Margaret Knight.

Published in: Salem Press Primary Encyclopedia, 2022, Topic Overviews K-5

Inventor

- **Born:** February 14, 1838
- **Birthplace:** York, Maine
- **Died:** October 12, 1914
- **Place of death:** Framingham, Massachusetts

Margaret Knight was an American inventor. Her most famous invention was a machine that folded paper bags. Margaret Knight invented many other useful machines. She was one of the most successful woman inventors. She received over twenty patents for her inventions.

Margaret E. Knight was born in York, Maine on February 14, 1838. Her parents were James Knight and Hannah Teal. Her father died when Knight was very young. Her mother took in sewing to support the family.

Margaret Knight was very creative when she was a girl. She used her father's toolbox to make things for her family. She made a foot warmer for her mother. She made toys for her two brothers.

When Knight was eleven, her mother moved the family to Manchester, New Hampshire. Her mother and brothers got jobs in textile mills. Knight got a job in a mill when she turned twelve.

Knight saw a terrible accident one day in the mill. A shuttle from a loom flew across the room. It hit one of the young workers in the head.

The accident gave Knight an idea. If there were metal guards on the looms, the shuttles would not fly off. Then they could not hurt workers.

Knight drew a picture of her idea. She showed it to an engineer who worked in the mill. The engineer thought it was a good invention. Metal guards were put on all the looms. These guards protected the workers.

Knight worked in many more factories. She then took a job in Springfield, Massachusetts. This job was in a paper bag factory.

At this time, machines made paper bags. But the bags did not stand up by themselves. Knight invented a machine that would fold and glue the bags in a different way. The bags had flat bottoms. This allowed them to stand up by themselves.

Knight took her plans for the machine to a Boston company. They made a machine out of iron using the plans. Knight took this machine and her plans to the patent office.

When Knight applied for a patent, she found that someone else had already submitted the idea. Charles Annan had seen Knight's plans. He had stolen them and applied for a patent himself.

Knight took Annan to court. She presented all of her plans for the paper bag machine. The judge ruled that the machine was her idea. She was able to get the patent for this invention.

Knight made changes to her paper bag machine to make it better. She then started the Eastern Paper Bag Company. The company used her machine to make paper bags.

Knight made many more inventions. She invented machines to cut out leather soles for shoes. She invented a new type of window frame. This window frame could swing outwards. She also designed improvements to different types of engines.

Knight worked on inventions until her death at the age of seventy-six. She made over ninety inventions. She received patents for over twenty of those inventions.

Bibliography

Books

McCully, Emily Arnold. *Marvelous Mattie: How Margaret E. Knight Became an Inventor.* New York: Farrar, 2006. Print.

Roehm, Michelle. *Girls Who Rocked the World 2.* Hillsboro: Beyond Words, 2000. Print.

Weatherford, Doris. "Margaret E. Knight." *National Women's History Museum.* National Women's History Museum, 2007. Web. 14 Feb. 2016. .

Websites

Weatherford, Doris. "Margaret E. Knight." *National Women's History Museum.* National Women's History Museum, 2007. Web. 14 Feb. 2016. .

Copyright of Salem Press Primary Encyclopedia is the property of Salem Press. The copyright in an individual article may be maintained by the author in certain cases. Content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use. Source: Salem Press Primary Encyclopedia, 2022 2 p Item: 110642293

This document was generated by a user of EBSCO. Neither EBSCO nor the user who have generated this content is responsible for the content of this printout.
© 2024 EBSCO Information Services, LLC. All rights reserved.
EBSCO | 10 Estes Street | Ipswich, MA 01938