

Strawbridge Vs. Curtiss

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Court : US Supreme Court

Decided On : 1806

Appeal No. : 7 U.S. 267

Appellant : Strawbridge

Respondent : Curtiss

Judgement :

Strawbridge v. Curtiss - 7 U.S. 267 (1806)

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Strawbridge v. Curtiss

7 U.S. (3 Cranch) 267

APPEAL FROM THE CIRCUIT COURT OF

THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

SYLLABUS

If there be two or more joint plaintiffs, and two or more joint defendants, each of the plaintiffs must be capable of suing each of the defendants in the courts of the United States to sustain the jurisdiction of the court.

The Court understands the expressions in the act of Congress giving jurisdiction to the courts of the United States "when an alien is a party, or the suit is between a citizen of the state where the suit is brought, and a citizen of another state" to mean that each distinct interest should be represented by persons all of whom are entitled to sue or may be sued in the federal courts -- that is, where the interest is joint, each of the persons concerned in that interest must be competent to sue or liable to be sued in those courts.

This was an appeal from a decree of the Circuit Court for the District of Massachusetts, which dismissed the complainants' bill in chancery for want of jurisdiction.

Some of the complainants were alleged to be citizens of the State of Massachusetts. The defendants were also stated to be citizens of the same state, excepting Curtiss, who was averred to be a citizen of the State of Vermont, and upon whom the subpoena was served in that state.

MR. CHIEF JUSTICE MARSHALL delivered the opinion of the Court.

The Court has considered this case and is of opinion that the jurisdiction cannot be supported.

The words of the act of Congress are "where an alien is a party or the suit is between a citizen of a state where the suit is brought and a citizen of another state."

The Court understands these expressions to mean that each distinct interest should be represented by persons all of whom are entitled to sue or may be sued in the federal courts. That is, that where the interest is joint, each of the persons concerned in that interest must be competent to sue or liable to be sued in those courts.

But the Court does not mean to give an opinion in the case where several parties represent several distinct interests

and some of those parties are and others are not competent to sue or liable to be sued in the courts of the United States.

Decree affirmed.

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