

### Transcription

Albemarle County

Court }

To the hon[ora]ble the L[or]ds Pr[o]prieters deputys  
& the Rest of the worshipfull Com[m]ission[e]rs  
now setting for the County of Albemarle

The petit[ion] of Ann Stewarts humbly

Sheweth

th[a]t yo[u]r petition[e]r being possessed of a Considerable  
estate & marrying one Jno. Steward who hath  
squandered & made away all the estat so th[a]t she  
is alltogether w[i]thout a maintainans: but w[hi]ch  
she is asisted w[i]th by her Children: & w[i]th litle  
she is Capable to gett of herselfe: she being  
likewise a Cripple & w[i]thout on[e] of her leges.

Now such is the Case th[a]t many persons do  
aleage th[a]t the aboves[ai]d Steward is much  
in debt to them: so th[a]t yo[u]r petition[e]r is discouraged  
so from endeavouring for a livelyhood for  
herselfe & Children, but the Creditt of the s[ai]d  
Steward should lay Claim to it for paym[en]t  
of their debts lest I be secured against them  
by yo[u]r hon[ors] & Worships (will please to  
provid to the Contrarye w[hi]ch I humbly ^hope^ you will &  
yo[u]r petiti[one]r shall as in dutty ever pray.

### Reflect & Discuss

Only widowed or single white women could own property under English common law. Married white women held no property rights. Their legal status was subsumed under that of their husbands (source: [NCpedia](#)). How do you think Ann Steward's situation fits within this legal system?

Though Ann is facing a hardship, she is able to petition the colonial court. Why is that? How might her experience be different compared to other women in the colony at the same time?

Individual Rights and Accusations: Petition of Ann Steward,  
1692



May 3th 92 Ann: Steward

