Washington's Letter Vanishes from Baltimore

To the Roman Catholics in the United States of America,

Gentlemen,

While I now receive, with much satisfaction, your congratulations on my long-called and announced, but not yet acted on, political offer of occupying an office for the unceasing service of the American people. I am constrained to say, in offering an apology for the unceasing delay, instead of acknowledging the benefits of the general government, you will do the justice to believe, that your testimony of the increase of the public prosperity enhances the pleasure which I should otherwise have experienced from your affectionate address.

Not that my conduct is our

The First and Last Pages of the Missing Washington Letter,

Was a Link with the Past, Recalling Memories of Constitutional Convention and the Carrolls of Carrollton

A DOCUMENT of the greatest historical importance has been lost. George Washington's famous letter in which he promised, granting the Church of the country for the part that was taken in the American Revolutionary War, has disappeared into its place in a fireproof vault beneath the sanctuary of the cathedral in Baltimore, Md.

Baltimore is the mother See of the hundred dioceses that now exist in the United States. Its great grail--the cathedral--holds for years many thousand volumes of valuable documents relating to the history of Maryland and Baltimore. There are few being engaged, and in the course of the work it has been discovered that the chief treasurer of them all, George Washington's letter, is gone from its vault.

The envelope which contained it was torn. The original letter of G. Washington to Catholic U. States, is in its usual place. But it is empty. A thorough search is being made, for the loss is a matter of great concern.

Fortunately a facsimile of the letter is in existence. In 1899 there was printed an Address From The Roman Catholics of American to George Washington, in the outfit of the President of the United States. It was issued in London, printed by J. P. Coghill, Duke Street, Governor Square, and sold by Mearns Robinson, Fatermonter Row. This pamphlet, which now in exceedingly rare, contained not only the address mentioned in the title, but George Washington's reply. It was reprinted by the publishers of the Catholic Encyclopedia, who added it to a reproduction of Washington's autographed letter. From this the accompanying illustrations are taken.

John Carroll was the first bishop of the See of the United States of America, and first Bishop and Archbishop of Baltimore. He was born at Annapolis, Md., in 1735. In 1808 the priests of Maryland petitioned Rome for a Bishop for the United States. Cardinal Antonelli replied by giving permission to the priests of the mission to solicit the people to send the candidates for presentation to the Pope. Twenty-four of the twenty-five miles of the mission to solicit the people to send the candidates for presentation to the Pope. Twenty-four of the twenty-five priests at the meeting voted for Father Carroll, Pope Pius VI. appointed Bishop, and his consecration took place at Lubecault, England, on Aug. 15, 1790.

Before the inauguration of General Washington as President of the United States Bishop Carroll sent him an address on behalf of the Roman Catholic clergy and laity of the United States. Associated with him in this address were Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Daniel Carroll of Maryland, Dominick Lynch of New York, and Thomas Fitzsimmons of Pennsylvania. Daniel Carroll and Thomas Fitzsimmons were the only Catholic delegates to the convention that sat in Philadelphia from May 14 to Sept. 17, 1787, and framed the Constitution of the United States.

In this letter Washington returned a cordial reply, which undoubtedly did much for establishing in the United States the Catholic religion. He wrote:

Address to the Roman Catholics in the United States of America,

Catholics,

While I now write, with much satisfaction, your congratulations on my being called to the honorable office of a member of the House of Representatives, I cannot but desire your assistance in carrying out the provisions of the Constitution. As a member of the House of Representatives, I shall be in a position to do much for the advancement of the interests of the Catholic Church in this country. I shall do my best to promote the interests of the Church and to secure for the Catholic population of this country the same rights and privileges that are enjoyed by other citizens of the country. I shall also endeavor to secure for the Catholic population of this country the same rights and privileges that are enjoyed by other citizens of the country.

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The Most Rev. John Carroll, First Archbishop of Baltimore,

The New York Times

Published: September 10, 1916
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