

Quick Learning Guide:

Wong Kim Ark, Citizenship Pioneer

United States v. Wong Kim Ark

Supreme Court of the United States

Argued March 5, 8, 1897

Decided March 28, 1898

Full case name *United States v. Wong Kim Ark*

Citations 169 U.S. 649 (*more*)
18 S. Ct. 456; 42 L. Ed. 890; 1898 U.S. LEXIS 1515

Case history

Prior Appeal from the District Court of the United States for the Northern District of California; 71 F. 382

Holding

The Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment must be interpreted in light of [English common law](#),^[1] and thus it grants U.S. citizenship to all children born to alien parents on American soil, with only a limited set of exceptions.^{[2][3]}

Court membership

Chief Justice
Melville Fuller

Associate Justices
John M. Harlan · Horace Gray
David J. Brewer · Henry B. Brown
George Shiras Jr. · Edward D. White
Rufus W. Peckham · Joseph McKenna

Case opinions

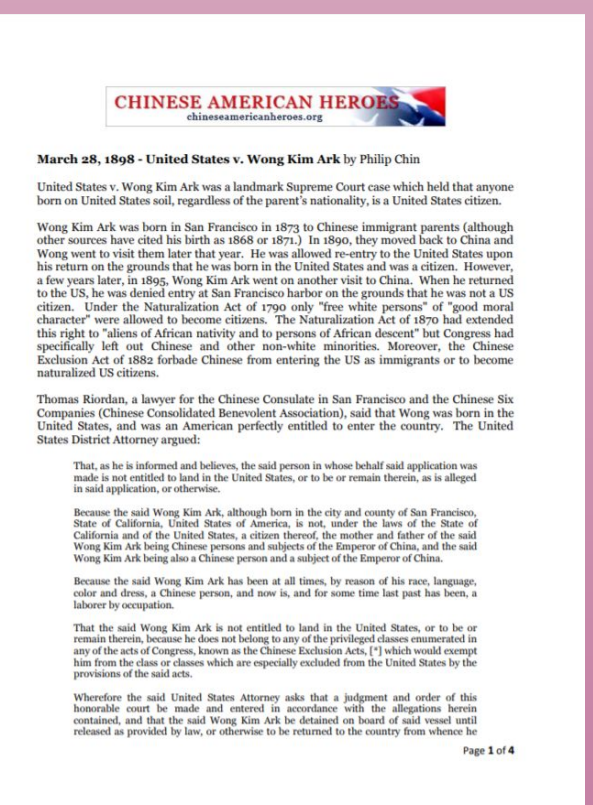
Majority Gray, joined by Brewer, Brown, Shiras, White, Peckham

Dissent Fuller, joined by Harlan

McKenna took no part in the consideration or decision of the case.

Laws applied

U.S. Const. amend. XIV



Did You Know.. .

Because of the new law, Wong Kim Ark sons, born in China, eventually moved to the US as citizens. One learned, after reading the newspaper in 1998, about his father's case and how he would be honored that year on the 100th anniversary of the settlement of the case. Wong had never mentioned the case to them.