

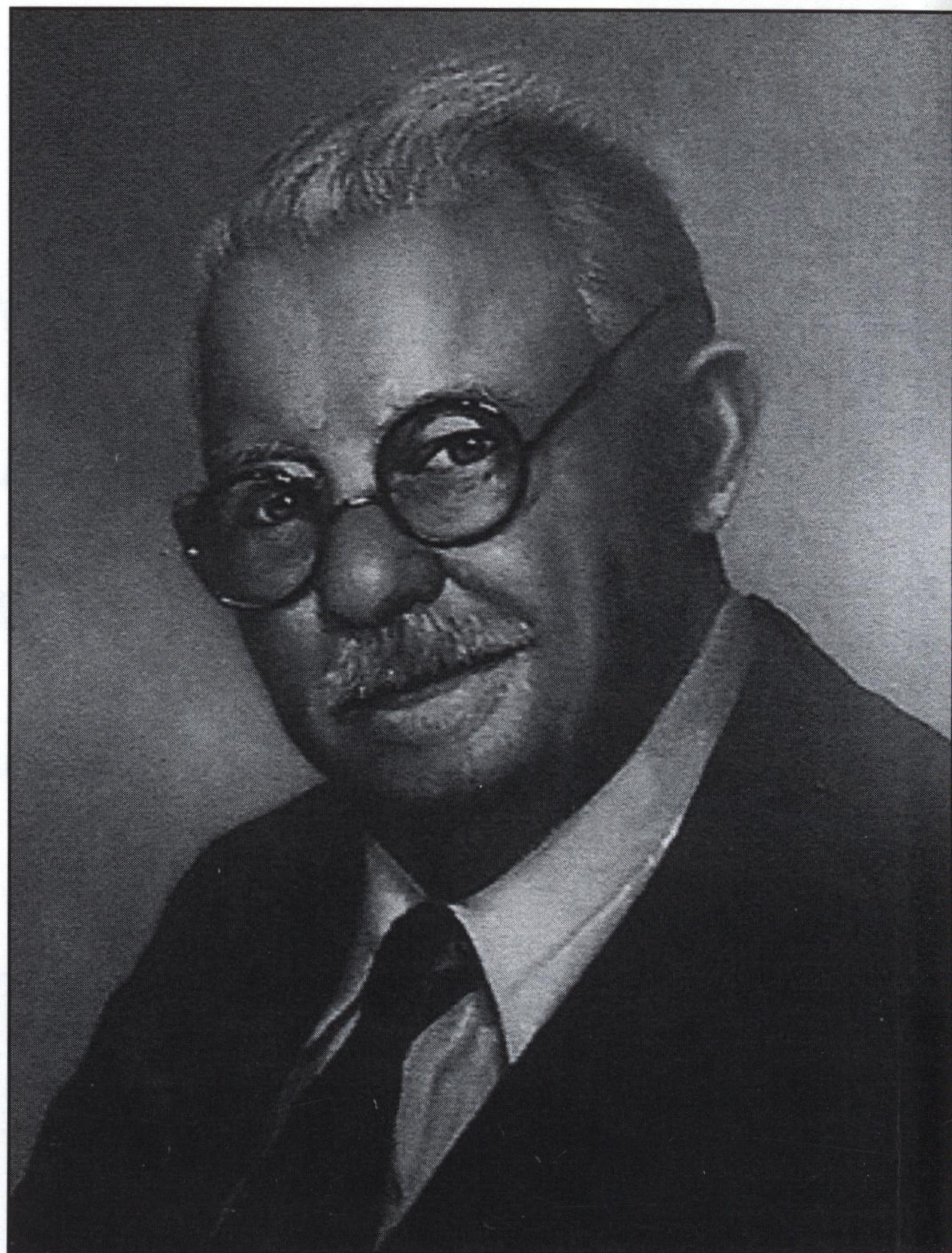
Simon Lake

Submarine Inventor (1866-1945)

Simon Lake, born September 4, 1866, son of John Christopher Lake, an inventor and foundry owner, attended public schools in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Toms River, New Jersey, and was graduated from the Clinton Liberal Institute at Fort Paine, New York. After a course in mechanical drawing he became a partner in his father's business.

Since his childhood, Lake's main ambition was to build submarines for the Navy. His first submarine, ARGONAUT, was built in 1894. He was not a wealthy man and had a difficult time financing the building of his submarine. Since it was still considered experimental, the United States government held trials to see if the Lake submarine or that of his rival inventor, Holland, was to be adopted. Neither was considered satisfactory at the time and Lake's much improved submarine, PROTECTOR was built in 1901. PROTECTOR was the first successfully tested even-keeled submarine.

American naval authorities were slow in considering PROTECTOR and she was sold to Russia. Lake spent the next seven years in Europe where he advised on submarine construction as well as designing and building. On return to the United States he founded the Lake Torpedo Boat Company which built submarines for both the Austrian and United States governments. His first submarine for the United States Navy was USS G-1 constructed at the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company in Newport News, Virginia, under a subcontract from Lake's company. Commissioned on October 28, 1912, the G-1 set a record by submerging to a depth of 256 feet. Soon the United States government adopted the Lake type of submarine to



be built in its Navy yards under royalty to the Lake Company.

There was universal recognition of the efficiency of his underseas craft and his influence on designs of the United States Navy submarines has endured over the years to reach the era of atomic and hydro dynamic design. Simon Lake's interest was not in the military uses of underwater craft but, rather, throughout his life he attempted to convince the world of the commercial and peaceful uses of the submarine. Although his boyhood dream never came true, he went on to make many significant salvage and marine inventions and served in an advisory capacity during World War II. As the inventor of the first even-keeled submarine, and before his death, on June 23, 1945, he had seen many of his early visions become reality.