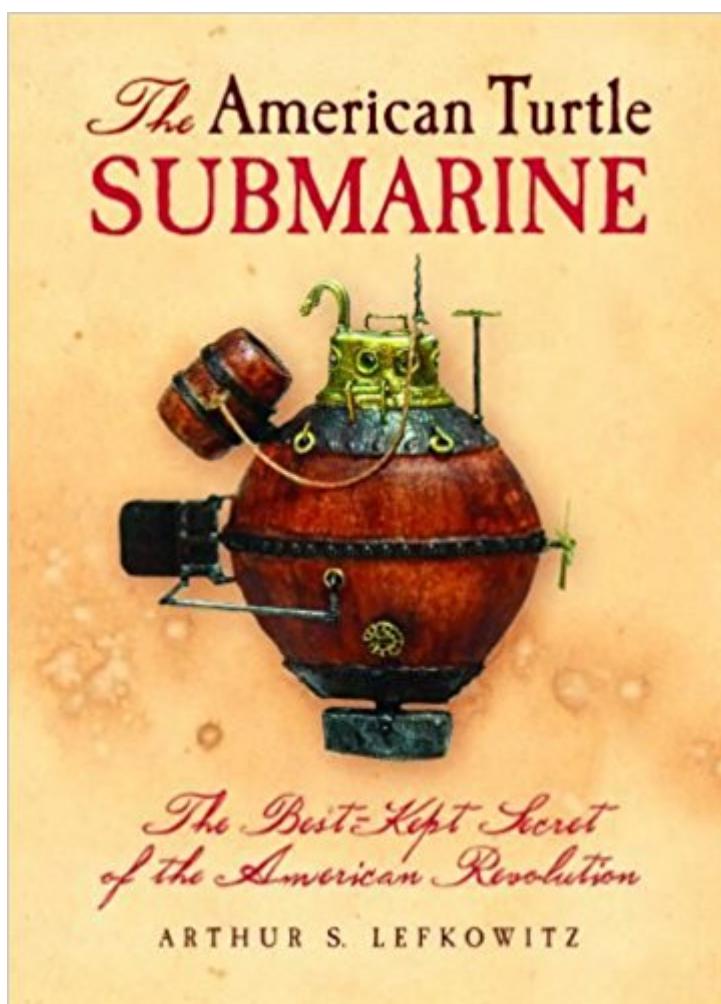


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# American Turtle Submarine, The: The Best-Kept Secret Of The American Revolution



## Synopsis

"An effort of genius." -George Washington to Thomas Jefferson, 1785 The world's first submarine was used during the American Revolution. While other men his age supported the country with muskets, Yale graduate David Bushnell sought the answer to one important question: how to defend America against the British Royal Navy. His answer was the American Turtle. Focusing on the vessel's most important mission, sinking Britain's flagship in New York harbor, this concise history follows the development of the invention from drawing table to open water and onwards.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Lefkowitz includes a number of fascinating details about the construction of the Turtle, and chapters are interspersed with frequent discussions of related events or issues . . . provided as asides in boxed format."-ALAN Review "I wish I had discovered it a while back before I started this project as it seems to be the most thorough source of information I have seen so far."-Duke Riley, avant-garde artist who built and tested a replica of the Turtle submarine David Bushnell was a "Yankee Tinkerer" during the American Revolution. Although the budding country had virtually no navy, this Yale graduate (with no practical training) created the world's first submarine. A closely guarded secret, the Turtle received limited funding from the government and was built in a shed behind Bushnell's home. Having come into a world without steam engines, electric power, or propellers, the Turtle was completely human powered. In 1776, the small submarine's primary objective became to sink the British flagship, the HMS Eagle, anchored in New York Harbor. This was the first of three daring attempts to attack Royal Navy vessels. A dedicated American Patriot,

Bushnell was later appointed by General Washington to the post of captain in what is now known as the Army Corps of Engineers. Arthur S. Lefkowitz serves on the board of governors of the American Revolution Round Table and is a lecturer for the New Jersey Council for the Humanities on the subject of the American Revolution. He has received many awards and honors for his books about this time period, including the American Revolution Round Table's annual book award, two Honor Book designations by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, an Outstanding Book for Teenagers by the New York Public Library, and a recommended selection by the History Book Club. Lefkowitz's lecture credits include various National Park Service sites, the annual Fort Ticonderoga Revolutionary War Symposium, Fraunces Tavern Museum, and Chubb & Son Inc. In 2005, he gave the keynote address at the annual meeting of the prestigious Washington Association of New Jersey. A past board member of the Brigade of the American Revolution (a national reenactment group), Lefkowitz earned his BA from New York University and MBA from Long Island University. He lives in New Jersey.

Praise for first edition "As work on the vehicle continues, the author provides historical context, weaving in military, political, and technological background without straying from Bushnell's story." -School Library Journal "This story of Bushnell and his submarine will interest students of engineering and American military history." -Booklist "It's a fascinating tale of perseverance and inventive genius. Maps, sidebars, and excellent diagrams support the lively text." -Kirkus Few people realize that the first submarine was invented by a civilian during the American Revolution. A Yale graduate with no naval experience, David Bushnell set out to find a way of competing with the famed Royal Navy. He used books from the university's library and experimented in a shed behind his house until America's first underwater craft was launched on September 6, 1776, with the intent of attaching explosives to the HMS Eagle, flagship of the British fleet, docked in New York Harbor. Arthur S. Lefkowitz has published four other books about the Revolutionary War and serves on the board of governors of the American Revolution Round Table. Lefkowitz resides in New Jersey.

I purchased a copy of this book for my 11 grandson who is interested in the Revolutionary War era. This book is nicely designed with great drawings of the Turtle submarine, maps of the colonies, ship information and much more. The story presents a detailed and intriguing view of how an inventor or "Yankee Tinkerer" by the name of David Bushnell designed and made a small submarine that could get under ships undetected in order to attach kegs of gunpowder to the hostile

British warships. I would recommend this to school kids (or adults!) interested in the Revolutionary War period. Adventurous and memorable.

My 5th grade son used this book for help with a school report. He found tons of great information. Good for upper elementary and middle school students.

This book provided a lot information about the subject in a short and concise way. It is an easy read and took less than 2 hours to complete.

My husband and one son-in-law were both in the U.S. Submarine Service and I thought I knew a lot of naval history. This short but informative book takes you back to the beginnings of our nation. Must read!

First published as Bushnell's Submarine by Scholastic (2006), this is a short and very readable book that is suitable for anyone 11 and up. Despite its modest length and simple language, the book packs an impressive amount of information about the Turtle's design, development, and combat operations, as well as a lot of useful background on Bushnell himself and his other inventions. There is an overview of submarine experiments before Bushnell's time, sidebars on various background topics and personalities, and a number of very good drawings that give a clear view of the Turtle's interior and workings. I would recommend this to anyone who is interested in the Revolutionary war, the history of submarine warfare, or 18th-century Weird Science in general.

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