



*February 24, 2015*



**KNOW YOUR RECORDS**  
National Archives and Records Administration

# **Protecting America's Treasures: Black History in the Vault**

## **Netisha Currie**

Archives specialist Netisha Currie describes records relating to African-American history held in our vault as well as unrestricted records available from our stacks.



## **Netisha Currie**

**Archives Specialist**

National Archives  
at College Park

Netisha Currie is an archives specialist in textual processing at the National Archives at College Park. She works with specially protected records and artifacts of high intrinsic value and leads the Vault Digitization Project. Netisha received a B.A. in Archeology and Anthropology from Oberlin College (2004) and a M.A. in Museum Studies from George Washington University (2011). Born and raised in the Washington, DC area with extended family in Mississippi, Netisha is interested in local and southern history.

PROTECTING AMERICA'S  
TREASURES: BLACK  
HISTORY IN THE VAULT



# The “Vault”



# National Archives Vaults

- Storage areas with restricted access to a limited amount of employees
- Vaults are all over the country in many National Archives facilities
- Records stored in vaults are considered specially protected and of high intrinsic value
- Copies or digital images of records are provided to researchers

# National Archives Vaults

- Purpose of the vaults is to protect the records
- Records in vaults can be diverse and eclectic:
  - ▣ Artifacts
  - ▣ Ceremonial Letters
  - ▣ Public Laws
  - ▣ Photographs
  - ▣ Surrender Documents
  - ▣ Presidential Gifts
  - ▣ Patents
  - ▣ Treaties





# The Book of Negroes, 1783

Vessels Names and their Commanders	Wherebound	Negroes names	Age	Description	Claimants		Names of the Persons in whose Possession they now are
					Names	Residence	
22 <sup>nd</sup> Septem <sup>r</sup> 1783 Spencer Robt Valentine	York Norway	William Scot	24	Stout fellow M			David Wright
		Jas Vallentyne	33	do Peckmarked B			Do
		Jane	28	Stout wench			Do

## Remarks

Says he was born free at Charles City Virginia serv'd till 21 years of age with Berry Hardin Capt from Mr Matthews Mayor  
 do lived with John Studvett Prince George County Virginia left it 3 years ago G.P.H.  
 formerly the property of David Cooper of Hansemond Virg<sup>a</sup> left him 3 do do  
 property of James Alexander

# The Book of Negroes, 1783

In pursuance of two Orders from His Excellency Sir Guy Carleton K.B. General Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Forces from Nova Scotia to West Florida inclusive, <sup>both</sup> dated Head Quarters York <sup>the one</sup> 15 April, 1783 <sup>and the other 23<sup>rd</sup> May</sup> 1783 whose names are hereunto subscribed Do Certify that we did carefully inspect the foregoing Vessels on the Eight day of July 1783 and that on board the said Vessels we found the Negroes mention'd in the foregoing List amounting to forty four men Twenty nine Women and thirty two Children and to the best of our Judgement believe them to be all the Negroes on board the said Vessels and we enquir'd of the Master of each Vessel whether he had any records deeds or Archives or papers or other property of the Citizens of the United States on board and to each Enquiry we were answer'd in the negative; and we further Certify that we furnish'd each Master of a Vessel with a certified list of the negroes on board <sup>of the Vessel</sup> and inform'd him that he would not be permitted to Land in Nova Scotia any other Negroes than those contain'd in the List and that if any other negroes were found on board the Vessel he would be severely punish'd and that we inform'd the Agent for the Transports of this matter and desir'd him to use means for returning back to this place all negroes not mention'd in the Lists

W. S. Smith C. S. &

Samuel Jones Secy

William Cook

Captain of the Regt

Nathl. Phillips M. B.

William  
1783

# Letter from George Washington to Charles Thomson, April 5, 1785

From General Washington to Charles  
Thomson Esq<sup>r</sup>

Mount Vernon April 5 1785

Dear Sir

The latter part of last spring, the Commissioners appointed to attend the embarkations at New York, previous to the evacuation of the city, made a report of their proceedings accompanied with a voluminous list of the Slaves which had left that place, to me. Soon after, having the pleasure of Mr. Read's company here, in conversation he informed me, that the list I had received was a duplicate of what had been sent to Congress - upon which I filed it with my public Papers.

By the last Post, he says he had been under a mistake, and requested me to forward the Papers which are in my hands, to Congress. This I would most assuredly have done, but they are too bulky for the mail, and liable to injury from the nature of such a carriage; - however, I will await your direction, after  
observing

observing to you that two of the Commissioners, Egbert Benson Esq<sup>r</sup> and Lieu<sup>t</sup> Colonel Smith, with Mr. Samuel Jones the Secretary; and undoubtedly the Papers from which the Report and proceedings were founded, are in New York.

If notwithstanding it is necessary to resort to me the original Papers (for it is not in my power to make Copies) shall be sent, altho it will make a chasm in my files, and disappoint many who apply to them for information respecting their Negroes.

with great Esteem &c.

(Signed) G<sup>o</sup> Washington

Domestic Letters, RG 59.  
NAID 568025. Fold3

# Dred Scott v. Sandford, 1857

Missouri - C. C. U. S.  
No. 17. 6. 7.  
Dred Scott, Plaintiff in Error  
vs  
John F. A. Sandford -  
Filed 30<sup>th</sup> December 1854.  
Dismissed for want of  
jurisdiction. -  
March 6<sup>th</sup> 1857.  
35

No. 7.  
Dred Scott - Plaintiff in Error  
vs  
John F. A. Sandford  
In error to the Circuit Court of the  
United States for the District of  
Missouri. -  
This cause came on to be  
heard on the transcript of the record  
from the Circuit Court of the United  
States for the District of Missouri and  
was argued by counsel - On Consider-  
ation whereof it is now here ordered  
and adjudged by this Court that the  
judgment of the said Circuit Court  
in this cause be and the same is  
hereby reversed for the want of juris-  
diction in that Court, and that this  
cause be and the same is hereby  
remanded to the said Circuit Court  
with directions to dismiss the case  
for the want of jurisdiction in that  
Court. -  
J. W. Ch. Jr. Sawyer  
6<sup>th</sup> March 1857.



Appellate  
Jurisdiction  
Case Files,  
RG 267

NAID 561075

# Confederate Currency



Scrapbook of Confederate Currency, RG 39, NAID 6728419

# Note from Abraham Lincoln to the Secretary of the Treasury

Executive Mansion  
Nov. 29, 1861  
Hon. Sec. of Treasury  
My dear Sir:  
You remember kindly  
asking me, some time ago whether  
I really desired you to find a place  
for William Johnson, a colored  
boy who came from Illinois  
with me. If you can find him  
the place shall really be ~~you~~  
obliged.  
Yours truly  
A. Lincoln

Referral for William Johnson,  
November 29, 1861

Personnel Files of Notable Treasury Employees,  
RG 56  
NAID 5751999



Abraham Lincoln, Vampire Hunter

# Note from Abraham Lincoln

This boy says he knows  
Secretary Chase, and would  
like to have the place  
made vacant by William  
Johnson's death. I believe  
he is the proper boy & I

should be glad for him  
to have the place if it  
is still vacant.

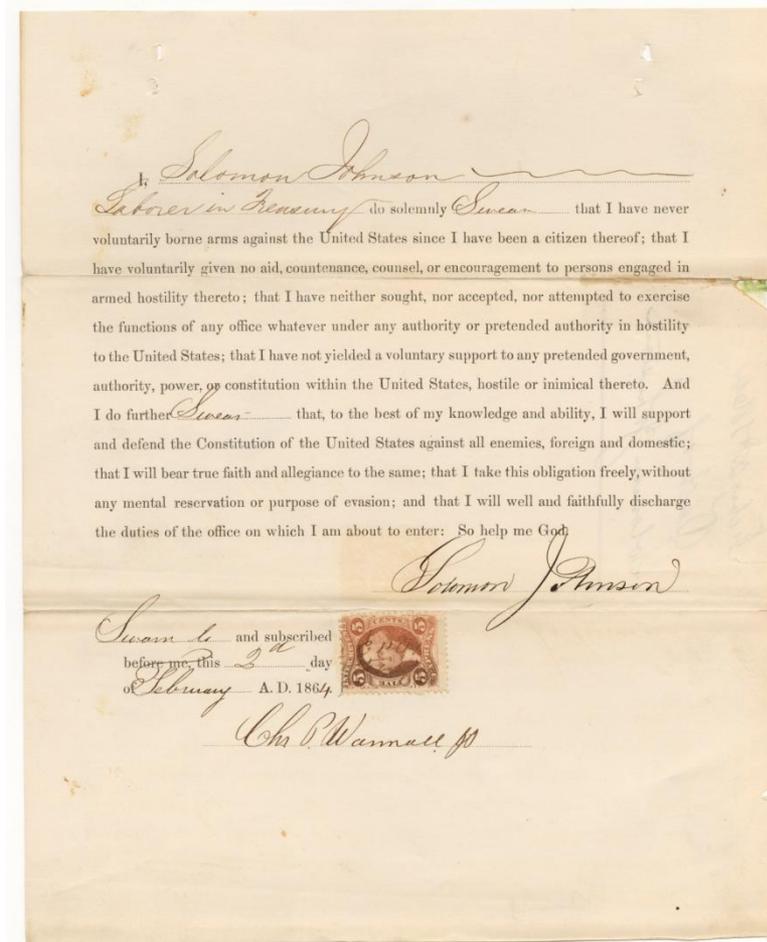
A. Lincoln

Jan. 28. 1864

Referral for Solomon Johnson,  
January 28, 1864

Personnel Files of Notable Treasury Employees,  
RG 56  
NAID 6920181

# Oath of Office, Solomon Johnson



- Taken February 2, 1864
- Appointed Laborer within Treasury Dept.
- Salary \$600 per year

# Letter from Solomon Johnson to the Secretary of the Treasury

Washington D. C.  
May 26<sup>th</sup> 1881.

To the Honorable,  
William Windom,  
Secretary of the Treasury.

Dear Sir:

I respectfully take this method to place before you my case for your favorable attention at such convenient time as without prejudice to calls of your Office, you may be pleased to give it.

I am a colored man, and a voter. Have a family.

I was first appointed in the Treasury Department by the late Chief Justice S. P. Chase, then Secretary of the Treasury, in 1864, upon the request of the lamented Abraham Lincoln, whose trusted attendant I was at that time.

Shortly after my appointment I received several promotions until the one distinguishing me as the first colored man appointed to a Clerkship under the Government of the U. S.

Have endeavored to improve myself in such liberal culture as becomes a good citizen.

In view of my long and faithful service I trust that I may receive such recognition as in your judgment you may find proper to give me; and that my unfortunate race relations may not be a bar to such recognition.

I take this method, because I do not wish to trouble my friends to intercede in my behalf; and being a stranger to you I did not wish to personally intrude, perhaps at a time when you would be occupied on important Official duties. If I have erred in so doing, please pardon me.

I have papers to substantiate what I write if granted at any time an interview.

I am very respectfully  
Your Obedient Servant  
Solomon Johnson  
Third Auditor's Office.

# Letter from William Syphax to the President of the United States



Washington, D. C. May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1865.

Sir,

I have the honor to bring to your notice the following case: My Mother and Father - Charles and Maria Syphax - have resided on the Arlington Estate all their lives. In the year 1826, the late Mr. S. W. Custer manumitted my Mother and her children, and at his death my father became free by the terms of Mr. C's will. At the time my mother was freed, (1836) Mr. Custer gave to her, for the use of herself and heirs, a small parcel of land - about ten acres - lying on the outer boundary of the Arlington tract, where our parents continue to reside. This estate has recently been sold, according to law, and been bought by the Government. My parents have no written evidence of this gift of land made to them by Mr. Custer, but can establish, by parcel evidence, the facts herein alleged.

What they now desire is, that in view of all the facts, they may be permitted to purchase from the Government the small parcel of ground on which they live, and to which they claim to be equitably entitled, at the rate at which the United States purchased the Arlington Estate, and to receive a legal title for the same, so that for the few remaining days of their earthly

existence, and their children after them, they may have the security and benefits which Mr. Custer's benevolence signified they should possess.

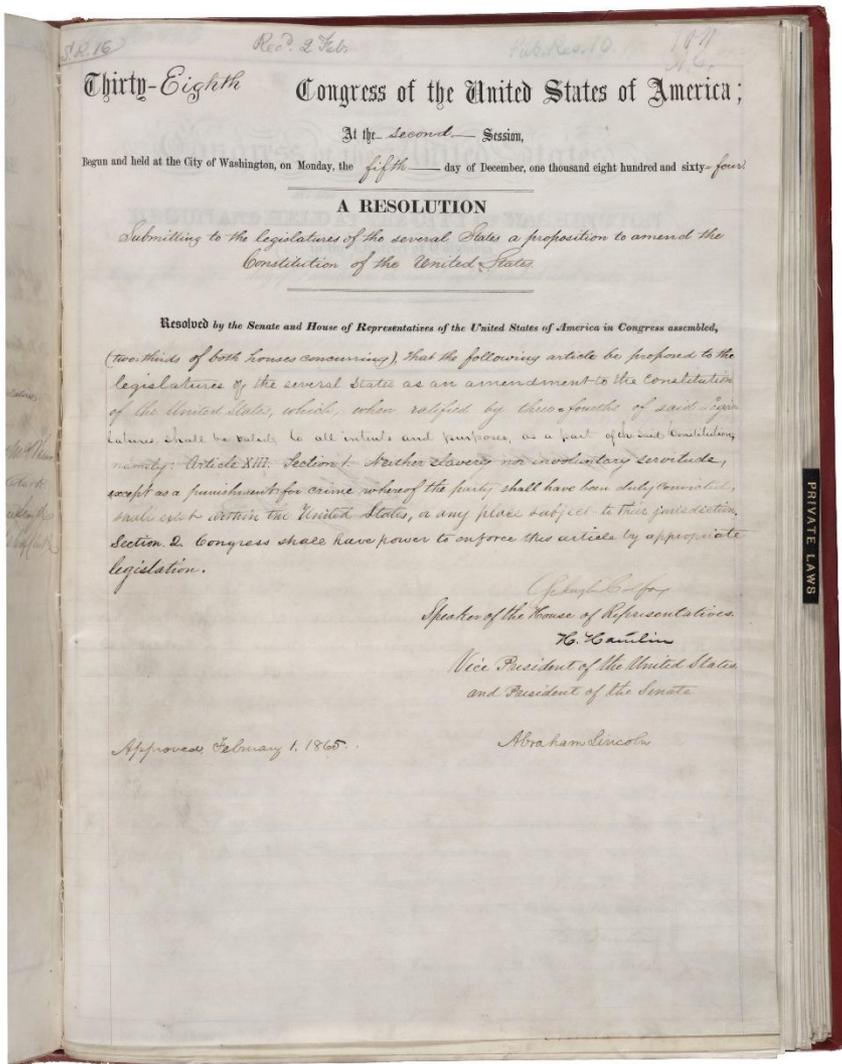
Should this application be lacking in force and effect, the undersigned, and the President will be kind enough to inform the undersigned to be informed how it may be more fully made, in order to accomplish the object desired, my parents will endeavor to comply. If the mode I have suggested be deemed impracticable, perhaps the President may see fit, by a military order, to cause the lot of ground in question to be set apart for the purposes indicated.

Since this unnatural rebellion commenced, the fencing around the premises has been completely destroyed, and my parents are extremely anxious that it shall be repaired, so that they may be able to raise and secure their vegetables, &c. as they formerly did.

I have the honor to be,  
With great respect,  
Your Obedt. Servant,  
William Syphax  
Keeper Dept. of the Interior.

To the  
President of the United States

# 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment



- Joint Resolution to amend the Constitution, approved on February 1, 1865
- Enrolled Acts and Resolutions of Congress, RG 11
- NAID 1408764

# Letter from Committee of the Citizens of Monrovia to Consul General

Recd 2<sup>d</sup> May

Monrovia Liberia  
February 21 1865

Sir,

It affords us great satisfaction to transmit herewith a series of Resolutions unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Citizens of Monrovia held in the Representative Hall on the 3<sup>d</sup> inst to give expression to our feelings of admiration and gratitude to His Excellency Abraham Lincoln President, for the measures he has inaugurated in the United States of America for the liberation of millions of our race who were held in that land in apparently hopeless bondage.

The recent re-election of Mr Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States, is the cause of general rejoicing in the Republic of Liberia; we recognise in this event

21 February 1865

event, the overruling of Divine Providence, and we believe that through the continued operation of the just, the humane and the beneficent policy he has commenced, the entire liberation of our race in the United States will be effected, and the blessing of peace be secured to his country.

We beg Sir, that you will do us the kindness to forward the enclosed copy of these Resolutions to His Excellency the President.

We have the honor to subscribe ourselves Sir,

Your humble servants.

Saml. F. McGill.  
Chairman of the Committee  
Alex. G. Sumner, Jr.  
Wm. Davis

To the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Abraham Hanson  
U. States Consul General.  
U. States Legation Monrovia

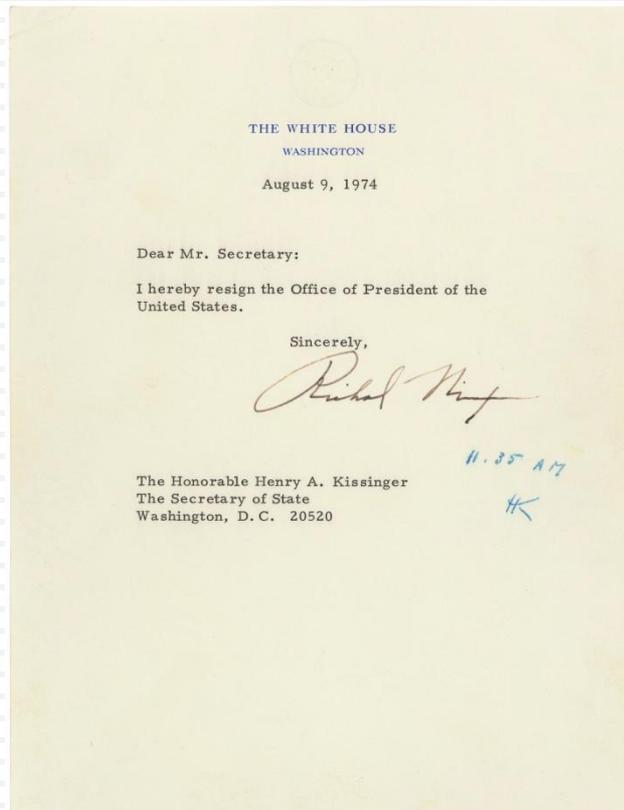
Henry M. Dennis

February 3, 1865

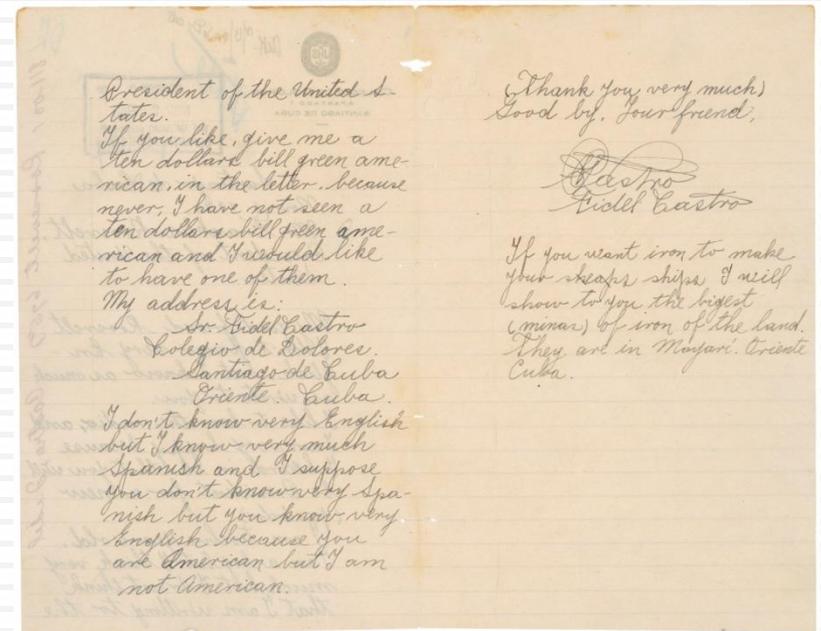
Communications  
from Foreign  
Heads of State,  
Liberia, RG 59

NAID 5950235

# Modern Records



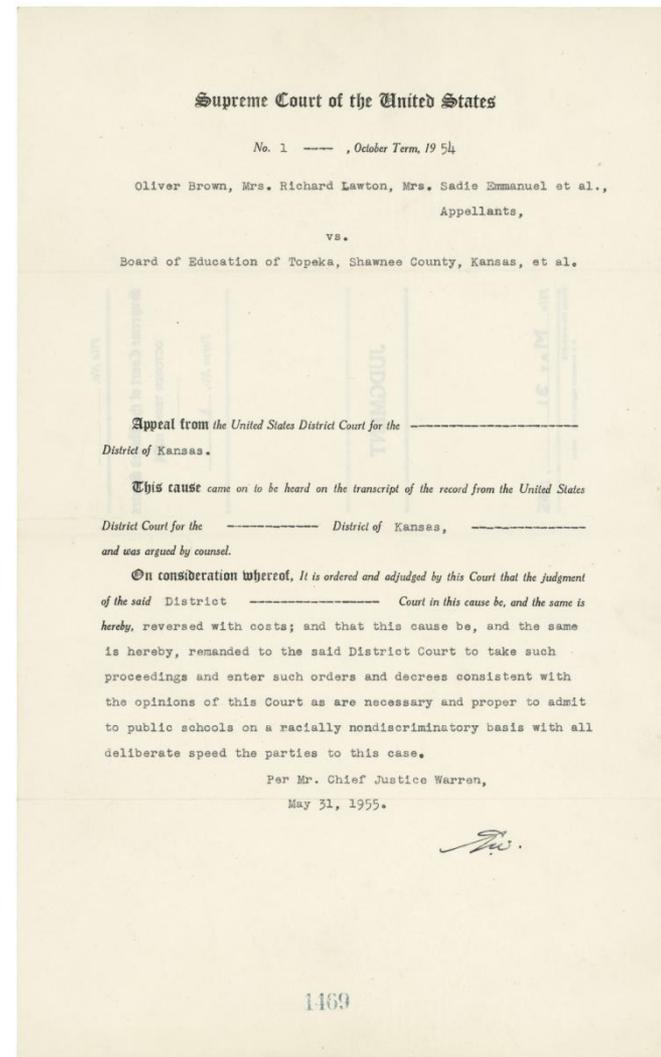
NAID 302035



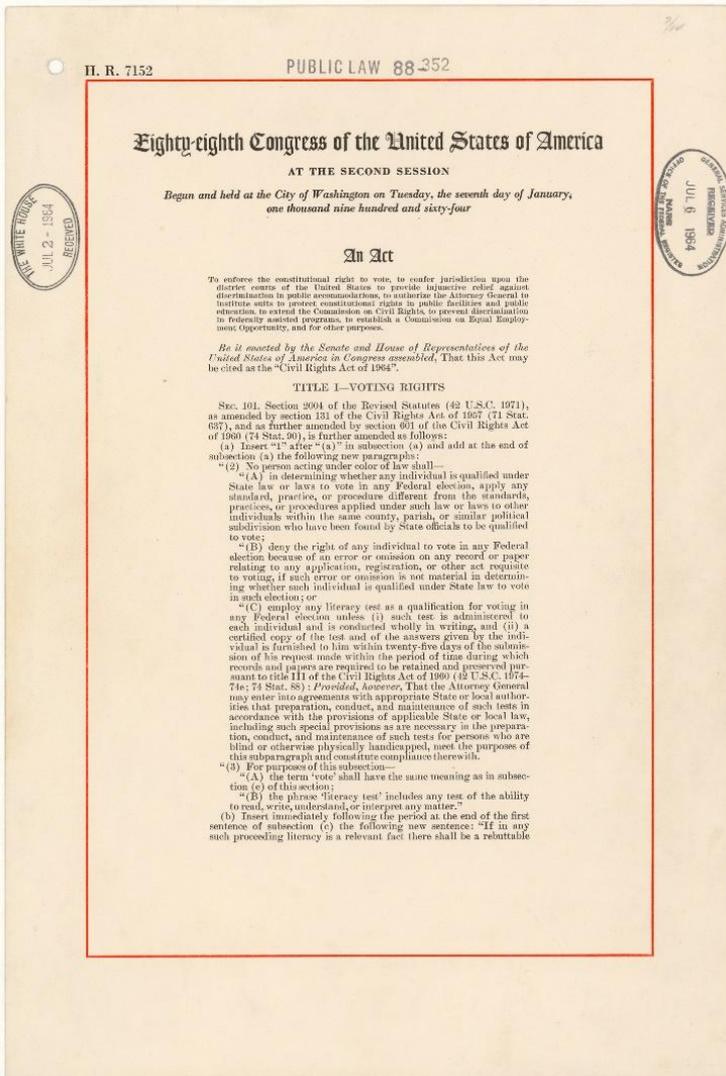
NAID 302040

# Brown v. Board, 1955

- Judgment in the Supreme Court Decision, May 31, 1955
- Appellate Jurisdiction Case Files, RG 267
- NAID 596300

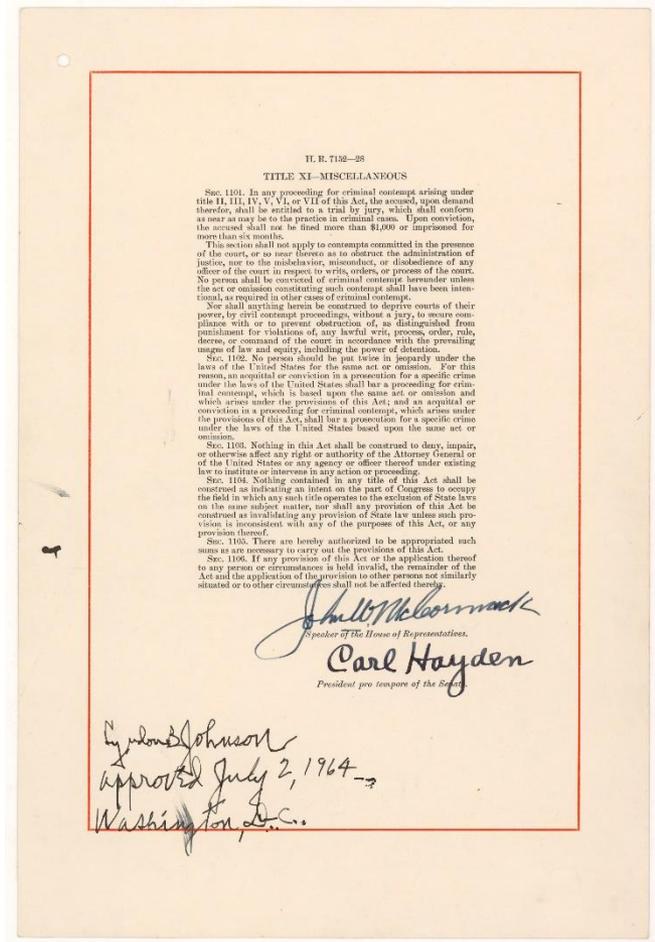


# Civil Rights Act, 1964

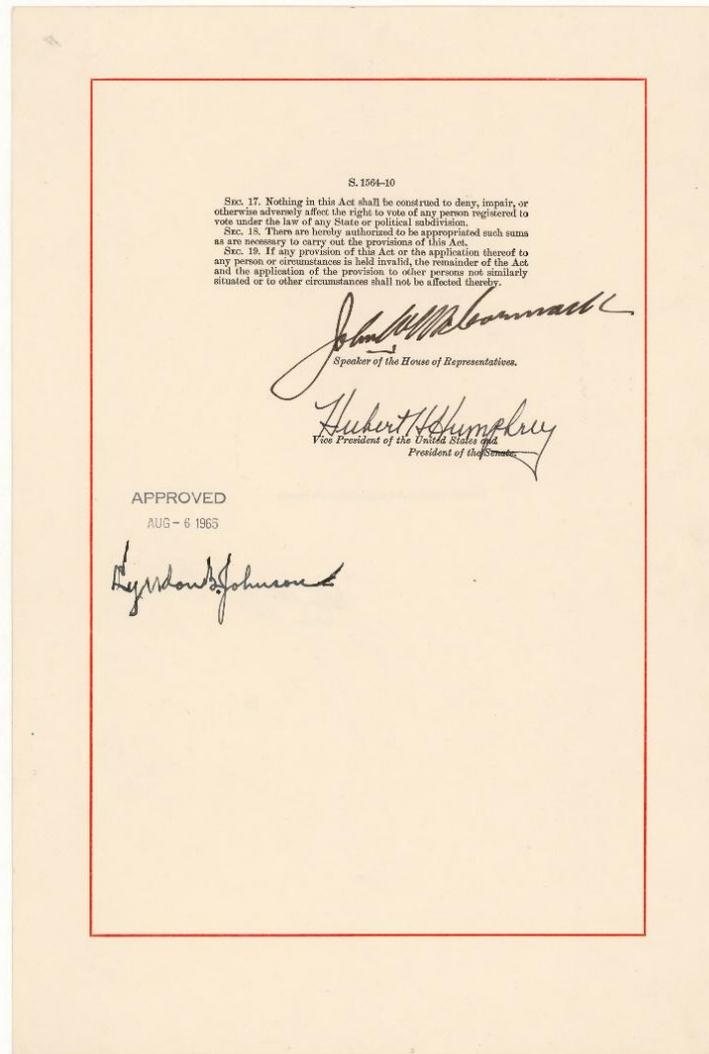
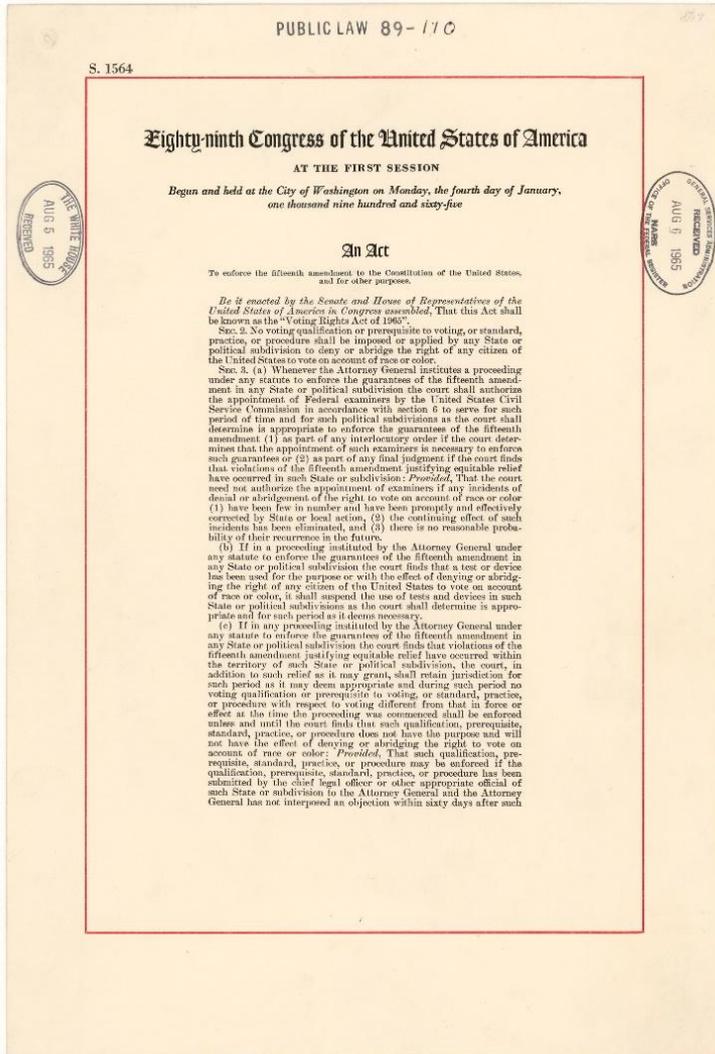


Enrolled  
Acts and  
Resolutions  
of Congress,  
RG 11

NAID 299891



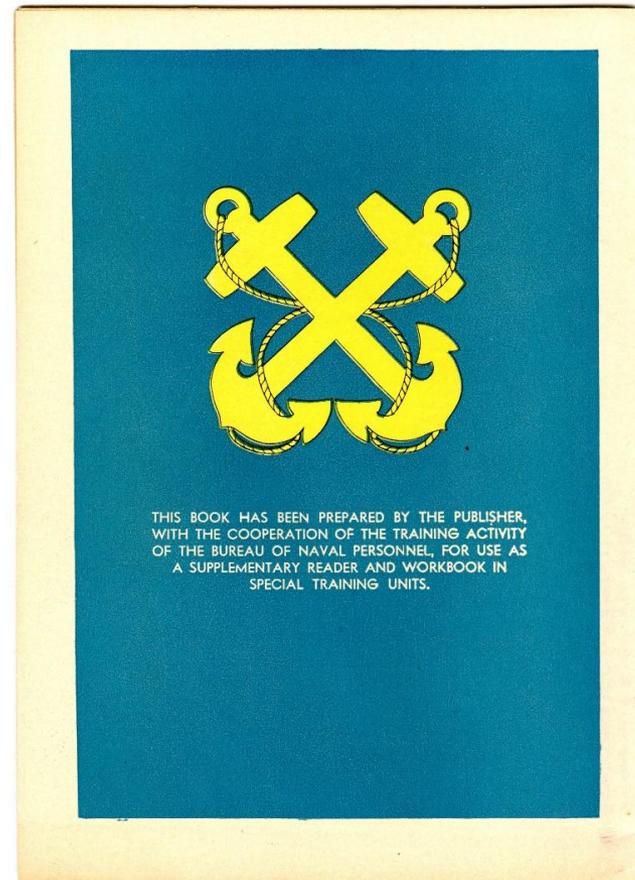
# Voting Rights Act, 1965



Enrolled  
Acts and  
Resolutions  
of Congress,  
RG 11

NAID 29909

# Literacy Comics, 1944–1945



Action Comics, No. 2. Historical Files of Navy Training Personnel, RG 24 NAID 6923890

# Literacy Comics, 1944–1945

**HOW WELL DID YOU READ?**

1. Write the words that tell what the story is about.  
an old man falls from a train  
an old man who put up a "Funland" for children  
an old man who does not like Superman

---

2. Lois was made up to look like something. What? Write the words that tell.  
a little girl about 10 years old  
a metal copy of Superman  
a metal animal run by an engine

---

3. Somebody made the "accidents." Who? Write the words that tell.  
Superman and Lois  
John Nicholas and Jason  
Fancy Dan and his men

---

4. Write *yes* or *no* after each question.

a. Was John Nicholas dead when his will was read? \_\_\_\_\_

b. Did Superman put Jason into the metal animal? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Did Ned and Ted want Fancy Dan to stop the "accidents"? \_\_\_\_\_

d. Did Lois play a trick on Jason? \_\_\_\_\_

e. Was Funland really dangerous to children? \_\_\_\_\_

f. Did it take two days for Superman to put up Funland? \_\_\_\_\_

g. Did Ted and Ned want to hurt the children? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Put these sentences in the right order. What happened first? Second? Third? Fourth?

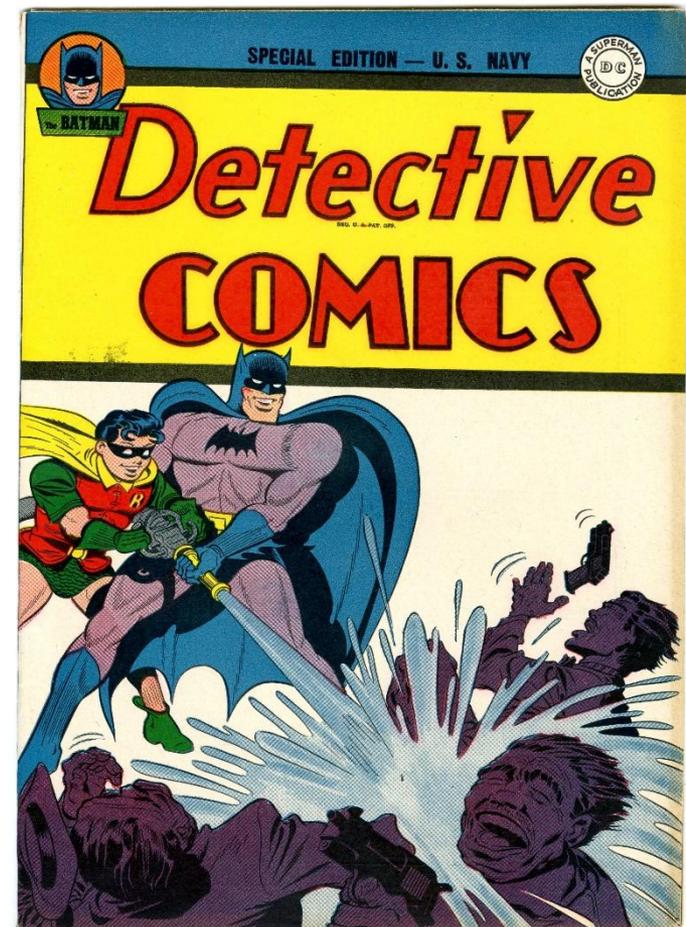
A child sees a boat capsized.  
Superman gets Funland ready in one day.  
The nephews find that Santa Claus is Uncle John.  
Superman saves the children in Funland.

first: \_\_\_\_\_

second: \_\_\_\_\_

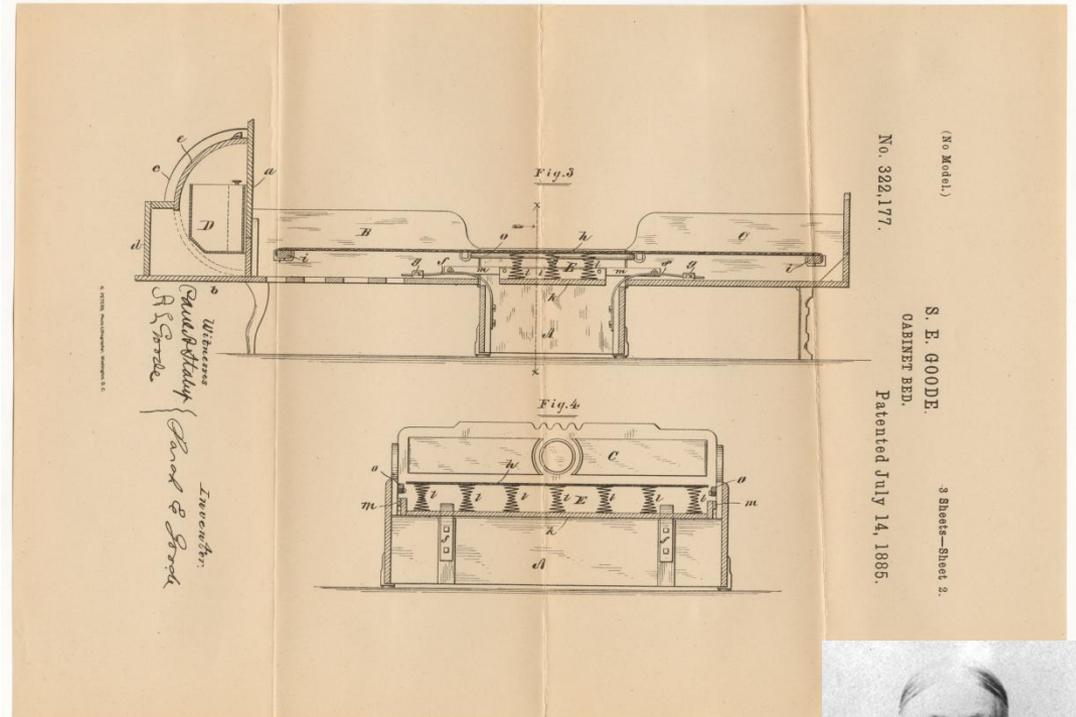
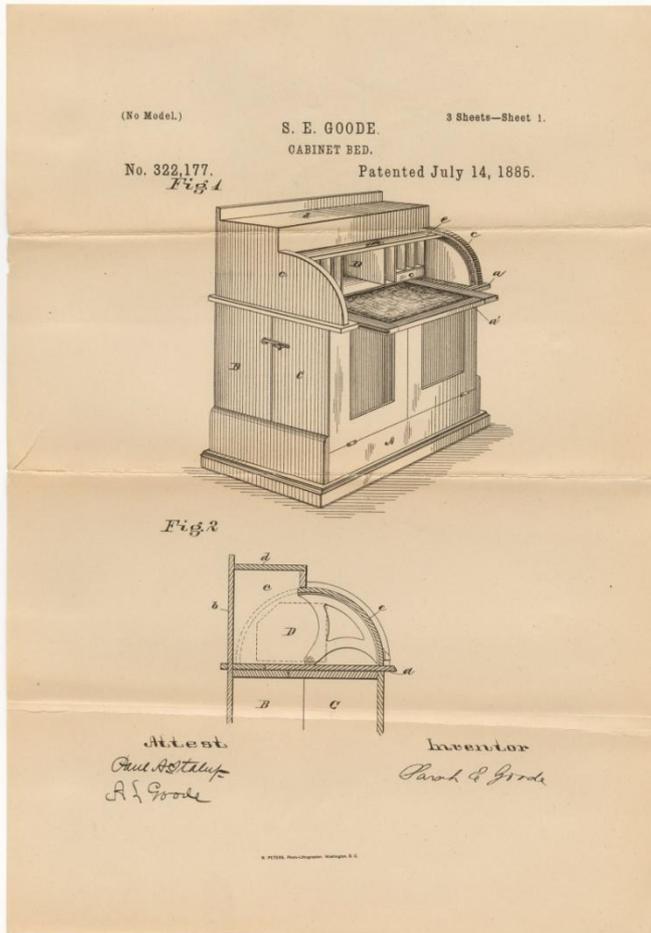
third: \_\_\_\_\_

fourth: \_\_\_\_\_

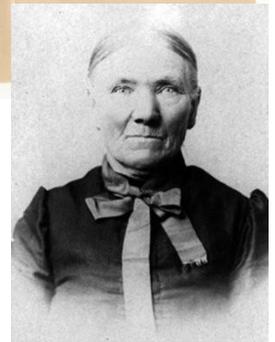


Detective Comics, No. 4. Historical Files of Navy Training Personnel, RG 24  
NAID 6923890

# Patent #322,177 - Folding Beds, Sarah E. Goode, 1885



Selected Patent Files, RG 241  
NAID 7560384



# George Washington Carver Patents

663,302

RECEIVED  
SEP 14 1925  
U.S. PATENT OFFICE

**Petition.**

To the Commissioner of Patents:

Your petitioner George Washington Carver,  
a citizen of the United States of America,  
residing at Tuskegee,  
in the County of Macon and State of Alabama  
and whose Postoffice address Tuskegee, Alabama,

pray that Letters Patent may be granted to him for the improvement in  
Cosmetics and Process of Producing the Same.

And he hereby appoints BROWNE & PHELPS, WASHINGTON, D. C. a firm composed of F. L. Browne, F. M. Phelps, and Dudley Browne, Registration No. 6264, his Attorneys, with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application, to make alterations and amendments therein, to sign his name to the drawings, to receive the Letters Patent and to transact all business in the United States Patent Office connected therewith.

Signed at Tuskegee, in the County of Macon and State of Alabama this 29 day of August, 1925.

George Washington Carver

**Specification.**

To all Whom it May Concern:

BE IT KNOWN, That I, George Washington Carver, a citizen of the United States, residing at Tuskegee, in the County of Macon and State of Alabama have invented certain new and useful improvements in Cosmetics and Process of Producing the Same, of which the following is a specification:

**Oath.** 6250

STATE OF Alabama  
COUNTY OF Macon

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

the above-named petitioner, being duly sworn, depose and says that he is a citizen of the United States, and resident of Tuskegee, Alabama,

that he verily believe s himself to be the original, first, and sole inventor of the improvements in

**PROCESS OF PRODUCING PAINTS AND STAINS**

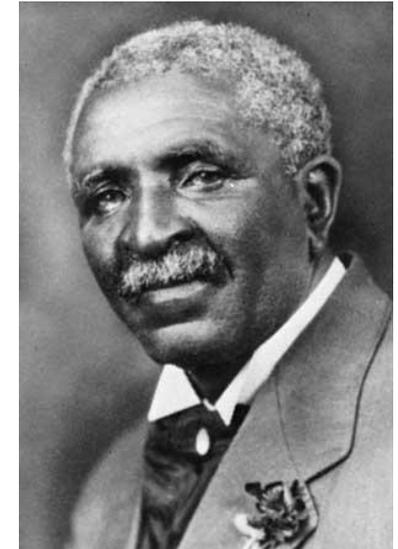
described and claimed in the annexed specification; that he does not know and does not believe that the same was ever known or used before his invention or discovery thereof, or patented or described in any printed publication in any country before his invention or discovery thereof, or more than two years prior to this application, or in public use or on sale in the United States for more than two years prior to this application; that said invention has not been patented in any country foreign to the United States on an application filed by him or his legal representatives or assigns more than twelve months prior to this application; and that no application for patent on said improvement has been filed by him or his representatives or assigns in any country foreign to the United States

George Washington Carver

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 13th day of January 1925.

C. W. Hare  
(Official Signature)  
Tuskegee, Alabama  
Notary Public.

Patented 3 inventions from 1925–1927 for cosmetics and paints, stains



# Michael Jackson Patent, 1993



7. These statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

TRIUMPH INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Date: August 25, 1992 By Michael S. Jackson, President

PATMISC\T114382.619 2

Selected Patent Files, RG 241 NAID 5721404

United States Patent [19]  
Jackson et al.



US005255452A

[11] Patent Number: 5,255,452  
[45] Date of Patent: Oct. 26, 1993

- [54] METHOD AND MEANS FOR CREATING ANTI-GRAVITY ILLUSION
- [75] Inventors: Michael J. Jackson, Los Angeles; Michael L. Bush; Dennis Tompkins, both of Hollywood, Calif.
- [73] Assignee: Triumph International, Inc., Los Angeles, Calif.
- [21] Appl. No.: 905,479
- [22] Filed: Jun. 29, 1992
- [51] Int. Cl.<sup>3</sup> ..... A43B 5/00; A43B 3/00
- [52] U.S. Cl. .... 36/113; 36/1; 36/136; 36/80; 36/132
- [58] Field of Search ..... 36/1, 80, 103, 113, 36/114, 131, 132, 136; 482/70, 71, 105
- [56] References Cited  
U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS  
1,059,284 4/1913 Dennis ..... 36/114  
2,114,790 4/1938 Venables ..... 36/132  
2,473,099 6/1949 Hatch ..... 36/1

- 3,889,359 6/1975 Emrich ..... 36/1  
4,445,287 5/1984 Garcia ..... 36/114  
4,538,410 9/1985 Trimble ..... 36/131  
4,645,466 2/1987 Ellis ..... 36/132  
4,762,019 8/1988 Beyl ..... 36/131  
4,882,858 11/1989 Signori ..... 36/131  
5,042,173 8/1991 Blizzard et al. .... 36/113

Primary Examiner—Steven N. Meyers  
Assistant Examiner—M. Denise Patterson  
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Drucker & Sommers

[57] ABSTRACT

A system for allowing a shoe wearer to lean forwardly beyond his center of gravity by virtue of wearing a specially designed pair of shoes which will engage with a hitch member movably projectable through a stage surface. The shoes have a specially designed heel slot which can be detachably engaged with the hitch member by simply sliding the shoe wearer's foot forward, thereby engaging with the hitch member.

13 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets

[http://youtu.be/h\\_D3Vffhvs4?t=7m10s](http://youtu.be/h_D3Vffhvs4?t=7m10s)



**KNOW YOUR RECORDS**  
National Archives and Records Administration

# Thank you for attending!

Session video recording and materials  
will remain available at

*[www.archives.gov/calendar/Know-Your-Records](http://www.archives.gov/calendar/Know-Your-Records)*



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