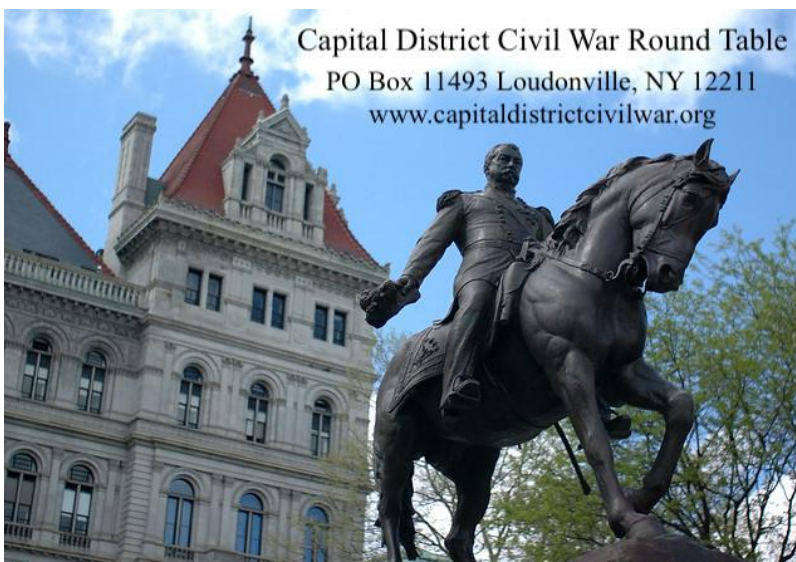


The Dispatch

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General August Willich's quarters near Lookout Mountain, Tennessee



Drawing shows General Willich, with his pet raccoon on his shoulder, talking with another officer near a campfire and soldiers relaxing near tents. By Adolph Metzner. From the Library of Congress <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017647007>

MAY MEETING

Friday, May 14, 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING USING ZOOM

DAVID DIXON

General Willich: Warrior for
Social Justice

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

An estimated 200,000 men of German birth enlisted in the Union Army during the Civil War, far more than any other contemporary foreign-born population. One of these, Prussian Army officer Johann August Ernst von Willich, led a remarkable life of integrity, commitment to a cause, and interaction with leading lights of the nineteenth century. After resigning from the Prussian Army due to his republican beliefs, Willich led armed insurrections during the revolutions of 1848–49, with Friedrich Engels as his aide-de-camp. Ever committed to the goal of universal human rights, he once dueled a disciple of Karl Marx—whom he thought too conservative. Willich emigrated to the United States in 1853, eventually making his way to Cincinnati, where he served as editor of the daily labor newspaper the Cincinnati Republican.

With exhaustive research in both English and German language sources, author David T. Dixon chronicles the life of this ingenious military leader—a

man who could also be stubborn, impulsive, and even foolhardy—risking his life unnecessarily in the face of overwhelming odds.

Dave earned his B.A. in political science and his M.A. in history at the University of Massachusetts. He lives with his wife Jeanne and his books in Santa Barbara, California.

Dave will randomly select three participants from the Zoom presentation to receive a copy of his book, Radical Warrior: August Willich's Journey from German Revolutionary to Union General. Join us on Zoom to be entered in the drawing.

ZOOM DIRECTIONS

- 1) **Download** Zoom program from the 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: 876 3245 3907**
- 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:

June 11: Bruce Mowday will present “Three Views of Gettysburg” as a Zoom presentation

September 10: Ron Kirkwood returns to speak on “Women to the Rescue at Spangler.” We would like to have this as an in-person presentation, but we will make that decision closer to the date.

October 8: topic to be finalized

THANK YOU, MEMBERS

The Round Table wishes to thank Matt George for his donation to the Preservation fund.

A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

by Nick Thony

August Willich, a “Prussian nobleman turned radical socialist,” became an implausible American hero. His unlikely life, skillfully chronicled in David Dixon’s latest work, Radical Warrior, underscores the connections between the American Civil War and the mid-nineteenth-century European revolutions Willich played a primary role in. As Dixon writes, for Willich, “the call to arms in 1848 and 1861 were virtually identical.” However, instead of battling the monarchy, as Willich did in Europe, the struggle in America was to displace a “traitorous slave aristocracy.”

Enrico Dal Lago’s book, Civil War and the Agrarian Masses, places the

struggle for Italian Reunification and the American Civil War in a similar global context, arguing that both conflicts resulted in part due to the accumulation of social and economic power in the rural elites in both Italy and the United States. In southern Italy in particular, wealthy landowners resisted ceding power to a centralized government. Ultimately, however, the “exploited agrarian masses” in Italy, rebelled against that concentration of power. As Dal Lago frames it, the struggle in Italy and the outbreak of war in America became parallel instances of “social revolution.”

Both Dixon and Dal Lago force us to examine the American Civil War from an Atlantic perspective that accounts for the related struggle of the American enslaved and landless European peasants. Willich saw this connection clearly. As Dixon writes, Willich believed that, “Whether worker exploitation was happening on the plantation or on the factory floor, the root of this injustice was the same.”

It is not surprising that Willich sympathized with Thomas Paine, calling the transatlantic revolutionary the “embodiment of patriotism and free thought.” Paine, like Willich, participated in more than one revolution, arriving in the colonies just in time to convince thousands of Americans to pursue independence with his popular missive *Common Sense*, and later becoming a central figure in the French Revolution. Like Willich who came later, Paine identified a global struggle. “Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression,” Paine wrote in *Rights of Man*. “Freedom hath been hunted round the globe.”

BOARD UPDATES

The Executive Board met via Zoom on April 19. Matt George, our Program Chair, has speakers scheduled through the fall of 2021. We hope that by then we can have in-person meetings. Decisions regarding a summer picnic will be made closer to the summer and based on health guidelines at that time.

Treasurer Steve Muller reported that the Preservation Account has \$3,037.00 The Operating Account has \$4,027.68 in it. Thank you to all the members who renewed their membership this year.

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. The numbers of “likes” and engagements have increased over the years. Our reach has grown as speakers and audience members share videos and posts with their friends.

The Board also discussed the possibility of creating a Civil War display in a community location, such as a library or historical society. We will share details once they are finalized. Anyone interested in helping can contact the Board at our email address on the back of the newsletter: cdcwrt@hotmail.com

BUFORD'S VIEW

by Matt George

Since we did not have any trivia questions last month, this milestone edition of Buford's View (#50) will be devoted to Civil War and related trivia.

First will be three regular Civil War questions. Email your answers to jbuford63@aol.com All responders with correct answers to the first three questions will receive a book.

1) What was the nickname of the 124th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment? (hint: think of the N. Y. county they were from)

2) The Colonel of this regiment, who rode a white horse, was killed at Gettysburg. Who was he?

3) What were the four regiments in Strong Vincent's brigade at Gettysburg?

Now some special trivia questions for fun. Today we live in divided times. The following two quotes (one long, one short) are by two literary people who differ in gender, age, race and historical period. The common theme is hope. Who are they?

Quote 1: *"I say, the evolution of the United States...coincident with these thoughts and problems, and their vitality and amplitude, and winding steadily through the future, affords the greatest moral and political work in all the so-far progress of Humanity. And fortunately, today, after the experience and warnings of a hundred years, we can pause and consider and provide for these problems, under more propitious circumstances, and new and native lights, and precious even if costly experiences, - with more political and material advantages to illumine and solve them - than were ever hitherto possessed by a nation. ...The summing-up of the tremendous moral and military perturbations of 1861-'65, and their results...is that they*

all now launch The United States forth, consistently with the entirety of Civilization and Humanity, and in main sort the representative of them, leading the van, leading the fleet of the Modern and Democratic, on the sea and voyages of the Future. ...And the real history of the United States – starting from that great convulsive struggle for Unity, triumphantly concluded, ...after all – is only to be written at the remove of hundreds, perhaps a thousand years hence.”

Quote 2: “We will rebuild, reconcile, and recover,

In Every known nook of our nature

In every corner of our country,

Our people, diverse and dutiful,

We’ll emerge, battered but beautiful.

When day comes, we step out of the shade,

Aflame and unafraid.

The new dawn blooms as we free it,

For there is always light,

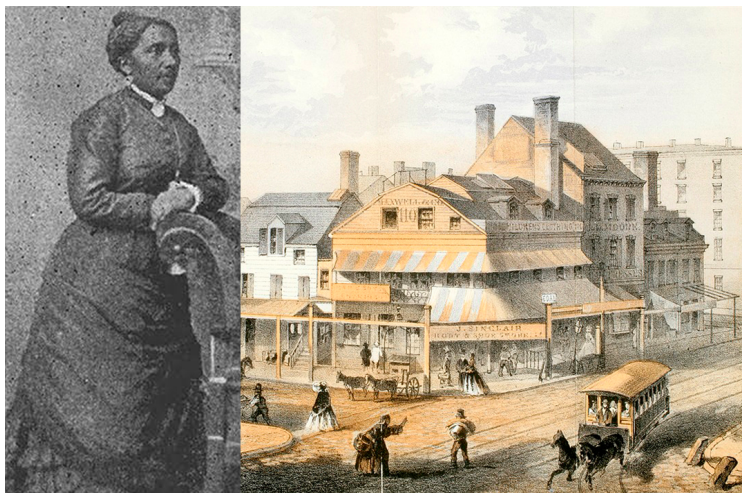
If only we’re brave enough to see it,

If only we’re brave enough to be it.”

In 1854 in N.Y.C. (one hundred years before Rosa Parks), a young African American woman named Elizabeth Jennings Graham was physically thrown off a horse drawn street car by the conductor and a policeman because of the color of her skin. She sued. Who was the young lawyer who took her case and won? What did he become many years later? Where is he buried? What was his job during the Civil War?

Lastly it saddens me to report the passing of two old friends. Ray Wemple, a former member, was an expert and lecturer on the Signal Corps and Lowe’s balloons during the Civil War. Ray died on April 5. Mary Heisinger from Greenville also died on April 5. Mary was a great lover of history. She attended many of our meetings. She served on the Board of the Greene County Historical Society and was a member of many other organizations.

Any donations made to the Round Table in their name will be donated in their memory.



Images of Graham and an intersection come from the New York Transit Museum
<https://www.nytransitmuseum.org/elizabethjenningsgraham/>

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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

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

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