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Notable Maryland Women



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their golf swings, and occasionally she can be seen cheering women golfers on to victory in area golf matches.

Brief Bibliography

The biographical information and account of the golf career of Mrs. Glick came from a personal interview with Mrs. Glick and from numerous articles in the *Baltimore Sun*.

MARY KATHERINE GODDARD, 1738-1816 **Printer, Publisher and Postmistress**

MARGARET W. MASSON

After a close study of the Maryland press in the Revolutionary period, Joseph Towne Wheeler concluded that of the four presses functioning at this time, the Goddard press in Baltimore was clearly the most important "judged on the basis of quantity and quality of output, or by the influence it exerted in the community in which it was located." This Goddard press was managed from 1774 to 1784 by Mary Katherine Goddard. From her newspaper the townspeople gleaned much of their news about the Revolutionary War, especially after 1779 when her competitor halted publication. And it was from her press that the first copy of the Declaration of Independence to include the names of the signers was issued. Moreover, Mary Katherine Goddard was the postmistress in Baltimore from 1775 until 1789, most likely the first to be appointed in the colonies and the only woman to hold such a position under the new American postal system.

The date of Mary Katherine Goddard's birth is now taken to be 1738. She was born on June 16 into a family with some social standing in her native Connecticut. Her father, Giles Goddard, was a physician as well as being the postmaster in New London, and her mother, Sarah Updike Goddard, was unusually well-educated. Only two of the couple's four children survived to adulthood, and it is probable that Mary Katherine was educated at home by her mother. In 1762, some time after her husband's death, Sarah Goddard went with her daughter to Providence, Rhode Island, where she helped her other child, William, to set up a printing press. William Goddard, then aged twenty-two and a few years younger than his sister, had learned the printing trade as an apprentice. For the next few years the family worked together to produce the town's first newspaper, the *Providence Gazette*. When the *Gazette* suspended publication in 1765 William left Rhode Island, but his mother was able to resume the paper in 1766 when it appeared under the name "Sarah Goddard and Company." Mary Katherine no doubt assisted her mother with the newspaper and with the other tracts and books that the

Company printed. Printing in colonial America seems to have been very much a family business, and especially in the case of the Goddards. In 1768 the Goddards sold their Providence shop. William Goddard had embarked on another venture in Philadelphia as publisher of the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*. His mother and sister joined him there later that year; both joined with him in his new undertaking.

Early in 1770 Sarah Updike Goddard died. Mary Katherine was by then thirty-two years old, unmarried, a capable businesswoman with considerable skill and experience in printing. Her brother, also unmarried, was an enterprising but erratic individual who, in contrast to Mary Katherine, often allowed personal issues to affect his journalism. His relations with business associates in Philadelphia had not been good, a factor which contributed to his decision to start another newspaper, this time in Baltimore. Leaving his sister in charge of the *Chronicle*, he journeyed to Maryland where in 1773 he published the first issue of the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser*. The paper appeared intermittently until early in 1774 when Mary Katherine wound up their affairs in Philadelphia and took over the publication of the *Maryland Journal*.

Baltimore in the early 1770's was a fast-growing town with a population of about 5,000 people but it had no newspaper until William Goddard offered the city its first paper, a weekly. Typically, erratic as he was, he decided to move elsewhere and soon became involved in setting up a new colonial postal system. Therefore, during her first year in Baltimore Mary Katherine ran the paper alone. On May 10, 1775 she confirmed the fact by changing the colophon on the *Journal* to read "Baltimore: Published by M.K. Goddard, at the Printing-Office in Market-Street, next Door above Dr. John Stevenson's." For the next nine years the *Maryland Journal* as well as other publications from her press carried only her name.

There has been some doubt about how much William Goddard was actually still behind the *Journal*, particularly after 1776 when he had completed his work on the new postal system. An incident in 1777 may throw some light on this matter. William Goddard had submitted to the *Journal* two satirical political articles which were subsequently printed. Both were anonymous though William knew that both were written by Samuel Chase. When a mob of townspeople, angered by the Tory tone of one article, clamored to know the identity of the author, they sent a deputation to Mary Katherine Goddard. She referred them to her brother as the one who had delivered the anonymous pieces to her office. So far as the townspeople were concerned Mary Katherine, not William, was the publisher of the *Journal*, although her brother was the one subsequently harassed by the "Whig Club." In a similar incident in 1779 the critics of the newspaper went straight to William. However, Ward Miner, William Goddard's biographer, believes that Mary Katherine was actively involved in the decision to publish controversial material in her newspaper, and that she edited her brother's printed responses.

She was herself a defender of a free press as it was defined in that period. In May, 1776, she complained to the Baltimore Committee of Safety about threats and abuse from George Somerville who objected to material in the *Journal*. As a result Somerville was censured by the Committee "by the evidence of Miss Goddard, that his conduct had a direct tendency to influence the freedom of the Press"

If Mary Katherine Goddard was primarily responsible for the *Maryland Journal* after 1776, then she must be given credit for running the newspaper so efficiently during those difficult years. Despite a serious shortage of paper and sometimes an equally serious shortage of accurate news, the *Journal* appeared fairly regularly. This was in contrast to the rival Baltimore newspaper and the Green family's paper in Annapolis, both of which had to cease publication for a time. No doubt it was helpful to Mary Katherine that in 1777 William and his partner Eleazer Oswald began to operate a paper mill at "Elk-Ridge Landing," though there were still shortages of printing supplies. Nevertheless, the *Maryland Journal* kept the townspeople informed about most developments in war and politics. In January 1777 an item of considerable historical interest came off her press, the first copy of the Declaration of Independence to include the names of the signers.

Another problem encountered by the publisher of the *Journal* was wartime inflation. In 1773 the annual subscription cost ten shillings a year; by 1779 the price had jumped to ten pounds annually. Rising costs probably may have encouraged Mary Katherine Goddard to diversify her business by adding bookbinding to her other activities. The *Journal* announced on October 13, 1778 that "with a View of serving the Public, and benefiting herself," she had hired "an excellent Workman [and] she dared promise that Books of All Sorts and Sizes will be bound in the best and neatest Manner." She also sold books, stationery and dry goods ranging from hats and handkerchiefs to snuff. Besides the conventional job printing that she probably handled, she published *The Maryland and Virginia and Pennsylvania Almanack for the Year of our Lord, 1780*, following up on this popular item every year until 1786. Thus despite the problems of the Revolutionary War years she could claim in 1779 that the *Journal* circulated as widely as any other colonial newspaper. In the same year her brother complimented her when he announced in the *Journal* of June 8 that he intended to engage in printing and bookselling but promised not to interfere with the activities of Mary Katherine "who, it must be acknowledged, hath supported her Business with Spirit and Address, amidst a Complication of Difficulties."

Unfortunately the harmonious relationship between the Goddards did not last. From at least 1781 it seems that tension between them was building. William may have resented her successful enterprises; Mary Katherine may have become exasperated by his erratic behavior. The exact reason for their split is not known. By March 1783 the *Journal* was appearing twice a week and was obviously on a very strong footing. Later that year certain typographical changes suggest the rather more flamboyant hand of William

Goddard. On January 2, 1784, William's name was added to the colophon; in the next issue Mary Katherine's name was dropped. Obviously some negotiations had taken place, possibly involving considerable bitterness. Perhaps William Goddard had been able to use a recent inheritance from the estate of General Charles Lee to pay off an obligation to his sister or to buy her out. The rancor surfaced later in the year when both Goddards published almanacs for 1785, and William attacked his sister's rival publication along with her character. They were never reconciled. William continued the *Journal* until 1792, while his sister retained her business as a bookseller and storekeeper.

Mary Katherine Goddard had a further disappointment to face. In 1775 she had been appointed postmistress in Baltimore under the new system that her brother had helped to create. Ebenezer Hazard, the Postmaster General in 1789, confirmed that she managed her post well, often submitting her accounts before they were due. Nevertheless, in November 1789, she was told to yield her position to John White. Over two hundred prominent Baltimore businessmen petitioned the Postmaster General to leave Mary Katherine in the post. The official reply was that consolidation of the postal system would require the Baltimore incumbent to travel extensively and that it would be beyond the capacity of a woman. Characteristically Mary Katherine put up a good fight. She appealed to President Washington and to the United States Senate, pointing to her excellent record as postmistress. But despite her efforts she was unable to recover the post.

In 1790 the United States census indicated that Mary Katherine Goddard presided over a household in Baltimore containing four slaves and another free person, perhaps an employee. In 1809 or thereabouts she retired from business and died in 1816. In her later years her household consisted of herself and only one slave, Belinda Sterling, to whom Mary Katherine willed freedom and all her property.

Mary Katherine Goddard was one of a number of women known to have been printers and newspaper publishers in early America. Unlike so many women in the colonial period who left no records of their activities and occupations for the historian, printers created the kinds of materials that have been preserved in archives. What is more they put their names on their handiwork. Perhaps this is why we are more aware of the women among them. Then, too, printing seems to have been a trade that involved all members of the family. The skills were passed along to sons, daughters, sisters, and mothers. Widows often took over the printing businesses of their deceased husbands.

Anne Catherine Hoof Green (c 1720-1775), another Maryland woman, offers a striking example. Her marriage to Jonas Green brought her into a family that had been involved with printing since the mid-seventeenth century. Her husband continued the trade in Annapolis and she took it over when he died in 1767. Her work as publisher of the *Maryland Gazette* and

as the official printer of the province earned her widespread respect. At the same time she trained her sons in the art and admitted them into partnership, so that Frederick Green was able to take over the press when his mother died in 1775. While it is true that sons rather than daughters invariably inherited the business when the widow finally died, it is also evident that the women knew the trade and were expected to support themselves through it when the need arose.

No doubt these traditions were helpful to a person like Mary Katherine Goddard who, as an unmarried woman, supported herself throughout her long life. But she could look back on more than this when she died at the age of seventy-eight. Her conscientious, relentlessly reliable work on the *Maryland Journal*, as a printer, and her activities as postmistress during the Revolutionary decades benefited the Baltimore community, as two hundred men affirmed when they supported her petition in 1789.

Brief Bibliography

Copies of the *Maryland Journal* and several editions of the *Almanac* published by Mary Katherine Goddard are available in the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore. A copy of her issue of the Declaration of Independence is in the Hall of Records in Annapolis, which also has her will. Photostats of materials relating to Mary Katherine's tenure as postmistress are at the Maryland Historical Society, the originals being in Washington, D.C. No personal letters by Mary Katherine Goddard have been discovered but accounts of her life and work can be found in Ward L. Miner's biography of her brother, *William Goddard, Newspaperman* (Durham, N.C., 1962) and in his essays on Mary Katherine Goddard and her mother in *Notable American Women, a Biographical Dictionary*, ed. by Edward T. James (Cambridge, Mass., 1971). See also Lawrence C. Wroth, *A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland 1686-1776* (Baltimore, 1922) and Joseph T. Wheeler, *The Maryland Press, 1777-1790* (Baltimore, 1938), both of which also list the issues from the Goddard press. There is a brief note about Mary Katherine in Ellen M. Oldham, "Early Women Printers of America," *Boston Public Library Quarterly* (1958).