

"A Penny-Post wanted.

A Man of good Character, well qualified to perform the Business of a Penny-Post, or Letter-Carrier, in this Town, will meet with good Encouragement by applying to M. K. Goddard, at the Post-Office.⁵

Ebenezer Hazard, the Postmaster General, testified to her ability as Postmistress in a letter to General Horatio Gates:

"... Even now some Embarrassment attends it [remitting a sum of money to Gates], for Miss Goddard (who is Postmaster at Baltimore) is so extremely punctual in her Remittances that she does not wait for the Expiration of the Quarter, but sends on Money from time to time as she gets it, & at the End of the Quarter we are generally in her Debt: . . ."⁶

Her account book from 1786 to 1789 marked "Letters received into the Post-Office at Baltimore" shows that she was a careful and conscientious public servant.⁷

As is generally the case with those who serve the community, she did not receive public tribute for her years of work until she had been dismissed from office. The bitterness resulting from this painful incident in her career must have been lessened by the unusual testimony which the leading citizens of Baltimore gave her in a letter to the Postmaster General.⁸ She was confronted by John White of Annapolis in November 1789, with the order to deliver up her office to him. No reasons for this surprising action were give her, even by Jonathan Burrell, who had signed the order and was at that time in Baltimore. The explanation later given by Burrell when he was waited upon by a group of merchants was that certain post offices in the surrounding district were to be put under the supervision of the Deputy Postmaster of Baltimore and "more travelling might be necessary than a woman could undertake." The petition of the merchants and citizens of Baltimore to Osgood, signed by over two hundred and thirty men, asking him to reconsider his decision was not answered until January 7, 1790. He refused to reinstate her and offered no other explanation in his reply than that he was responsible for the conduct of his deputies and "In all such cases, there seems to be a peculiar Propriety in permitting the Officer to exercise his own Judgment freely."⁹ In the meantime she wrote President Washington on

⁵ *Maryland Journal*, December 30, 1783.

⁶ Hazard to Gates, New York, December 23, 1789. Emmet Collection at the New York Public Library.

⁷ Presented to the Maryland Historical Society in 1883 by Colonel William Goddard, Chancellor of Brown University.

⁸ The prominent citizens of Baltimore petitioned Samuel Osgood, Postmaster General, to reinstate Mary K. Goddard. The petition was signed by over 230 men, including the Governor of Maryland and the French consul. It was dated Baltimore, November 12, 1789. Copy of original in Senate Library and photostat at Maryland Historical Society.

⁹ A copy of the reply dated New York, January 7, 1790, with observations on it, probably written by Mary K. Goddard is in the Senate Library. Photostat at Maryland Historical Society.