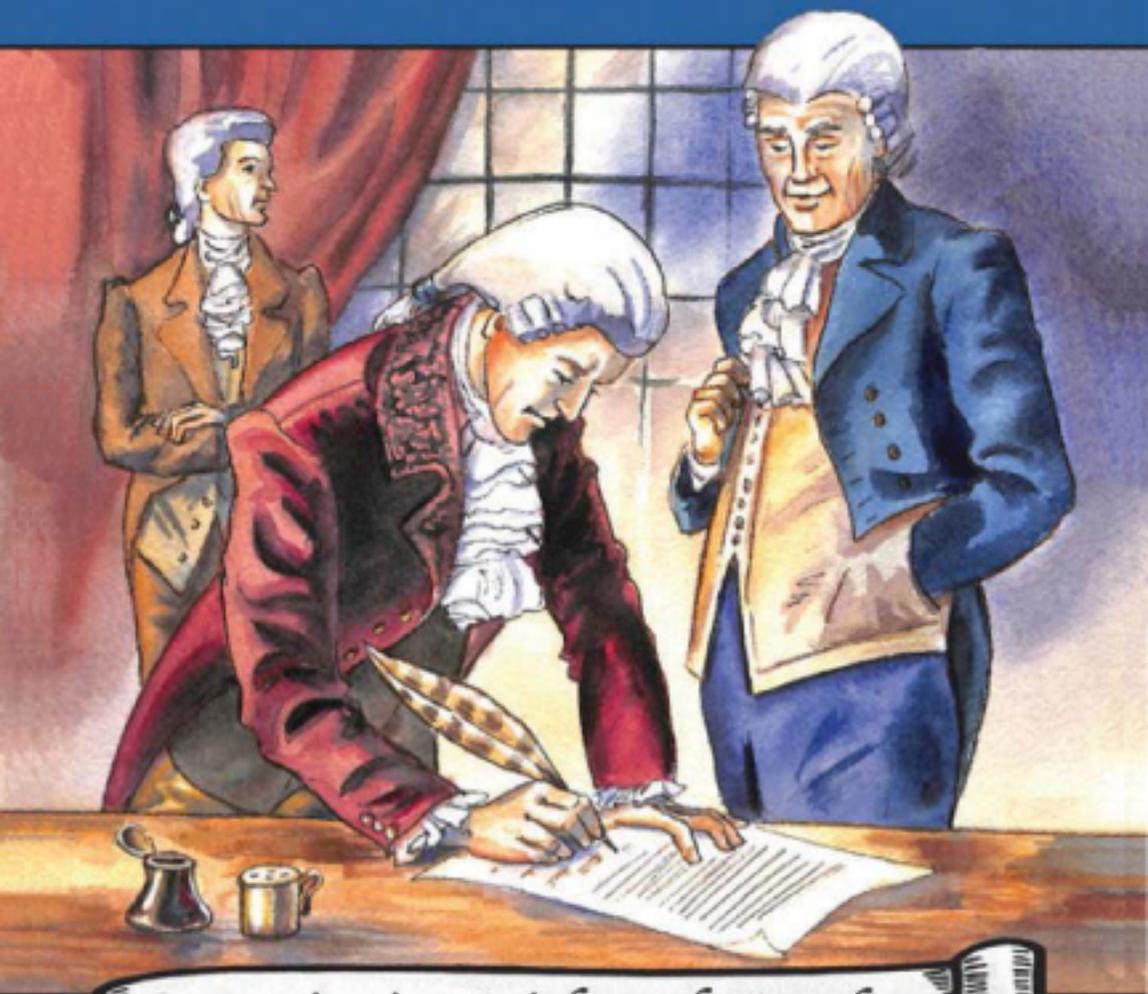


Charles Carroll

and the American Revolution



Portraits in Faith and Freedom

Milton Lomask

Charles Carroll

and the American Revolution

by Milton Lomask



Illustrated by Jo Polseno

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Portraits in Faith and Freedom

SET 1: FOUNDING VOICES FOR FREEDOM IN THE U.S.

Charles Carroll and the American Revolution
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Statement on Portraits in Faith and Freedom

Bethlehem Books is bringing back this series of biographies originally made available in the 1950's and 60's by publishers who wished to introduce young people to a wide range of arresting and faithful Catholic lives. Slightly edited now for the modern reader, these biographies present key people and events from the past that help us reflect anew on the meaning of freedom. They depict how powerfully men and women of faith have formed and influenced the world in which they live.

Web Resources

To access printable maps, a timeline, and other information, visit <https://www.bethlehembooks.com/charles-carroll-and-american-revolution-810>

About Usage of Outdated Terms

In republishing the books that form our *Portraits in Faith and Freedom* series, the editors considered whether it would be worthwhile to update the authors' usage of words like "Indian" and "Negro." The more current preference among many is "Native American" and "African American." The editors found, however, that changing the original terms often did not work well for the context of those times. The attitudes of respect and honesty that inspired these works—written in the 1950s and early 1960s—clearly conveyed the authors' positive meaning. In most cases, therefore, we have let the words stand.

Bethlehem Books

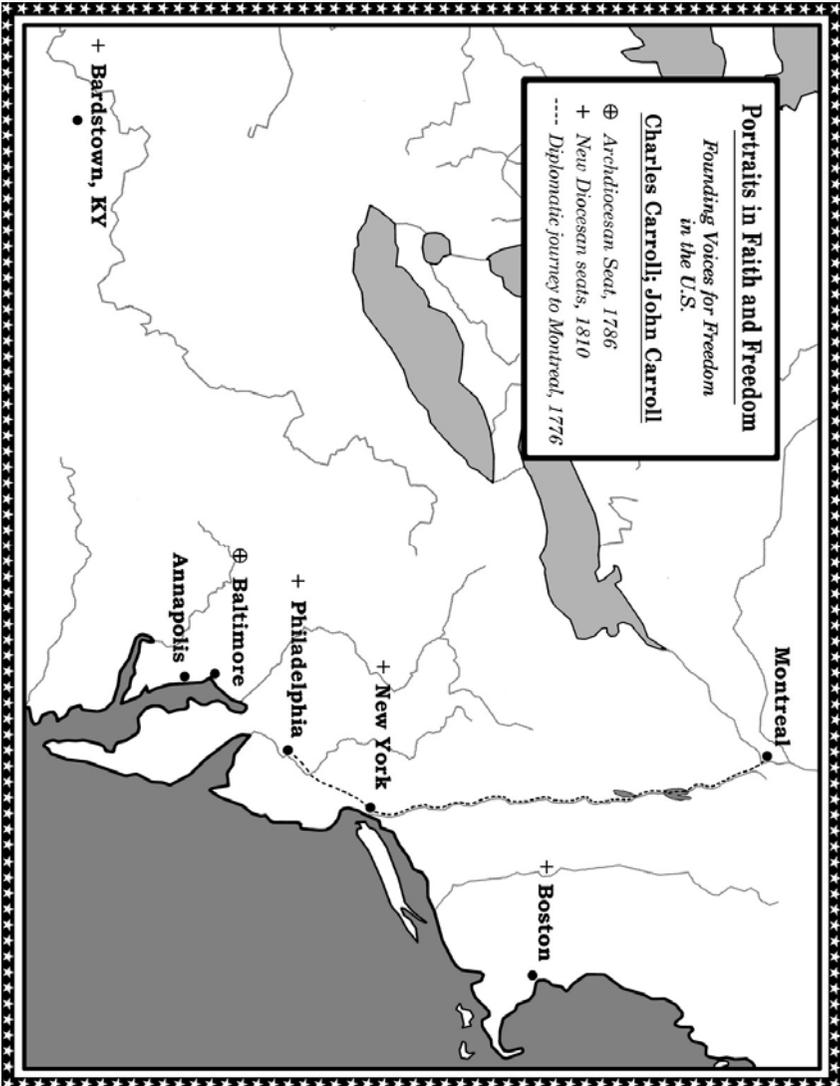
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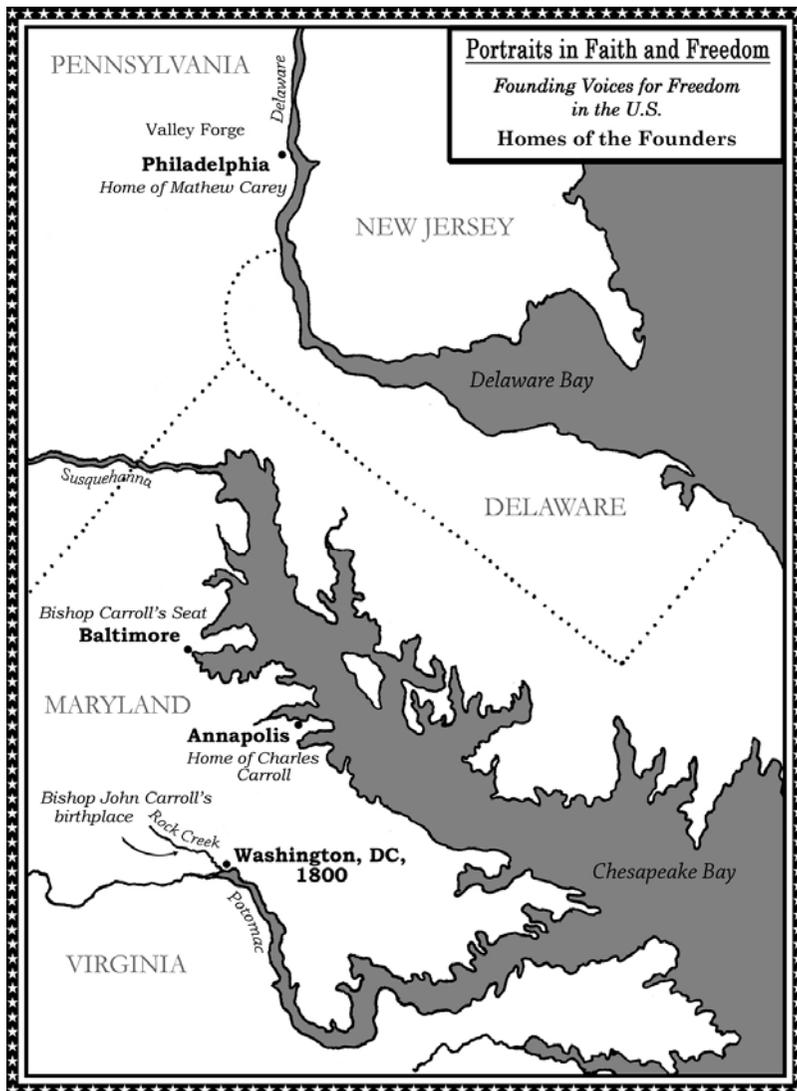
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ABCDEFGHIJLMPQRSTUVWXYZ

Maps





1. The Letter

IN THE BRIGHT little room off the kitchen, Molly Darnall Carroll was busy with her household accounts.

Molly's writing desk stood against an open window. Indian summer had brought soft breezes to the seaport town of Annapolis, capital of the British province of Maryland in colonial America.

Beyond the window the lawns of Carroll House were as bright as an artist's palette. Yellow and crimson and burnt orange were the trees, robin's egg blue the sky. In the near distance the sun made a blaze of the waters of the broad inlet from Chesapeake Bay known as Spa Creek.

With so much beauty in front of her, Molly Carroll found it hard to concentrate. But concentrate she did. She had been up since before dawn, preparing for this evening's dinner party. It was now late afternoon. If she were to get some rest before her guests arrived, she must keep steadily at it.

Rapidly she sorted the tradesmen's bills and copied the proper figures into the proper columns of her ledger book. Charles, her husband, had taught her how to keep her accounts. She followed his system exactly. Every time she turned a page she wrote the date at the top of the new page. It was October 1, 1769.

Molly blotted her last page with fine sand from a pewter shaker at her elbow. She was closing the book and laying it aside when a shuffling sound at the door told her she was no longer alone.

She turned, pushing back her cane chair as she did so. One of the house servants had come in from the kitchen. He was a black youth, scarcely more than a boy. A grin covered two-thirds of his pleasant face.

"Yes?" said Molly, rewarding the boy's grin with a smile of her own.

"Excuse me, Mrs. Carroll, but Cook sent me. She say she's ready for you now."

"Ready?" Molly laid a finger across her lips. It was a habit she had when she was trying to remember something. "Oh dear! Cook did say she'd be needing me shortly. But what about? What is it? Did Cook say why she was ready for me?"

"The terrapin stew, ma'am. It's ready."

“Oh, of course!” As Molly hurried past the boy and across the kitchen, the little wicker basket pinned to her housedress gave off a musical tinkle. This basket contained the keys to every room and cupboard in Carroll House, to every larder and linen closet.

Molly pinned on her key basket first thing every morning and seldom removed it till she was ready to dress for dinner in the evening. She wore it proudly. It was the badge of her vocation. She was proud to be mistress of her husband’s big home, proud to be the wife of a man whom she—and she alone—knew was someday going to be a very great and famous man indeed.

Cook was a big, broad black woman. She stood by the fireplace, beaming and bobbing her head as Molly approached. The stew steamed in a mammoth black kettle hung from a crane above the burning pinewood in the fireplace.

“It all ready for you to taste now, Mrs. Carroll,” Cook said. She took down one of the ladles suspended from the brick ledge of the Dutch oven, which jutted out at right angles to the fireplace. “Do it quick-like, Mrs. Carroll. I’m all goose pimples, waiting to hear what you gonna say about it.”

Molly took the ladle. She didn’t taste the stew “quick-like,” however. She did it slowly. She knew that what she thought of the stew was important to Cook, so she made a ceremony of it.

Slowly she dipped the ladle into the simmering broth. Bringing the soup to her lips, she blew on it lightly—and tasted it once, twice. Then she returned the ladle to Cook. She smacked her lips and rolled her large brown eyes—actions which put Cook into a shiver of delight.

“Cook,” Molly said, “if King George the Third of England were our guest this evening, I know he would say that never had he tasted more delicious terrapin stew.”

“Oh, Mrs. Carroll, does you really mean it?”

“I wouldn’t say it if I didn’t.” This was simple truth. In all her twenty years, Molly Darnall Carroll had always tried to say only what she meant.

At the top of the stone stair which wound about the Dutch oven, a door opened, and a small dark man made his appearance. His red and gold livery marked him as one of the servants from the front of the house. This was Harvey, butler and superintendent of all of the many household servants of Carroll House.

Almost eighty years of living had bent Harvey's back. It had made a white cloud of his hair. Slowly and painfully he limped down the steps.

There was a letter in his hand. "It just came by special messenger, Miss Molly," he said. "It's for Mr. Carroll. He's reading in the library. I didn't know whether the letter was important enough to disturb him or not. So I brought it to you."

Molly took the letter. Her hand shook as she did so. She had already glimpsed the handwriting on the envelope.

"Thank you, Harvey," she said. "I'm going upstairs now. I'll see that Mr. Carroll gets it."

"Yes, ma'am." For a second old Harvey's eyes roamed the kitchen, busy with the activities of Cook's assistants. Satisfied that all was as it should be here, he gave Molly a nod. Then he limped up the steps and disappeared.

"Well, Cook." The arrival of the letter had frightened Molly. She could only hope that her fear was not showing in her eyes. "You know where to find me if you need me."

She ran up the steps and pushed through the little door at the top, closing it behind her. Not till she was alone in the back hall of the first floor did she permit herself a good look at the letter.

The envelope was addressed in a round and sweeping hand. It read:

To Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Esquire

All letters to her husband were addressed in this manner. They had to be. There were several Charles Carrolls in Annapolis, several more in the surrounding countryside. Only by signing his own letters "Carroll of Carrollton" was Charles sure of getting his mail. The "Carrollton" stood for his country home up near the little Maryland town of Frederick.

Molly examined the envelope in the sunlight pouring through the many-paned window at the end of the back hall. She knew the handwriting. She had seen it before—too many times before. The sight of it penciled a single deep line across the forehead of her pretty, heart-shaped face.

It was the handwriting of Lloyd Dulany. And who was Lloyd Dulany? If you asked Molly, he was the most dreadful, the most