

interest in the Nottingham Ironworks and a two-thirds interest in Principio Ironworks. From 1760 until his death, Ridgely maintained extensive farms on his Baltimore County land. **PUBLIC CAREER.** **LEGISLATIVE SERVICE:** Lower House, Baltimore County, 1773–1774 (Public Office 1); Conventions, Baltimore County, 1st, 1774, 2nd–3rd, 1774, 4th, 1775, 5th, 1775 (elected, but did not attend), 9th, 1776 (Manufactories); Lower House, Baltimore County, 1777, 1777–1778 (resigned 1st session; reelected 2nd session), 1778–1779 (Tax Commissioners 3), 1779–1780 (Elections 2, Claims 2, Tax Commissioners 2), 1780–1781 (resigned 1st session), 1783, 1784, 1785, 1786–1787, 1787–1788 (Grievances 2), 1788, 1789. **OTHER STATE OFFICE:** Constitution Ratification Convention, Baltimore County, 1788. **LOCAL OFFICES:** churchwarden, St. Paul's Parish, Baltimore County, 1765–1766; St. Paul's Parish Vestry, Baltimore County, 1767–1768. **STANDS ON PUBLIC/PRIVATE ISSUES:** An analysis of Ridgely's political philosophy by a modern historian shows him to have been throughout his public career an advocate of weak, decentralized government. He is described as believing "that taxes should be lower, government less powerful, churches unsupported by the public purse, and government-funded higher education avoided at any cost." Letters and depositions written during the winter of 1776–1777 indicate that Ridgely felt the Revolution might have been avoided had proper negotiations taken place. Ridgely maintained an efficient local political machine, which reelected him consistently. He opposed ratification of the Federal Constitution. His will provided for the manumission of two slaves. **WEALTH DURING LIFETIME. PERSONAL PROPERTY:** His wife Rebecca was bequeathed £1,000.0.0 by her father in 1772. Ridgely owned and operated a grist mill in Baltimore County from 1772 to his death. The value of his individual holdings was assessed at £5,183.0.0, including 98 slaves, 42 oz. plate, 1783. Between 1783 and 1789, Ridgely built the imposing Georgian mansion in Baltimore County still known as "Hampton." **LAND AT FIRST ELECTION:** probably 7,159 acres in Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties and Pennsylvania, lots on Fell's Point, and at least 1 lot in Baltimore Town (2,000 acres in Baltimore County as a gift from his father, 1760); ca. 255 acres in Baltimore County devised by his father, 1772; 4,904 acres in Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties and Pennsylvania by patent and/or purchase), plus a two-thirds interest in the lands belonging to the Northampton Ironworks. **SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN LAND**

BETWEEN FIRST ELECTION AND DEATH: purchased 50 acres in Baltimore County in partnership with *Samuel Chase* (1741–1811) and *William Paca* (1740–1799), 350 acres in Baltimore County, and probably 919 acres of his father-in-law's estate in Frederick County, 1774; sold half of the Frederick County land, 1775; purchased ca. 500 acres in Baltimore County for himself and a share of 535 acres in Baltimore County for the ironworks, 1779–1782; purchased with others the Dorsey Ironworks, Nottingham Ironworks, and the Principio Company giving him at least a one-fifth interest in ca. 6,660 acres in Anne Arundel County, a one-eighth interest in ca. 4,000 acres, and a two-thirds interest in 876 acres, both in Baltimore County, 1782–1785. In 1783 Ridgely was assessed for 6,962 acres in his own name in Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties. He obtained by patent and purchase 3,265 acres in Baltimore, Anne Arundel, and Frederick counties, 1783–1790, part of which was in exchange for some of the Dorsey land in Frederick County; sold 318 acres in Frederick County shortly before his death. **WEALTH AT DEATH. DIED:** on June 28, 1790, in Baltimore County. **PERSONAL PROPERTY:** requested that no administration of his estate be made; charged with 117 slaves, 1790. **LAND:** at least 10,780 acres, and possibly as much as 11,482 acres, in Baltimore, Anne Arundel, and Frederick counties, plus lots in Baltimore Town and Fell's Point and land in Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and New York. Ridgely also owned a share of the lands of the Northampton, Nottingham, Principio, and Dorsey ironworks. Ridgely named as his principal heirs Charles Ridgely Carnan, Charles Goodwin, of William, Charles Goodwin, of Lyde, and Charles Sterett, provided that each would legally assume the surname Ridgely.

RIDGELY, CHARLES, OF JOHN (ca. 1749–1786). **BORN:** between 1747 or 1748 and 1750, at "Ridgely's Delight," Baltimore County; eldest son to survive childhood. **NATIVE:** fifth generation. **RESIDED:** at "Ridgely's Delight," Baltimore County, until at least 1775; Anne Arundel County by 1779; both "Ridgely's Delight" and his plantation at Elkridge, Anne Arundel County, 1780 to death. **FAMILY BACKGROUND. FATHER:** *John Ridgely* (by 1724–1771), son of *Charles Ridgely* (by 1705–1772). **MOTHER:** Mary Dorsey (1725–ca. 1786). **UNCLES:** *Charles Ridgely* (1733–1790); *Edward Dorsey* (1718–1760). **AUNT:** Rachel Ridgely, who married *Darby Lux* (?–1795). **BROTHERS:** (first name unknown) (ca. 1746–1748);