

# BROADSIDE

The Newsletter of the  
American Revolution Round Table

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

April 2022

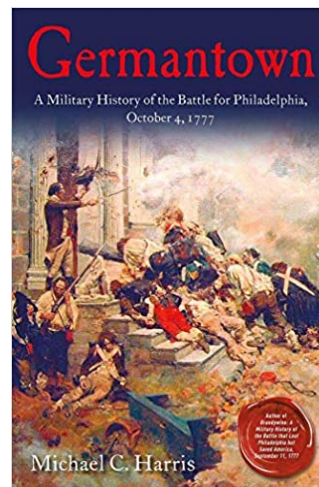
## FEBRUARY SPEAKER:

### MICHAEL HARRIS ON GERMANTOWN

Like a true historian, Mr. Harris reminded us of his place in the history of the Round Table: He was our last live speaker before the Covid shutdown and our switch to Zoom meetings (February 2020). On that occasion, Mr. Harris was speaking about his recent book on the Battle of Brandywine. This time, he continued to the next battle of the Philadelphia campaign, Germantown.

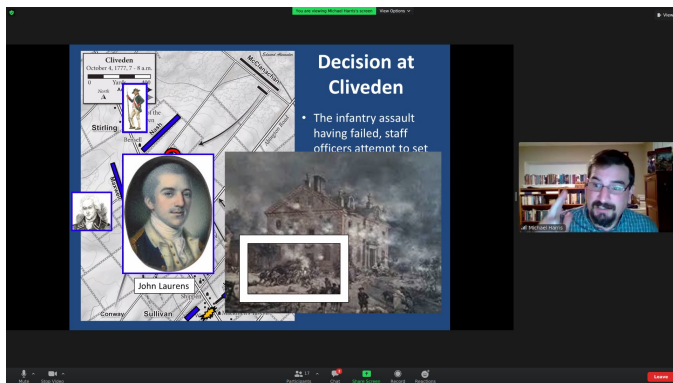
General Sir William Howe had landed his army at the head of Chesapeake Bay and had defeated Washington at Brandywine Creek, and this enabled him to occupy Philadelphia. But before he even had a chance to settle in, Washington's army came marching down the roads into the Philly suburb of Germantown, in a very foggy dawn attack. At first, the Americans kicked British butt. But then about

lot of firing in their rear and turned back toward the mansion, throwing away a chance for a great victory. The fog giveth and the fog taketh away: fog had saved the Continental Army at Brooklyn, but now it caused enough confusion to allow the British defenders of Philadelphia and Germantown to push the Continentals all the way back to their initial positions, miles away from the metropolis.



Harris corrected one oft-repeated myth about the battle: The lobsterbacks did not, in fact, get a cannon into the mansion. All they had was musketry. Since the Americans had the house surrounded, and were pummeling it with cannonballs from two or more sides, any ball that missed the house in the fog would hit the

American lines on the opposite side of the house, creating the impression of British cannon fire *from* the house.



sixty Redcoats took refuge in Cliveden, the Chew mansion, and used it as a fort in the American rear. The troops advancing toward Philadelphia heard a

A mystery came up in the Q & A. Member Jon Carriel asked: Why did General Howe move much of his army from New York City to Philadelphia at all, and why did he sail his ships up the Chesapeake and not the Delaware to get there? Harris's intriguing answer was that "I think that Howe did it to screw Burgoyne." General Howe had something against General "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne, so he refused to link up with him at Albany as Burgoyne came down from Montreal (which had been the agreed-upon plan). Instead, Howe took

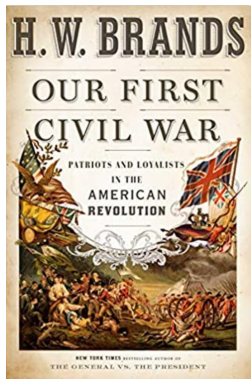
most of his army to Philadelphia, later giving Parliament the excuse that he wanted to capture Continental supply depots in that area. But he never attacked the depots, instead ensconcing himself in the biggest city in the Thirteen Colonies, while Burgoyne, left unsupported in the wild north, was defeated and captured. Why attack the Delaware River Valley by way of the Chesapeake and not straight up the Delaware River? Perhaps to create the illusion of a plan to attack the depots. But once ashore at Head of Elk, and once victorious at Brandywine, he had to shorten his supply lines to New York, and taking Philadelphia would accomplish that. And Brandywine opened the way to Philadelphia anyway, so why not take it? But was the Quaker City Howe's secret objective all along?

Michael C. Harris teaches high school history. BRANDYWINE was his first book and GERMANTOWN his second. He has managed and interpreted historic sites in Virginia, Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

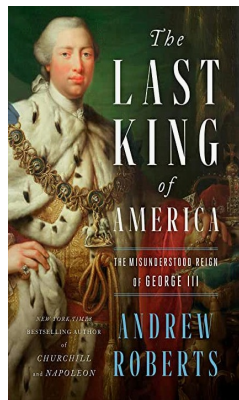
Sixteen attended the Zoom meeting.

## BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

Book review Editor Lynne Saginaw is still offering HERO OF TWO WORLDS: THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION, by Mike Duncan. New offers: OUR FIRST CIVIL WAR: PATRIOTS AND LOYALISTS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, by H. W. Brands, and THE LAST KING OF AMERICA:



THE MISUNDERSTOOD REIGN OF GEORGE III, by Andrew Roberts. Wait for the meeting! Lynne will announce two more titles currently in pre-publication.



Member John DiNuzzo reviewed the following book thusly:

### **THE HOWE DYNASTY**

Julie Flavell

Liveright Publishing, 2021

Review by John DiNuzzo ([jpgdinuzzo@gmail.com](mailto:jpgdinuzzo@gmail.com))

Author Julie Flavell (flah-VELL) spent her childhood in Massachusetts, earned a Bachelor's degree from Bryn Mawr College and holds a Ph. D. in History from University College London. Flavell was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 1999 and resides in Scotland. Her other books include **When London Was Capital of America** (2011), analyzing the British Empire leading up to the American Revolution, and **Britain and America Go to War** (co-editor, 2004), covering the period 1754-1814. Flavell's website is [www.julieflavell.com](http://www.julieflavell.com).

Subtitled *The Untold Story of a Military Family and the Women Behind Britain's Wars for America*, "Howe Dynasty" contains 366 pages, plus extensive footnotes, a full bibliography, and paintings of the featured principals.

The eight children—four males and four females—of Scrope 2<sup>nd</sup> Viscount Howe and Charlotte von Keilmansegg Howe to survive childhood span the years 1722 to 1819. Although the exploits of George and William Howe in the Army and Richard in the Navy fill 18<sup>th</sup> Century British military history tomes, Flavell makes the case early and repeatedly that Caroline Howe, their eldest sister, was truly the hub of Howe Family activity. It was Caroline who, while the brothers were engaged in battles far from home, advocated in royal circles for their ascensions in rank and recognition by Kings George II and George III. Within the family, Caroline's was "the voice of authority", maintaining her status among the Howes practically until her death in 1814 at age 92.

First-born among the males, George flourished early in life, seemingly destined for great

achievements. Already a member of the House of Commons through his family's influence, George first earned kudos at age 21 in the War of Austrian Succession (1745) for his bravery and decisiveness. He was killed 13 years later while a Brigadier General during the ill-fated British attack on the French at Ticonderoga. George was a vigorous leader on the battlefield, beloved by the rank-and-file soldier, and "considered the ideal of a British officer and a well-rounded gentleman, intelligent and a man of action".

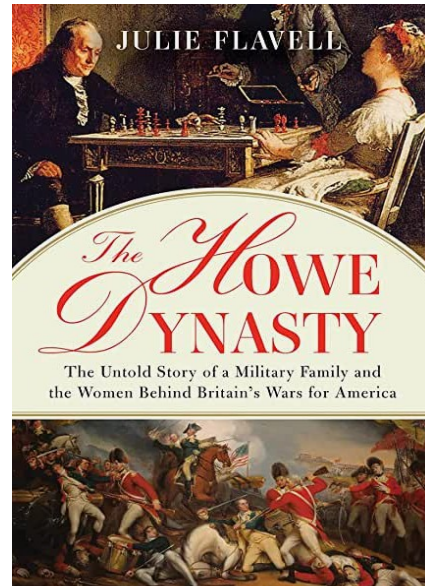
Richard, two years George's junior and deemed "the steadiest of the lot", left school at 10 for a Navy career. He was at times hindered by speech and language difficulties—"there was a disconnect between his intellect and his ability to communicate"—but Richard's skills as a tactician and his family's connections compensated for his interpersonal struggles. Captain Richard Howe's firing a broadside at a French warship off the coast of Newfoundland began the Seven Years' War at sea. By the end of that war in 1763, he was a Commodore.

Despite being "at the height of his military career... privately described by a brother officer as 'illiterate and indolent'", William Howe rose to the rank of Brigadier General when the Seven Years' War concluded with the Treaty of Paris. Assisting in his climb to prominence were the Howe ladies at home—William's mother ensured he would succeed George in Parliament after George was killed. William was fighting in America at the time, as was Richard, who was already a member of Parliament.

Thomas, the youngest brother who died of natural causes in 1771 at age 40, was the only one of the brothers who didn't gain fame in Britain and America from the Seven Years' War. He was, however, the fourth Howe brother to join, in 1768, the House of Commons.

The American Revolution, of course, provided the most historic showcase for the Howe Family. Before the open outbreak of hostilities between the British and their wavering American countrymen, Caroline Howe was the face of the Family's efforts to avoid war. Caroline initiated a series of chess games with the distinguished London visitor

Benjamin Franklin in 1774 and 1775, conducting secret negotiations (abetted, off-stage, by brothers Richard and William) with the celebrated American colonist in an attempt to prevent the conflict—and American independence. While her peacemaking efforts wouldn't bear fruit, and often put her friend Franklin in an awkward position, she continued to work behind the scenes in the early days of the Revolution to bring the fighting to a stop.



Richard Howe served as both Peace Commissioner and Navy Commander at the time open hostilities developed with the colonies. It was Richard who initiated a final attempt to broker a peace agreement on September 11, 1776

with Continental Congress representatives John Adams and Benjamin Franklin at Staten Island. The pessimism British political leaders held regarding these efforts proved well-founded, as the Americans would not negotiate without a recognition of their fledgling independence, then barely four months old.

William Howe served as British Army Commander in the colonies during the first two years of the Revolution. Indictments of William's leadership in the Revolution start as early as the Battle of Bunker Hill, during which he ordered "a mindless advance against the American entrenchments, and...saw his men slaughtered around him". It was said, as a result of this, "for the rest of his service in America, William...did not dare to attack the Americans head-on." William permitted Continental troops to return to their main defenses at Brooklyn after the British victory there in the Battle of Long Island (Aug. 1776). This allowed Washington to slip away to Manhattan under cover of darkness. "It was the best chance William would ever have of destroying the American Army". By the end of '76, "Britain



seemed to have sent its great army and warships to America to play a cat-and-mouse game that thus far had resulted in no definitive outcome”.

Ultimately, the Howes by 1777 “saw their status as a military family disintegrate, when the tide turned against Britain”. Both Richard and William were back in England by mid-year 1778. It was not until 1782 when, gratefully away from North America, Richard and William received additional military appointments and restored their sterling military reputations.

The book adopts a very pro-Howe tone, spending, for example, an entire chapter refuting William’s long-cited relationship during the Revolution with Mrs. Elizabeth Loring. Despite one aggravating error—multiple references to Fort Ticonderoga in 1755-58, when the French fort located there was named Fort Carillon—I found the book to be quite enjoyable as it convincingly makes the case that Caroline and her sisters were substantial parts of the Howe legacy.

Regarding any current works-in-progress, Flavell replied to me as follows in an email: “I am considering a sequel to my last book, When London Was Capital of America, on London during the American War of Independence.”

Your editor has recently read, and recommends, **INFAMOUS SCRIBBLERS: THE FOUNDING FATHERS AND THE ROWDY BEGINNINGS OF AMERICAN JOURNALISM**, by Eric Burns, 2006, entertaining and insightful, and **BATTLE TACTICS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**, by Robbie MacNiven, published in 2021. I reviewed this book at the February Round Table. This is a short, richly illustrated, paperback divided into chapters on British, Continental, German and French wartime practices and organization. The illustrator, Adam Hook, shows what we would see if we were in a helicopter hovering over one of these armies as it maneuvered into a battle line.

One line that stood out was: “though there is some evidence...”. This shows me that I am safe in the hands of an expert who has read all the sources and reports the minority theories along with the majority

theories. Only 61 pages. A fact-packed briefing rather than a discourse.

## IN THE NEWS

For Whom the Bell Rolls  
(Headline borrowed from the AP/NY POST)  
—Lynne Saginaw

Early in March many of us Revolutionaries saw news reports of a 1,000-pound bronze church bell which completed a 6,000-mile round trip from Massachusetts to California and back. The bell was manufactured in Canton, Mass. by Joseph Warren Revere, son of the famed patriot, in 1834. Joseph Revere was following in his father’s footsteps.



In addition to being an ardent patriot, the senior Revere was also a noted silversmith and engraver.

Further, he was interested in other forms of metal manufacturing.

In 1787, he built a brass and iron foundry on the corner of Lynn

and Foster Streets in the North End of Boston. From small items he went on to produce cannon and bells.

He taught himself to work copper, and by 1800, he purchased and renovated a former iron mill in Canton, MA. In 1804, he handed day-to-day involvement in the Canton mill to his son Joseph. Paul Revere retired from the business in 1811 (aged 76). He died in 1818.

Between 1796 and 1843, the Revere foundries cast over 900 bells, several of which are still in service. One of the heaviest, a 1,000 pounder was sent by oxcart to a church in Ohio, where it performed for

over a hundred years. When the property was sold in 1984, the agent who brokered the sale rescued the bell.

Upon retirement, she and her husband moved with the bell to California where they would ring it every Fourth of July. When she died, her son and daughter stored the bell. They researched and discovered where the bell was from, and decided to donate it to the museum established on the site of the Canton foundry.

The bell arrived by truck (no oxcarts available, we suppose) in February, and will reside with several others for the public to enjoy. Learn more about it at <https://paulreveremuseum.org>.

## NEW VISITOR CENTER AT LAKE GEORGE

—John DiNuzzo

ARRT-NY member John DiNuzzo serves as President of the Board of Trustees for the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, a not-for-profit “friends” group supporting the public park in the Southern Adirondacks region that was the site of several battles during both the American Revolution and the French and Indian War. (Several other ARRT-NY members are also part of the “Alliance”.)

John is pleased to announce that the long-awaited new Visitor Interpretive Center at the Park will have its grand opening on Wednesday, May 25, and operate from May to October each year. The VIC will contain artifacts unearthed from the site through a series of archaeological explorations performed over the past 20 years, as well as unique exhibits of uniforms, scale-model forts, weaponry and paintings that represent the Lake George Region’s significance during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

Among the noteworthy events that occurred on the grounds of the Battlefield Park were the Battle of Lake George (1755); the massacre of British and provincial soldiers following the fall of Fort William Henry (1757); the launch of unsuccessful (1758) and successful (1759) British attacks on the French at Ticonderoga; the construction of Fort

George (1759); the lodging of Henry Knox during his transport of artillery from Ticonderoga to Boston (1775); the largest Continental Army smallpox hospital (1776); and Christopher Carleton’s raid and burning of the Continental fort (1780).

For more information on the Visitor Center or about joining the Lake George Battlefield Park Alliance, go to the organization’s website ([www.lakegeorgebattlefield.org](http://www.lakegeorgebattlefield.org)) or contact John ([jpgdinuzzo@gmail.com](mailto:jpgdinuzzo@gmail.com)).

## WOOD VS. WOODY

Peter Feinman sends out a regular blog called “The State of American History” under the banner of IHARE: the Institute of History, Archaeology and Education. In his November 29, 2021 blog, Feinman writes an entertaining piece called “The Thrilla in Manila” about the October 23 debate between Gordon Wood, of Brown University, and Woody Holton, of the University of South Carolina on the “1619 Project. The debate was held at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Apparently the debate got a bit raucous, or at least the audience did. The topic of discussion got sidetracked into accusations from Holton that Wood was connected somehow with the forces of reaction and Trumpism to suppress Holton’s access to the public for his findings. But the issue was supposed to be his contention that slavery was either THE reason, or at least A reason for Congress declaring independence.

Christian McBurney, our December, 2020 speaker, has written an article for the [Journal of the American Revolution, September 14, 2020](#), on the great strides against slavery made by the revolutionary generation. And as for the recent claim that slaveholding members of the Continental Congress voted for independence to escape a looming UK law outlawing slavery, McBurney points out that there was no significant abolitionist movement in Britain till 1787, and the British government before that blocked the efforts of Virginia and other provinces to limit the slave trade,

because that trade was too profitable *to Britain* for them to be willing to limit it, let alone abolish it.

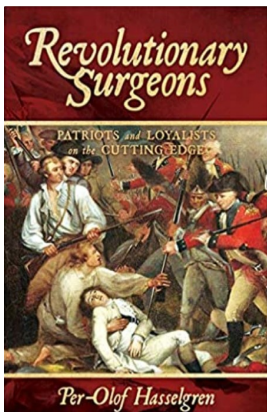
## ARRT WRITERS' DATABASE

Member Richard Melnick would like all fellow ARRT members who have written anything on the Rev to send their work, or at least a link thereto, to the Broadside for inclusion in a database, so we can all promote each others' writings.

## APRIL SPEAKER

Our April speaker, zooming in from Boston, will be Dr. Per-Olof Hasselgren MD, discussing his new book **REVOLUTIONARY SURGEONS: PATRIOTS AND LOYALISTS ON THE CUTTING EDGE**.

Dr. Hasselgren is a surgeon, scientist and author. He is a member of the Department of Surgery of Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital, Boston. He is the George H. A. Clowes Distinguished Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School.



The good doctor reminds us that four of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence were physicians. There were 22 surgeons among the members of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress in its 1774 and '75 sessions. The 18<sup>th</sup> century saw dramatic advances in medicine. Dr. Joseph Warren, if he had not been killed in

action at Bunker Hill, might have been asked to become Commander in Chief of the Continental Army. George Washington might not have become President if not for the influence and intervention of surgeons. The smallpox epidemics of the 18<sup>th</sup> century provide lessons relevant to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Our speaker's book was published in October by Knox Press, which is named after General Henry Knox, a Boston bookseller who became General Washington's artillery chief. It specializes in history. It is an imprint of Permuted Press, of Nashville and New York, which was founded only in 2004. Don't confuse it with Westminster John Knox Press of Louisville, a Christian publishing firm.

## DEADLINE

Midnight, Tuesday, May 17 (Norwegian Constitution Day) is the deadline for submissions for the June Broadside. Send your contributions to the Editor of the Broadside, Fred Cookinham, at [fcookinham@juno.com](mailto:fcookinham@juno.com). Send us your tired, your poor, your news items related to the Rev, reports of visits to historic sites, recipes, anything of interest to this group! Before the end of May, you should find the Broadside in your email inbox. Then, a fortnight after that, will be the June Round Table.

## AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

The April Round Table will meet virtually, at 7:30 pm, Tuesday, April 5. The Zoom link is in the email you got from Jon Carriel that also contains the link to this Broadside. We hope that the June, or at least the October, Round Table may be live.

Yr most obdt svt,  
Dr. David W. Jacobs