

Dred Scott v Sanford:



Legal Question(s) this case helped answer:

1. *Is a slave a citizen and thus able to bring suit in a federal court?*
2. *Is a slave who has resided on free soil therefore freed?*
3. *Did the U. S. Congress have the power to outlaw slavery in new states or in a territory?*

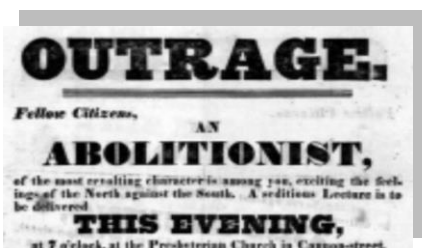
Background/Summary of Court Case:

In 1820 Henry Clay proposed the Missouri Compromise to keep the balance of free states and slave states. Congress admitted Maine to the Union as a free state, Missouri as a slave state. The territory above the 36 30 parallel would be free and below slave.



Dred Scott was born a slave in Virginia . In 1833 Scott was sold to an army surgeon named Dr. John Emerson. Emerson took Dred Scott to Illinois (a free state) and then to Wisconsin (another free state) to work. When Emerson died, Scott sued for this freedom arguing he had lived in a free state and should be free. The Dred Scott case made it all the way to the supreme court.

The Supreme Court ruled that slaves were property not citizens and did not have the rights. It also declared the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional The court said the federal government does not have the right to ban slavery in the territories because slaves were property. The North was outraged over the Dred Scott Case.



The North was upset because the decision had the potential to legalize slavery throughout the US. Shortly after the Dred Scott Case, Congress passed the Fugitive slave law.

Importance of the Case:

The Dred Scott case was a landmark court case that eventually helped lead to the Civil War. It angered many abolitionists in the North.

The Supreme Court ruled that slaves were property not citizens. Judges concluded that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional since people have ownership of their property regardless of the state's free status.

