



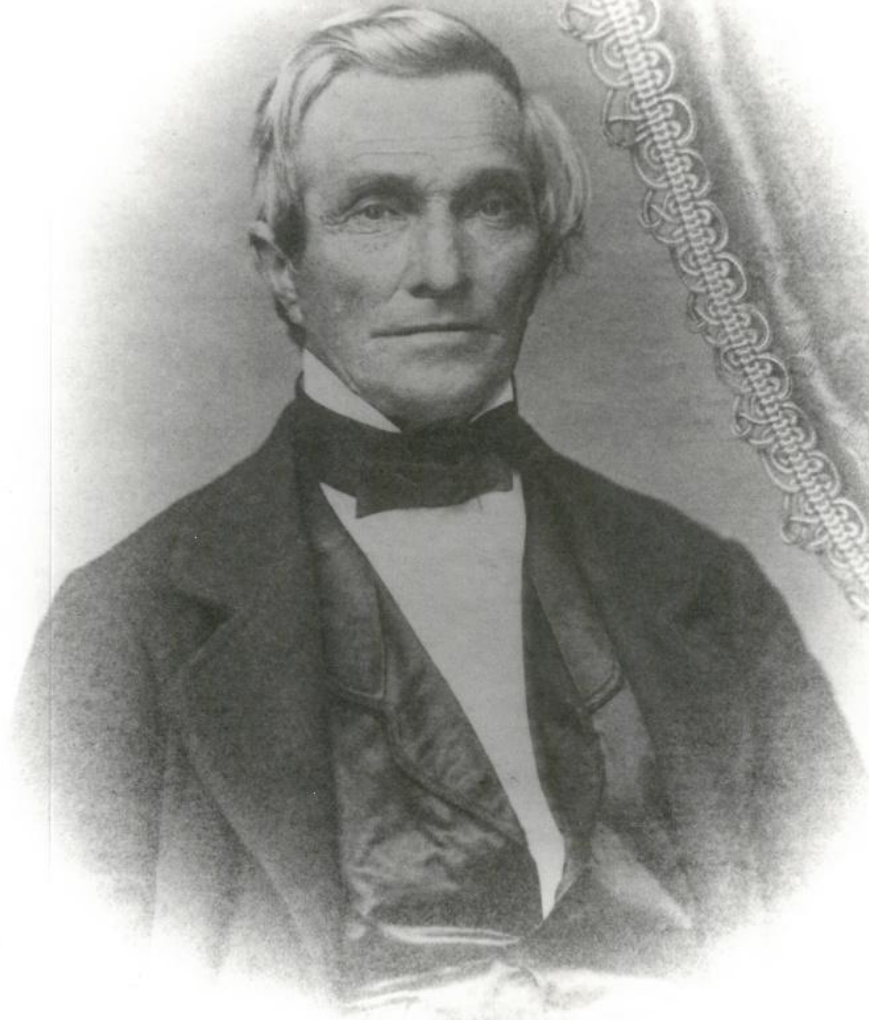
Milly Sawyers

1834

Milly Sawyers v. William Ivy

- September – Milly filed a complaint against William Ivy (aka Ivey) for trespass, assault and battery, and false imprisonment.
- Tax records indicate that Ivy didn't own land or slaves.

State of Mississippi } In the Circuit Court
Greene County } December Term 1834
To wit
Milly Sawyers ~~Milly~~ a free person of
colour by her Attorney, complains of
William Ivy of a plea of Trespass
assault & battery and false imprison-
ment. For that the said defendant on
the tenth day of August in the year
Eighteen hundred & thirty four with force
& arms &c; made an assault upon the
said Plaintiff to wit at the County of
Greene aforesaid & then & there seized
& laid hold of the said plaintiff & with
great force & violence pulled & dragged
about her the said plaintiff & then and
then gave & struck the said plaintiff
a great many violent blows & strokes
& also then & there pulled and dragged
about the said plaintiff from & ^{out of a} certain
place ~~situate~~ ^{to wit} in said County of Greene into
the public road then & then & there forced
& obliged her to go to a certain place situate
& being ~~in~~ the County of Greene aforesaid
& then & there imprisoned the said plaintiff



LITTLEBERRY HENDRICKS
JUDGE 1862~1863

1834

- ▶ Littleberry Hendricks (aka Hendrick) was Milly's court-appointed attorney.
- ▶ Hendricks was in Greene County by 1833. He became a prominent attorney in southwest Missouri.

1834

- ▶ At that time Hendricks did not own slaves at the time, but 1853 circuit court records show he sold a slave, “a certain mulatto woman slave for life name Mary, “ to Isaac Thomas of Cooper County.
- ▶ Tax book from 1855 shows he owned one slave, valued at \$500.

1834

- ▶ Ivy answered his court summons but refused to enter recognizance.
- ▶ Judge Allen allowed Milly to file her suit as a pauper.
- ▶ Ordered her to be “hired out” until the case was resolved. She stayed with John Edwards.

1834

- ▶ Circuit Judge Charles H. Allen – Allen was the first circuit judge in Greene County; served from 1833-1837.
- ▶ Allen was known as “Hoss” or “Horse” Allen, liked to pick fights, and was known as a “very profane man...” He once made “the air so blue...that [Littleberry] Hendricks...was shocked.”

1834

- ▶ September – William Ivy and James Comer were charged with disturbing the peace after harassing Hendrick and causing damage to his home.
- ▶ Hendricks said they were following him from “place to place and hung out around his house.” He believed they were the ones who broke down his door.

1834

- ▶ Ivy and Comer were ordered to keep the peace and to stay away from Hendrick for one year.
- ▶ By this time both men were living in Ray County, Missouri.

1835

1835 - August

- ▶ Milly won her freedom by default when Ivy failed to appear in court.
- ▶ Her petition for \$500 damages was held over until the April 1836 court term.

Freedom

Milly Sawyers Plaintiff Trespass assault &
vs William Joy - Defendant Battery & false imprisonment
This day Came the plaintiff by her attorney and the Defendant
being solemnly Called Comes Not - Therefore it is considered by the Court
Here that the said Milly Sawyers the petitioner aforesaid Recover her
freedom of and against the said William Joy and that she be free
and discharged of and from the service of the said William Joy and
Whereas the Court doth not know the Damages sustained by the
said Plaintiff it is ordered by the Court here that a writ of
Inquiry of Damages Issue returnable to the next term of this
Court until which time this Cause is ordered to be
Continued

1836

1836 – April 1st

- James A. McCarrol, Junius T. Campbell, and Lucius Rountree were indicted for burglary after breaking into John Edwards home and kidnapping Milly Sawyers on April 1st.

1836 – April

- ▶ John Polk Campbell and James Warren were indicted for the April 1st kidnapping of Calley Easter, a free woman of color, to be sold as a slave. Both men were arrested.

1836 - April

- ▶ John Polk Campbell, Sidney Ingram, and others “unknown” were indicted for rioting and destroying the home and property of John Edwards. Littleberry Hendricks was attorney for Edwards.

1836 - April

- ▶ Justice of the Peace Charles Yancy was charged with misdemeanor in office for not stopping the assault and riot at Edwards home.

1836 - April

- ▶ Junius T. Campbell was arrested and charged with perjury for lying for James McCarroll, Lucius Rountree, Henry Fulbright, and Zenius Rountree.

1836

- ▶ John Polk Campbell – founder of Springfield; related to future president James K. Polk. Campbell's cabin was used as the first Greene County courthouse. Milly's case would have been heard in his house.
- ▶ James Warren – in 1834 he owned one slave.
- ▶ James A. McCarroll – early Greene County settler; owned one slave.

1836

- ▶ Junius T. Campbell - brother of John Polk Campbell; came to Springfield in 1831; owned first store in Greene County; held several public offices; not yet a slave owner.
- ▶ Lucius Rountree – arrived 1831; brother of Zenas; not a slave owner; later fought with the Union Army.

1836

- ▶ Sidney S. Ingram – owned one slave in 1835; according to his probate file, when he died in 1847 he owned one female slave.
- ▶ On November 10, 1836, Ingram was appointed superintendent of public buildings. As such, his first job was to “present the court with a plan of a court house to be built in the town of Springfield... [which] shall be erected in the public square.”
- ▶ Charles Yancy (aka Yancey) – in Greene County by 1834; not yet a slave owner; elected justice of the peace in August 1835

1837

1837

- ▶ April – John Polk Campbell and James Warren pled not guilty in the kidnapping of Calley Easter. The circuit attorney decided not to prosecute the case.

SPRINGFIELD SUNDAY NEWS-LEADER

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PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

She won her freedom in court. Then they beat her.

Giacomo Bologna Springfield News-Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

The pages have yellowed. The cursive writing is cramped. The old court records are difficult to read.

The documents describe a family huddled inside a Greene County home, waiting in terror as a riot formed outside.

The men in the mob were apparently upset that a black woman was living freely among them.

On the night of April 1, 1836, they came for Milly Sawyers.

They threw sticks and

stones at the home, then broke in and dragged Sawyers out.

They beat her viciously in the street.

Among the members of the rabble were men now revered as Springfield's founders.

For months, the News-Leader, working with archivists, a librarian and a historian, has worked to tell this story, almost entirely unknown among Springfield historians.

The yellowed court records were rediscovered in 2017 by Connie Yen, the director of the Greene County Archives, who was intrigued by the documents and the "free woman of colour" they described.

See SAWYERS, Page 5A

The place where it happened

See a map of key locations in Milly Sawyers' story, Pages 6-7A

More inside

What was Springfield like when Milly Sawyers lived here? Page 5A

Library hosting panel on Milly Sawyers, Page 5A

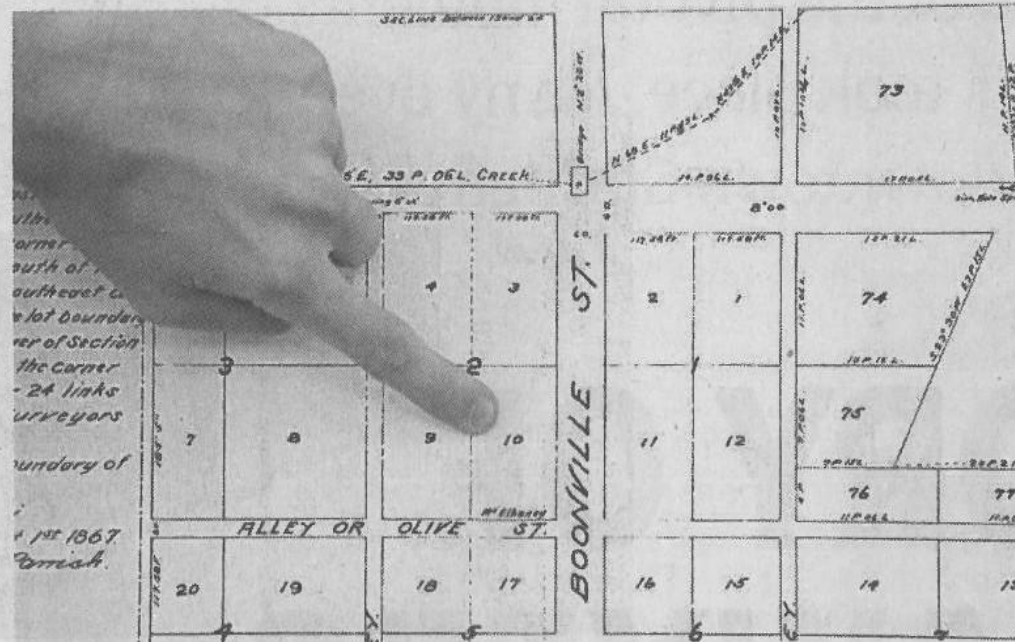
Experts, records shed light on Milly Sawyers case

Giacomo Bologna
Springfield News-Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

Newly rediscovered court documents show Milly Sawyers was a black woman who was beaten by Springfield's founders after winning her freedom in 1835.

However, reading the nearly 200-year-old documents to understand the experience of Sawyers is like looking through a straw to view a landscape painting.

The News-Leader reviewed additional records and texts and worked with experts to try and answer ques-



According to librarian John Rutherford, John Edwards owned lot 10 of block two in Springfield's original 50-acre plat.

ANDREW JANSEN/NEWS-LEADER

The *Milly* Project



As we continue to gather requests from this community and the extended communities, we ask each of you to consider supporting this academic, artistic, and humanitarian work.

Our Performance History: 2019

- The Milly Project opened on February 26th, school matinee for a public high school.
- The public opening was on April 8th at The Springfield Little Theatre McDaniel Education Building (now The Judith Enyeart Reynolds School of the Performing Arts for Springfield Little Theatre.)
- The Milly Project was then presented for an entire 8th grade class, a coordinated effort with a history teacher who was working to thoroughly educate students about reconstruction and ethical context.
- The Milly Project opened to the public in the high school theatre on May 3rd.
- *Greater Missouri Leadership Challenge @* First and Calvary on June 5th.
- Juneteenth Performance @ Silver Springs Park on June 29th.
- Public Performance @ The Connecting Grounds on July 1st.
- Fondren Presbyterian Church Performance in Jackson, Mississippi on July 22.
- Private performance for the Southern Missouri Women Lawyers, Missouri Bar YLS & Springfield Metropolitan Bar @ MSU on September 5th with esteemed panel members: Chief Justice George Draper, the Honorable Patricia Breckenridge from the Supreme Court of Missouri, Adora Snead, and Dr. Marlin Barber.
- Private performance for the judges of the Missouri Court of Appeals and trial lawyers, Southern District @ The Hilton Branson Convention Center on September 18th.
- Public Performance @ The Connecting Grounds on September 18th.
- *Missouri Association for Museum and Archives @* the History Museum on the Square (Fox Theatre) on October 18th.
- *Bridging Differences Symposium: Conversations on Gender, Race, and Equality*, presented by Missouri Humanities and William Woods University Student Alumni Council @ The Brick District Playhouse on October 21st.
- *Youth Empowerment Summit* hosted by MSU on October 29th.
- *Martin Luther King Day Celebrations @* The Gillioz Theatre: January 20th following the MLK Day Parade there was an abbreviated performance & tribute.
- Public performance @ The Gillioz February 7th.
- Conversations with the Cast, Timmons Hall: February 8th, 11AM-12:30PM.
- *We are Better Together* hosted by Campbell UMC, Pitts Chapel UMC & Justice League @ Campbell UMC February 8th from 2PM-4PM.

Upcoming Performances:

- Springfield Leadership Class '38: Timmons Hall, February 25th @ 1:30PM
- Public Performance in Columbia, MO @ Broadway Christian Church March 1st 7:30PM
- MSU Diversity and Inclusion Conference @ MSU April 24th 10AM-11:30AM

**Final confirmations and dates are still pending for Kansas City, Organization of Defense Lawyers, Conference for Trial Lawyers of Missouri*

The Milly Project cast gives thanks to an anonymous donor for our trip to Jackson, Mississippi, where we performed and immersed ourselves in the historical Civil Rights Museum. We then crossed the bridge in Selma and found our gut-wrenching shared history at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, as well as the Legacy Museum. May this work and project allow us to live our missions.

Visit The Milly Project on Facebook. Contact Kendra Chappell, director and writer, at 417-209-3345 or kendrawolfchappell@gmail.com for more information.

"We are not makers of history. We are made by history."

-Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King