latter portion of Volume 1 deals with building a 1:96 scale,



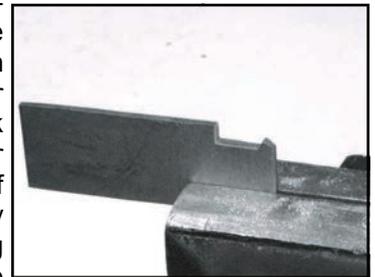
plank on bulkhead model of the *Young America*. Even at this smaller scale, the hull measures a very impressive 40" in length.

In order to accommodate this sizable amount of information, and to avoid repetition, Tosti, on occasion, makes reference to his earlier work, the *Naiad Frigate*. Although not absolutely necessary, he suggests that having these additional books may compliment the process descriptions needed to construct either scale model of the *Young America*.

The book starts out with a brief history of how the extreme clippers evolved, the innovative methods used to construct them, and the men who actually designed and built them. Finally, a short description of the *Young America's* career is provided.

The second chapter, "Planning for Construction," is unique in many ways, and exemplifies the author's attention to detail in guiding the model builder. Mr. Tosti discusses the many facets of planning your project. Some of these include scope (what to build), the level of quality desired, detection and correction of errors, machine, hand and specialty tools, what species of woods to use, and of course safety.

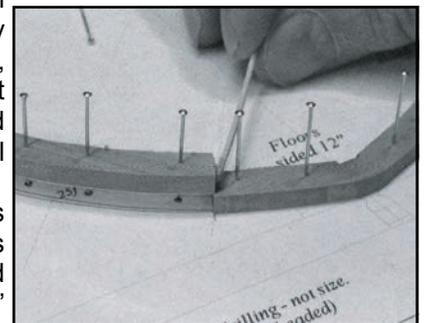
Actual construction begins with the keel structure. The author goes into great detail, and includes obscure fittings such as keelson joint wedges and water stops. The use of dark glue is also described for enhancing the visibility of glue joints. Scrapers play a prominent part in creating rabbets, and patterns are provided for fabricating the correct shapes.



The author goes on to describe his design for a model shipway or building board. Although, later in the book, additional information is provided for a smaller, simpler, less costly design for the POB model, the more complex device can actually be used for both versions.

You might say that the three chapters dealing with the framing of the model are the heart of this book. They begin with the square frames. Although less complex than the examples found on 17th and 18th century Royal Navy vessels, the shear number that need to be constructed on this large model present a challenge.

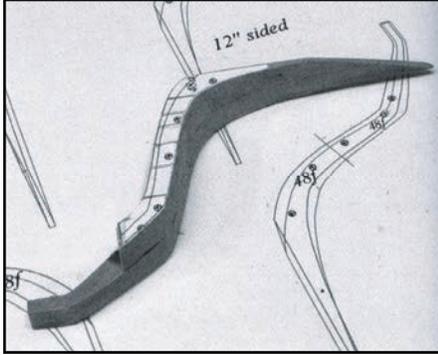
The author outlines an innovative process he calls "Pin-indexed Frame Assembly."



Tosti states that this procedure is simpler, faster, more accurate, eliminates the need for elaborate clamping fixtures, and allows the modeler to bevel the frames before erecting. It is at this point that the author reminds the reader about the need for accuracy. The smallest error in each frame can result in a cumulative variance that will cause major problems.

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A detailed description for mounting all the frames ensues. This includes the square frames, keelson, fore and aft deadwoods, and half and full cant frames,. Patterns for all these challenging components are supplied in the CD that comes with the book. The innovative materials used for simulating iron and copper bolts are also discussed.

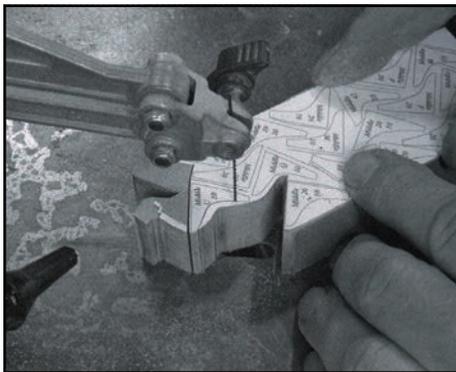


One of the most intriguing aspects of the chapter that deals with the hold ceiling and deck clamps, involves the installation of a lattice of simulated iron bands that were used during the nineteenth century to prevent hogging in wooden hulls. Tosti outlines his method for cutting, blackening, and installing the 1/16" wide copper strips on the inner hull surface. Since the bands will be barely visible when the model is completed, the author admits to simplifying the installation. However, he does describe how his method deviates from actual practice.



With the hull framing completed, decks preparation is next. This topic includes beams, hooks, knees, carlings, and pillars. In every case, multiple pieces are required, and the author offers some helpful hints, which will expedite their construction. Mindful that not everyone's workshop has the same equipment, Tosti offers six different options for creating the round-up on the deck beams.

One daunting revelation involves the fact that *Young America* possessed approximately 1000 knees. Diagrams are provided in the CD for the various types, and the author offers a solution for mass-producing them.



With the array of different parts that have to be installed, a 23-step outline is provided that culminates with the installation of the hatchways, central deck facilities, and decking. Tosti states that for this phase of the model, adhering to this guide is not absolutely necessary. However, for the next sequence that deals with the topside planking and rails, following the steps, as listed, is highly

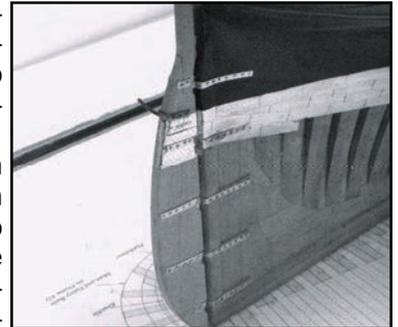
recommended.

This is primarily due to the fact that Ed advocates pre-painting parts before mounting them permanently. A small bit of advice, but no less valuable than his extensive explanation for creating the model's decorative carvings, which is worth the cost of the book by itself.



The next segment is devoted to lower hull detailing, and is loaded with numerous hints and tips. Procedures are outlined for fabricating waterways, binding strakes, limber channels, scuppers, hawse holes, metal sheathing, gudgeons and pintles. Tosti's method for mass-producing these last two items is especially innovative.

The final chapter in Volume I that deals with information applicable to both versions of the *Young America* discusses work on the upper decks, and includes the poop, main deck, and fore-castle. Details for the pin rails, mast partners, hatch and cabin coamings, pump suction pipes, decking, chain pipes, mooring bits, boomkins and catheads are just a few of the items outlined. How the aft cabins looked is not known, and Ed does an admirable job designing a typical interior for his model. Drawings for this layout are included in the CD.



The last two chapters are devoted entirely to building the 1:96 scale POB model. Although this version was referred to often in previous chapters, this segment begins with basics, the constructing of the model shipway and accessories. Going forward from there, the author's concise style of writing, and excellent photos, provide the reader with a clear understanding of how to build this type of hull. There's no doubt that Tosti's methods could apply to any scratch-built POB model.



In addition to the CD, this book comes with a packet of eight drawings. Six are devoted to the 1:72 scale model, and two feature the smaller 1:96 version. This review has barely scratched the surface as to what this book has to offer, but there's no doubt that *Young America 1853* will become a classic reference for modelers and clipper ship history buffs. SeaWatch states that Volume II is a year away, which, for many of us, can't come soon enough!

Reviewed by
Bob Filipowski