

To his Excellency the Governor of the State of Maryland
the petition of John Soward of Queen Anne County, most
humbly sheweth, that he is a youth of about seventeen
years of age; that he has been and was at the time of
the commission of the offence herein set forth, assist-
ing his mother (a widow), in carrying on a farm;
that the management of the lands on the farm
necessarily devolved on him: that he one day ordered
one of these negroes Annrettas to her work, that she
refused to go to her work, upon which your peti-
tioner attempted to chastise her for her insolence
and to coerce her attention to her business, that she
immediately thereupon turned on your petitioner and
being older and stronger was about to beat him,
whereupon in order to protect himself he drew
a knife and stabbed her which caused her
death - But in as much as the above facts can
not appear in behalf of your petitioner should he
be brought to his trial, but only the fact of his
having killed said negro & that too with an
instrument from which malice aforesaid
might & would be inferred, he prays your Ex-
cellency to take his case into consideration;
to think of the aggravation, his youth &c; and
to grant him, that he shall be free and discharged
from any trial, and he will as in duty bound
ever pray &c.

John Soward

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