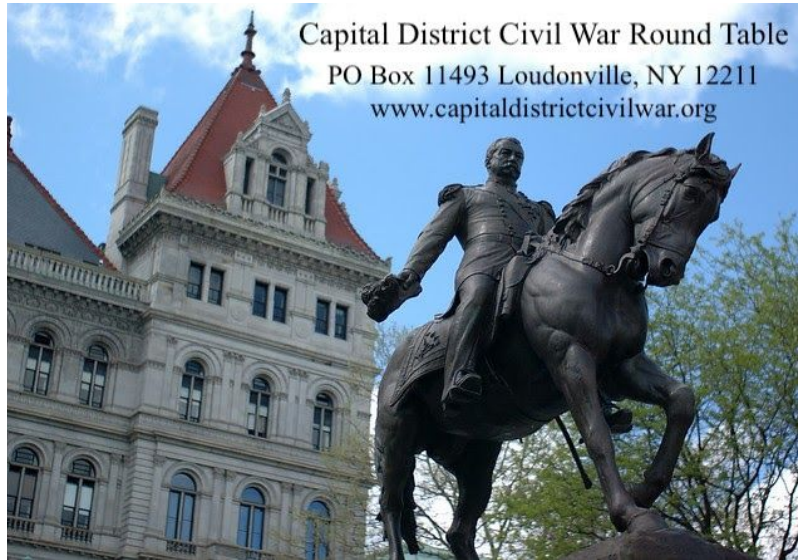


The Dispatch

Volume 37, Number 8

December 2020



The Northernmost Land Action of the Civil War: the Confederate Raid on St. Albans, Vermont



“The Suspense Thriller of the Year!” 1954’s Hollywood account of the historic St. Albans Raid
<https://myfavoritewesterns.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/the-raid-1954-posters.jpg>

DECEMBER MEETING

Friday, December 11, 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING USING ZOOM

BOB O'BRIEN
St. Albans Raid

Business Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Presentation	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Questions & Answers	8:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Bob O'Brien was born and raised in New Haven, CT. He graduated from Saint Michael's College in Colchester, VT with a B.A. degree in 1969. He then graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Law in 1973 and was admitted to the Connecticut Bar that year. He worked for over 33 years as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Judicial District of New Haven; the last 23 years as the Supervisory Attorney in that office's Career Criminal Division. He retired in May of 2011.

Bob is an Advisory Board member of the South Central Connecticut Civil War Roundtable and speaks there regularly as well as at other area round tables and historical societies.

On the afternoon of October 19, 1864 the citizens of St. Albans, Vermont, near the Canadian border, were shocked to find themselves facing a band of armed Confederate soldiers. The Confederate "invasion" of Saint Albans would constitute the northernmost land action of the Civil War. The raiders had infiltrated St. Albans over

the previous week. They divided into small groups to rob banks, herd the townspeople onto the town green to prevent an alarm, and steal horses for their escape. Heading off to the Canadian border they were pursued by a hastily organized posse.

ZOOM DIRECTIONS

1) **Download** Zoom program from Internet at: <https://zoom.us/download>

2) Once in Zoom, **create** a username and password **OR log in** through other methods such as your Facebook account username and password.

3) On the Zoom main page, you will see four icons. To join a scheduled meeting, click **"Join"** in the upper right side. Enter the meeting ID number and passcode. **Meeting ID: 836 9620 4119**
Passcode: 491792

4) Your computer **camera** will turn on. A pop-up box appears and asks if you want to join with **computer audio**. Click the blue **"Join"** icon.

5) Click the **"mute"** button seen on the left side of the bottom black bar so a slash appears across the microphone.

Please keep your microphone **MUTED** during the presentation to eliminate interruptions of background noise.

To Activate the Chat Feature:

1) Move your mouse cursor to the bottom black bar of the video screen. Click **"chat"** (comic word bubble) and the vertical chat box appears.

2) Type your question.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Jan. 8: Ken Aslakson will speak on slavery and the causes of secession and war.

Feb. 12: Steve Phan's presentation will be on the Civil War defenses of Washington, D.C.

March 12: Chris Gwinn, who was scheduled to speak last March, will speak on Union and Confederate reflections of the battle of Gettysburg.

DUES, DUES, DUES

The Round Table membership year starts January 1. The basic dues level is \$35, and members also have the option to make donations to the Operating and Preservation Accounts. The membership form is included in this newsletter. Payments can be made through the PayPal link on the Round Table's website or mailed to the Round Table's P.O. Box.

THANK YOU, MEMBERS

The Executive Board would like to thank the following people for their support and donations to the Preservation Fund: Matt George, Mike Phelan, Stephen McErleane, Dean Long and Luanne Whitbeck.

CDCWRT'S 2021 ELECTIONS

The election will be held at the January 8 meeting, and any member in good standing (dues paid) may be nominated from the floor for any board position.

The current officers have agreed to run for their current positions for another one-year term. We have one At-Large position open.

LEGAL FALLOUT FROM THE ST. ALBANS ROBBERY

by Rosemary Nichols

On Oct. 19, 1864, about 25 Confederate soldiers based in Canada raided the town of St. Albans, Vt., killed one man, robbed three banks, and then retreated to Canadian territory. A U.S. posse pursued the raiders and captured several of them, but was forced to surrender them to the Canadian authorities. On October 21 fourteen of the Confederates were arrested by the Canadians.

The jailed Confederates appeared in Montreal Police Court on Nov. 2 where a battery of respected lawyers were ready to do battle over extradition of the robbers. All 14 men were called to the stand to testify. All were recognized by witnesses from St. Albans. Then, a month-long recess was granted for trial preparation.

A hearing was held on Dec. 13 during which Judge Charles J. Coursol said his court lacked jurisdiction over the matter. The Canadian court ruled that because the raiders were soldiers under military orders, even though out of uniform, officially neutral Canada could not extradite them. The raiders were freed.

Although the Canadian government reimbursed the three plundered banks, the release of the raiders led to strong

protests in the United States. Consequently, five of the raiders were rearrested and remained in custody for a time for violating Canadian neutrality. They were still in custody at war's end.

The five rebels had been released by Canadian officials in April 1865, but their leader, Bennett Henderson Young, was again charged, this time for an alleged violation of British neutrality laws. He was eager to clear his name, but the Civil War was now over and that charge was dismissed in November 1865.

In 1872 a claims commission established under the Anglo-American Treaty of Washington (1871) permitting extradition of criminals who had fled across the border in either direction ruled against further American claims to compensation. Though Canada had reimbursed the banks, \$87,000 of the stolen funds was never found.

The fact that planning for the St. Albans Raid had taken place in Canada became an embarrassment to the British government during and after the raiders' trials. The Canadian Parliament eventually passed laws that, had they been enacted before the Civil War, would have banned all Confederate officials and soldiers from the country.

For more about the raid and its aftermath, see *The St. Albans Raid: Confederate Attack on Vermont* (2014). Authored by Michelle Arnosky Sherburne, this book is part of the 53 book Civil War Sesquicentennial series.

BOARD UPDATES

The Executive Board met via Zoom on November 16. The Operating Account has \$2,727.21. The Preservation Account has \$1,953.46.

The Board has been pleased with the number of people who join our Zoom presentation meetings or watch the recorded video on our Facebook page. Members are welcomed and encouraged to share meeting information with interested friends.

We are looking for a new person to join the Executive Board as an At-Large member. Contact Erin Baillargeon through the Round Table's email (cdcwrt@hotmail.com) if you have questions or would like to serve.

BUFORD'S VIEW

by Matt George

I'm currently in the middle of reading three books, each a different genre. One book on my night table is "The Future of Humanity" (2018) by Michio Kaku. Topics include terraforming Mars, interstellar travel, immortality and our destiny beyond earth. Kaku is a professor of theoretical physics at the City University of New York. The second book is a mystery "The Seagull" (2017) by Ann Cleeves. The Cleeves murder mysteries are the basis for the British hit TV series "Vera" on P.B.S. I first saw this show while visiting my cousins on a trip to the Gettysburg battlefield. I've been a fan ever since. The third book relates to the Civil War.

(continued on page 7)



CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 11493 Loudonville, NY 12211
www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org

Membership Form 2021 Calendar Year

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Newsletter Preference: Email _____ OR Copy Mailed to Home _____

Membership Dues \$35
(All dues go into the Operating Account to pay for newsletters,
program expenses, and use of the meeting space)

Additional Donation for the Operating Account _____

Donation for the Preservation Account _____
(Preservation money pays for donations to preserve historic
sites/lands, rental of the storage shed, and the Round Table's
insurance)

Total: _____

Please mail your payment to: CDCWRT
P.O. Box 11493
Loudonville, NY 12211-0493

- * Early payments will be held and deposited in January.
- * Credit/Debit card payments can be made through the CDCWRT website.

In the area of Civil War history I've begun a new book called "Lincoln Takes Command – The Campaign to Seize Norfolk and the Destruction of the CSS Virginia" by Steve Norder. Shortly after the epic draw between the *Monitor* and the *Virginia*, an American President assumed control of land and sea forces to act as military commander. It was the first and last time that this has happened in our history. "From May 5 to May 12, 1862, Lincoln was not only the commander in chief of United States forces, but, a field commander directing a campaign that he hoped would help bring the war closer to an end." His actions helped recapture Norfolk and the Gosport Navy Yard, but also hastened the eventual destruction of the Virginia.

Norder has written a number of articles on the Civil War and is a member of the Atlanta Civil war Round table. Of local interest, the military Governor of Norfolk was Egbert Viele. Long time members of the Round table might remember Viele's unique (strange) mausoleum from our two visits to the West Point Cemetery. The stories connected with his resting place and reincarnation beliefs are simply amazing. Viele was from Waterford, New York.

In honor of the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment (ratified August 18, 1920) I was hoping to schedule a series of three speakers in the fall of 2021 devoted to women in the Civil

War. I have one speaker confirmed in September, one pending in October (if her book is published by then), and I am still working on a couple of possibilities for November. The topic in September will be a return visit to the Spangler Farm when Ron Kirkwood will discuss the role of women at the 11th Corps Field Hospital.

Finally, as a result of a Civil War Trust Conference tour of the Battle of Richmond, Kentucky battlefield, I still receive the Newsletter of the Battle of Richmond Association. In the Fall/Winter edition they had a short article on an interesting bit of Civil War Trivia. James J. LaSueur was a private in Co. H of the 2nd Tennessee Cavalry. During the Battle of Richmond he was wounded, captured, and exchanged. He survived and many years later married and raised a family (a son and a daughter). The son, Thomas, abandoned the family and disappeared. The daughter, originally named Lucille, grew up and went to Hollywood and became a star. Of course, she had to change her name. The first name chosen in a contest was Joan Arden but that name was taken. Another name was picked. This one stuck. What was her name? She died in 1977. The first to contact me (JBuford63@aol.com) with her correct name I'll send them a free Civil War book.

**CDCWRT
P.O. BOX 11493
LOUDONVILLE, NY 12211**

Created in 1984, the Capital District Civil War Round Table is an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held monthly in various locations in the Capital District. This newsletter is published eleven times per year. Annual dues are \$35. The purpose of the organization is to promote, educate, and further stimulate interest in, and discussion of, all aspects of the Civil War period.

Contact the Capital District Civil War Round Table through
our website: www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org
or email: cdcwrt@hotmail.com

THE OFFICERS

President	Erin Baillargeon	Vice-President	Nick Thony
Treasurer	Steve Muller	Secretary	Rosemary Nichols
At-Large	J.J. Jennings	At-Large	Mark Koziol
At-Large	(open)		

THE NONCOMS

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Refreshments	Dean Long and Luanne Whitbeck		
Webmaster			
Education	Matt George		
Newsletter	Rosemary Nichols and Erin Baillargeon		