

## Transcription

To the Honourable the Justices of the Grand court the  
humble petition of Mary Val[]away humbly sheweth  
That wheras your petitioner having some years agoe bound  
her son William Jackson to Mr Thomas Snoden late of  
P(re)equimins precinct, and Thomas Snoden dying, Doctor James  
Williamson  
by marrying His widow is now become his master, and by his harsh  
Inhumane usage obliges him to take such courses, that unless some  
speedy stop is put thereto, may terminate in his ruine. Your petitioner  
therefore humbly prays that your honour's will be pleas'd to order  
the said Doctor Williamson to sell the Lads time to some other -  
Master who may treat him with more humanity, or otherwise as to  
your honour's shall seem meet, and your poor petitioner shall  
as in duty bound for ever pray etc [&c]  
Mary Vallaway  
[... to give Hour ... Copy]

## Reflect & Discuss

Mary and her son William have different last names, what might this suggest about the circumstances of William's indenture?

Why would Thomas Snoden's widow's new husband become master of William Jackson?

What does Mary Vallaway mean by "terminate in his ruine?"

Mary's plea for a master to "treat him with more humanity" resonates today. Think about how relationships between ordinary people and those in power have changed—or stayed the same.

How might William's circumstances be different if he weren't indentured? Or if he were enslaved?

Why do you think William's mother made this petition, instead of William?