

# Iowa: Leader in Civil Rights and Equality

## How does Iowa demonstrate, “Our liberties we prize, and our rights we will maintain?”

Iowa has a proud record of laws and court decisions that have established precedents that expanded civil rights and equality before they were adopted on the national level. The first case heard by the Iowa Supreme Court, the Case of Ralph in 1839, declared that a slave who came to the state legally could not be forced to return to his or her master because Iowa did not allow slavery. That came a decade before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the Dred Scott decision that slaves were property, could be taken anywhere and had no rights. It took the Civil War to end the question of slavery. After Iowa desegregated schools in 1868, it took the U.S. Supreme Court almost 90 years to reach the same conclusion in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

### Iowa and Expanding Civil Rights

Iowa was also one of the first states to grant African-American men the right to vote. In 1868, Iowa voters (all white men at the time) approved a constitutional amendment that removed the word “white” as a qualification for voting. While Iowa-born and educated Carrie Chapman Catt became the leader of the national organization promoting women’s suffrage, Iowa was not in the forefront of states granting that right. Iowa voters, still all male, defeated an amendment in 1916 to extend voting rights to women, but the Iowa legislature approved a national Constitutional amendment for women’s suffrage opening the 1920 elections to both sexes. Discrimination based on sex or gender orientation rose to prominence in the latter half of the 20th century. Iowa voters twice defeated an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) designed to prevent discrimination against women. In the referenda of 1980 and 1992, opponents helped to defeat the ERA proposal by arguing that it would advance gay rights when laws could not discriminate based on sex. In 2009, however, Iowa became the third state to grant same-sex couples the right to marriage by a ruling of the Iowa Supreme Court.

### Separate and Unequal

However, it is important to look beyond the laws themselves to the way they were implemented — or not — in daily life. In Iowa’s territory and early statehood days, there were laws that placed severe restrictions on African Americans wanting to move into the state or live here. They had to post bonds to insure that they would not become public charges and were denied basic rights guaranteed to whites, like the right to serve on juries. While Iowa law prohibited public accommodations like trains, buses, restaurants, and theaters from discriminating on the basis of race, in practice African Americans often faced barriers. Many schools prohibited African Americans from playing on sports teams. Some communities even had “sunset laws” that required African Americans to leave town by evening. African-American students at the state universities were denied housing in school dorms until African-American veterans returning from World War II demanded and overturned that restriction. Edna Griffin led a 1948 protest against Katz Drug Store in Des Moines when it refused to serve her ice cream at its lunch counter. When she sued based on Iowa law, she won but was awarded \$1. As late as the 1960s, some theaters required African Americans to sit in the balcony and some restaurants refused to serve African-American customers.

### Refugee Resettlement

In other ways, however, Iowa has been a leader as an open and inclusive society. In the 1970s, Governor Robert Ray inaugurated a resettlement program for Vietnamese and Laotian refugees displaced by the civil wars in those countries. When Ray traveled to Southeast Asia and viewed the horrible conditions in refugee camps, he made a commitment to organize resources to help them establish new lives in Iowa. He mobilized churches and welfare groups to help refugees find housing, learn English and get jobs. Today, many of the refugees and their children have distinguished themselves in their chosen professions.

One must consider both the laws that are on the books and the ways that they are implemented when evaluating Iowa’s record. Attitudes toward race, gender and other factors have changed over the years, and Iowa has reflected

those changes. Still, the long-term trend is toward eliminating barriers toward the full participation of all. Both the national creed in the Declaration of Independence that all “are created equal” and Iowa’s motto that “our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain” have been powerful ideals by which we work toward creating a just society.

## Supporting Questions

How do events from Iowa’s history show a pattern of trailblazing for civil rights and equality on a national level?

- [Letter by Iowa State Football Player Jack Trice Written from the Curtis Hotel, October 5, 1923 \(Document\)](#)
- [C.L. Brewer’s Letter Barring Football Player Jack Trice from Playing at the University of Missouri, October 8, 1923 \(Document\)](#)
- [Letter from S.W. Beyer to C.L. Brewer and the University of Missouri about Iowa State’s Jack Trice, October 10, 1923 \(Document\)](#)
- [Mother Mosque of America in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, October 1950 \(Image\)](#)
- [National Registry of Historic Places Application for the Moslem Temple, 1996 \(Document\)](#)
- [IPTV’s “World War II Veteran: Mary Adams,” 2008 \(Video\)](#)
- [“The Life and Legacy of Jack Trice” Essay from The Annals of Iowa, 2010 \(Document\)](#)

How has Iowa’s state government changed or enforced state law to support civil rights and equality?

- [Anti-Miscegenation Laws in Iowa, between 1839 and 1959 \(Document\)](#)
- [“State v. Amana Society: 1906,” 2018 \(Document\)](#)

In what ways has Iowa modeled upholding civil rights and equality for the national stage?

- [Iowa Supreme Court Ruling on Montgomery v. Ralph, 1839 \(Document\)](#)
- [Alexander Clark’s Petition to Allow Immigration of Free Slaves into Iowa, 1855 \(Document\)](#)
- [U.S. Supreme Court Majority Opinion on Dred Scott v. John Sanford Case, March 6, 1857 \(Document\)](#)
- [“Since it is my right, I would like to have it: Edna Griffin and the Katz Drug Store Desegregation Movement” Essay from The Annals of Iowa, 2008 \(Document\)](#)
- [IPTV’s “Alexander Clark and the First Successful School Desegregation Case in the United States,” 2012 \(Video\)](#)

## \*Printable Image and Document Guide

### Additional Resources

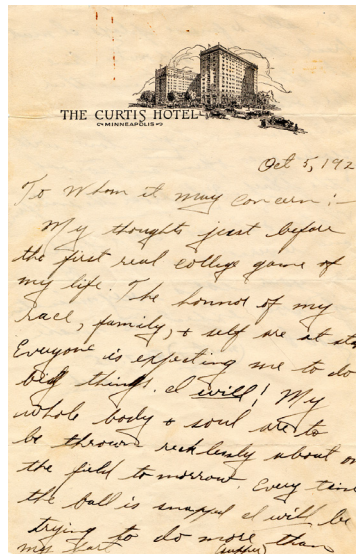
**[Varnum v. Brien](#):** This document is the amicus brief filed in Varnum v. Brien, an Iowa Supreme Court Case that led to the unanimous decision by the Court that the state’s limitation of marriage to opposite-sex couples was unconstitutional. Because of this court case, Iowa became the third state in the nation to legalize same-sex marriage.

**[IPTV’s “Lost in History: Alexander Clark” Video](#):** This resource was created by Iowa Public Television and it tells the story of Iowa civil rights leader Alexander Clark. The video also highlights the effort being made in the past decade to bring Clark’s story back to the forefront of Iowa’s history in civil rights.

**[IPTV’s “Ralph Montgomery”](#):** This webpage from Iowa Public Television summarizes the story of of the court case Ralph v. Montgomery. Ralph was born into slavery in Missouri, was able to make an agreement to work for his freedom in Iowa. When his former slave owner attempted to apprehend him in Iowa for not paying for his freedom the agreed amount, the Iowa Supreme Court ultimately ruled in Ralph’s favor that he was a free man.

**[IPTV’s “Alexander Clark and an African-American’s Fight for Civil Rights”](#):** This online webpage about Alexander Clark for Iowa Public Television includes multiple videos about one of Iowa’s most prominent civil rights leaders.

## Letter by Iowa State Football Player Jack Trice Written from the Curtis Hotel, October 5, 1923



Courtesy of Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives, Trice, Jack, "Last Letter," 5 October 1923

### Description

This letter was written by Jack Trice from the Curtis Hotel the night before his second game of the season for Iowa State College. Trice was the first African-American athlete to compete at Iowa State. In the letter, he described the significance of him playing in the game, and what he would face during the contest. During the football game against the University of Minnesota, Trice sustained severe injuries that later led to his death.

### [Transcript of Jack Trice's Letter from the Curtis Hotel](#)

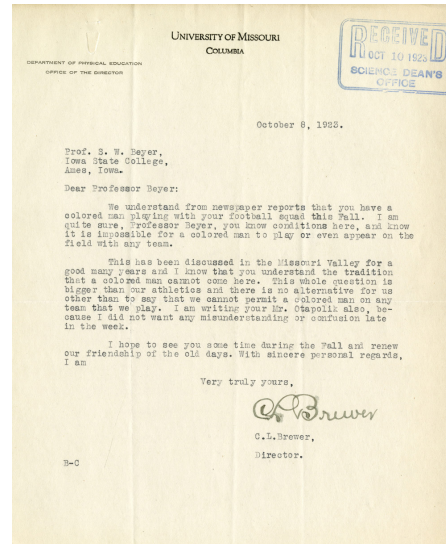
### Text-Dependent Questions

- As you read the letter, what do you feel are the main points Jack Trice is trying to state?
- Why do you feel he wanted to write this letter before this game? Do you think he understood his role and significance in playing this game for Iowa State College? What text evidence leads you to this conclusion?
- Read the [letter that C.L. Brewers](#) wrote on October 8, 1923 and compare it to this letter. Based C.L. Brewers letter, why do you think Jack Trice would predict his own death? What textual evidence would support your claim?

### Citation Information

Trice, Jack, "Last Letter," 5 October 1923. [Courtesy of Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives](#)

## C.L. Brewer's Letter Barring Football Player Jack Trice from Playing at the University of Missouri, October 8, 1923



Courtesy of Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives, Brewer, Chester L., "Chester L. Brewer letter to Samuel W. Beyer regarding football game at University of Missouri," 8 October 1923

### Description

This letter was sent from C.L. Brewer, director of the Department of Physical Education at the University of Missouri, to Iowa State College and Professor S. W. Beyer. Brewer's letter stated that Jack Trice, Iowa State's first African-American athlete, would not be allowed to play in their upcoming game between the two colleges.

### [Transcript of C.L. Brewer's Letter Barring Jack Trice from Playing at the University of Missouri](#)

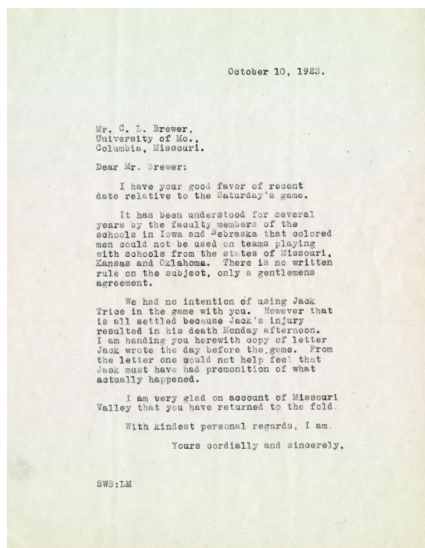
### Text-Dependent Questions

- What is the purpose of this letter?
- Why do you think that Brewer would use phrases like, "you know the conditions here" and "I know that you understand the tradition that a colored man cannot come here?"
- Do you think that Iowa State College would have brought and tried to play Jack Trice if been able to play? What makes you think this?
- How does this quote from [The Life and Legacy of Jack Trice essay](#) help to underscore what would happen on the football field: "African Americans who played for predominantly white institutions faced extraordinary hazards and abuse."

### Citation Information

Brewer, Chester L., "Chester L. Brewer letter to Samuel W. Beyer regarding football game at University of Missouri," 8 October 1923. [Courtesy of Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives](#)

## Letter from S.W. Beyer to C.L. Brewer and the University of Missouri about Iowa State's Jack Trice, October 10, 1923



Courtesy of Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives, Beyer, Samuel W., "Samuel W. Beyer letter to Chester L. Brewer, regarding Trice's death," 10 October 1923

### Description

This letter was sent from S.W. Beyer to Director C.L. Brewer and the University of Missouri responding to their "request" that Jack Trice, Iowa State College's first African-American athlete, not play in their upcoming football game. Beyer informs Brewer that Trice would not be attending the game because of his death, which was caused by injuries he received during a game against the University of Minnesota. Enclosed in the letter was a copy of a letter written by Jack Trice the night before the game where he sustained the fatal injuries that led to his death.

### [Transcript of S.W. Beyer's Letter to University of Missouri's C.L. Brewer](#)

### Text-Dependent Questions

- This is in response to the [letter Brewer wrote two days earlier](#). What do you feel S.W. Beyer is trying to state in this letter?
- Why do you think he would include a copy of the [letter written by Jack Trice](#)? What do you think Beyer means when he states, "... one would not help feel that Jack must have had premonition of what actually happened?"
- Based on the correspondence between these two schools, do you feel that Jack Trice playing on the Iowa State College varsity football team was "trailblazing" for college athletics? Why or why not?

### Citation Information

Beyer, Samuel W., "Samuel W. Beyer letter to Chester L. Brewer, regarding Trice's death," 10 October 1923. [Courtesy of Iowa State University Library Special Collections and University Archives](#)

## Mother Mosque of America in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, October 1950



Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, October 1950

### Description

This photograph is of the Mother Mosque of America, also once known as Moslem Temple and the Rose of Fraternity Lodge. This building is the first and the oldest surviving mosque in the United States. The photo was taken in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in October 1950.

### Text-Dependent Questions

- This is a photograph of the first and the oldest surviving mosque in the United States. What might be the significance of the name “Mother Mosque” be? Why “Mother?”
- What do you notice about this picture that makes Mother Mosque unique compared to other buildings of worship you have seen in Iowa?
- Why might Muslims in the United States, and in particular Iowa, choose Iowa as the location for the first mosque in the United States?
- Why do you think this building is significant enough to list on the [National Registry of Historical Places](#)?

# National Registry of Historic Places Application for the Moslem Temple, 1996

1996 April 10, 1996

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

MOSLEM TEMPLE  
Linn County, Iowa

Section number 7 Page 1

The Moslem Temple (now the Mother Mosque) is a simple, one-story wood frame "prairie schoolhouse style" building with a concrete basement. The walls are finished with Vinyl siding and the flat roof is asphalt. At the front entrance, ten steps lead to an extended foyer. Ateop sits a dome capped with the traditional Islamic symbol of a crescent, marking the building as a place of worship. The mosque is located in an old residential area in Cedar Rapids Northwest district (Time Check), facing west onto 9th Street NW between "L" and "M" Streets. The mosque's interior is simple, with walls painted white with wood trim on the first floor, which contains a prayer area, a classroom, an area for ablutions, and two offices. The basement, finished with gray wood paneling, contains a hall, used for social functions and meetings, and a kitchen. (See sketches submitted.)

The property is in excellent condition, partially due to restoration work in 1991 and 1992 to correct damage sustained the preceding decade when the property fell into disuse and disrepair. The original foundation and structure remain largely intact, although the roof had decayed and had to be replaced. Significant renovations were also undertaken to the interior. Despite this work, the historic integrity of the building survives. First, the building retains the same location as during its period of significance. As in that period, the setting is a residential neighborhood. The external design of the mosque is little altered. The Islamic dome and crescent, which were removed at one point when a church occupied the building, have been restored (the dome is purely ornamental and lacks any structural significance), and the wide clapboard siding which had been used in earlier renovations was replaced with narrower siding conforming to the original design. The dome designs over the windows have also been replaced. A canopy was added over the front steps with the name of the mosque; this addition does not significantly detract from the integrity of the original design. During restoration, the internal design of the mosque was kept as close as possible to the original design. Thus, the prayer area occupies the same space as it originally did; there is a classroom now where religious instruction took place from 1934 through the 1960s; the basement social hall and kitchen are still used for social and community functions. Some minor modifications were made in the restoration, such as the transformation of a former storage closet into an area for ablutions and the installation of a stairway elevator chair to meet disabled accessibility requirements; however, the overall design maintains its historical integrity.

The materials used in the building's restoration are generally either the same as or similar to those originally used (for example, the siding noted above). In some cases, however, the use of different materials, such as wood paneling in the basement and linoleum in the kitchen, was dictated by cost and availability considerations. The workmanship in the building is similar to that used in the original construction, although there are minor differences of style. It is in terms of the last two categories of association and feeling, however, that the historic integrity of the mosque is most visible. The mosque retains the overall simplicity and atmosphere intended by the original builders, and the continuity in the prayer area and social hall space is evident.

Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, 1996

## Description

In 1996, the Moslem Temple submitted a registration form for the National Registry of Historical Places for the Mother Mosque of America in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The application was accepted in March of 1996.

[Full Transcript of National Registry of Historic Places Application for the Moslem Temple](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from National Registry of Historic Places Application for the Moslem Temple](#)

## Text-Dependent Questions

- What is the historical and religious significance of the [Moslem Temple](#)?
- Why is this significant to note for state of Iowa?
- What information from this document supports the argument that this historical place of worship helped to "show a pattern of trailblazing for civil rights and equality?"

## IPTV's "World War II Veteran: Mary Adams," 2008



Courtesy of Iowa Public Television, "World War II Veteran: Mary Adams," Iowa Pathways - Iowa Public Television, 2008

### Description

This is an interview that aired on Iowa Public Television in 2008, where World War II veteran Mary Adams described her experience enlisting in the Women's Army Corps (WAC). After six weeks of basic training, she worked in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, typed the orders for the men going overseas. She stayed in the WAC for two years and 22 days.

### Text-Dependent Questions

- Before you watch the video, what do you expect to hear about Mary Adams and her experience in the military?
- As you watch the video, were you surprised? If you were surprised, what does that say about how our society views women and military service? If you were not surprised by what you saw, explain why not.
- Based on what you heard and saw, do you feel that women like Mary Adams were treated the same as military men? What evidence do you have from the video to support your answer?

### Citation Information

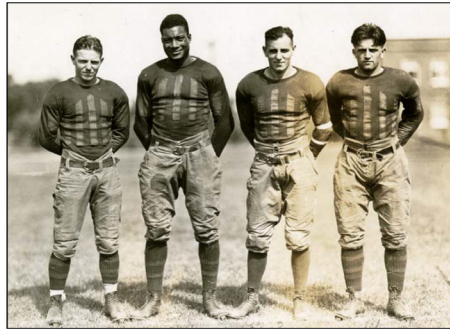
"World War II Veteran: Mary Adams," *Iowa Pathways* - Iowa Public Television, 2008. [Courtesy of Iowa Public Television](#)



## “The Life and Legacy of Jack Trice” Essay from *The Annals of Iowa*, 2010

# The Annals of Iowa

Volume 69, Number 4  
Fall 2010



A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF HISTORY

Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, Schwieder, Dorothy, *The Annals of Iowa*, Vol. 69, No. 4, pp. 379-418, 2010

### Description

This *Annals of Iowa* essay is a written account by Dorothy Schwieder, a retired history professor from Iowa State University (ISU), that details the life of Jack Trice, Iowa State's first African-American athlete and one of the first African-American athletes to play for a major college in the U.S. Trice tragically died in 1923 as a result of an injury he suffered during his second game for the football team against the University of Minnesota. This account highlights the hurdles Trice faced on and off the field, the events preceding his fatal injuries and the effort made after his death to recognize his story among students at ISU.

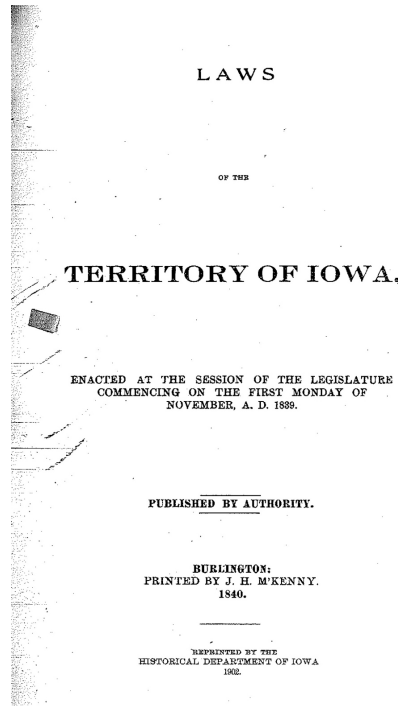
[Full Transcript of “The Life and Legacy of Jack Trice” \*Annals of Iowa\* Essay](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from “The Life and Legacy of Jack Trice” \*Annals of Iowa\* Essay](#)

### Text-Dependent Questions

- What were some of the unique circumstances Jack Trice faced both on and off the field at Iowa State College between 1922 and 23?
- How did other colleges who played against Iowa State College treat both the game, and specifically, Jack Trice?
- After reading about the details of Jack Trice's last football game, read the [letter he wrote the night before the game](#). What resonates with you about his letter, description of the game and his medical treatment?
- How was Jack Trice's career (and his death as a result of injuries on the field) significant to the rest of the nation and collegiate sports when it comes to equality?

## Anti-Miscegenation Laws in Iowa, between 1839 and 1959



Courtesy of the Law Library, State Library of Iowa, "Anti-Miscegenation Laws in Iowa," between 1839 and 1959

### Description

This document contains three different sources that all contain anti-miscegenation laws in Iowa and across the United States between 1839 and 1959. Anti-miscegenation laws are laws that enforce racial segregation at the level of marriage and intimate relationships by criminalizing interracial marriage between members of different races. The three sources in this document are: the 1839 Laws of the Territory of Iowa, the Iowa Code of Law of 1851 and the Yale Law Journal of 1959.

[Full Transcript of Anti-Miscegenation Laws in Iowa](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from Anti-Miscegenation Laws in Iowa](#)

### Text-Dependent Questions

- What did the [territory of Iowa law](#) say in 1839 about marriages between whites and people of color?
- By 1851 Iowa had repealed its miscegenation law for marriages. Why do you think
- As you read [480 Appendix 1 and 482 States Formerly Prohibiting Miscegenation](#), how does Iowa's omission of the anti-miscegenation laws compare to other states? Why is this significant to Iowa's statement of "our rights we will maintain?"

### Citation Information

"Anti-Miscegenation Laws in Iowa," between 1839 and 1959. Courtesy of the Law Library, State Library of Iowa

## "State v. Amana Society: 1906," 2018

State v. Amana Soc., 132 Iowa 364 (1906)  
109 N.W. 884, 8 L.R.A.N.S. 906, 11 Am. Ann. Cas. 231

Corporations in this state are organized under general laws, and are separated by the Code into two classes—those for pecuniary profit and those not for pecuniary profit. In this action, in the nature of proceedings in quo warranto, the contention of the state is that the defendant, though organized under the statutes relating to corporations not for pecuniary profit, is exercising the functions of a corporation for pecuniary profit, in that it is possessed of extensive property interests with which, in connection with divers business enterprises, the society is engaged in money making, and that, for this reason, the corporation should be dissolved and its franchise forfeited. The defendant does not deny having property as alleged, nor that such property is so employed as to yield a fair return, but insists that the purpose is not pecuniary profit in the sense contemplated by statute.

The society was first incorporated in 1859 under chapter 131, p. 253, of the Acts of the Seventh General Assembly, amendatory to chapter 44 of the Code of 1851, reincorporated in 1880 under the provisions of chapter 2 of title 9 of the Code of 1873, and again in 1900 under chapter 2 of title 9 of the Code. Section 1642 of this title provides that "any three or more persons of full age, a majority of whom shall be citizens of the state, may incorporate themselves for the establishment of churches, colleges, seminaries, lycées, libraries, fraternal lodges or societies, temperance societies, trades' unions or other labor organizations, agricultural societies, farmers' granges, or organizations of a benevolent, charitable, scientific, political, athletic, military or religious character, by signing, acknowledging, and filing for record with the county recorder of the county where the principal place of business is to be located, articles of incorporation, stating the name by which the corporation or association shall be known, which shall not be the same as that of any such organization previously existing, its business or objects, the number of trustees, directors, managers or other officers to conduct the same, and the names thereof for the first year." Section 1643 of the Code: "Up on filing such articles, the persons signing and acknowledging the same, and their associates and successors, shall become a body corporate, with the name therein stated, and may sue and be sued. It may have a corporate seal, alterable at its pleasure, and may take by gift, purchase, devise or bequest real and personal property for purposes appropriate to its creation, and may make by laws. Corporations so organized shall endure for fifty years, unless a shorter period is fixed in the articles, or they are sooner dissolved

by three-fourths vote of all the members thereof, or by act of the General Assembly, or by operation of law." Section 1645 of the Code: "No dividend nor distribution of property among the stockholders shall be made until the dissolution of the corporation." Section 1647 relates to the selection of trustees, directors, or managers of the corporation. It will be observed that, under the first section quoted, it is enough if the organization be of a religious character, that under the next section it may acquire "real and personal property for purposes appropriate to its creation," and, by the third section, distribution of the property, by dividend or otherwise, prior to dissolution is not allowed. But the manipulation of property which may be acquired by corporations of this class so that it shall yield a profit and the use of such profit to promote its objects is not prohibited. Indeed, the right to the income from the beneficial employment of property is one of the incidents of ownership. Thus colleges are maintained in large part from the income derived from the investment of endowment funds; and the benevolences of charity are continued indefinitely from the returns of property dedicated to its use. The distinction between corporations organized under this chapter and those for pecuniary profit has relation, not to whether the one or the other shall earn or receive an income, though this may be important as evidence, but to the design had in organizing and the objects sought to be attained; not to methods pursued so much as the things to be accomplished. If the purpose is to earn money or property, if financial gain is the main or controlling object for which the corporation is created then, regardless of other circumstances, it is within the class designated as corporation for pecuniary profit. See *Santa Clara Female Academy v. Sullivan*, 110 Ill. 373, 6 N. E. 131, 56 Am. Rep. 776. But if organized for one of the purposes enumerated in the statute quoted, as for the promotion of the doctrines of some sect in religion or for education or some charity, and the property acquired and the income therefrom is essential to effectuate such purpose, and is so employed \*896 then these are incidental to the main object of the organization and the corporation cannot be said to exist for pecuniary profit.

The Legislature, while expressly allowing such corporations (not for pecuniary profit) to acquire and hence to hold property, has limited this to an amount appropriate for the purposes of their creation. To be thus appropriate it is not enough that the property sustain a slight or remote connection with the purpose contemplated. The mere fact that money may be necessary

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Courtesy of Law Library, State Library of Iowa, "State v. Amana Society: 1906," pp. 1-7, 2018

### Description

This document is the majority opinion on the 1906 ruling from the Iowa Supreme Court on the State v. Amana Societies case. Their decision upheld the rights of the Amana Societies to pursue economic gains for the purpose of supporting the members of the Society based on their religious principles and beliefs.

### [Transcript of "State v. Amana Society: 1906"](#)

### Text-Dependent Questions

- What was the State's original complaint against the Amana Societies (the defendants)? What was the defendant's argument against the Attorney General?
- What was the official ruling from the Iowa Supreme Court? Using the text, was was the main point(s) that supported the ruling?
- How does this ruling show that Iowa's government was enforcing the equal rights of the Amana Societies?

### Citation Information

"State v. Amana Society: 1906," pp. 1-7, 2018. Courtesy of Law Library, State Library of Iowa

## Iowa Supreme Court Ruling on Montgomery v. Ralph, 1839

Ordered that this court now adjourn till tomorrow 8 A.M.

Charles Mason  
Chief Justice

Thursday morning July 11th 1839. Court met pursuant to adjournment. Present, Charles Mason Chief Justice, and Joseph Williams associate.

Jorden Montgomery  
vs  
Ralph a man of color

And now on this day, this cause was submitted to the Court by consent on a case of facts stated and on file, and it appearing to the satisfaction of the Court on agreement of Counsel, that the said Ralph is man of color is free by operation of Law, it is therefore ordered and adjudged, that he be discharged from further duress and restraint, and that he go hence without day.

The committee appointed for the purpose of preparing a set of rules for the government of the practice in this Court, which report was adopted, ordered to be spread upon the records, and copies thereof sent to each of the Clerks of the District in the several Counties in this Territory.

Ordered that this Court now adjourn, sine die.

Charles Mason  
Chief Justice

Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, Mason, Charles, 1839

## Description

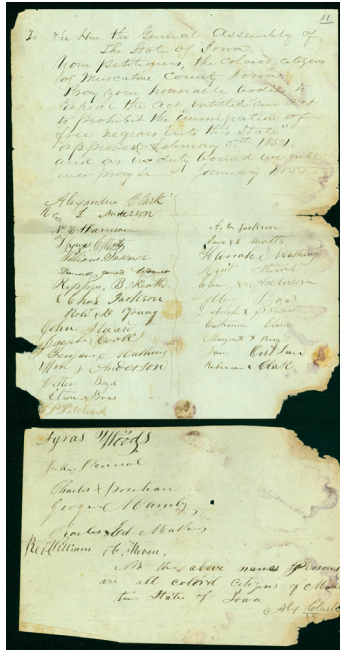
This document is the written judgment from Iowa Supreme Court Chief Justice Charles Mason, who in 1839 ruled that a former slave named Ralph would be "... free by operation of law; it is therefore ordered and adjudged; that he be discharged from further duress and restraint, and that he go hence without day." The background of the case was that Ralph was a slave of Jorden Montgomery's in Missouri, and in 1834, they agreed that Ralph would go to Dubuque, Iowa, to work in the lead mines. They also agreed Ralph would pay Montgomery \$450.00 for his freedom but Ralph did not pay Montgomery, so the Missouri slave owner came to Iowa to apprehend Ralph. The ensuing supreme court case found that Ralph was a free man and Montgomery could not "illegally restrain a human being of his liberty."

## [Transcript of Iowa Supreme Court Ruling on Montgomery v. Ralph](#)

## Text-Dependent Questions

- Considering the time period, why do you think it is significant that the Iowa Supreme Court and Chief Justice Charles Mason stated, "Ralph, a man of color?"
- Why do you think Chief Justice Mason ordered that this ruling be shared out to several counties in the territory of Iowa?
- Compare this ruling to the [Dred Scott ruling](#). How does the ruling of Ralph show Iowa's progression toward civil rights compared to the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Dred Scott?

## Alexander Clark's Petition to Allow Immigration of Free Slaves into Iowa, 1855



Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, 1855

### Description

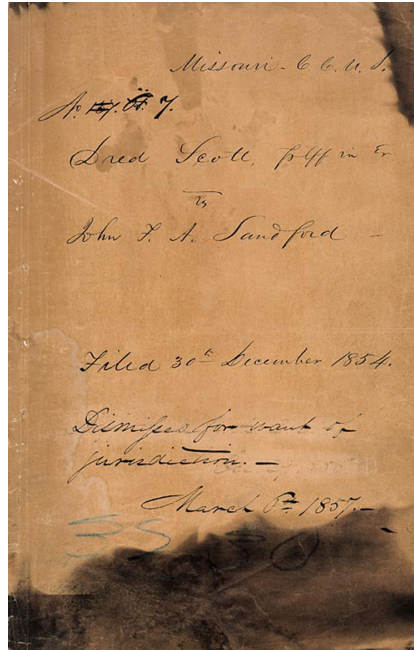
This document is a petition submitted by Alexander Clark, a prominent Iowa civil rights leader, to the Iowa General Assembly in 1855. The petition calls on the legislature to overturn an exclusionary law that prohibited the immigration of free slaves into the state of Iowa.

### [Transcript of Alexander Clark's Petition to Allow Immigration of Free Slaves into Iowa](#)

### Text-Dependent Questions

- What was the main point of the petition presented by Alexander Clark?
- This petition was submitted in 1855 to the Iowa General Assembly. This petition was submitted before the Civil War, why would that be significant?
- How does this document show that Iowans led the way in the fight for equality and civil rights?

## U.S. Supreme Court Majority Opinion on Dred Scott v. John Sanford Case, March 6, 1857



Courtesy of National Archives, "Dred Scott v. Sanford (1857)," U.S. Supreme Court, 6 March 1857

### Description

On March 6, 1857, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney of the U.S. Supreme Court shared the majority opinion in the ruling of Dred Scott v. John Sandford. The Supreme Court ruled that slaves were not citizens of the United States and, therefore, could not expect any protection from the federal government or the courts.

[Full Transcript of U.S. Supreme Court Majority Opinion on Dred Scott v. John Sanford](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from U.S. Supreme Court Majority Opinion on Dred Scott v. John Sanford](#)

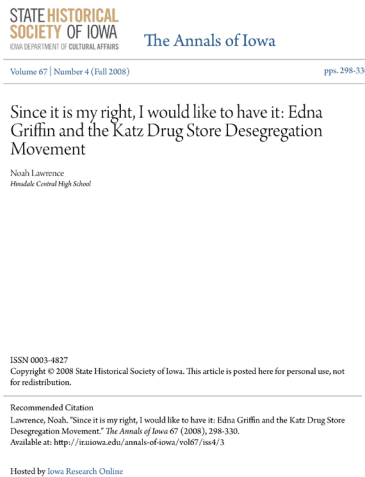
### Text-Dependent Questions

- What were the reasons why the United States Supreme Court ruled against Dred Scott?
- How did this ruling compare to the Iowa Supreme Courts ruling in the [case of Ralph](#)?
- How did the Iowa ruling model for everyone the need for upholding the civil rights of citizens of Iowa and the United States? How did the Dred Scott ruling set that progress back?

### Citation Information

"Dred Scott v. Sanford (1857)," U.S. Supreme Court, 6 March 1857. [Courtesy of National Archives](#)

## “Since it is my right, I would like to have it: Edna Griffin and the Katz Drug Store Desegregation Movement” Essay from *The Annals of Iowa*, 2008



Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, Lawrence, Noah, “Since it is my right, I would like to have it: Edna Griffin and the Katz Drug Store Desegregation Movement,” *The Annals of Iowa*, Vol. 67, No. 4., pp. 298-330, 2008

### Description

This 2008 *Annals of Iowa* essay written by high school student Noah Lawrence details the effort of Edna Griffin to desegregate Katz Drug Store in Des Moines, Iowa.

[Full Transcript of “Edna Griffin and the Katz Drug Store Desegregation Movement” \*Annals of Iowa\* Essay](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts “Edna Griffin and the Katz Drug Store Desegregation Movement” \*Annals of Iowa\* Essay](#)

### Text-Dependent Questions

- In your own words, describe the events that involved Edna Griffin and the Katz Drug Store in Des Moines, Iowa.
- What techniques and strategies did Griffin use in her civil rights fight? Why were they so effective?
- How did the efforts of Griffin inspire other efforts in Iowa and across the nation, and spark the National Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s?

## IPTV's "Alexander Clark and the First Successful School Desegregation Case in the United States," 2012



Courtesy of Iowa Public Television, "Alexander Clark and the First Successful School Desegregation Case in the United States," Iowa Pathways - Iowa Public Television, 2012

### Description

This video is an excerpt from program "Lost in History: Alexander Clark," which was produced for Iowa Public Television in 2012. The video explains the significance of Alexander Clark's lawsuit against the Muscatine, Iowa, school district for denying his daughter admission to a public school because she was African American in 1867. Clark eventually wins the lawsuit and his daughter becomes the first African American to integrate into an all-white public high school.

### Text-Dependent Questions

- What were the details of the lawsuit and court case? What was the main focus in the lawsuit, and what was the end result?
- Why was this court case so significant to our nation's history of school segregation?
- Watch the video and read [Alexander Clark's Petition to Allow Immigration of Free Slaves into Iowa](#). How did Alexander Clark pave the way for equality and civil rights in Iowa and the United States?

### Citation Information

"Alexander Clark and the First Successful School Desegregation Case in the United States," *Iowa Pathways* - Iowa Public Television, 2012. [Courtesy of Iowa Public Television](#)