
A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland

which comprised a large part of the printing output of the day and place, there issued from her press a sermon by the Reverend Peregrine Coney, a clergyman whose discourses seem to have met with the approval of the delegates on the several occasions of their delivery. It has been seen that during the life of William Nuthead, this reverend gentleman had been requested to have printed a fast-day sermon, delivered by him before the Assembly. Again on May 13, 1695, in the interval between William's death and the re-establishment of the press by Dinah, Mr. Coney was returned thanks by the House for his fast-day sermon,¹ but doubtless for the reason that there was no press in operation in Maryland at that time, he was not asked to have his discourse printed. One year later, however, three days after Dinah had petitioned for leave to print, the Upper House ordered that "Mr. Couey (*sic*) be desired to Print his Sermon preached yesterday,"² an action which was concurred in by the delegates on the following day. The discovery of a copy of this sermon or of any other imprint from Dinah Nuthead's press would be an event of importance in American typographical history, inasmuch as it would constitute the first known American imprint from a press conducted by a woman.

No further references to Dinah Nuthead's activities are to be found in the Assembly proceedings, a circumstance from which one must conclude that the Nuthead press of Annapolis had ceased operations or even had been removed from the Province. It may be that Dinah had employed her press for other purposes than those described in the bond, with the result that she had been prohibited its use; or it may be that, illiterate herself, she had been unable to procure for the conduct of her establishment that rare bird in the colonies, a journeyman printer, and in consequence had been compelled to give over entirely her venture into a difficult and uncertain business. The probability that it was just at this time, however, that she married a second husband must not be overlooked in seeking for the cause of her withdrawal from the business of printing.

The date of Dinah Nuthead's second marriage is uncertain, but sometime before the month of December 1700, she married one Manus Devoran of Anne Arundel County, who dying in this month left his personalty to his daughter Catherine, and to his children-in-law, that is his step-children, William and Susan Nuthead.³ His wife and executrix submitted her account

¹ L. H. J., May 13, 1695, *Archives of Maryland*, 19: 178, where date is incorrectly given as 18th.

² U. H. J., May 8, 1696, *Archives of Maryland*, 19: 313, 316 and 362. This sermon also is recorded in Ethan Allen's Ms. *List of Works by Maryland Clergymen*, in the Maryland Diocesan Library, but Dr. Allen had seen no copy.

³ *Maryland Calendar of Wills*, 2: 210.