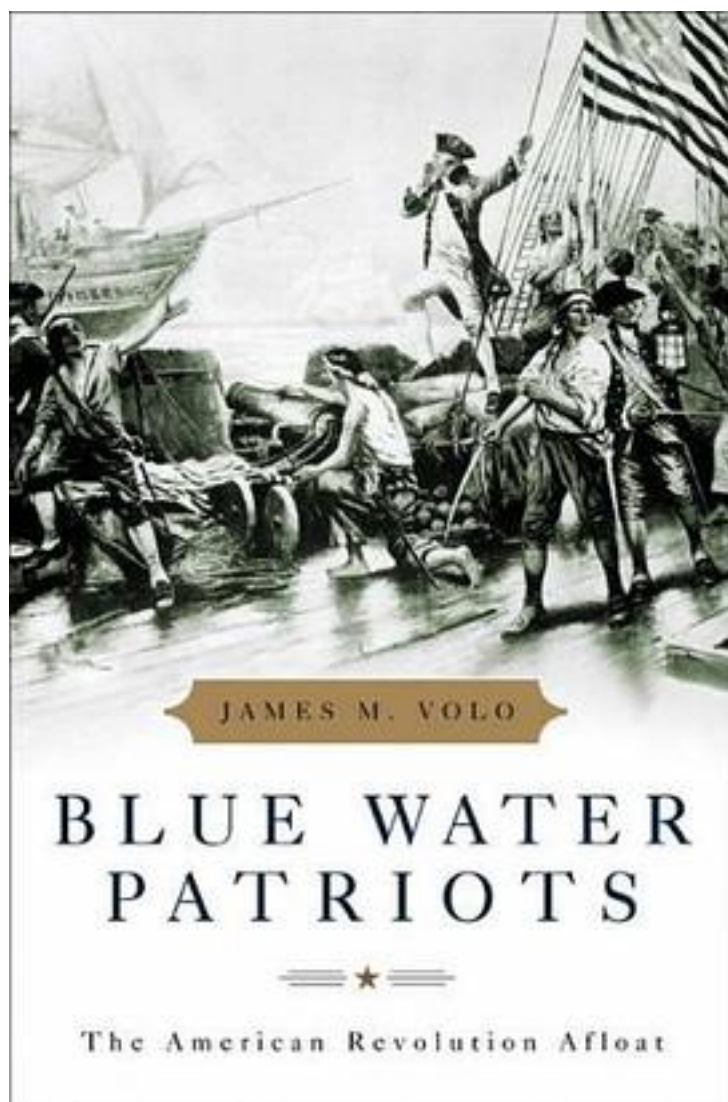


Blue Water Patriots



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In 1775, it was inconceivable that the American colonists could have overcome the overwhelming military superiority of Great Britain. Yet, somehow, the colonists were able to resist the British at sea, attract capable allies - notably France - to aid them, and successfully conclude their quest for independence. The American Revolution can be viewed as part of a prolonged worldwide naval conflict between France and Britain beginning with the Glorious Revolution in 1688 and ending with the British victory at Trafalgar in 1805 during the Napoleonic Wars. This was a period in which the armed merchantmen of the age of trade were replaced by genuine warships whose task was to control the sea lanes. The American Revolution was a watershed in this regard with improved warship designs, new technologies, improved gunpowder and communications, and innovative tactics. Although French participation in the war for independence was crucial, the primary focus of this work is the period before 1779, when the colonists confronted the Royal Navy alone with only their ingenuity and courage to defend them. These 'Blue Water Patriots' fought crucial battles on the road to American independence, and this is their story.

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