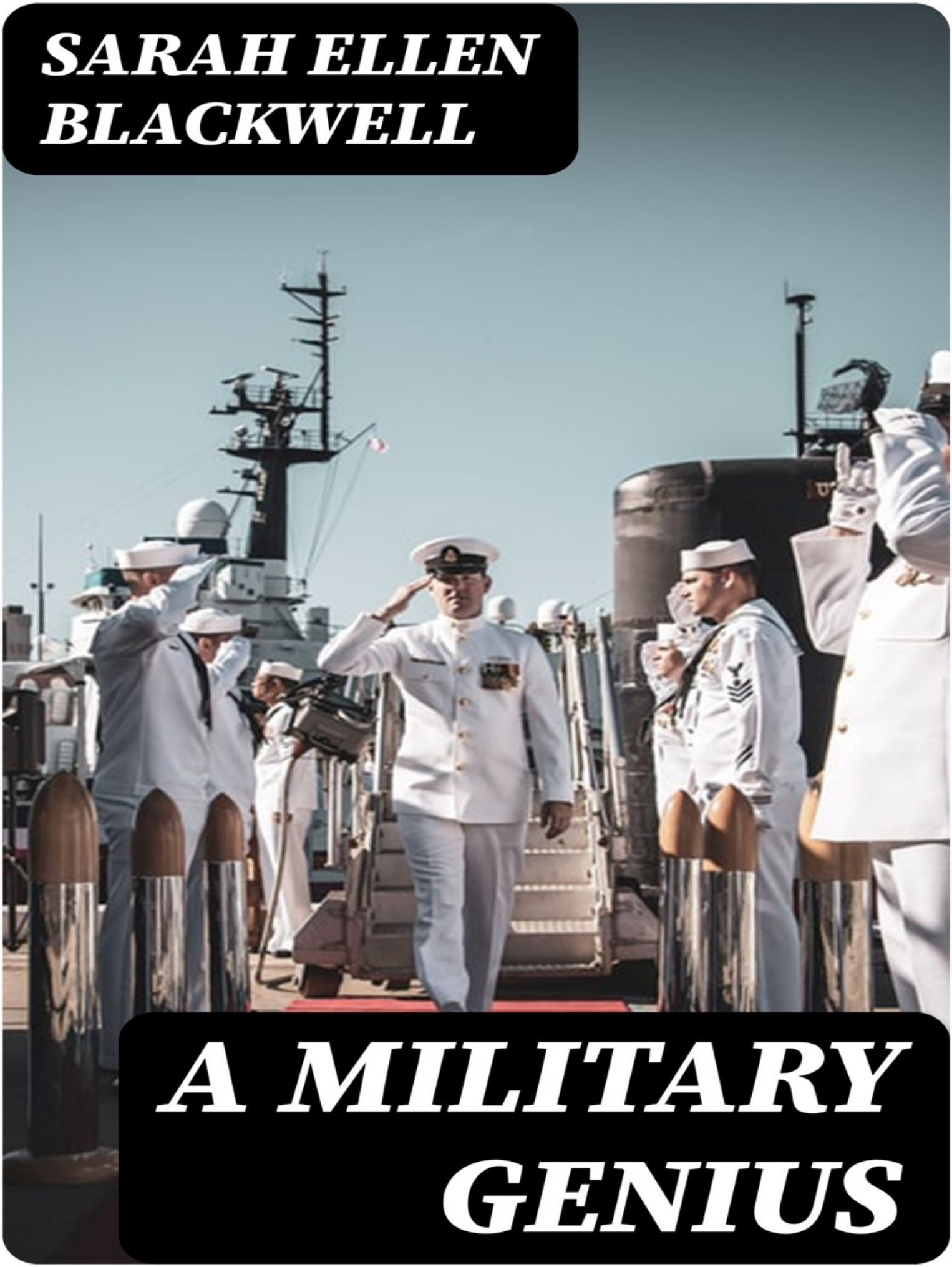
SARAH ELLEN BLACKWELL



A MILITARY GENIUS

Sarah Ellen Blackwell

A Military Genius

Life of Anna Ella Carroll of Maryland

EAN 8596547216025

DigiCat, 2022
Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

Table of Contents

PREFACE.

Table of Contents

In commencing the attempt to portray a very remarkable career I had hoped for the coöperation of the person concerned so far, at least, as the supervision of any statements I might find it necessary to make. But it was decided by her friends that it would not be well for her at present to be troubled with new projects, or even informed of them. It was at first a serious disappointment to me and seemed to increase my difficulties, but as I was allowed access to sources of family information I have been enabled to present a sketch, slight and inadequate, but authentic, and greatly desired by many distant friends. With continued improvement in health I trust that the wishes of Miss Carroll's friends may be better met by an autobiography taking the place of the present meager and imperfect sketch.

It should be at once understood that this is not a plea for Miss Carroll.

Her work has but to be fairly presented to speak for itself.

Her claim was settled once and forever by the evidence given before the first Military Committee of 1871, met to consider the claim, and reporting, through Senator Howard, unanimously endorsing every fact. The Assistant Secretary of War, Thomas A. Scott, the Chairman of the Committee for the Conduct of the War, Benjamin F. Wade, and Judge Evans, of Texas, testifying in a manner that was conclusive. These men knew what they were talking about and human testimony could no farther go. Congress, through its

committees, has again and again endorsed the claim, and never denied it, being "adverse" only to award as involving national recognition.

Our great generals have left us one by one without ever antagonizing the claim, and General Grant advised Miss Carroll to continue to push her claim for recognition.

But this work is to be considered rather in the light of an historical research bearing on questions of the day.

Are our present laws and customs just toward women? Are women ever preëminently fitted for high offices in the State? Is it for our honor and advantage when so fitted to avail ourselves of the whole united intellect and moral power of men and women side by side in peril and in duty? Such a life as this gives to all these questions the authoritative answer of established facts.

New York, *April 21st, 1891*. (Summer address, Lawrence, Long Island, N. Y.)

Miss Carroll's address is 931 New Hampshire Avenue, Washington, D. C.

A SEARCH FOR THE DOCUMENTS.

Table of Contents

Arriving as a stranger in Washington, knowing nothing of libraries and document rooms, Secretaries offices, and War departments, I was at first greatly at a loss. For many years I had had in my possession two very important documents, the last memorial of 1878 and the report of the Military Committee thereon under General Bragg in 1881. With these two in my hand I proceeded to consult the Descriptive Catalogue of the Congressional Library. To my surprise, I

found that these two very important documents had been omitted from the index. Calling attention to the fact, we looked them up in the body of the volume and Mr. Spofford immediately added them in pencil together with the other important documents, in Miss Carroll's favor, which had also been omitted. When I made my way to the Senate document room I found that this important Miss. Doc. 58 had been omitted there also, having been set down under another name. Looking it up in the volume of Miscellaneous Documents I again obtained the admission by Mr. Amzi Smith. In the list at the Secretaries office Miss. Doc. 58 was also omitted together with the last report by a Military Committee, under General Bragg, endorsing the claim in the most thorough going way. The index ending with an intermediate report mistakenly designated as *adverse*, though the previous reports were not thus heralded as favorable.

After the first report, as made by Senator Howard and the repeated endorsements made by Wilson and Williams of succeeding Congresses, these two documents are by far the most important and interesting.

The memorial of '78, containing additional evidence explaining some things, otherwise unaccountable, and making some very singular revelations. It is a mine of wealth for the future historian. At the Secretary's office I showed the documents and stated that their exclusion must have been unfavorable to the presentation of the case. I was not equally fortunate in obtaining their immediate admission, but trust the mistake has since been rectified.

The report marked as "adverse" would be more truly described as "admission of the incontestable nature of the evidence in support of the claim," admitting the services in every particular and being "adverse" only to award involving national recognition.

At the Secretary's office I obtained permission to see the file of the 41st Congress, 2d. session. There I saw the first short memorial with the plan of campaign attached as described by Thomas Scott. Then my investigations were temporarily ended by the outside of a document being shown me stating that the papers had been withdrawn by Samuel Hunt, thus agreeing with the statement made by him in Miss. Doc. 58, that they had been stolen from his desk while the committee were examining the claim.

I found it very difficult to obtain the earlier documents. "Supply exhausted" being the answer that has long been given, but all can be looked up in the bound volumes.

When, at length, fairly started in my work I was disturbed by a rumor that Miss Carroll's papers, formerly placed on file at the War Department, were no longer to be found there. I set out as far as possible to investigate. Provided with an excellent letter of introduction to the Secretary of War I made my way, on March 6, 1891, to the vast building of the War Department and sent in my letter with a list of the documents I wanted to see. Miss Carroll's Military papers, given in the Miss. Doc. 58, and a list of letters from the same memorial by Wade, Scott, and Evans.

The permission being kindly accorded I was transferred to the Record office and told that the file should be ready for me on the following day.

Taking with me the Miss. Doc. 58, an unpublished manuscript of Miss Carroll's, and specimens of the handwriting of Wade and Scott, I punctually put in an appearance, was transferred to the office of the Adjutant General, and Miss Carroll's file produced for my inspection. I met with all possible courtesy and every facility for the examination. I found two of the papers on my list in her now familiar handwriting, and some others.

A letter to Secretary Stanton, of May 14, 1862, recommending the occupation of Vicksburgh and referring to Pilot Scott, stating that she had derived from him some of the important information which had lead to her paper to the War Department on Nov. 30, 1861, which had occasioned the change of campaign in the southwest and proved of such incalculable benefit to the national cause.

A paper of May 15th, 1862, advising that Memphis and Vicksburgh should be strongly occupied and the Yazoo river watched. Another letter to Stanton concerning her pamphlets and proposing to write another one in aid of Mr. Lincoln, unjustly assailed. There was a portion of a letter written in great haste from St. Louis. There was an interesting letter from Robert Lincoln when Secretary of War. A petition from a group of ladies, asking for information concerning Miss Carroll's services and several other documents, but most of the important papers on my list were not on the file.

After examining the papers for some time I asked to see the originals of the letters of Wade and Scott. I was told they were in another department and would take some time to look up, but a gentleman was politely detailed to conduct

me there and look up the letters. I opened my Miss. Doc. 58 and pointed out the long list of letters of Mr. Wade's, on pages 23, 24, 25, and 26, and asked to see those first.

The gentlemen expressed his astonishment that, with *such* a document in my hand, I should ask for *originals*. He said that the documents printed by order of Congress were to all intents and purposes the same as the originals, as they were never so printed until those letters and papers had been examined and proved to be genuine. I asked if the printing was also a guarantee for Miss Carroll's papers as printed in that document, though we were now unable to find the originals. He replied assuredly it was; that I could positively rely upon all that had been so printed. There was no going back upon the Congressional records. Other gentlemen came up and confirmed the statement.

Under these circumstances it seemed unnecessary to carry the investigation any further, so with thanks for the great friendliness and courtesy that I had met with I took up my precious Miss. Doc. 58 and departed with a slight intimation that if anything more should be needed they might have the pleasure of seeing me again.

The missing documents, after being on file for 8 years, were sent on one or more occasions from the War Department to the Capitol for examination by committees.

On page 30 of the Miss. Doc. 58 we learn the reason, on testimony of Wade and Hunt (keeper of the records), why they are there no longer.

For list of documents see pages 29 and 82.

MISS CARROLL'S MILITARY MAPS.

Table of Contents

On page 178 of the memorial of '78 Judge Evans, in one of the many repeated letters and statements of great interest that I have been obliged to omit for want of space, relates how he stood beside Miss Carroll in her parlor at St. Louis when she was gathering the information for the preparation of her paper to the War Department of November 30, 1861, and its accompanying map. He says, "I have a very distinct recollection of aiding her in the preparation of that paper, tracing with her upon a map of the United States, which hung in her parlor, the Memphis and Charleston railroad and its connections southward, the course of the Tennessee, the Alabama, and the Tombigbee rivers, and the position of Mobile Bay; and when Henry fell she wrote the Department, showing the feasability of going either to Mobile or Vicksburg."

In his testimony given on page 85 of Miss. Doc. 179, he says, "On Miss Carroll's return from the West she prepared and submitted to the deponent, for his opinion, the plan of the Tennessee river expedition, as set forth in her memorial. Being a native and resident of that part of the section and intimately acquainted with its geography, and particularly with the Tennessee river, deponent was convinced of the vast military importance of her paper, and advised her to lose no time in laying the same before the War Department, which she did on or about November 30, 1861. The accompanying map, rapidly prepared by Miss Carroll, was made on ordinary writing paper. An unpretentious map, but fraught with immense importance to the national cause.

Assistant Secretary of War Thomas A. Scott, the great railroad magnate and a man of remarkably acute mind, saw at a glance the immense importance of the plan; he hastened with it to Lincoln, and when her plan of campaign was determined on he studied her map with the greatest care before going West to consolidate the troops for the coming campaign.

The second map sent in with Miss Carroll's paper of October, 1862, when the army before Vicksburg was meeting with disastrous failure, was made on regular map paper, representing the fortifications at Vicksburg, demonstrating that they could not be taken on the plan then adopted and indicating the right course to pursue. Miss Carroll bought the paper for the map at Shillington's, corner of Four-and-a-Half street and Pennsylvania avenue; sketched it out herself with blue and red pencils and ink and took it to the War Department.

On page 24 of Miss. Doc. 58, Judge Wade writes:

"Referring to a conversation with Judge Evans last evening he called my attention to Colonel Scott's telegram announcing the fall of Island No. 10 in 1862 as endorsing your plan, when Scott said, 'the movement in the rear has done the work.' I stated to the Judge, as you and he knew before, that your paper on the reduction of Vicksburg had done the work on that place, after being so long baffled and with the loss of so much life and treasure by trying to take it from the water; that to my knowledge your paper was approved and adopted by the Secretary of War and immediately sent out to the proper military authority in that Department."

On April 16, 1891, by permission of the kindly authorities of the War Department, search was made in the office of the Chief Engineer to see if, by chance, these maps might have come to the War Department. No trace or record was found and it seemed to be agreed that, considering the circumstances of extreme secrecy attending the inauguration of the campaign, it was unlikely that they should come there. Time, which so often corroborates the truth, may possibly bring those maps to light. At present I cannot trace them.

It is proposed to follow this volume with another, entitled "Civil War Papers in Aid of the Administration," by Anna Ella Carroll, with notes by the author.

CHAPTER I.

Table of Contents

ancestry and old plantation life.

In looking at the map of Maryland we find that the configuration of the State is of an unusual character. The eastern portion is divided through the middle by the broad waters of Chesapeake Bay, leaving nine counties with the State of Delaware on the long stretch between the Chesapeake, Delaware Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean. Of late years the great tide of population has set toward the western side of Chesapeake Bay, leaving the widely divided eastern counties in a comparatively quiet and primitive condition. But in the earlier history of our country these

eastern counties, with easy access to the Atlantic Ocean, were of greater comparative importance to the State, and were a Center of culture and of hospitality. It was in Somerset, one of the two southernmost of these eastern counties, that Sir Thomas King, coming from England about the middle of the eighteenth century, purchased an extensive domain.

Landing first in Virginia with a group of colonists, he there married Miss Reid, an English lady also highly connected and of an influential family. The estate which he subsequently purchased in Maryland embraced several plantations, extending from the county road back to a creek, a branch of the Annemessex river, then and since known as King's creek.

Standing well back and divided from the county road by extensive grounds, Sir Thomas King built Kingston Hall, a pleasant and commodious residence. An avenue of fine trees, principally Lombard poplars and the magnificent native tulip tree, formed the approach to the Hall, and its gardens were terraced down to the creek behind.

On one of the outlying plantations Sir Thomas King also established the little village of Kingston, of which he built and owned every house. He brought hither settlers, but the little place did not thrive. Plantation life and proprietary ownership were not conducive to the growth of cities. As the old settlers died out the houses were abandoned, and the post office was removed to a corner of the Hall plantation, then known as Kingston Corner. A new settlement grew up there, and since emancipation has changed the conditions of life it has grown and thriven. It is now a promising little

place of 250 inhabitants. It has assumed to itself the name of the older village and is known as Kingston on the present maps.

At the Hall Sir Thomas King established his family residence. Here he lived and here his wife died, leaving but one child, a daughter, heiress to these wide estates, the future mother of Governor Thomas King Carroll and the grandmother of Anna Ella Carroll, whose interesting career is the subject of our present relation.

Through all the early history of Maryland the contests between Catholic and Protestant form one of its most conspicuous features. Early settled by Lord Baltimore, a Catholic proprietary, his followers were at once involved in a struggle with still earlier settlers at Kent Island, in the Chesapeake Bay, and the Protestants who followed, while condemning Catholicism as a rule of faith, associated it also with the doctrine of divine right and arbitrary rule. Bitter contests followed. The most active minds of the Colony enrolled themselves enthusiastically in the opposing parties.

St. Mary's, a little town on the western side of the Chesapeake, was the ancient capital of the State and the headquarters of Catholicism.

Sir Thomas King, on his side, was a staunch Presbyterian. This household was strictly ruled in conformity to his faith, and by liberal contribution and personal influence he was largely instrumental in building the first Presbyterian meeting-house, at the little town of Rehoboth, a few miles from his own domain, a great barn-like structure of red brick, which remains to this day. The marriage of Miss King with her cousin, young Mr. Armstead, of Virginia, the ward of

Sir Thomas King, was an event that had been planned for in both families, and was looked forward to with great satisfaction on all sides.

One may well imagine, then, the consternation which ensued to the proprietor of the Hall, to his relatives and friends, and all the neighbors of that staunch Presbyterian region, when Colonel Henry James Carroll, of St. Mary's, of the old Catholic family of the noted Charles Carroll, and himself a Catholic by profession, came across the waters of the Chesapeake, courting the only daughter of Sir Thomas King, the heiress to all these estates and the reigning belle of the county.

In vain was the bitter opposition of father and friends. The willful young heiress insisted on giving to the handsome officer from St. Mary's the preference over all her other admirers. It may be that a reaction from the strict rules and the severe tenets of her education gave to this young scion of another faith an additional charm. However that may be, love won the day.

The father was compelled to yield, and the young heiress became the wife of the intrepid Colonel Henry James Carroll. It could hardly have been expected that Sir Thomas King should associate with himself under the same roof a son-in-law of principles so opposed to his own; but he established the young couple on the adjacent estate of Bloomsborough, which he also owned, and here their little son, Thomas King Carroll, first saw the light of day.

The old proprietor, in his great empty hall, coveted this little grandson and proposed to adopt him as his own child and make him the heir to all his estates.

In course of time a younger son, Charles Cecilius Carroll, was born to the Bloomsborough household, the grandfather's proposition was accepted, and little Thomas King Carroll, then between five and six years of age, became an inmate of Kingston Hall and the object of Sir Thomas King's devoted affection and brightest hopes.

Governor Carroll, in after times, used to relate to his children how they spent the winter evenings alone in the old Hall. His grandfather, in his spacious armchair, on one side of the open hearth, with a blazing wood fire and tall brass andirons; the little boy, in a low chair, on the opposite side, listening to the tales that his grandfather related of ancient times and heroic deeds. By these means Sir Thomas King strove to amuse his youthful heir and to train his mind to high principles and brave aspirations. But Sunday must have been a terrible day to the little boy, attending long services in the red brick meeting-house and occupying himself as he best could between whiles with the old English family Bible, with pictures of devils and lakes of fire and brimstone, calculated to inspire his youthful mind with horror and alarm.

At an early age the young heir was sent to college, to the Pennsylvania University at Philadelphia, then the most famous seat of learning for those parts. Here he graduated with distinguished honors, at the age of seventeen. Among his classmates and intimate friends were Mr. William M. Meredith, of Philadelphia; Benjamin Gratz, of St. Louis, and the father of Mr. Mitchell, the author of Ike Marvel.

Returning to Maryland, Thomas King Carroll began the study of law with Ephraim King Wilson, who had been

named after Sir Thomas King. He was the father of the late United States Senator for Maryland. His studies being completed, arrangements were made to associate him as partner with Robert Goodloe Harper, the son-in-law of Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, in his lucrative law practice, and a house was engaged for his future residence in Baltimore.

During the studies of Thomas King Carroll, his aged grandfather, Sir Thomas King, having died, Colonel Henry James Carroll and his family were residing at Kingston Hall and managing the estate for the young heir.

An old friend of the family was Dr. Henry James Stevenson, one of the prominent physicians of Baltimore. Dr. Stevenson had come over formerly as a surgeon in the British army. He had married in England Miss Anne Henry, of Hampton. Settling in Baltimore, he acquired a large estate, then on the outskirts, now in the center of Baltimore. On Parnassus Hill he built a very spacious and handsome residence. During the Revolutionary War Dr. Stevenson remained loyal to his British training and was an outspoken Tory. The populace of Baltimore were so incensed against him that they mobbed his residence, threatening to destroy it. The Doctor showed his military courage by standing, fully armed, in his doorway and threatening to shoot the first man who attempted to enter. The mob were so impressed by his determined attitude that they finally retired, leaving the owner and his property uninjured. Dr. Stevenson afterwards became much beloved through his devotion and care, bestowed alike on the wounded of both armies. He became noted in the profession from his controversy with

Dr. Benjamin Rush, of Philadelphia, the one advocating and the other opposing inoculation for small-pox. Dr. Stevenson was so enthusiastic that he gave up, temporarily, his beautiful residence as a hospital for the support of his theory.

An ivory miniature in a gold locket, now in possession of Miss Carroll, represents Dr. Stevenson in his red coat and white waistcoat, and at the back of the locket there is a picture of Parnassus Hill, crowned by the Doctor's residence, with a perpendicular avenue straight up hill, and a negro attendant opening the gate at the foot for Dr. Stevenson, mounted on his horse and returning home. It is a very quaint and valuable specimen of ante-revolutionary art.

The daughter of this valiant doctor was a beautiful and accomplished girl, Miss Juliana Stevenson. She is described as having very regular features, a complexion of dazzling fairness, deep blue eyes, and auburn hair flowing in curls upon her shoulders. She was a good musician, playing the organ at her church, and educated carefully in every respect. Her knowledge of English history was considered something phenomenal.

Thomas King Carroll early won the affections of this lovely girl, and they were married by Bishop Kemp before the youthful bridegroom had completed his twentieth year.

Those that care for heraldry may be interested to know that at Baltimore may be seen the eight coats-of-arms belonging to the King-Carroll family, of which Miss Anna Ella is the eldest representative.

When the question came of Miss Stevenson leaving home, her especial attendant, a bright colored woman, had