

# Dred Scott v. Sandford / How the Case Moved Through the Court System

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## Supreme Court of the United States

The Court found in favor of Sanford, stating that Scott should remain enslaved. They said that as an enslaved person he is not a citizen of the United States and thus not eligible to bring suit in a federal court, and as an enslaved person he is personal property and thus has never been free.

The Court further declared unconstitutional the provision in the Missouri Compromise that permitted Congress to prohibit slavery in the territories.

*Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857)



## U.S. Court for the District of Missouri

The jury decided that Dred Scott and his family were not free.

*Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1854)



*Sanford (Mrs. Emerson's brother who was now responsible for the estate) moved to New York leaving Scott in Missouri. Because of a peculiar turn of events in the Missouri court system and law, Scott was in the unusual position of deciding whether to appeal directly from the Missouri Supreme Court to the U.S. Supreme Court OR to start his case over again in Federal District Court. Scott chose to bring a new suite in federal court on the basis that he and the defendant were now citizens of different states.*

## Missouri Supreme Court

Reversed the decision by the Circuit Court saying Dred Scott and his family were not free.

*Dred Scott v. Emerson* (1852)



## Missouri Circuit Court of St. Louis County

The jury in a second trial decided that the Scotts deserve to be free based on their time residing in the non-slave territories of Wisconsin and Illinois.

*Dred Scott v. Emerson* (1850)



## Missouri Circuit Court of St. Louis County

On behalf of himself, his wife, and his two daughter, Dred Scott sued his enslaver in state court to win his freedom. The Circuit Court ruled in favor of Mrs. Emerson, dismissing the Scott's case but allowing them to refile their suit.

*Dred Scott v. Emerson* (1847)