

To the Honorable Speaker and Legislature of Virginia.

The Petition of Mary Alexander, widow of David Alexander late of the Town of Petersburg, humbly representing to your Honorable body, that her late husband departed this life sometime early in the Spring of the present year (1815) intestate and without children, leaving no relations in this country capable of inheriting his Estate at the time of his death, and none in Europe other than aliens (if any at all); that her Husband died considerably indebted, and that the Administrator upon his Estate has publickly sold the whole of his personal property of every description, consisting of valuable negroes &c. to the amount of Three thousand Dollars or thereabouts, as will more fully appear by his Certificate herewith annexed and prayed to be examined as a part of this Petition (Marked A) the proceeds of which property she from the best information has reason to believe, will be entirely consumed in the payment of the debts aforesaid, that your Petitioner has been living with her said husband in the Town of Petersburg for upwards of fifteen years (having been married in 1799) most happily and comfortably, always using and exerting her best endeavours, to promote and increase the prosperity of her husband by frugality, and attention to Economy; that her husband departed this life suddenly and unexpectedly, not only to your Petitioner, but to his friends and acquaintances, before he had time to reflect probably upon the danger of his situation, or it is reasonable to suppose, that as he has no relation in this Country capable of inheriting his property, that he would have given it to your Petitioner (even if he had been wanting) in affection and regard for her) which never was the case) in preference to permitting his real Estate to Escheat to the Commonwealth, which consists principally of a new unfinished two story brick house, with necessary out houses, lying in that part of the Town of Petersburg called Bolling-Brook Street (upon the lower end thereof) That your Petitioner, in consequence of the sale of all the Personal Estate of her husband has been ~~left~~ in a forlorn and destitute situation, considerably advanced in life, ~~and~~ ^{cut off} from those comforts and enjoyments she has been hitherto accustomed to, and left entirely to depend upon her own personal exertions for support and maintenance, a situation the more distressing because the prime of her life has passed away, without the necessity of personal labor or inconveniences; that your Petitioner, is a Native of Scotland in the Kingdom of Great Britain, but came to this State in the year 1792, and married after being here some few years as before stated; that she is credibly informed that the Real Estate of her husband is liable to Escheat to the Commonwealth, in consequence of the want of Citizen representations capable of receiving and inheriting the same, that she cannot suppose that the Legislature of Virginia would permit the property of her Husband to be so disposed of, merely because she was not at the time of his death a Citizen of this Country, the Idea never presented itself, that it was necessary for her to take the Oath of allegiance, never hearing of woman's adopting that course, and believing that the law was intended to operate entirely upon the male part of the community, and not on the female or she could heretofore at any period for eighteen or twenty years (the greater part of the latter period living in the Town of Petersburg) have taken the Oath most willingly and conveniently, intending always to remain permanently in this country, and she is informed that a female becoming a citizen by taking in bow the Oaths required, is a most novel and uncommon occurrence, which ceremony she however has gone through since the death of her Husband, as will more fully appear by a certificate herewith annexed and asked to be examined, if necessary; she never thinking for a moment before, that it was customary or required by the laws of the land. That her husband has at this time a nephew in this State who was an alien at the time of his death, and was put upon that footing and dealt with as such during the war, but your Petitioner has been credibly informed, that although in this Country for several years, he never thought it necessary to become a Citizen of the United States untill since the death of his uncle, with a view it is supposed of endeavouring to acquire the real property of which her Husband died possessed of, and which has been described above. That your Honorable Body will not and cannot hesitate to say, that your Petitioner has a better natural claim to the property of her husband than any other living, and that none but the children of the deceased could have been better entitled (if he had died leaving any) Your Petitioner therefore prays, that your Honorable body will consider her peculiarly distressing, forlorn and destitute situation, and that as she has no means of support left her, that you will pass a Law specially and particularly vesting in your Petitioner all the Commonwealth's right, claim and interest, in and to the real Estate of which her husband died seized and possessed, lying in the Town of Petersburg upon the lower end of Bolling-Brook street = partly liable to Escheat, when there is a natural Representative of the deceased, who is only prevented from at once taking it, from the want of some formal ^{legal} ceremony &c. And your Petitioner will ever pray &c.

Mary Alexander

Mary Alexanders,
Petition To The Legislature
of
Virginia
Decr. 6th 1815.
ref^d to C. off.

Reasonable 8th
Decr. 1815

Bill drawn

Dumond