

# BROADSIDE

The Newsletter of the  
American Revolution Round Table  
<http://www.arrrt-ny.org>

April 2021

FEBRUARY SPEAKER

## MILITIA AMBUSHED THE REDCOATS AFTER LEXINGTON, AND CONQUERED

Our February main speaker was Glenn F. Williams, PhD. Don't call him "Professor;" he does not like it. He does not mind being called "GW," though. Dr. Williams is a leading authority on American military history, and a retired Infantry officer. He is associated with the US Army Center of Military History at Fort McNair, Washington.

He is the author of several books, including YEAR OF THE HANGMAN, about the US-Iroquois war, and DUNMORE'S WAR.

The subject of last night's talk was a chapter that GW contributed to the 2020 book THE 10 KEY CAMPAIGNS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. The chapter is called "Let It Begin Here." Exposing his own chapter title as apocryphal was the first of many surprises Dr. Williams treated us to in his talk. Captain John Parker of the Lexington militia may not have really said the famous words attributed to him – seventy years later.

Militia? Don't you mean Minutemen? No, there were no Minutemen at Lexington. They were ordinary militia. Another surprise. The Minutemen were an elite militia unit, numbering about one quarter of the total militia. They were paid, for one thing, by the townships. They were better trained

than the ordinary militia. They may even have been better trained than some of the Redcoats they fought. They were more political, and more radical. They were volunteers. Ordinary militia did not volunteer, they were drafted. When an able-bodied boy turned 16, he automatically became liable for militia duty. The American fighters at Concord were about half ordinary militia and half Minutemen. Some of the militia were veterans of the French and Indian War. They knew how to march and fight.

Did the Redcoats march back to Boston while the Minutemen shot at them? No, the Redcoats had flankers fighting broken formation skirmishes with the militia all the way.



Did Paul Revere yell "The British are coming?" No, he would not have called them the British. He would have called them the Ministerial Army.

Dr. Williams criticized a colleague for writing about a cannon firing a shell or a howitzer firing a ball. Other way around.

"No taxation without representation" did not mean that Americans wanted to have MPs representing them in Parliament. They just did not want internal

taxes imposed on them by Parliament. They were content to be taxed by their own provincial Assemblymen. One MP for each colony in the House of Commons would not have had much weight anyway. They would have numbered thirteen out of two or three hundred members of the House of Commons. Each colony had its own miniature Parliament, with the Governor playing the role of King, the Governor's Council the House of Lords, and the Assembly Commons.

The new taxes were not to pay for the Seven Years' War (French and Indian). They were to pay for the future defense of the colonies.

The Boston Massacre happened on the same day – March 5, 1770 – that Parliament repealed the Townsend Acts.

It was Cromwell who gave Englishmen their fear of a standing army, because he used his army to oppress the population.

Whigs in Parliament were different from Whigs in America. Not as radical. They dominated Parliament.

Dr. Williams showed slides, which worked fine. The last slide read SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION over pictures of the covers of his two previous books. Everyone found his presentation well-organized, fast-paced and full of fun facts with which to amaze our friends.

The meeting ended at 9:05. We had 25 attendees.

## BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

Before the main speaker spoke last night, Chairman Dave introduced member Stephen Weiner, who read us his review of *GEORGE WASHINGTON'S NEMESIS*, by Christian M. McBurney (Round Table speaker: Feb. 2013, Oct. 2015, June 2018, and Dec. 2020).

Stephen, himself an attorney, said that McBurney, ditto, has written a prosecutor's brief against General Charles Lee as to his treason: Lee, captured

by the British, wrote them a memo showing how best to defeat the Yankees. Stephen finds McBurney's case persuasive. But our reviewer thinks the book should be called "George Washington's Rival" rather than "nemesis." Nemesis was the Greek goddess of retributive justice.

While the author finds Lee guilty of treason in the first half of the book, he is somewhat sympathetic to Lee in the second half, finding his court martial conviction unjustified.



Stephen recommends that before you read this book, you read *FATAL SUNDAY*, by Mark Edward Lender and Garry Wheeler Stone, for a more complete account of the battle, because that is the reason for the court martial of Lee.

After the Monmouth battle, Lee got into trouble for publicly criticizing General Washington. The Commander in Chief warned Lee about "speaking freely" with his criticism. Lee did not heed this warning.

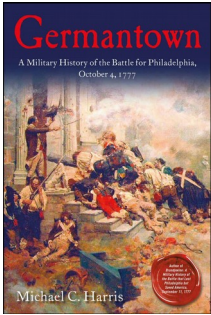
McBurney decides: No, Lee was not guilty of disobeying orders, no, he was not guilty of conducting a disorderly retreat, but yes, he was guilty of disrespecting the Commander in Chief. Lee could also be faulted for failing to keep General Washington informed of the fluid developments on the battlefield.

After being suspended from the army for one year, and then resigning from the army, Lee continued to publicly criticize Washington, and then Congress after it backed Washington on his suspension of Lee.

Member Fred Cookinham reviewed *A HANDSOME FLOGGING*, by William R. Griffith IV. This short book tells, efficiently, the story of the Battle of Monmouth, and gives very thorough driving and walking directions for anyone wishing to drive to the battlefield from both the British and the American approaches. Pictures and maps lay the

scene out so well that the visitor to the battle site will feel like he was there on June 28, 1778.

## IN THE NEWS

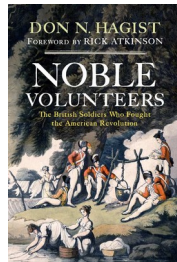


Book Review Editrix Lynne Saginaw offered two new books for review. **GERMANTOWN: A MILITARY HISTORY OF THE BATTLE FOR PHILADELPHIA, OCTOBER 4, 1777**, by Michael C. Harris, found no takers when offered. But Fred Cookinham volunteered to review **FIRST PRINCIPLES: WHAT AMERICA'S FOUNDERS LEARNED FROM THE GREEKS AND ROMANS AND HOW THAT SHAPED OUR COUNTRY**, by Thomas E. Ricks.

### WE NEED A VOLUNTEER TO REVIEW THE GERMANTOWN BOOK!! YOU VILL ENJOY IT!!!

Lynne has received two more books from publishers. Lynne will mail you one and you may keep it if you promise to review it for an upcoming Round Table! They are:

**NOBLE VOLUNTEERS: THE BRITISH SOLDIERS WHO FOUGHT IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**, by Don N. Hagist. Westholme Publishing, December 2020.



and

**THE COMPLEAT VICTORY: SARATOGA AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**, by Kevin J. Weddle. February 2021. Part of the "Pivotal Moments in American History" series published by the Oxford University Press.

PLEASE CONTACT LYNNE SAGINAW AT [lynneess@juno.com](mailto:lynneess@juno.com) AND VOLUNTEER TO REVIEW A BOOK. WHEN READING YOUR REVIEW AT THE ZOOM MEETING, PLEASE KEEP IT UNDER FIVE MINUTES. AND YOU GET TO KEEP THE BOOK!!

The Congress of American Revolution Round Tables is still scheduled for the fall, Covid permitting. It will be hosted by the George Washington ARRT in Washington DC. It will be held at the National Museum of the US Army at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Go to [www.thenmusa.org](http://www.thenmusa.org).

**J'ACCUSE!** – In November 2020, the New York Almanack website reviewed **ENEMIES OF THE STATE: REDISCOVERING THE PATRIOT-LOYALIST STRUGGLE IN REVOLUTIONARY NEW YORK**, a collection of the New York State Archives and available at their website. The collection makes easily available 400 pages of indictments of Loyalists by courts in the Patriot-held areas of the state, and court minutes of the trials of those charged with treason to the Crown in court in occupied New York City. The New York State Archives got a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the National Parks Service to conserve and digitize these court records. The DAR also donated funds to this end. These court records are often the only surviving documentation of marginalized persons in the revolutionary era.

**WHAT'S UP, DOC?** – Polly Guerin, who never misses a public cultural event, reports a lecture hosted jointly on February 2 by Fraunces Tavern Museum® and Keeler Tavern Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut on the subject of carrots.

Carrots were important in the colonial diet. Housewives put up carrot jam and served carrot pudding. Sam Fraunces featured carrot cake on his menu, so His Excellency might have had some. Those Fraunces recipes have themselves been preserved. Educators at the two tavern museums hosted this "Tavern Tastings Program." It is not clear how a tasting works over Zoom.

**HALL OF FAME** – The March 2021 issue of *The Atlantic Magazine* features an article by Danielle Allen: "A Forgotten Black Founding Father: Why I've Made It My Mission To Teach Others About Prince Hall." This is part of The Atlantic's "Inheritance" series on American history and Black

life. Prince Hall, of Boston, was a freed slave. He was the first to invoke the Declaration of Independence against slavery, just seven months after the Declaration was made public, in a petition to the Massachusetts General Court (legislature).

Fraunces Tavern Museum® will once again sponsor its “A Rebellious Brew: New York’s Tea Party of 1774” walking tour on Saturday and Sunday, April 24 and 25, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The museum had to cancel 2020’s Tea Party tour because of Covid, but their annual Evacuation Day tour was successfully executed in November, and the Tea Party is on! Go to [www.frauncestavernmuseum.org](http://www.frauncestavernmuseum.org) for reservations. And I don’t have to tell you who the tour guide will be!

A MAN – A PLAN – A CANAL – PANAMA! – Treasurer-Secretary Jon Carriel is retiring to Panama City. But through the miracle of electronics, Jon will continue to carry out his treasurer duties, except that any checks will be mailed to Chairman Dave Jacobs.

**BARRY LEWIS, NYC HISTORIAN, DIES**  
by Lynne Saginaw

Those devoted to the history of the arts in America were grieved to learn of the death on January 12, 2021, at 75, of architectural historian Barry Lewis. An extraordinarily popular lecturer and author, Barry Lewis was also noted for his frequent media appearances. You might remember the “Walking Tours of New York City” with David Hartman, 1998-2004, on PBS.



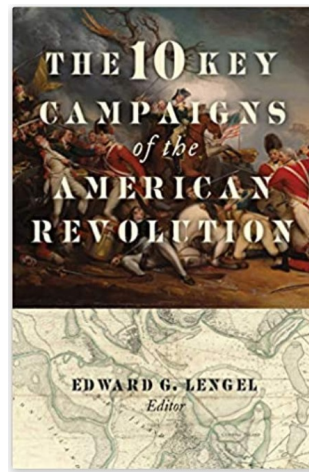
I was privileged to attend his lecture on colonial domestic architecture at the New-York Historical Society in 2019. He was knowledgeable, witty, friendly, and generous with his time. Scholarship has lost a champion, New York a great friend.

## APRIL SPEAKER

Mark Lender will be our April speaker. He addressed us once before, in December of 2018 (not February 2019, as mistakenly reported here last ish). He will be speaking this time on “The Middle Atlantic Campaign.”



That means, mainly, the Battle of Monmouth, June 28, 1778. As with Glenn F. Williams in February, speaking on Lexington and Concord, and as with our June speaker, Jack Buchanan on the southern campaign, our speaker is a contributor to the 2020 book *THE 10 KEY CAMPAIGNS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION*. The book’s editor, Edward G. Lengel, tells us, in his Editorial Note,



that no one had ever written a “serious” study of the Monmouth battle before Lender and Garry Wheeler Stone published *FATAL SUNDAY* in 2017. Lender’s lecture title suggests that we will get more than just a recounting of one battle. His topic will be the wider campaign, especially the “spin” put on the campaign by master

retail politician General George Washington and his partisans, including young Alexander Hamilton.

## DEADLINE

Tuesday, June 1 will see our next Zoom meeting after April 6, so your Broadside should appear the usual two weeks before that, Tuesday, May 18, and that means that one week before that, midnight, Tuesday, May 11, will be your deadline if you wish to send anything to your grateful editor, Fred Cookinham, for inclusion in the June Broadside. Please do send something! Anything having even remotely to do with the American Revolution! Book reviews, news of someone digging up a cannonball, DNA evidence of someone fathering someone,

Martha Washington's recipes, anything! You will see your name in print, and who doesn't love that?

## AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN



On Tuesday, June 1, the Round Table will Zoom its way into your very hearth and home at the usual time of 7:30.

Board members will Zoom the usual semi-annual meeting at 6:45 p.m., before the “dinner” meeting.

Your most obdt. Svt.,

Dr. David W. Jacobs

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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.arrt-ny.org](http://www.arrt-ny.org).