

Title: Guinn v. United States 238 U.S. 347 (1915)

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## ***GUINN v. UNITED STATES 238 U.S. 347 (1915)***

In an 8–0 DECISION, the Supreme Court sustained the conviction of two Oklahoma election officials of conspiracy to deprive blacks of their VOTING RIGHTS. In an opinion by Chief Justice EDWARD D. WHITE, the court held that a state constitutional amendment enacting a GRANDFATHER CLAUSE, which exempted from the literacy test the descendants of persons who had been entitled to vote before 1866, violated the FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT, and that officials could be prosecuted for attempting to enforce it. In a COMPANION CASE (*Myers v. Anderson*) the Court held that Maryland officials were liable for civil DAMAGES for enforcing that state's grandfather clause.

DENNIS J. MAHONEY  
(1986)

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