



FOUNDING FEMALES Female Qualifying Ancestor Index

Female Ancestor Number: 122

Name: Nuthead, Dinah (—)

Dates: (—) - aft 3 Apr 1707)

Colonial Society: MD

Date added to ROA: 4/11/2024

Service: Woman of Distinction: Business Owner/Printer, 1696

Authority: Wroth, Lawrence C., A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland 1686-1776 (Baltimore: Typothetae of Baltimore, 1922), 1-5, 10-15; Dexter, Elisabeth Anthony, Colonial Women of Affairs, A Study of Women in Business and Professions in America before 1776 (Boston & New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), 166-167.

Biography:

Dinah was probably born about 1660 in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

She and her husband, William had two children together. William was a printer in Virginia until printing was prohibited after which he moved to St. Mary's, Maryland in 1686. His press printed primarily government forms operating from 1686 to 1695 when he died.

Dinah Nuthead appeared before the Prerogative Court after his death requesting to be appointed to administer his estate. She inherited his estate which was quite poor but included a "printing press". She moved herself and the press to the new colonial Capitol in Annapolis. She was given permission in May 1696 upon the posting of bond with two men, to "*exercise and imploy her printing press and letter to noe other use than for the printing of blank bills bonds writs warrants of Attorney Letters of Admin and other like blanks as above.*" Only five blanks attributable to Nuthead's press exist. It is impossible to determine how long Dinah operated her press. It is widely believed that she was illiterate having made her mark on a government document.

She married second Manus Devoran before December 1700 who died within a year.

She married her third husband Sebastian Oley in 1701 with whom she had a third child, Sebastian.