

# The Forgotten Story of Robert Carter: The Founding Father Who Freed His Slaves

## A Lost Chapter in American History

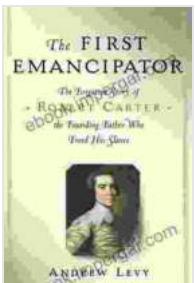
Amidst the pantheon of American founding fathers, one name has been largely obscured by the passage of time: Robert Carter III, a wealthy planter and prominent political figure who made a daring and transformative decision that would forever alter the course of history. In the twilight of his life, Carter liberated over 500 enslaved people, defying the prevailing social norms of the time.

## Early Life and Education

Robert Carter was born in 1663 into one of Virginia's most prominent families. As the son of a wealthy landowner, he received a privileged education in England, where he studied law and politics. From an early age, Carter displayed a sharp intellect and a keen interest in public affairs.

## The First Emancipator: The Forgotten Story of Robert Carter, the Founding Father Who Freed His Slaves

by Jean-Philippe Soulé

 ★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 967 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 336 pages

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## Political Career

Upon his return to Virginia, Carter embarked on a successful political career. He served in the House of Burgesses, the colony's legislative body, representing his county for several terms. As a delegate to the Continental

Congress, he played a key role in drafting the Declaration of Independence.

## **Internal Conflict and a Moral Awakening**

Despite his political accomplishments, Carter's personal life was marked by a growing inner turmoil. As a slave owner, he grappled with the moral implications of slavery. The influence of the Enlightenment and the ideals of liberty and equality began to weigh heavily on his conscience.

## **The Decision to Manumit**

In 1791, at the age of 58, Carter made a momentous decision. He drafted a deed of manumission, granting freedom to all the enslaved people on his five plantations. This act was a radical departure from the societal norms of the time, where slavery was an integral part of the economic and social fabric of the South.

When we got a telegram from you, I telephoned to him & offering  
to do it. I found Mr. Babb a widow who has been an widow of the war left her the  
house & contents to trust at first before we do bidirections we will take care of the  
affectionate wife. To the war who will offer us the bidirections our human friends  
grateful to it. One of the persons that he said had no property that he can fall  
by until the end of his life if his relatives should be defrauded in the war but - We  
consequently arranged the war left his wife & I. Your man we have got hold of by  
9916

~~List of slaves the property of local Courts of Oldhamshire County when from  
time and a half to January twenty-fourth being the date when being at the  
following places have been sold by Sheriff Court - One - The manor of Bawsey, Lancashire, Three  
Yeasts, North Yorkshire in Oldhamshire County. Name in bold letters. Register Dennis,  
Belper, Derbyshire, One - The dependencies of Bridgwater County, Devon, Devonshire County,  
Camer, or West Somerset County - One - The Pold Kell Right Warden, Middlesex County  
in Londonshire County.~~

# Robert Carter III's Deed of Manumission

## Motives and Legacy

Historians have speculated on Carter's motivations for freeing his slaves. Some believe it was a sincere moral awakening, while others suggest that it may have been influenced by economic or political considerations.

Regardless of his reasons, Carter's actions had a profound impact on the lives of those he liberated.

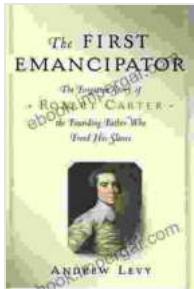
Carter's decision to abolish slavery on his plantations set a precedent for other slave owners and helped to pave the way for the eventual abolition of slavery in the United States. His legacy as a Founding Father who stood up for the principles of freedom and equality has been largely forgotten, but it is a story that deserves to be told and celebrated.

## **Rediscovering a Lost Legacy**

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in Robert Carter and his remarkable story. While his name may not be as well-known as some of his contemporaries, Carter's contributions to the fight against slavery are undeniable.



The story of Robert Carter, the Founding Father who freed his slaves, is a testament to the power of moral courage and the enduring struggle for human rights. Carter's legacy serves as a reminder that even in the face of adversity, individuals can make a profound difference in shaping the course of history. It is a story that should not be forgotten.



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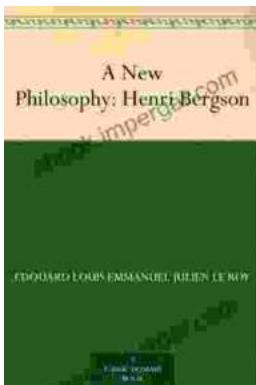
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