

well provided with money, she yet made plans to carry on a business in which some knowledge of letters and a certain amount of capital is usually regarded as indispensable. She was shrewd enough to realize, however, that if she were successful in finding a journeyman printer to conduct her establishment, the possession of that rare article, a printing press, would surely provide a decent maintenance for herself and her two children. Boldly she made the venture.

On May 5, 1696, more than a year after her husband's death, "Dinah Nuthead's Petition for License to Print was read and referred to the House that if they have nothing to Object her Paper might be Granted provided she give Security for the same."¹ Eight days later her petition was read to the delegates, and the House expressed its willingness that she should have leave to print if his Excellency pleased.² Evidently the Governor offered no objection, for on the next day the persons described as "Dinah Nuthead of Ann Arundell County Widow, Robert Carvile and William Taylard of St. Maries County Gentn" gave bond to the Governor to the amount of one hundred pounds lawful money of England for the good behavior of Dinah Nuthead in the operation of her press. The instrument continues as follows:

"Now the Condition of this Obligation is such that if the said Dinah Nuthead shall exercise and Imploy her printing press and letters to noe other use than for the printing of blank bills bonds writts warrants of Attorney Letters of Admrcon and other like blanks as above-sd nor Suffer any other person to make use thereof any otherwise than aforesd Unless by a particular Lycense from his Exncy the Governor first had and obtained And further shall save harmless and indempnifye his sd Exncy the Governor from any Damage that may hereafter Ensue by the said Dinah Nuthead misapplying or Suffering to be misapplied the aforesd Printing press or letters otherwise than to the true intent & meaning before expressed, Then this Obligation to be Voyd or else to Remain in full force and Virtue."³

This fearsome instrument for the protection of the Province against the evils of indiscriminate printing was signed by certain witnesses, by the two bondsmen and by the principal, who, as one observes, was compelled to make her mark instead of signing her name to the document, a disability under which she labored to the end of her days. Clearly Dinah Nuthead herself could not have intended to act as the compositor in the establishment which she had brought up from St. Mary's to the new seat of government at Annapolis.

For how long a period Dinah operated her "press and letters" in Annapolis, it has been impossible to determine. No imprints bearing her name have been recorded, but it is quite possible that in addition to the blank forms

¹U. H. J., May 5, 1696, *Archives of Maryland*, 19: 306.

²L. H. J., May 13, 1696, *Archives of Maryland*, 19: 370.

³Council Proceedings, May 14, 1696, *Archives of Maryland*, 20: 449.