

Loving v Virginia – I

Lead: In summer 1958 the long arm of Virginia law propelled by generations of racial animus reached out to ensnare Richard and Mildred Loving.

Intro: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts

Content: On a warm night in mid-July, Caroline County Sheriff R. Garnet Brooks and two deputies invaded the bedroom of the sleeping Lovings. The cops asked why the two were in bed together. Mildred said, “I am his wife.” When Richard Loving pointed to their District of Columbia marriage license hanging on the wall, Brooks said, “That’s no good here.” They were arrested and hauled off to jail.

The couple met as children and over the years their friendship blossomed into romance. When in 1958, eighteen-year-old Mildred became pregnant, they were forced to go to the District of Columbia to get married. The couple came to a trial in January, 1959 presided over by the thoroughly racist Judge Leon M. Bazile. In later appeal proceedings, Judge Bazile stated, “almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents....The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix.” He sentenced them to a suspended sentence but banished them from the Commonwealth. Next time: miscegenation.

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