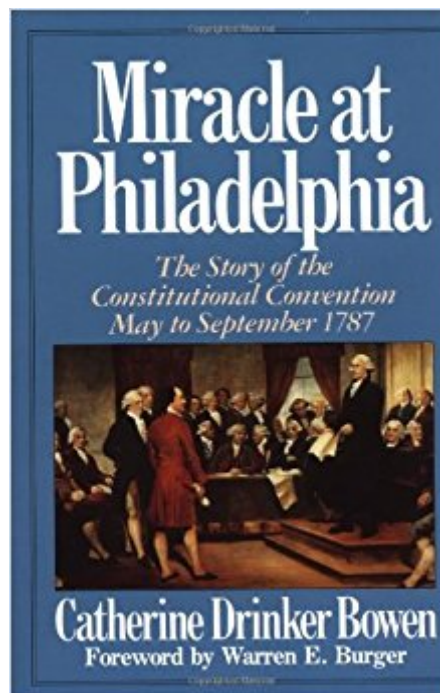




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Miracle At Philadelphia: The Story Of The Constitutional Convention May - September 1787



Synopsis

A classic history of the Federal Convention at Philadelphia in 1787, the stormy, dramatic session that produced the most enduring of political documents: the Constitution of the United States. From Catherine Drinker Bowen, noted American biographer and National Book Award winner, comes the canonical account of the Constitutional Convention recommended as "required reading for every American." Looked at straight from the records, the Federal Convention is startlingly fresh and new, and Mrs. Bowen evokes it as if the reader were actually there, mingling with the delegates, hearing their arguments, witnessing a dramatic moment in history. Here is the fascinating record of the hot, sultry summer months of debate and decision when ideas clashed and tempers flared. Here is the country as it was then, described by contemporaries, by Berkshire farmers in Massachusetts, by Patrick Henry's Kentucky allies, by French and English travelers. Here, too, are the offstage voices--Thomas Jefferson and Tom Paine and John Adams from Europe. In all, fifty-five men attended; and in spite of the heat, in spite of clashing interests--the big states against the little, the slave states against the anti-slave states--in tension and anxiety that mounted week after week, they wrote out a working plan of government and put their signatures to it.

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Customer Reviews

"To understand the fundamental issues that divided the states and the spirit of toleration that finally overcame them, the reading of a single book could make a difference. This is Catherine Drinker

Bowen's *Miracle at Philadelphia*, a remarkable account of the men and issues of that historic gathering." *New York Times*

"... assembly of demi-gods"... (Thomas Jefferson, in his remarks about the quality of persons attending the Federal Convention - pg 4) "*Miracle at Philadelphia*" is one of the many books I have read about the American Revolution as I revere the subject; and for me, it stands at the top of a list of excellent writings about the forming of our Nation. Not only is Catherine Drinker Bowen's accounting eloquent and logical, she manages to take us there as if by magic; we "feel" the humid air, the possibility of disease lurking around every corner, the lack of sanitation, the torment of mosquitoes that emerge at night unabated during that long hot summer of debate over the Constitution - the Great Experiment unfolding its wings. A passage from the first paragraph of this remarkable book:

Great descriptive book.

Years ago I read Ms Bowen's auto of John Adams. I was very impressed with her story telling Skills. It read like a novel. Today we hear lots about 'OUR FOUNDING FATHERS'...and i have the idea most of those who invoke the reference really don't know much about them, how they fought, how they were so protective of their state's interests. In fact, according to MY opinion, the Constitution of the United States is a COMPROMISE document. When they couldn't agree on something they just ignored the subject. Look what they did with the slavery problem... just moved it down the road twenty years (Article I, Section 9) (Slavery) shall not be prohibited by the congress prior to the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eight... *Miracle at Philadelphia* has been classified by others as a soft and romantic version of what happened at the Constitutional Convention, but I found it very humanizing. It is one of three books I have just re-visited on the subject, and I enjoyed it greatly. If one is not a history buff this is a book on history for you

Amazing story of the development of our constitution. It WAS a miracle!

I first read this book when it was originally published and found it informative and interestingly written to entice the general reader with the drama of the writing of the Constitution. I read it again in 1987 when I was preparing presentations for the public surrounding the bi-centennial of the adoption of the Constitution. I wanted to read it a third time with the additional material prepared by the

Harvard historian, Commager. Sadly, that did not occur because the book ordered from one of 's used book sellers was never delivered. This is an engaging introductory book for the general reader. I think high school children might benefit.

It's okay

I am not a scholar at all, but of all the books I have read in the last couple of years about the making of the constitution, and that is more than I can count on one hand, this was the most interesting read. Her syntax and variation of focus makes it the most flowing of the ones I have read.

I am not a historian by training or nature, but I find this book an excellent source to inform me of the background and true meaning of our National Constitution. These days, most references to the Constitution are associated with partisan positions and are therefore suspect as to credibility. I have given copies of the book to most of my friends because I think they deserve the same benefits that I receive.

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