

A Little More Detail about Charles Carroll of Carrollton (1737-1832)

Let us momentarily side step the ownership of the land we call Lansdowne because Charles Carroll of Carrollton who was born September 19, 1737 and died November 14, 1832, was, as far as can be determined, never an owner of the land. He was a distant cousin to Charles Carroll, Barrister (1723-1783) of Anne Arundel County who was an owner until his death in 1783.

Still, Charles Carroll of Carrollton was of great significance. As mentioned, at the age of 91, he laid the ceremonial corner stone for the first track of the B&O Railroad on July 4, 1828. At that time, he was the last living signer of The Declaration of Independence. The B&O became the first common carrier railroad in the country. The first section of the B&O Railroad tracks stretched 13 miles from Baltimore to Ellicott Mills (now Ellicott City). The B&O laid part of those 13 miles of track through Lansdowne between January and May 1830 making Lansdowne one of the first B&O towns.

The B&O Railroad's first 13 miles from Baltimore to Ellicott's Mills (now Ellicott City) formed America's first commercial railway in 1830, featuring early horse-drawn trains and the iconic Thomas Viaduct at Relay, with the original terminus now the B&O Railroad Museum in Ellicott City. While the original tracks are largely gone or repurposed by CSX Transportation, the station and remnants of this historic line, including the viaduct, remain significant landmarks, marking America's rail pioneering era

Considered one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, Carroll was known contemporaneously as the "First Citizen" of the American colonies, a consequence of signing articles in the Maryland Gazette with that pen name. He served as a delegate to the Continental Congress and Confederation Congress. Carroll later served as the first United States Senator for Maryland. Of all of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, Carroll was one of the wealthiest and most formally educated. A product of his 17-year Jesuit education in France, Carroll spoke five languages fluently.

Born in Annapolis, Maryland, Carroll inherited vast agricultural estates and was regarded as the wealthiest man in the American colonies when the American Revolution commenced in 1775. His personal fortune at this time was reputed to be 2,100,000 pounds sterling, the equivalent to £338,402,985 in 2023 (US\$375 million). In addition, Carroll presided over his manor in Maryland, a 10,000-acre estate, and claimed as his property approximately 300 slaves. Though barred from holding office in Maryland because of his religion, Carroll emerged as a leader of the state's movement for independence. He was a delegate to the Annapolis Convention and was selected as a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1776. He was part of an unsuccessful diplomatic mission, which also included Benjamin Franklin and Samuel Chase, that Congress sent to Quebec in hopes of winning the support of French Canadians.

Carroll served in the Maryland Senate from 1781 to 1800.[6] He was elected as one of Maryland's inaugural representatives in the United States Senate but resigned his seat in 1792 after Maryland passed a law barring individuals from simultaneously serving in both state and federal office. After retiring from public service, he helped establish the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad by purchasing \$40,000 of state-backed securities and serving on its first board of directors.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Carroll_of_Carrollton

Carroll County, Maryland, was named for Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, when the county was formed in 1837 from parts of Baltimore and Frederick Counties, honoring the prominent Maryland statesman and revolutionary figure. Carroll was a wealthy landowner and politician who died just a few years before the county's creation, and naming it after him was a significant tribute.

It's worth noting that multiple states, including Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Virginia, and Ohio, have counties named after Charles Carroll of Carrollton, recognizing his historical importance.