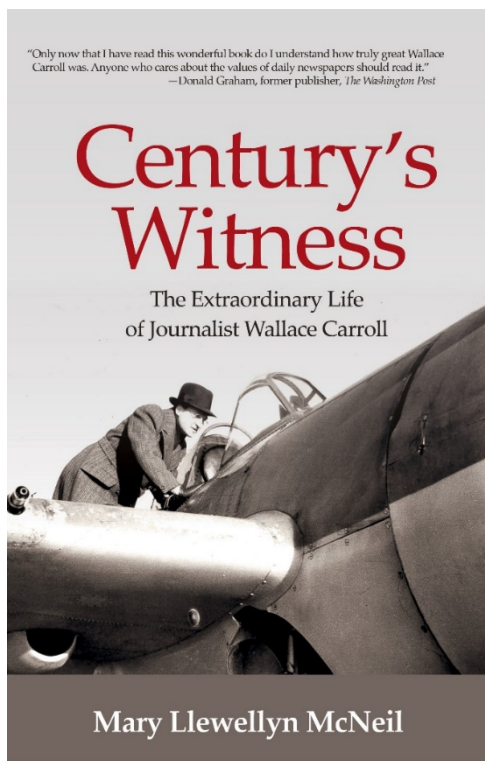


Journalism's Unsung Hero

Acclaim for *Century's Witness*: *The Extraordinary Life of Journalist Wallace Carroll*



“Only now that I have read Mary McNeil’s wonderful book do I understand how truly great Wallace Carroll was. Anyone who cares about the values of daily newspapers should read it.”

—Donald Graham, former publisher, *Washington Post*

“This well-told story of a gentleman journalist is a trip back to a time when that phrase did not strike most Americans as an oxymoron, and when vibrant local newspapers were both causes and effects of national vigor.”

—George F. Will, Columnist and Pulitzer Prize Winner

“With crisp prose, fine research and a clear moral purpose, this book illuminates the current troubles of journalism—particularly the loss of local news. McNeil’s thoughtful and well-executed study should go a long way toward giving this exemplary journalist his due.”

—Margaret Sullivan, Media Columnist, *Washington Post*

“This perceptive biography shows how one self-effacing editor set the standard for quality coverage in WWII—and through the 1950s and 1960s. The Wallace Carroll playbook, with its insistence on thoroughness and fairness, continues to inform generations of journalists.”

—Norman Pearlstine, American journalist

Today when corporate profits drive press coverage, local newspapers are going out of business and unbiased reporting is seen as almost nonexistent, Wallace Carroll’s life is a lesson in journalistic excellence. A “journalists’ journalist” with unmatched integrity, Carroll covered the most significant events of his time, from the London Blitz to the United States’ withdrawal from the Vietnam War. His commitment to the power of words and an independent press influenced generations of readers in this most violent of centuries.

Carroll's story is particularly relevant today, as the world revisits the violence in Europe and the threat of world war. Carroll covered the League of Nations in the late 1930s, warning the American public of the dangers of fascism, headed United Press's office in London at the outbreak of the war, and was among the first journalists to reach the Russian front following the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. He later joined the U.S. Office of War Information, tasked with "winning the hearts and minds" of those captured under the Nazi boot. As such, he was well-placed to understand the power of words, and their heightened importance in a time of conflict.

Carroll's life and career is essential reading for all those who believe a trusted and reasoned press is essential to our democracy. Carroll bore witness to this country's greatest generation—working to win a war, influence the peace, abolish segregation in the South, and conserve our most beautiful lands—these were the accomplishments of his life. *Century's Witness* is his untold story.



Mary Llewellyn McNeil, a student of Wallace Carroll's, is a former editor and writer for the Congressional Quarterly and the primary author of *Environment and Health*, *Reagan's First Year*, and *The Nuclear Age*. She has worked as an editor at the Smithsonian Institution and the National Academy of Sciences, and as a journalist at the *Winston-Salem Journal*. During a twenty-eight-year career at the World Bank she launched two global publications, *The Urban Age* and *Development Outreach*, and edited *Demanding Good Governance*, *Lessons from Social Accountability Initiatives in Africa*. A graduate of Wake Forest University and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, she resides in Washington D.C. with her husband and three daughters. This is her first full-length biography.

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More praise for *Century's Witness*:

“For me, this book was a discovery of a remarkable but under-sung life, a well-researched and captivating read about a man I’m now delighted to have encountered through this memorable book. Carroll’s story is the kind of romance that persuades many of us to be drawn to journalism as a profession. As a globe-trotting, unflappable observer and interpreter, he had a nose for what was important, and he somehow managed to be on the scene of some of history’s major turning points. The book is a romp through the 1900s, and a must read for anyone interested in history, journalism, or how to live a life dedicated to public service.”

–Mark Nelson, former reporter, *The Wall Street Journal*, and head,
Center for International Media Assistance, National Endowment for Democracy

“I marvel at the prodigious research Mary McNeil engaged in to produce this important chronicle.... She has that capacity to put the reader right in the center of the action, whether it’s stories about the bombing in London or the newsroom of the *Winston-Salem Journal* when the Pulitzer Prize announcement was made.”

“I do hope this book finds its way into the marketplace where people who care about American journalism can see what Mary McNeil has produced – it’s a real gift!”

–Garrett Mitchell, *The Mitchell Report*

“In my first two newspaper jobs, I worked for Wally Carroll, once at the Washington bureau of the *New York Times* and again at the *Winston-Salem Journal*. He was universally revered in both places, though reverence is in short supply in newsrooms.

“How I wish I had asked him about reporting from London on the Blitz, or about being one of the first American reporters with the Russian army in World War II. He could be wrong, and McNeil is frank about the two big mistakes of his career. But at his best—and he was mostly at his best—he stood for the greatest values of daily newspapers, as reporter, editor and publisher.”

–Donald Graham, former publisher, *The Washington Post*

“Wallace Carroll was a man of great charm and intelligence as well as a great twentieth century journalist reporting on some of the most critical moments in American history—during World War II a United Press reporter on the rooftops of London as German bombs exploded all around him to serving as publisher of a newspaper in a southern city bursting with provincial pride and economic and racial disparities. Wally brought the same impeccable critical standards to local issues, which were also American in scope-- the arts, school desegregation, the Vietnam war, and the environment. Carroll’s life is a model for our time as we search for our own local heroes.

“McNeil, one of Carroll’s students at Wake Forest University, has done her homework well: she shows us what mattered in his life, and what should matter in ours.”

–Edwin G. Wilson, former Provost Wake Forest University

“To today's journalists, Wallace is less well known than his son, John, who became the editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, but he is no less worthy of recognition. McNeil's thoughtful and well executed study should go a long way toward giving this exemplary journalist his due.”

–Margaret Sullivan, *The Washington Post*