

13, Chief, S. E. Div.

marriage with the claimant, therefore, the premises considered, I am of the opinion that it is safe to assume that they married by and with the sanction of their masters, under the sanction of a statute, and their cohabitation subsequent to their emancipation may be accepted, under the dictum of Jones vs. Jones (id) as a ratification of their former slave-marriage, hence the marriage of the claimant and the soldier, while Caroline was living and undivorced, was absolutely null and void, and as there was no change in their relation after Caroline's decease in 1888, and as common law marriages are not recognized by the courts of Maryland, I am constrained to hold that claimant has no title to recognition as the lawful widow of the soldier.

Very respectfully,

*A. W. Cuddy*  
Chief of Law Division.