

BROADSIDE

The Newsletter of the
American Revolution Round Table

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

October 2021

JUNE SPEAKER

JACK BUCHANAN ON THE ROAD TO KING'S MOUNTAIN

Twenty-seven people attended the June Zoom meeting of the Round Table.

After Chairman Jacobs' welcome, Lynne Saginaw, our Book Review Editrix, introduced long-time member Vic Miranda, who reviewed *THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE*, by T. H. Breen. Vic was followed by Bob Crothers, who reviewed *THE COMPLEAT VICTORY: SARATOGA AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION*, by Kevin Weddle. Both reviews are summarized below, in *BOOKS BOOKS*.

Our main speaker, long time member Jack Buchanan, spoke about the first part of the southern war, from the British capture of Savannah and Charleston to the American victory at King's Mountain.

One important point about the King's Mountain battle is that it was mostly one of militia versus militia. The British, seeing that it was the tidewater "rice kings" who had initiated the revolution in the south, thought that the back country settlers were still loyal to the King. They weren't. They attacked a thousand Loyalist militia and Loyalist colonial Regulars from New York and New Jersey who held very easily defended high ground. The Patriot militia attacked up the steep, wooded, rocky slopes at eight points all around the elongated hill. The Loyalists did not counterattack until the rebels had

reached the unwooded top of the hill. They drove the rebels back down the slope into the trees three times, but each time the rebels advanced again until the Loyalists, their commander, Major Patrick Ferguson killed, surrendered. The rebel militia, unused to professional military discipline and the laws of war, kept shooting at the Loyalists after the white flags were up. The rebel officers Shelby and Campbell, risked their lives by getting in front of their men to order them to cease fire.



This victory stalled Cornwallis's plans in the Carolinas long enough for General Greene to replace the defeated General Gates and force Cornwallis to finally retire into winter quarters at Yorktown, Virginia, where he was later besieged and defeated. So King's Mountain ranks high on the list of battles that can be argued to be turning points in the war.

Jack's dramatic reading of the rhetoric and eyewitness accounts of the campaign made us think we could almost hear the Rebel Yells.

Several questions to Jack concerned Delancey's Loyalist Rangers, who traveled by ship down from the Province of New York to reinforce Cornwallis.

Ambrose Richardson told us that a New York area museum omitted King's Mountain from its timeline of the war, while the Yorktown museum omits the Battle of Brooklyn! Are even museums still being run by Johnny Reb and Billy Yank?

BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

PLEASE CONTACT LYNNE SAGINAW AT lynneess@juno.com AND VOLUNTEER TO REVIEW A BOOK. YOU GET TO KEEP THE BOOK!

RULES FOR BOOK REVIEWERS:

1. Keep it under five minutes.
2. You must read your review within two meetings of Lynne giving you the book to review.
3. The Broadside editor must be given a copy of your review for summarizing in the next Broadside.
4. Lynne will not assign a book review before the meeting. All who attend a meeting will have a chance to volunteer.

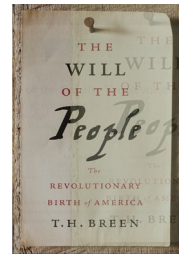
At the October meeting, Lynne will be seeking reviewers for the following three books:

- From Savas Beatie, *THE WINTER THAT WON THE WAR*. Phillip S. Greenwalt writes about Valley Forge. Part of Savas's Emerging Revolutionary War series.
- From Osprey Publishing, *BATTLE TACTICS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION*. Robbie Macniven. Tactics of all sides in the Revwar.
- *THE HOWE DYNASTY*, Julie Flavell. The cover art shows one of the Howe sisters playing chess with Dr. Franklin. Really happened!

Vic Miranda, on *THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE*, by T. H. Breen:

Breen's book tells us of the ordinary individuals who participated in protests and town hall meetings, enlisted in local militia, offered supplies to soldiers, and abandoned certain family and career

responsibilities for the revolution. Their Committees of Safety policed their neighborhoods, sometimes had to identify friends as traitors, and conducted judiciary procedures.



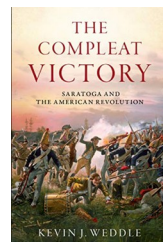
Breen uses primary sources – private correspondence, newspapers, journals and published sermons – to show why patriots and loyalists chose to act as they did.

Bob Crothers, on *THE COMPLETE VICTORY: SARATOGA AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION*, by Kevin Weddle:

This book, the latest of five or ten Amazon books on the Saratoga campaign, was published this year by Oxford University Press.

Colonel Weddle is retired after 28 years in the US Army as a combat engineering officer. He is a West Pointer, with a Princeton doctorate in History. He lectures at the Army War College at Carlisle, PA. He has written books on World War II and the Civil War. He has at least six videos on You Tube.

There will be no more complete versions of the Saratoga campaign. This book is encyclopedic. It boasts 379 pages of text and another 121 pages of appendices. Those include a chronology of the campaign, the order of battle, a "What Became of Them?" Section, and four-color plates of the generals. It has some very useful comments on military and political leadership.



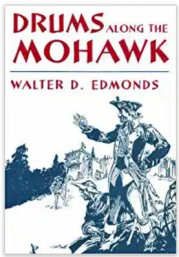
The book is comprehensive, but Bob has a few discontents. The maps are black and white, with small type and inadequate explanations.

Weddle blames bad planning, in London, months before the campaign, and bad co-ordination among Burgoyne, Howe and St. Leger, for the British loss.

Comprehensive, yes, but not much fun to read, says Bob. He still prefers Ketchum's 1997 account of the campaign for its sense of adventure and storytelling.

Your editor just came across his old, dried-out paperback of DRUMS ALONG THE MOHAWK, by Walter D. Edmonds, who also wrote THE CAPTIVE WOMEN (IN THE HANDS OF THE SENECA), CHAD HANNA, THE BOYDS OF BLACK RIVER, and ROME HAUL, which became the movie “The Farmer Takes a Wife.” It’s about the Erie Canal.

In his Author’s Note, Edmonds writes that only the top fourteen characters in the novel are invented.



All the rest are real people, actual historical persons, who did the things he writes about in the novel. They were the actual settlers and Oneidas and Loyalists who lived or fought in the Mohawk Valley in 1777. “As I learned more about them, it astonished me to see how a simple narration of their experiences carried the book along with only slight liberties with the truth.”

IN THE NEWS

KINGS MOUNTAIN ON VIDEO

One especially rapt attendee at our June zoom, listening to Jack Buchanan’s talk on the Revwar in the South, was Randell Jones, of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Mr. Jones sends us some links to videos on the southern campaign. One is called “The American Spirit, 1780.” It tells of the Overmountain Men who defeated Loyalist militia at Kings Mountain, South Carolina. The video is forty minutes long. The actors are re-enactors. You can find it at <https://www.randelljones.com/in-the-classroom>. Mr. Jones also wrote a book: BEFORE THEY WERE HEROES AT KINGS MOUNTAIN, published in 2011. “I am a champion of telling the 18th century story of the South,” says Jones.

TOURS AND RE-ENACTMENTS

Member Richard Melnick writes:

I took two of Fred Cookinham’s historical walking tours: “Evacuation Day,” in November 2020, and “The Surrender of Fort Washington,” in June, 2021.

Following the necessary Covid-19 safety protocols, Fred led fifteen people on his Evacuation Day tour. There was so much to see and learn about the evacuation of British and Hessian troops from New York City on November 25, 1783.

On the Fort Washington tour in June, I photographed the walk, the scenery, the hills and the history. Spoken word and images of what once was there really brought the battle to life as one without the other can seldom do. The tour mixes hard and harsh historic facts of war with an occasional tale of a local romance and the lives of the farmers of northern Manhattan.

After the tour, two Astoria friends and historians joined me for a nice little saunter across, fittingly, the George Washington Bridge.

I also attended the August 29, 2021 Battle of Brooklyn events at Green-wood Cemetery (it has a hyphen.). The main events were canceled due to rain. I ran into fellow Round Tabler Christopher Thuilot. We observed fascinating and historically accurate speeches, debates, crafts, and maneuvers of infantry and cavalry. A re-enactor of the 17th Light Dragoons demonstrated deft swordsmanship and answered numerous questions. A member of the Huntington Militia re-enactors demonstrated the steps of musket loading and firing.

The militiamen allowed me to fire a musket. No ball. One hundred grains of powder. The 1762 Brown Bess musket produced a definite kick. I felt ready to fix bayonet and bring battle to the nearby redcoats.

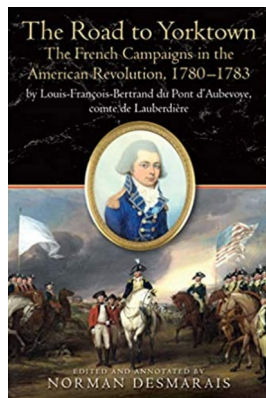
INSTITUTE OF H., A & E REPORTS

Peter Feinman, of the Institute of History, Archaeology and Education, sends out regular reports on historical activities statewide and nationwide. Lots of orgs are commemorating in different ways the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. New York State has passed a law changing the make-up of the NYS 250 commemoration Commission in ways that will not be revealed until the Governor signs it, maybe in January, and will probably be of interest only to those who want to claim that they are full

Commission members and not just consultants. Albany is also preparing a commemoration of the State's own Emancipation Day. However, Feinman finds that Virginia has done more about the 250th than the Empire State has. Feinman assures us that Annette Gordon-Reed, a famous Black historian, although participating in the "1619 Project," still finds a place in her interpretation for the Revolution.

OCTOBER SPEAKER

Norman Desmarais will speak on his book **THE ROAD TO YORKTOWN: THE FRENCH CAMPAIGNS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, 1780-1783**. Savas Beatie released the book in May. The author has translated and edited the wartime diary of the Comte de Lauberdière, nephew and aide-de-camp to General Rochambeau, commander of the French expeditionary force. The Comte gives a detailed description of the French army camp at Newport, Rhode Island, hence the local interest for Rhode Islanders like Desmarais. Many other diaries, Allied and Royalist, give good first-hand accounts of this war, but this is the only one that tells us exactly *where* the French fleet and army landed in Rhode Island. The diary shows us how General Rochambeau won over many Americans who had an instinctive suspicion of the French. After all, the French had been the enemy just seventeen years before, in the French and Indian war, and many other wars before that. And after. Our diarist also reports on how quickly Philadelphians adopted French fashions while he was there. This is this diary's very first appearance in print. Original sources in foreign languages are not just for professionals anymore!



Mr. Desmarais is Professor Emeritus at Providence College, Rhode Island. He is an active re-enactor. He is the

author of the multi-volume *Guide to the American Revolutionary War*. Six volumes by land and seven by sea. That's a book series you can really revere. And other books on the Rev. He and Madame Desmarais live in Lincoln, Rhode Island.

The ARRT is seeking a member willing to accept the position of Treasurer. The Treasurer is a member of the Board of Governors, and is responsible for all financial transactions and record keeping of the Round Table.

DEADLINE

Midnight, Tuesday, November 16 is your deadline for getting to the editor anything you wish to contribute to the December Broadside before the December meeting. A week after that, Tuesday, November 23, is when you can expect the December Broadside to appear in your email inbox.

Please send anything related to the American Revolution! We can even stretch that to include the French and Indian War and the War of 1812. Perhaps you have traveled to a historic site. Write about what you saw! Perhaps you have seen a movie connected with the Rev, such as "Washington Slept Here," with Jack Benny. (*Washington slept here with Jack Benny? That didn't come out right. Blame the editor.*) Tell us about it! As the New York Times says, "All the news that fits, we print!"

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

The next Round Table will meet on Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 7:30 pm. It will be a Zoom meeting.

Yr obdt svt,
Dr. David Jacobs, Chairman