

How States Get Their Shapes

What are the most important factors in determining state borders?

Americans are so accustomed to the current shapes of the states that make up the United States. History, however, tells a much different story. Iowa's borders were caught up in the sectional struggle over slavery and became a contentious issue at home and in the U.S. Congress.

Path to Statehood

From the early years of the United States, Congress adopted a plan to admit western states into the Union on a status equal to the original thirteen. The region first became a territory with limited government. Once the population reached 60,000, the legislature could submit to the voters (white males 21 years and older) a proposal to draft a state constitution to send to Congress with an application for statehood. After several false starts, such a proposal was approved in 1844. However, it took two more years before Congress and Iowa voters could agree on the terms of a constitution.

While several issues were subjects of intense debate, Iowa's borders were not at first. Because Missouri had already been admitted as a state, Iowa's southern border was established (or so it seemed at the time). Similarly, the Mississippi River divided Iowa from Illinois and Wisconsin on the east. The northern and western borders had no such fixed lines. Iowa's first territorial governor, Robert Lucas, wanted Iowa to extend up to what is now Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, a large state indeed. The convention adopted the Lucas borders and sent them to Congress for approval.

At this point, Iowa's admission became a subject of geo-political bickering. Because each state gets two Senators, northern interests wanted to carve out western lands into many small states that would never support slavery and cotton production. Many states, many "free" senators. Hence, they wanted to reduce the size of new states on the northern prairies and Great Plains. The South wanted just the opposite. They wanted big states from this region. Big states, fewer senators.

"Small State" vs. "Big State" Interests

When Iowa's constitutional proposal reached Congress, Northern "small state" interests redrew the western border, not as the Missouri river as Lucas had proposed it, but a line some 80-100 miles back to the east. They also moved the northern border south from Lucas' original proposal. Iowans balked at the smaller size. When the proposal came back to Iowa voters for approval, the measure failed. A compromise was reached setting the borders as we know them today.

While the constitution stated that Iowa's southern border is the northern border of Missouri, it was unclear exactly where that line was to be drawn. The survey line ran from the Missouri River to a point "on the rapids of the Des Moines River." Unfortunately, there were several sets of rapids that answered that description. A heated exchange between the governors of Iowa and Missouri led to hastily assembled militias on both sides, but no shots were fired and the issue was settled by the U. S. Supreme Court.

Even today, issues surrounding the border occasionally arise. The Missouri River occasionally shifts its flow somewhat, and lands on either side might find themselves on the opposite side. Do affected residents now vote in a different state and pay on different tax rates? The courts have been able to settle the cases without resort to armed conflict.

The United States map would look much different in the Midwest if either of the first two Iowa boundary lines had been adopted. We would have had Rochester and Albert Lea, Iowa, and part of Minnesota's capital would have been Hawkeye land. On the other hand, Council Bluffs, Sioux City, Atlantic, and Storm Lake would have been part of Nebraska. The shape of Iowa was the result of political compromise.

Supporting Questions

How did surveyors contribute to border decisions?

- [Field Notes of Surveyor John Sullivan, 1816 \(Document\)](#)
- [Map of Surveyed Part of Iowa by J.H. Colton, 1839 \(Map\)](#)
- [Act of Congress to Define Iowa's State Boundaries, August 4, 1845 \(Document\)](#)
- [Surveyor Letter from Messers Hendershott and Minor in Keokuk, Iowa, September 20, 1850 \(Document\)](#)

What is the process by which a territory becomes a state?

- [Land Ordinance of 1785, May 18, 1785 \(Document\)](#)
- [Act of Congress to Admit Iowa and Florida into the Union, March 3, 1845 \(Document\)](#)
- [Final Act of Congress to Admit the State of Iowa into the Union, December 28, 1846 \(Document\)](#)
- [Iowa Boundaries as Defined by the State Constitution, 1857 \(Document\)](#)

How are/were border disputes between states settled?

- [Article Detailing Border Conflict Between Iowa and Missouri, May 17, 1845 \(Document\)](#)
- ["The Contested Boundary" Between Iowa and Missouri, October 30, 1847 \(Document\)](#)
- [U.S. Supreme Court Report by Surveyors about the Iowa, Missouri Border, December 17, 1850 \(Document\)](#)

How did the conflict over slavery affect decisions about state borders?

- [NW Land Ordinance for Ohio River Territories, July 13, 1787 \(Document\)](#)
- [Mitchell's School Atlas of the United States and Mexico, 1839 \(Map\)](#)
- ["Boundary Between Missouri and Iowa" Article in The Daily Crescent, April 3, 1849 \(Document\)](#)

*Printable Image and Document Guide

Additional Resources

[The Goldfinch: Iowa History for Young People, Spring 1976](#): This Iowa history magazine for children was published quarterly by the State Historical Society of Iowa from 1975-2000. Each issue focuses on a theme and this particular volume highlighted the development of Iowa's government on its path to statehood.

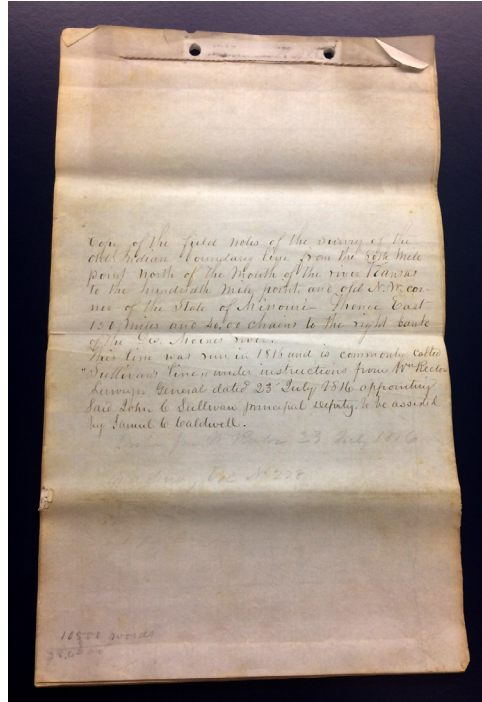
[The Goldfinch: Iowa History for Young People, Volume 4, No. 3, February 1983](#): This Iowa history magazine for children was published quarterly by the State Historical Society of Iowa from 1975-2000. Each issue focuses on a theme and this particular volume highlighted the creation of Iowa's boundaries.

["To Shed Our Blood for Our Beloved Territory: The Iowa-Missouri Borderland,"](#) Derek R. Everett, *The Annals of Iowa*, Volume 67, No. 4, Fall 2008: This *Annals of Iowa* essay focuses on the "border war" between Iowa and Missouri as the former approached statehood.

["The Southern Boundary of Iowa,"](#) Frank E. Landers, *The Annals of Iowa*, Volume 1, No. 8, 1895: This *Annals of Iowa* essay focuses on the conflict and compromise that led to the southern border of Iowa.

["The Border War Between Iowa and Missouri, on the Boundary Question,"](#) Alfred Hebard, *The Annals of Iowa*, Volume 1, No. 8, 1895: This *Annals of Iowa* essay features a look at the border conflict that developed between Iowa and Missouri as Iowa reached statehood.

Field Notes of Surveyor John Sullivan, 1816



Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, 1816

Description

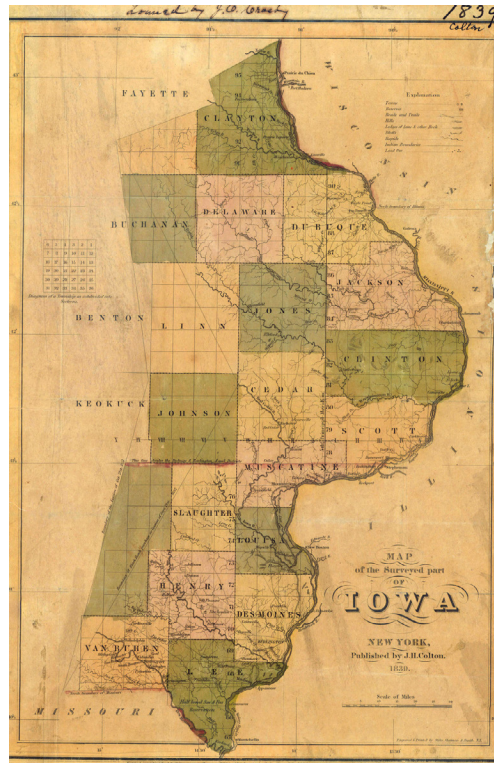
John Sullivan was commissioned to conduct a survey to determine the boundary between American Indian lands and lands belonging to the United States of America. The line created controversy between the State of Iowa and the State of Missouri upon Iowa's admission to the Union in 1846. Subsequent surveys relied on Sullivan's notes as a starting point for their work.

[Transcript of Surveyor John Sullivan's Field Notes](#)

Text-Dependent Questions

- Based on your analysis of John Sullivan's notes, how did he fulfill the directives in the [Land Ordinance of 1785](#)?
- Using evidence from the text, do you see any problems that might arise from the way Sullivan marked the lines? Why or why not?

Map of Surveyed Part of Iowa by J.H. Colton, 1839



Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, Colton, J.H., 1839

Description

This map was created in 1839 and includes the surveyed parts of Iowa. It shows the division of Iowa into counties, some of which have changed. The map also shows physical features and boundary lines created by treaties with American Indians. Township lines also are drawn on the map.

Text-Dependent Questions

- Consider the [Land Ordinance of 1785](#) and the [NW Ordinance of 1787](#). How does this map reflect the requirements from those documents?
- Compare this 1839 map with a [modern map of Iowa](#) and a [satellite image of Iowa](#). What differences do you see?

Act of Congress to Define Iowa's State Boundaries, August 4, 1845

52 TWENTY-NINTH CONGRESS. Sess. I. Ch. 82. 1846.

of the President, all lands of the second class, though heretofore unproclaimed and unoffered, and such other isolated or disconnected tracts or parcels of unoffered lands, which, in his judgment, it would be proper to expose to sale in like manner: *Provided*, That public notice of at least thirty days shall be given by the land officers of the district in which such lands may be situated, pursuant to the directions of the Commissioner aforesaid.

APPROVED, August 3, 1846.

Aug. 4, 1846. CHAP. LXXXII. — *An Act to define the Boundaries of the State of Iowa, and to repeal so much of the Act of the third of March, one thousand eight hundred and forty-five as relates to the Boundaries of Iowa.*

Boundaries declared. 1845, ch. 48.

Question in controversy between Missouri and Iowa referred to the Supreme Court.

Supreme Court invested with necessary authority.

To be entitled to two representatives.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following shall be, and they are hereby, declared to be the boundaries of the State of Iowa, in lieu of those prescribed by the second section of the act of the third of March, eighteen hundred and forty-five, entitled "An Act for the Admission of the States of Iowa and Florida into the Union," viz. Beginning in the middle of the main channel of the Mississippi River, at a point due east of the middle of the mouth of the main channel of the Des Moines River; thence up the middle of the main channel of the said Des Moines River, to a point on said river where the northern boundary line of the State of Missouri, as established by the constitution of that State, adopted June twelfth, eighteen hundred and twenty, crosses the said middle of the main channel of the said Des Moines River; thence, westwardly, along the said northern boundary line of the State of Missouri, as established at the time aforesaid, until an extension of said line intersect the middle of the main channel of the Missouri River; thence, up the middle of the main channel of the said Missouri River, to a point opposite the middle of the main channel of the Big Sioux River, according to Nicollet's map; thence, up the main channel of the said Big Sioux River, according to said map, until it is intersected by the parallel of forty-three degrees and thirty minutes north latitude; thence east, along said parallel of forty-three degrees and thirty minutes, until said parallel intersect the middle of the main channel of the Mississippi River; thence, down the middle of the main channel of said Mississippi River, to the place of beginning.

Sec. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the question which has heretofore been the subject-matter of controversy and dispute between the State of Missouri and the Territory of Iowa, respecting the precise location of the northern boundary line of the State of Missouri, shall be, and the same is hereby, referred to the Supreme Court of the United States for adjudication and settlement, in accordance with the act of the Legislature of Missouri, approved March twenty-five, eighteen hundred and forty-five, and the memorial of the Council and House of Representatives of the Territory of Iowa, approved January seventeenth, eighteen hundred and forty-six, by which both parties have agreed to "the commencement and speedy determination of such suit as may be necessary to procure a final decision by the Supreme Court of the United States upon the true location of the northern boundary of that State;" and the said Supreme Court is hereby invested with all the power and authority necessary to the performance of the duty imposed by this section.

Sec. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That, until the next census and apportionment shall be made, the State of Iowa shall be entitled to two representatives in the House of Representatives of the United States.

Courtesy of Library of Congress, "An Act to define the Boundaries of the State of Iowa," U.S. Congress, 4 August 1845

Description

This law was passed in August 1846 in response to the dispute over the border between the State of Missouri and the State of Iowa. The Act referred the matter to the U.S. Supreme Court as the final arbiter in the conflict.

[Full Transcript of an Act of Congress to Define Iowa's State Boundaries](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from an Act of Congress to Define Iowa's State Boundaries](#)

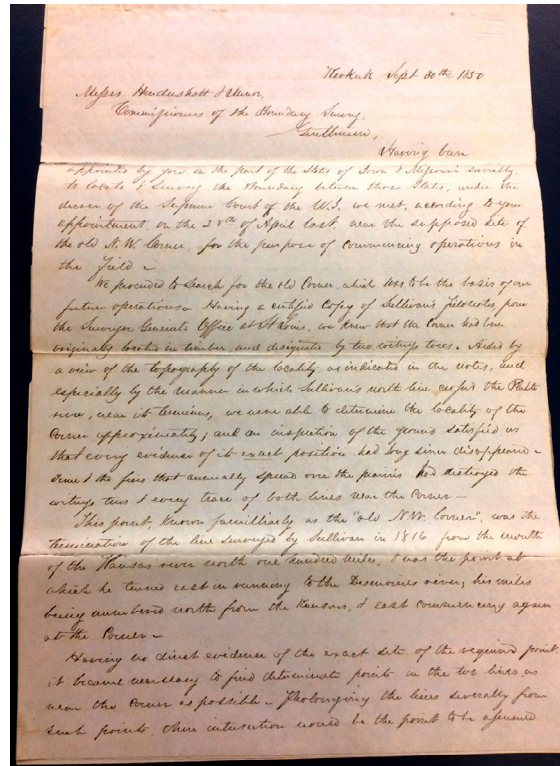
Text-Dependent Questions

- According to this document in [Section 1](#), upon what should the southern border of Iowa be based?
- What authority does [Section 2](#) give to the U.S. Supreme Court in regard to the border between Iowa and Missouri?

Citation Information

"An Act to define the Boundaries of the State of Iowa," U.S. Congress, 4 August 1845. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

Surveyor Letter from Messers, Hendershott and Minor in Keokuk, Iowa, September 30, 1850



Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, 30 September 1850

Description

This letter was a report from surveyors commissioned by the U.S. Supreme Court to confirm a boundary line between Missouri and Iowa.

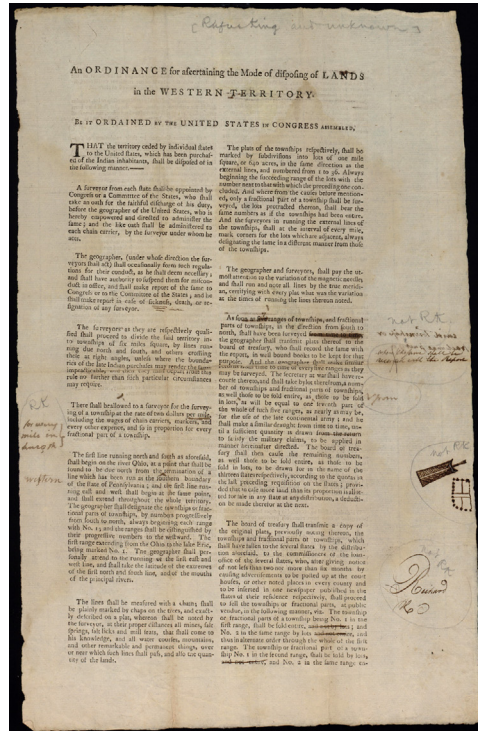
[Full Transcript of Surveyor Letter from Messers, Hendershott and Minor](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from Surveyor Letter from Messers, Hendershott and Minor](#)

Text-Dependent Questions

- Using evidence from the text, give two examples of ways that surveyors' lines in the 1800s could be lost.
- According to the text, how did the surveyors in 1850 try to prevent confusion over their line in the future.
- According to the surveyors, what was wrong with John Sullivan's line?

Land Ordinance of 1785, May 18, 1785



Courtesy of Library of Congress, United States Continental Congress, King, Rufus & William Samuel Johnson, "An ordinance for ascertaining..." 18 May 1785

Description

The Land Ordinance of 1785 was passed by the U.S. Congress under the Articles of Confederation. It laid out the process by which lands west of the Appalachian Mountains were to be surveyed and sold. The method of creating townships and sections within townships was used for all U.S. land after 1785.

Full Transcript of the Land Ordinance of 1785

Transcribed Excerpts from the Land Ordinance of 1785

Text-Dependent Questions

- According to the text, what were the key tasks surveyors needed to do to fulfill the land ordinance?
- What suggestions does the text give to surveyors in marking lines?
- How were the surveyors and geographers to make certain they marked straight lines?

Citation Information

United States Continental Congress, King, Rufus & William Samuel Johnson, "An ordinance for ascertaining the mode of disposing of lands in the Western Territory: Be it ordained by the United States in Congress assembled, that the territory ceded by individual states to the United States, which has been purchased of the Indian inhabitants, shall be disposed of in the following manner," 18 May 1785. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

Act of Congress to Admit Iowa and Florida into the Union, March 3, 1845

742 TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS. Sess. II. Ch. 47, 48. 1845.

STATUTE II.
 MARCH 3, 1845. CHAP. XLVII.—*An Act making appropriations for the support of the Military Academy for the year ending the thirtieth June, eighteen hundred and forty-six.*

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums be, and the same are hereby appropriated out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the support of the Military Academy, for the year ending on the thirtieth of June, eighteen hundred and forty-six:

Pay. For the pay of officers, instructors, cadets, and musicians, seventy-nine thousand four hundred and sixty dollars;

Subsistence. For commutation of subsistence, three thousand five hundred and seventy-seven dollars;

Forage of officers' horses. For commutation of forage for officers' horses, two thousand five hundred and ninety-two dollars;

Clothing of officers' servants. For clothing for their servants, four hundred and twenty dollars;

Incidental and contingent expenses. For repairs and improvements, fuel and apparatus, forage of public horses and oxen, stationery, printing and other incidental and contingent expenses, twenty-two thousand dollars;

Barracks. For the building of barracks for cadets, thirty thousand dollars: *Provided,* That this appropriation, and the unexpended balance of the one heretofore made for this object, shall be applied exclusively to the completion of that portion of the barracks which is designed to accommodate the cadets usually quartered in the "old south barracks."

Pay of a cadet. *Sec. 2. And be it further enacted,* That from and after the thirtieth June, eighteen hundred and forty-five, the pay of a cadet shall be twenty-four dollars per month, in lieu of the present pay and emoluments.

APPROVED, March 3, 1845.

STATUTE II.
 MARCH 3, 1845. CHAP. XLVIII.—*An Act for the admission of the States of Iowa and Florida into the Union.*^(a)

Preamble. Whereas, the people of the Territory of Iowa did, on the seventh day of October, eighteen hundred and forty-four, by a convention of delegates called and assembled for that purpose, form for themselves a constitution and State government; and whereas, the people of the Territory of Florida did, in like manner, by their delegates, on the eleventh day of January, eighteen hundred and thirty-nine, form for themselves a constitution and State government, both of which said constitutions are republican; and said conventions having asked the admission of their respective Territories into the Union as States, on equal footing with the original States:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the States of Iowa and Florida be, and the same are hereby, declared to be States of the United States of America, and are hereby admitted into the Union on equal footing with the original States, in all respects whatsoever.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That the following shall be the boundaries of the said State of Iowa, to wit: Beginning at the mouth of the Des Moines river, at the middle of the Mississippi, thence by the middle of the channel of that river to a parallel of latitude passing through the mouth of the Mankato, or Blue-Earth river, thence west along the said parallel of latitude to a point where it is intersected by a meridian line, seventeen degrees and thirty minutes west of the meridian of Washington city, thence due south to the northern boundary line of the State of Missouri, thence eastwardly following that boundary to the

(a) Notes to the act of June 17, 1836, ch. 96.

Courtesy of Library of Congress, "An Act for the admission of the States of Iowa and Florida into the Union," U.S. Congress, 3 March 1845

Description

This is a document from the U.S. Congressional Record. These pages show the congressional acts that brought Iowa and Florida into the Union. Iowa was admitted as a free state and Florida was admitted as a slave state, according to their respective state constitutions. The concurrent admission of the two states allowed the U.S. Senate to remain balanced in regard to the number of senators from free and slave states.

[Full Transcript of an Act of Congress to Admit Iowa and Florida into the Union](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from an Act of Congress to Admit Iowa and Florida into the Union](#)

Text-Dependent Questions

- According to the document, what steps have both Iowa and Florida taken to be admitted into the Union?
- According to the document, where is the southern border of Iowa? What conflict might arise by the wording?
- In the antebellum period in U.S. history, states were generally allowed to join the Union in pairs. Why were Iowa and Florida admitted at the same time? Why does the legislation not make reference to it?

Citation Information

"An Act for the admission of the States of Iowa and Florida into the Union," U.S. Congress, 3 March 1845. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

Final Act of Congress to Admit the State of Iowa into the Union, December 28, 1846

PUBLIC ACTS OF THE TWENTY-NINTH CONGRESS

OF THE

UNITED STATES,

Passed at the second Session, which was begun and held at the City of Washington, in the District of Columbia, on Monday, the 7th Day of December, 1846, and ended on the 3d Day of March, 1847.

JAMES K. POLE, President; GEORGE M. DALLAS, Vice-President, and President of the Senate; JOHN W. DAVIS, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

CHAPTER I. — *An Act for the Admission of the State of Iowa into the Union.*

WHEREAS the people of the Territory of Iowa did, on the eighteenth day of May, anno Domini eighteen hundred and forty-six, by a convention of delegates called and assembled for that purpose, form for themselves a constitution and State government — which constitution is republican in its character and features — and said convention has asked admission of the said Territory into the Union as a State, on an equal footing with the original States, in obedience to “An Act for the Admission of the States of Iowa and Florida into the Union,” approved March third, eighteen hundred and forty-five, and “An Act to define the Boundaries of the State of Iowa, and to repeal so much of the Act of the third of March, one thousand eight hundred and forty-five as relates to the Boundaries of Iowa,” which said last act was approved August fourth, anno Domini eighteen hundred and forty-six: Therefore —

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the State of Iowa shall be one, and is hereby declared to be one, of the United States of America, and admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original States in all respects whatsoever.

Sec. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That all the provisions of “An Act supplemental to the Act for the Admission of the States of Iowa and Florida into the Union,” approved March third, eighteen hundred and forty-five, be, and the same are hereby declared to continue and remain in full force as applicable to the State of Iowa, as hereby admitted and received into the Union.

APPROVED, December 28, 1846.

STATUTE II.

Dec. 28, 1846.

1846, ch. 78.

Preamble.

1845, ch. 48.

1846, ch. 62.

Iowa admitted into the Union.

Former act continued in force.

1845, ch. 76.

CHAP. II. — *An Act to encourage Enlistments in the regular Army.*

Jan. 19, 1847.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That during the continuance of the war with Mexico, the term of enlistment of the men to be recruited for the regiments of dragoons, artillery, infantry, and riflemen of the present military establishment, shall “be during

Enlistments to be for the war.

(17)

Courtesy of Library of Congress, “An Act for the Admission of the State of Iowa into the Union,” U.S. Congress, 28 December 1846

Description

This Act of Congress is the final step in Iowa’s admission into the Union. The Act references the conflict over the boundaries defined in an 1845 Act of Congress. This law also states that Iowa followed the [NW Ordinance](#) by forming a republican constitution for their state.

[Full Transcript of Congress’ Final Act to Admit Iowa to the Union](#)

[Transcribed Excerpt from Congress’ Final Act to Admit Iowa to the Union](#)

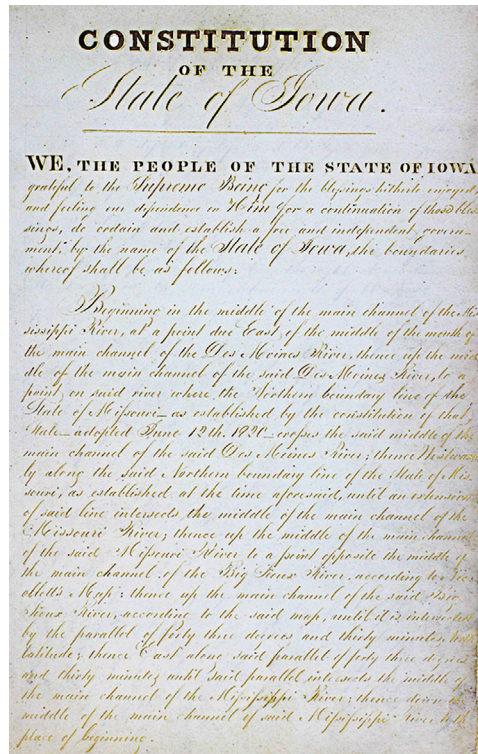
Text-Dependent Questions

- According to the document, what steps did the people of Iowa take in order to form a government? Why would these steps be important?
- What type of government was formed by the people of Iowa?
- What questions does this document leave you in regard to the boundaries of Iowa? What sources could you use to find the answers?

Citation Information

“An Act for the Admission of the State of Iowa into the Union,” U.S. Congress, 28 December 1846. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

Iowa Boundaries as Defined by the State Constitution, 1857



Courtesy of Iowa Secretary of State, "Constitution of the State of Iowa," 1857

Description

This document is the official first constitution of the State of Iowa. Iowans participated in three constitutional conventions in 1844, 1846 and 1857 - the first constitution was rejected by voters. This version, from 1857, was approved by voters.

[Transcribed Excerpt from the Constitution of the State of Iowa](#)

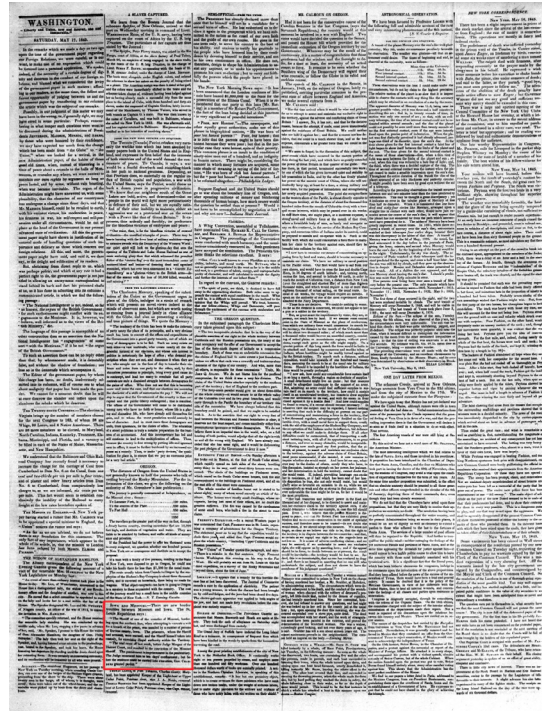
Text-Dependent Question

- According to Iowa's constitution, what document established the northern border of Missouri?
- What differences do you see in how Iowa's constitution defines its southern border compared to how it defines its northern border? How might these different definitions lead to conflict?

Citation Information

"Constitution of the State of Iowa," 1857. [Courtesy of Iowa Secretary of State](#)

Article Detailing Border Conflict Between Iowa and Missouri, May 17, 1845



Courtesy of Library of Congress, "Iowa and Missouri," *Weekly National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., 17 May 1845

Description

This document is a newspaper article that appeared in the *Weekly National Intelligencer*, a Washington D.C.-based newspaper. The article appeared on May 17, 1845, and describes conflict between the state of Missouri and the territory of Iowa.

[Transcript of the Article Detailing Border Conflict Between Iowa and Missouri](#)

[Printable Excerpt of the Article Detailing Border Conflict Between Iowa and Missouri](#)

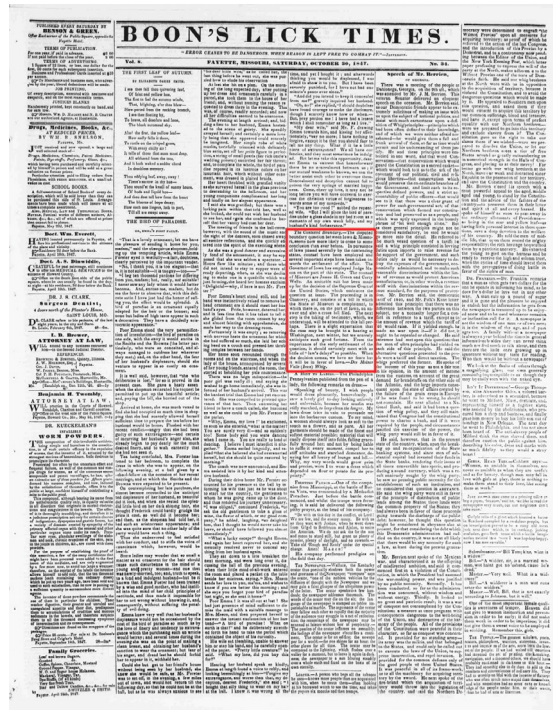
Text-Dependent Questions

- According to the article, what was the cause of conflict between Iowa and Missouri?
- Was this conflict resolved? Justify your answer.

Citation Information

"Iowa and Missouri," *Weekly National Intelligencer*, Washington, D.C., 17 May 1845. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

“The Contested Boundary” Between Iowa and Missouri, October 30, 1847



Courtesy of Library of Congress, “The Contested Boundary,” *Boon's Lick Times*, Fayette, Mo., 30 Oct 1847

Description

This newspaper article from 1847, after Iowa's admission to the Union, tells how both Iowa and Missouri have hired lawyers to present their cases regarding their shared border to the U.S. Supreme Court.

[Transcript of “The Contested Boundary” Article](#)

[Printable Excerpt of “The Contested Boundary” Article](#)

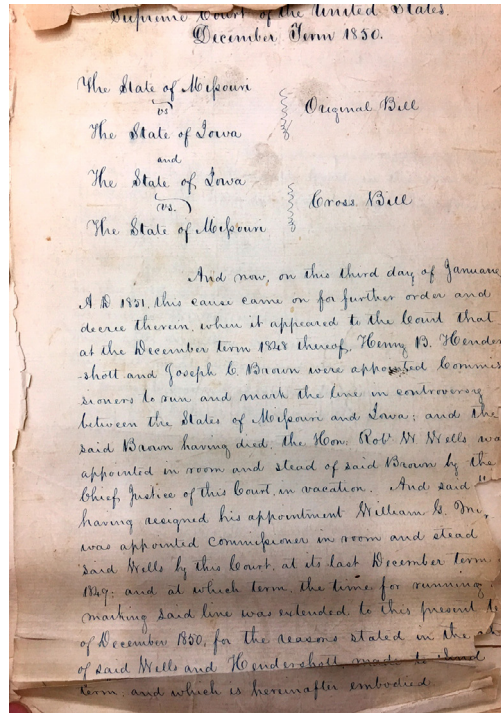
Text-Dependent Questions

- Using evidence from the text, describe how the author believes the U.S. Supreme Court decision will be received by the states involved.
- The author of this article seems to think the resolution of the border conflict will “be in favor of Iowa.” How credible do you believe the author is? What factors helped you decide the authors credibility?

Citation Information

“The Contested Boundary,” *Boon's Lick Times*, Fayette, Mo., 30 Oct 1847. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

U.S. Supreme Court Report by Surveyors about the Iowa, Missouri Border, December 17, 1850



Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, 17 December 1850

Description

This report to the U.S. Supreme Court was submitted by surveyors who had been commissioned to re-survey the southern border of Iowa after Missouri and Iowa sued each other. The surveyors particularly point out the difficulty of confirming the line surveyed in 1816 by John Sullivan.

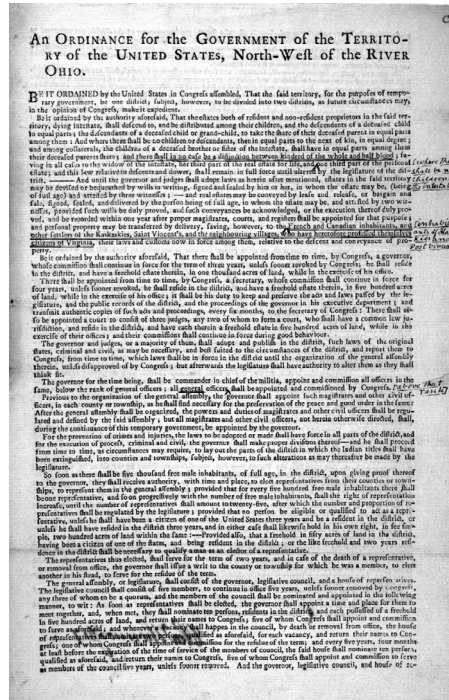
[Full Transcript of U.S. Supreme Court Report by Surveyors about the Iowa, Missouri Border](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from the U.S. Supreme Court Report by Surveyors about the Iowa, Missouri Border](#)

Text-Dependent Questions

- According to this report, what caused problems for the surveyors when they tried to determine a previous surveyor's line?
- How did the surveyors try to prevent future confusion with the line they were marking?

NW Land Ordinance for Ohio River Territories, July 13, 1787



United States Continental Congress, Thomson, Charles, "An ordinance for the government of the territory of the United States, North-west of the river Ohio," 13 July 1787

Description

This ordinance was passed July 13, 1787, and it specified the steps necessary for the territories north and west of the Ohio River to become states on the same footing as the original 13. It also outlined a Bill of Rights to be guaranteed in the territories. The plan put forth in this document has been the guiding document for states to enter the Union since it was approved.

[Full Transcript of NW Land Ordinance for Ohio River Territories](#)

[Transcribed Excerpts from NW Land Ordinance for Ohio River Territories](#)

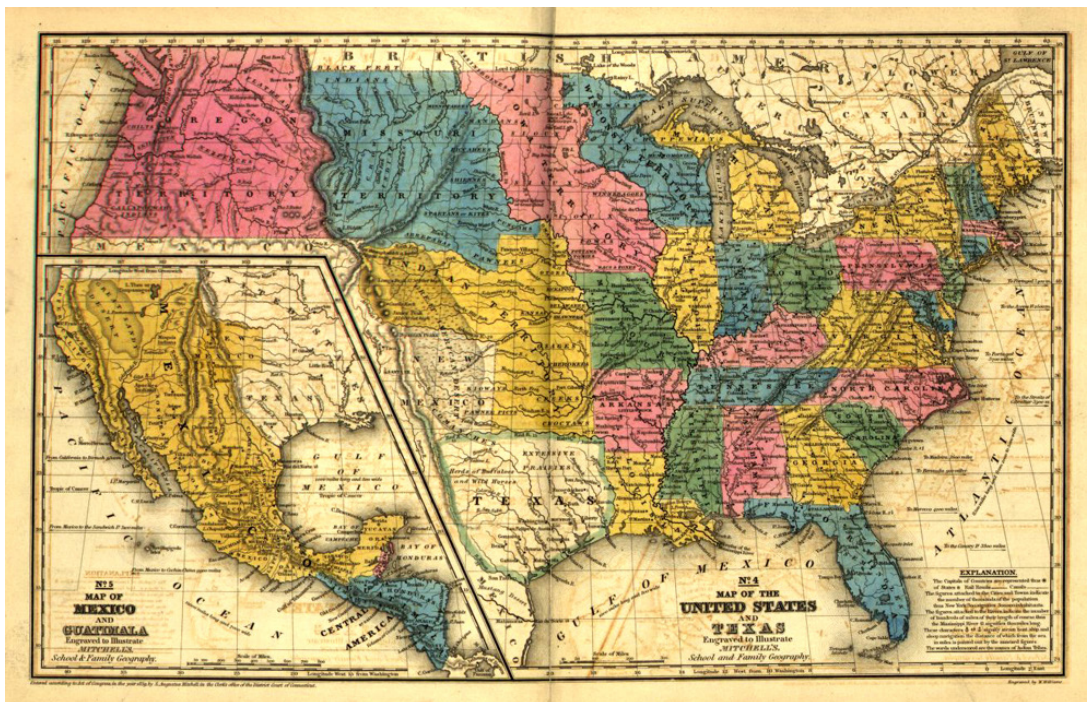
Text-Dependent Questions

- Based on the excerpts above, outline the steps a territory needs to take in order to become a state.
- What do you think are the three most important rights guaranteed to inhabitants of the NW territory?
- Using your knowledge of U.S. history in the late 1700s, why do you think Article Six is significant?

Citation Information

United States Continental Congress, Thomson, Charles, "An ordinance for the government of the territory of the United States, North-west of the river Ohio," 13 July 1787. [Courtesy of Library on Congress](#)

Mitchell's School Atlas of the United States and Mexico, 1839



Courtesy of Library of Congress, Mitchell, S. Augustus, Young, J.H., & Cowperthwait & Co Thomas, "Mitchell's School Atlas," 1839

Description

This map appeared in Mitchell's School Atlas in 1839. It shows the territories formed from the Louisiana Territory Purchase as well as several states that had already been carved from Louisiana Territory. The Iowa territory is shown in pink.

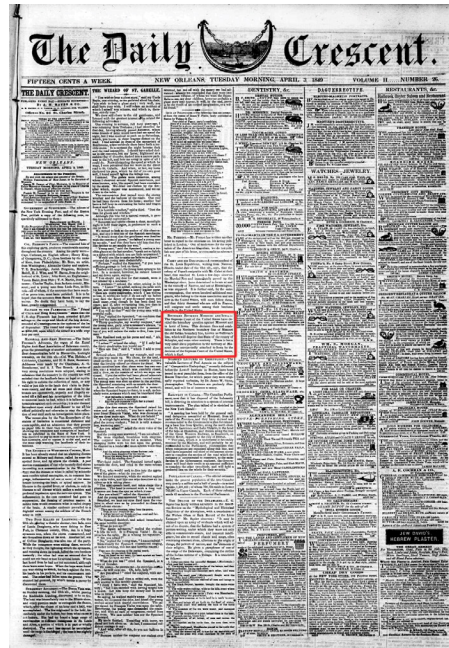
Text-Dependent Questions

- Compare and contrast this 1839 map with a [current U.S. map](#). What is the same? What is different? What observations can you make about the border of Iowa territory compared to the border of the modern state?
- Refer back to the [Act of Congress to Admit Iowa and Florida into the Union](#), March 3, 1845. Why would a conflict about Iowa's southern border relate to the issue of slavery?

Citation Information

Mitchell, S. Augustus, Young, J.H., & Cowperthwait & Co Thomas, "Mitchell's School Atlas," 1839. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

“Boundary Between Missouri and Iowa” Article in The Daily Crescent, April 3, 1849



Courtesy of Library of Congress, “Boundary Between Missouri and Iowa,” *The Daily Crescent*, New Orleans, La., 3 April 1849

Description

This newspaper article appeared in the New Orleans newspaper, *The Daily Crescent*. The article announced that the conflict over the border dispute between the states of Iowa and Missouri was settled. Iowa had been admitted as a state in December 1846, with the border in question. The ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court settled the issue.

[Transcript of “Boundary Between Missouri and Iowa” Article](#)

[Printable Excerpt of “Boundary Between Missouri and Iowa” Article](#)

Text-Dependent Questions

- According to text, what is Iowa’s southern boundary based on?
- Based on evidence from the text, what state “won” the case? How could the “very small slave population ... unexpectedly attached to Iowa by the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States...” impact both Iowans and Missourians?

Citation Information

“Boundary Between Missouri and Iowa,” *The Daily Crescent*, New Orleans, La., 3 April 1849. Courtesy of Library of Congress