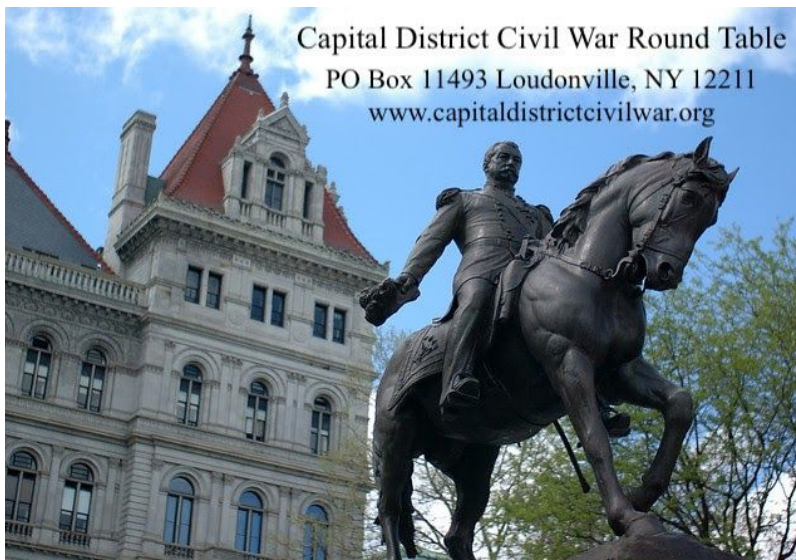


The Dispatch

Volume 38, Number 1

January 2021



**CDCWRT DONATIONS NOW TOTAL
\$2,124,447.76
IN ACTUAL AND MATCHING FUNDS**

2020 Donations

**\$900 to the American Battlefield Trust to preserve
land at Bristoe Station (a \$593 to \$1 match)**

**\$100 to the American Battlefield Trust in
remembrance of Ed Bearss**

**WE HAVE DONATED \$220,595.26 IN ACTUAL FUNDS
OVER THE PAST THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS.**

JANUARY MEETING

Friday, January 8, 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING USING ZOOM

KEN ASLAKSON

Slavery and the Causes of Secession

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

Kenneth Aslakson is an Associate Professor of History and the American Studies Program Director at Union College. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Southwestern University, and a Ph.D. and J.D. from the University of Texas at Austin.

Ken is a social and cultural historian with a focus on African-American and early-American history. He teaches African-American history, Southern history, Constitutional history (with a focus on issues of race), the United States and the Caribbean in the age of revolution, the Atlantic world, and the history of slavery.

His interest in the intersection of law and culture, especially as it impacts the life of African-Americans in the United States and shapes our understandings and perceptions of race and gender. His specific focus so far has been on the use of the New Orleans court system by the city's free people of color in the two decades straddling the Louisiana Purchase of 1803.

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: 839 2397 2618**
Passcode: 349234
- 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.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

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.

April 9: Gary Morgan will present on “Dowd” of the 97th NY and the Raiders at Andersonville

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: Dean Long, Luanne Whitbeck, Matt George, and Steve McErleane.

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.

THE NULLIFICATION CRISIS from the American Battlefield Trust

Thirty years before the Civil War broke out, disunion appeared to be on the horizon with the Nullification Crisis. What started as a debate over the Tariff of Abominations soon morphed into

debates over state and federal sovereignty and liberty and disunion. These debates transformed into a national crisis when South Carolina threatened secession, an explicit threat of disunion. However, the United States narrowly avoided a civil war through compromise and the reaffirmation of executive authority.

Since 1816, the United States used tariffs to protect American industry against foreign competition. Protective tariffs formed the foundation of Henry Clay's American System which served as the main economic policy of the United States until President Andrew Jackson's election. The first tariff passed was relatively low, but it progressively rose each year until 1828, with what became known as the Tariff of Abominations. Representative Silas Wright, an ally of Jackson, first proposed this tariff in 1828 as a ploy to help Old Hickory's presidential campaign. The tariff raised duties to between 30-50% on certain raw materials, which protected the Mid-Atlantic and western states which produced these raw materials, but left southern states—and its cotton and tobacco industry—unprotected. In retaliation for the high tariff, foreign markets blocked the sale of American cotton, the South's chief export and the cornerstone of their economy which caused economic issues in the South. Despite the South's fervent objection to this tariff, Jackson maintained southern support for his campaign and by backing this tariff garnered support from states such as Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Kentucky, and Missouri, which proved to be vital in his campaign and helped him win the presidency. In 1828, Jackson's soon to be Vice President and ally John C.

Calhoun of South Carolina wrote an anonymously published pamphlet titled "Exposition and Protest," which passionately criticized the tariff and laid the groundwork for nullification theory.

Despite southern objections, the tariff passed and went largely forgotten in American consciousness until an exchange on the Senate floor between South Carolinian Senator Robert Hayne and Massachusetts Senator Daniel Webster in January 1830 reopened the debate. Hayne argued that state sovereignty permitted the nullification of federal rulings when those rulings infringed on states' rights, going so far as to argue for secession in order to preserve state and personal liberty. Webster famously responded with "liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable." To Webster and many other unionists, people, not states, comprised the union. Nullification propagated secession which in turn would destroy the union: the sole protector of liberty. Thus, to preserve liberty, one must preserve the union. Nullifiers did not believe in this link between union and liberty but rather argued it was the states alone which protected individual freedoms from an overreaching federal government. The issue of nullification divided the White House as Vice President Calhoun staunchly supported states' rights and served as a spokesman for nullification by revealing he wrote "Exposition and Protest." Jackson, on the other hand, supported states' rights, but not at the expense of the Union. He once stated he "would rather die in the last ditch than see the union dismantled." The Nullification Crisis was one in a series

of issues that destroyed Jackson and Calhoun's relationship.

In 1832 Congress replaced the Tariff of Abominations with a lower tariff; however, that was not enough to satisfy the South Carolinians, who had made faint threats of nullification since 1828. Almost immediately following Jackson's re-election in 1832, South Carolina, fortified by the recent election of many state nullifiers, formed a convention that denounced the Tariff of Abominations and its 1832 revision and formally adopted an Ordinance of Nullification. This ordinance declared those tariffs null and void and forbade the collection of duties within the boundary of the state following February 1, 1833. Finally, the ordinance declared that any act of force by Congress against South Carolina would lead to its immediate secession from the union.

In the past Jackson simply acknowledged the supremacy of union over state sovereignty without taking any direct action; however, this explicit threat of secession forced him to act against these nullifiers. Jackson advised his Secretary of War Lewis Cass to prepare for war. Over the course of a few months, Cass compiled arms and enlisted a militia in preparation to enter South Carolina to enforce the tariff and prevent secession. During his war preparations, Jackson engaged in a national public relations campaign to discredit nullification in the mind of the American public. Jackson gave speeches against nullification vehemently denounced South Carolina and promoted unionism. Jackson also

(continued on page 6)



The Dispatch
Newspaper of the
**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.

gave a special speech to Congress asking them to reaffirm his authority to use force to ensure the execution of United States laws. Congress complied with the request in a bill aptly known as Jackson's force bill.

Despite his preparations, Jackson did not desire a civil war, but rather hoped the nullifiers would back down against his threats. In response to Jackson's vigorous actions, South Carolinians delayed the enactment of their ordinance. Jackson, in turn, discretely supported Speaker of the House Henry Clay's efforts to lower the tariff that caused this crisis. On March 2, 1833, Congress passed both Jackson's and Clay's tariff reduction. In response, South Carolinians rescinded their Ordinance of Nullification and the crisis passed. Many parties claimed to be the victor of this crisis, Calhoun and his nullifiers for receiving a tariff reduction, Clay for his compromise that prevailed. Jackson remained the true victor as he reaffirmed his executive authority and prevented a potential civil war days before his second inauguration.

Although not the first crisis that dealt with state authority over perceived unconstitutional infringements on its sovereignty, the Nullification Crisis represented a pivotal moment in American history as this is the first time tensions between state and federal authority almost led to a civil war. Ultimately, the spirit of union prevailed, and Americans reached a compromise which avoided war. However, this crisis laid the groundwork for the secession theory that reemerged in the 1850s at a time of heightened sectional tensions. By then the United States would not be so

lucky, and debates over slavery and the legitimacy of secession would plunge Americans into a horrific civil war.

BOARD UPDATES

The Executive Board met via Zoom on December 14. The Operating Account has \$3,027.23. The Preservation Account has \$2,555.41. Thank you to everyone who made donations to either account.

Matt George, our Program Chair, has speakers scheduled through the fall of 2021. We hope that by then we can have in-person meetings.

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

The correct answer to Last month's trivia question was JOAN CRAWFORD. We had three responses and all were correct. The first to contact me was Mary Ellen Johnson, followed by Jeff Falace and Luanne Whitbeck. It was pointed out to me that people who received their newsletter digitally had a

time advantage over those who receive it by regular mail. As a result all three will receive a free book.

However, since there seems to be an interest in continuing this, I've decided to change the parameters. The monthly trivia contest will expand to three questions. All responders who submit all three correct answers by the 21st of the month, by any means, will each receive a book. I will also need a mailing address to mail or personally deliver the book. My email address is JBuford63@aol.com When we return to in-person meetings I will bring the books to the meetings where they can be picked up. The three questions for January are:

- 1) In the epic battle between the *Monitor* and the *Virginia*, who was briefly Captain of the ship after Captain Worden was blinded by metal fragments AND who was his more well-known father (think Gettysburg)?
- 2) What Union General's boyhood home is now an antique shop in Ballston Spa?
- 3) What well known Union General was born in Cadiz, Spain?

The Adams County Historical Society (Gettysburg) has announced plans to build a new five-million dollar home for their Gettysburg collection. It will be located north of Barlow's Knob. Anyone interested in making a contribution, contact them at www.achs-pa.org/campaign/welcom.html

Also, if the pandemic will permit it, the 2021 Conference on Women and the Civil War (entitled Women of the Shenandoah Valley) will be held July 23-25 in Harrisonburg, Virginia. For further details contact them at <http://www.swcw.org/2021-conference-details.html>

Again with the hope that things will have returned to normal, the Civil War Institute 2021 Conference is set for June 10-13. Speakers will include Gary Gallagher and Kent Materson Brown as well as battlefield tours by Garry Adelman and Jennifer Murray. This is an excellent conference. It would be a shame if it also was canceled.

I'm looking forward to the very late spring or fall of next year when maybe we will be able to hold regular meetings.

**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

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Treasurer	Steve Muller	Secretary	Rosemary Nichols
At-Large	J.J. Jennings	At-Large	Mark Koziol
At-Large	(open)		

THE NONCOMS

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Webmaster			
Education	Matt George		
Newsletter	Rosemary Nichols and Erin Baillargeon		