

BROADSIDE

The Newsletter of the
American Revolution Round Table

<http://www.arrrt-ny.org>

October 2020

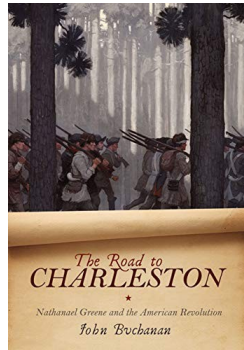
JACK BUCHANAN WINS BOOK OF THE YEAR

As Simon & Garfunkle would say, something tells me it's all happening at the Zoom.

One advantage of Zoom is that since each attendee's camera is sending a continuous close-up of his face, we could all enjoy Jack Buchanan's facial reaction, at the June 2 pre-dinner board meeting, when Chairman Dave Jacobs announced that our Board had named Jack's latest book the New York Round Table's Book of the Year. If Jack was not really as surprised and gratified as he looked, a new career in acting awaits him.

Jack, almost a life-long New York City boy, has spent so much time, over so many years, traveling in the south and inspecting all the battlefields that he by now probably knows more about the campaigns of General Greene than General Greene did.

Jack's book is called *THE ROAD TO CHARLESTON: NATHANAEL GREENE AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION*. He spoke on his book at the April 2019 Round Table. It had already won the Order of the Cincinnati's "Best Book on the Revolution Award" for 2019. It was published in that year by the University of Virginia Press. It completes the story of the southern phase of the war that Jack began in 1999 with *THE ROAD TO GUILFORD COURTHOUSE*.



The regular Zoom meeting commenced at 6:45.

Technical difficulties bedeviled our June meeting (can't very well call it a dinner, unless some were munching off-camera). Our speaker could be seen, but not heard. It was like the British House of Commons, where the only one who never speaks is called the Speaker. Andrea Meyer acted as Capcom: that's the astronaut at Mission Control who alone speaks to the crew of the spacecraft. She gave determined assistance to our speaker, Tom Shachtman, but we were never able to get his audio connected. He was to speak on his new book *FOUNDING FORTUNES: HOW THE WEALTHY PAID FOR AND PROFITED FROM AMERICA'S REVOLUTION*. Mr. Shachtman last addressed us in October of 2017. He said he will be happy to try again in the spring.

Thirty-six attended the Zoom meeting. Among them was Akhil Reed Amar, author of *THE BILL OF RIGHTS: CREATION AND RECONSTRUCTION*, 1998, which your memorialist started to read and gave up on. Too technical. Amar, 61, is deemed one of the top twenty constitutional scholars in the US. He teaches at Yale. He was born in 1958 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where his parents, both from India, were studying medicine at the University of Michigan.

Scott Flanigan, of the South Jersey Round Table, also attended.

Member Robert Ulrich livened up the meeting with a series of questions that he threw out to all comers: Did GW free his slaves? Is the Museum of the American Revolution (MAR) correct in its interpretation of the Battle of Cowpens? What was

Tarleton's role? What was Dan Morgan's role? Your editor, not being adept at shorthand, did not note the answers that other members gave to Mr. Ulrich's questions, but this shows how trenchant and lively a discussion we had, in spite of the technical difficulties. So a Zoom meeting can be a productive one.

Chairman Jacobs signed off at 7:32.

BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

The diligent Broadside staff recently came across these titles:

AMERICAN REBELS: HOW THE HANCOCK, ADAMS, AND QUINCY FAMILIES FANNED THE FLAMES OF REVOLUTION, by Nina Sankovich. St. Martin's Press, March, 2020.

THE CLEAN BODY, Peter Ward. McGill-Queen's University Press, November, 2019.

RUSH: REVOLUTION, MADNESS, AND BENJAMIN RUSH, THE VISIONARY DOCTOR WHO BECAME A FOUNDING FATHER. Stephen Fried. Crown, September, 2018. Winner, National Magazine Award. The author is an investigative reporter and a Columbia University professor.

POLYGAMY: AN EARLY AMERICAN HISTORY, Sarah Pearsall. Yale University Press, 2019. The author teaches the history of early America and the Atlantic world. At Cambridge.

OUR SISTER REPUBLICS: THE UNITED STATES IN AN AGE OF AMERICAN REVOLUTIONS. Caitlin Fitz. W. W. Norton, 2016. How did Americans view the Latin American revolutions? How did those new republics view the US?

In the Juvenile Fiction category, we have SUSANNA'S MIDNIGHT RIDE: THE GIRL WHO WON THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR. (I said this was fiction!) Libby Carty McNamee. Sagebrush Publishing, 2018. Susanna overheard Cornwallis

plotting the capture of General Lafayette. Claims to be based on a true story.

Book Review Editor Lynne Saginaw, bereft of live book reviews, asks us all to send in reports on what we have all been reading during the Covid shutdown.

Lynne also advises us that National Geographic has re-issued its 2016 book FOUNDING FATHERS: AMERICA'S GREAT LEADERS AND THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM. \$14.99 will get you a book full of illustrated essays. Your editor has greatly enjoyed National Geographic's illustrations all his life.

And still more from Lynne, and it's another *kudos* for Jack Buchanan: He contributed a chapter to THE TEN KEY CAMPAIGNS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, by Ed Lengel. The chapter is "Charleston to King's Mountain: The Southern Partisan Campaign." Lynne's review of the whole book is positive: "Excellent. Insightful. The language is elegant and well chosen. There are outstanding maps."

Our October speaker, John Gilbert McCurdy, besides his current book, also wrote one in 2009 called CITIZEN BACHELORS: MANHOOD AND THE CREATION OF THE UNITED STATES. It was published by Cornell University Press. There were laws in colonial America restricting certain rights of men who stayed single too long. What a fascinating sidelight on the much better-known struggle for women's rights! Bachelors were looked on with suspicion and disapproval, but they were also useful, especially for recruitment into the revolutionary army. A single man might not desert to go home for spring planting.

250 YEARS AGO IN NEW YORK CITY

On January 19 and 20 New York saw the Battle of Golden Hill, which Jon Carriel told us about in February. In March 1770 came the news of the Boston Massacre, and also in that month came the welcome news that Parliament had repealed the

Townshend Acts ... except for the tax on tea. Things quieted down a little, but only a little. A new royal Governor arrived on October 19, John Murray, the Earl of Dunmore, but rioting resumed November 5.

We are counting down to the 250th anniversary of independence in 2026!

IN THE NEWS

Polly Guerin sends along a quote from the “Father Ruttler’s Weekly Column” of July 12: Painter Jacques-Louis David designed the flag of the French Republic. His inspiration was the cockade of the Marquis de Lafayette. He adds that Lafayette had been urged to help the Americans in their struggle for independence by the brother of King George III, of all people. This was the Duke of Gloucester, who was in a funk because his royal brother had disapproved of his choice of wife.

Polly also apprises us of the arrival of Lafayette in New York on August 15, 1824, at the Battery. The Marquis would have seen Castle Clinton still connected to Manhattan Island by a causeway. Battery Park had not yet been filled in around it. One hundred ninety-six years ago August 15, the hero of two revolutions began his two-year tour of all twenty-four of the states.

Lynne Saginaw reports that the Brooklyn Historical Society has recently digitized their collections of maps of New York City, New York State, and the whole Eastern seaboard. They have fifteen hundred such maps, and they date from today back as far as 1562. One reason for digitizing these maps is that they are so old and fragile. And it is not just a matter of preserving the maps – they are adding the latest computer methods of using the maps, too. They will be searchable, and gridded to today’s street grids and landmarks, and to GPS coordinates.

The other Round Tables have resorted to Zoom meetings this spring and summer of the Plague Year just as we have. The wave of the future?

Sue Slack, after consulting a helpful Revolutionary tour guide, was able to find the two plaques on Park Avenue commemorating the Murray family of Murray Hill. They are at 35th and 36th Streets.

Saturday, September 19th will be the date for the annual Steuben Day Parade. This year, of course, it will have to be virtual and not actual. The important thing to remember about this parade is that it is not meant as a celebration of German culture as much as German-American culture. General Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben was a hero of the American Revolution, and settled in Oneida County, New York, on the edge of the Adirondacks, after the war.

Jon Carriel strongly recommends an important recent three-part article in the *Journal of the American Revolution*, by our next (December) speaker, Christian McBurney: “The First Efforts to Limit the African Slave Trade Arise in the American Revolution.” The essay shows that what might be called “proto-abolitionism” was a much larger factor in the lead-up to the revolution than previously thought.

Another bulletin from Lynne Saginaw: The New-York Historical Society exhibit “Colonists, Citizens, Constitutions: Creating the American Republic” opens September 11. The Society website (www.nyhistory.org) walks you through if you can’t visit in person. But if you do, you must wear a mask and get a pre-purchased, timed ticket. Details on ticketing are still pending, so go to the Society’s website or call 212-873-3400. See a 1787 copy of the Constitution, a letter on the Constitution from John Jay, and handwritten revisions on the document by Alexander Hamilton!

Finally, some sad news: The Coffee House Club has lost its lease at the General Society Building and is looking for new digs in the same neighborhood. They have removed all those pictures on the walls, and their library, and their chairs with nameplates with names of famous former members, like Robert Benchley, and have put them in storage. Frances Vieta, the Club’s manager, told Treasurer Jon Carriel this in an August 11 email. The Club has been the Round Table’s home since the October, 2011 dinner.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

As the Board was discussing ways to increase membership in the Round Table, Chairman Dave Jacobs recalled that North Callahan, in founding the group in 1959, had placed an ad in the New York Times. He was the author of books on Henry Knox and Daniel Morgan. North was both true and magnetic.

EDITORIAL

The cancellation, forced on us by the Covid pandemic, of this year's April and June Round Tables is not the biggest problem faced this year by this organization. There is a greater long-term threat.

In Portland, Oregon, mobs pulled down sculptures of Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, because they were slave owners.

Some elements of the major media are touting the "1619 Project." 1619 was the year Black slaves were first landed at Jamestown, Virginia. Slavery, they claim, built the United States, and slavery is the only, or the only important, factor in American history. "The plan was to challenge the notion that American history began in 1776," the authors say. "1619 is as important as 1776."

I don't know anyone who thinks that "American history" began in 1776. I first read a reference to 1619 in a juvenile novel called *Lions In The Way* that I was assigned to read in eighth grade, in 1968, which I cannot find on google now. That book taught me that most Black American families have been in the US longer than most White families. Everyone knows that slavery is an important factor in American history. But it is not the only factor.

The American Revolution is being minimized, and in the end, made to disappear, by some elements in the major media. Perhaps the Museum of the American Revolution will find its donor base dry up. The American Revolution may be written out of the history books completely by the professors.

Many of them have already been trying to do that long before this. The professors used to do this in the name of Marxism. Now they are doing the same thing in the name of "anti-racism." I suppose that is progress. And I am all for starting vigorous debates. Maybe the Project and the vandalism (which the authors endorse!) will actually get *more* people interested in our revolution. The only thing worse, for our favorite revolution, than being denounced is to not be talked about at all.

The Civil War gets it, too. A re-enactor at Grant's Tomb, about twenty years ago, expounded his view that slavery was not the cause of the Civil War. Economics was. This too is a fashionable view from the socialist professors. It has been cool for many years to impress your students with that claim. Cool, daring views sell books for professors. There has always been a lot of money to be made putting down "capitalism." Herr Profesor Doktor can really impress you with his mastery of the subject, if you are a naïve freshman, by saying that slavery was not the cause of the Civil War, or that the American Revolution was a failure, that it was unimportant. As Eliza was crossing the ice of the Ohio River, I suppose she was saying "I hope I make it over this ice, to the land of high tariffs and heavy industry!"

I heard a speech from the 1960s by Stokely Carmichael. He claimed that cotton built the US economy, and since Black slaves picked the cotton, Black slaves built the American economy. George Washington would be the first to point out to Mr. Carmichael that slavery was an *impediment* to the American economy. To say that slavery built the American economy suggests that you think that slavery works. But we were all taught in school that slavery, and the one-crop economy slavery encouraged, was the reason why the South was so under-developed economically, and thus defeated by the industrial North. Rhett Butler says as much in the movie "Gone With The Wind," which is in the process of being suppressed as a racist movie now. And I learned of the economic advantages of the North over the South in graphs and maps in my Golden Book Encyclopedia. So this baloney is not even fresh baloney.

What many professors have long been suppressing is the fact that slavery is hardly a peculiarly

American institution. There has been slavery in every part of the world, going back, probably, to cave man days. Our revolutionary generation, as part of the Enlightenment movement in Britain and France as well as here, *was the first in the history of the world to put the abolition of slavery on the political agenda*. Before that, everyone in the world just took slavery for granted. Washington and Jefferson were contributors to the process of starting slavery down the road to extinction. This point, by the way, is one I first heard from a Black professor of American History. But this view is not currently fashionable. Fashions change, though, if dissenters speak out against the mob.

– Frederick Cookinham

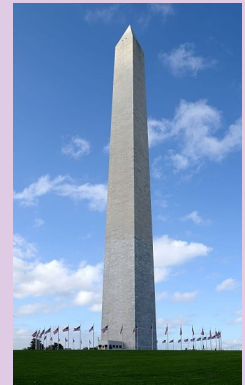
DEADLINE

The Broadside needs your input! Any book news, any news about museums and historic sites, any news about someone digging up an old cannonball, any news about someone writing a Broadway show about some Revolutionary hero, anything of interest to Revolution fans, send it in! Drop the Editor an email at fcookinham@juno.com. For inclusion in the December Broadside, your deadline for submission is midnight, Friday, November 13th. Easy to remember.

POET'S CORNER

Washington's Monument

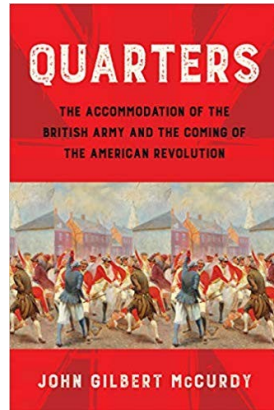
Walt Whitman – February 1885



*Ah, not this marble, dead and cold:
Far from its base and shaft expanding – the round zones circling, comprehending,
Thou, Washington, art all the world's, the continents' entire – not yours alone, America,
Europe's as well, in every part, castle of lord or laborer's cot,
Or frozen North or sultry South – the African's – the Arab's in his tent,
Old Asia's there with venerable smile, seated amid her ruins;
(Greet's the antique the hero new? 'tis but the same – the heir legitimate, continued ever,
The indomitable heart and arm – proofs of the never-broken line,
Courage, alertness, patience, faith, the same – e'en in defeat defeated not, the same.)
Where'er sails a ship, or house is built on land, or day or night,
Through teeming cities streets, in doors or out, factories or farms,
Now, or to come, or past – where patriot wills existed or exist,
Where'er Freedom, pois'd by toleration, sway'd by Law,
Stands or is rising thy true monument.*

OCTOBER SPEAKER

Our October Zoom meeting will feature **John Gilbert McCurdy**, who will speak on his latest book, **QUARTERS: THE ACCOMMODATION OF THE BRITISH ARMY AND THE COMING OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**. The book was published by Cornell University Press in 2019. Professor McCurdy's previous book is discussed above, under **BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS**.



Our speaker is a Professor of History at Eastern Michigan University.

Copies of his book will be made available to Round Tablers ... somehow.

Access to Zoom meetings is available either by internet (with video) or telephone (voice only).

Here is the invitation to the October 6 meeting:

David Jacobs is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: American Revolution Round Table of NY
Time: **Oct 6, 2020 7:30 PM** Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting by clicking this hyperlink:
[Join our Cloud HD Video Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 491 546 9680

Passcode: 5858

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,4915469680#,,,,,0#,,5858# US
(New York)

+13017158592,,4915469680#,,,,,0#,,5858# US
(Germantown)

TELEPHONE ACCESS:

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 491 546 9680

Passcode: 5858

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcIrtJpVVI>

**VOTE AND ANSWER THE
CENSUS!!
ELSE WHAT IS A
REVOLUTION FOR?**

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

The Board believes that our meetings will probably continue to be virtual through June 2021. Maybe not, but that is what we should plan on for now. After that, there is a possibility that we might look for a replacement for the Coffee House Club in cooperation with the Civil War Round Table, which is also looking for a new home.

Tom McAndrews, of the Philadelphia Round Table, has kindly taken it upon himself to compile a weekly update of all the virtual discussions of the American Revolution around the country. This useful information has been shared via his personal e-mail list (derived mostly from attendants of the Congress of AmRev Round Tables). However, Michael Troy, of the South Jersey ARRT, has recently volunteered to compile McAndrews' information into a universally-available Google Document page. Both gents have more or less promised to continue these updates throughout the period of the pandemic. This may well be worth making a bookmark on your internet browser:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uhbgH8hn3SwXwW9K52J2uc4MDLrWU9io5U3x81MPet4>

Book reviewers will be asked to read their reviews to the Round Table during our Zoom meetings. Please keep them down to five minutes. We will try to avoid reviews of the very book whose author we are hosting at the moment! Contact Lynne Saginaw at lynneess@juno.com, if you would like to be assigned a book to review — the publishers send copies of new books to her.

Finally, here is a notice rarely seen in any dues-supported organization:

ARRT-NY WILL NOT BE COLLECTING DUES FOR THE 2020-2021 SEASON!

With no meeting space and no food to pay for, and with speakers not having to be flown in and put up at a hotel, we have only honoraria to pay for, and a few incidental expenses.

However, we would like everyone who wishes to continue receiving the *Broadside* to re-confirm their e-mail address for the new season. Please so advise Jon Carriel (JonCarriel@protonmail.com) by e-mail.

If any member is inspired to contribute to the Speakers Fund, to help cover ARRT's on-going expenses, it would always be appreciated. Please send physical checks (made payable to **ARRT**) to:

Dr. David Jacobs
8 Spencer Avenue
Niantic, CT 06890

We will see each other on Zoom at **7:30 pm, Tuesday, October 6.**

Your most obdt. Svt.,
Dr. David W. Jacobs

THE BROADSIDE is published five times a year to members of the American Revolution Round Table of New York. Editor: Frederick Cookinham. Electronic Publisher: Jonathan Carriel. Past issues are available on our website: www.rrt-ny.org.