
Mary Katherine Goddard, Printer and Postmistress of Baltimore

December 23, 1789, asking him to overrule the decision of the Postmaster General.¹⁰ He replied that he was unable to interfere in the appointment of Deputy Postmasters but that he would refer her memorial to the Postmaster General.¹¹ In desperation, she appealed to the Senate of the United States on January 29, 1790. She did not conceal her natural resentment at the treatment which she had received after fourteen years of service during which she had made personal financial sacrifices in order to meet the expenses of the Post Office.

“... although Mr. White who has succeeded her might doubtless have been highly meritorious, in the different Offices, he has sustained, yet, she humbly conceives, he was not more worthy of public notice & protection in his Station, than She has uniformly been in hers. It must therefore become a matter of serious importance to her, if Government can find no means of rewarding this Gentleman's Services, but by taking her little Office, established by her own Industry in the best years of her life, & whereon depended all her future Prospects of subsistence.

“... although it has been suggested that the Income of her Office, for a few years last past, has made her amends for her former assiduity care and expence, yet She would beg leave to observe, that from the many failures which have distressed the Community since the Peace, She has met with her Share of losses and misfortunes, a Truth well known to all her Neighbours...”¹²

Shortly after his appointment, John White died and she was suggested as the logical person for the position. In spite of the support of her warm friends in Baltimore, she was not reappointed then. As early as May 21, 1790, it was a foregone conclusion that there was no hope of her being reinstated by Osgood. R. Denny in writing to O. H. Williams, collector of the Baltimore port, on that date said:

“I am Just informed of the Death of Mr. White DP Master at Baltimore, and as I am well informed Miss Goddard will not be appointed to hold the Office, I am induced to make Application.”¹³

John Hamilton and Alexander Furnival were successively appointed to succeed White.¹⁴ In the official history of the Baltimore post office the erroneous statement was made that:

“Through the influence used by her friends in Baltimore, Miss Goddard was restored to her old position by direct edict of President Washington on December 31st, 1793, and she held that position during the life of Washington.”¹⁵

¹⁰ The memorial is in the papers of the Continental Congress, 78, Vol. 10, 617-619, in the Library of Congress.

¹¹ The Washington Letter Books, January 6, 1790. In Library of Congress.

¹² “To the Honorable the Senate of the United States,” January 29, 1790. The original is in the Senate Library. Photostat in the Maryland Historical Society. As Deputy Postmaster she was entitled to 20% of the annual receipts of the Post Office.

¹³ O. H. Williams Papers, Vol. III, 215, at the Maryland Historical Society.

¹⁴ Ernest Green, *A Brief History of the Baltimore Post Office from 1773 to 1930*. Baltimore, 1930. Griffith mentions A. Furnival as Postmaster rather than Furbish.

¹⁵ Green, *op. cit.*, page 9. No evidence of her reappointment has been found in the contemporary newspapers or in the cataloged manuscripts at the Library of Congress.