



ELLA RUTH HASTINGS, )  
                           Complainant )  
 -vs- )  
 ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS, )  
                           Respondent )

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BALDWIN COUNTY,  
 ALABAMA.  
 IN EQUITY.

TO THE HONORABLE F. W. HARE, JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BALDWIN  
 COUNTY, ALABAMA, IN EQUITY:

Comes your Complainant, Ella Ruth Hastings, and humbly com-  
 plaining against the Respondent Robert Selma Hastings, respectfully re-  
 presents and shows unto your Honor and this Honorable Court as follows:

FIRST: That your Complainant and the Respondent are both  
 over the age of twenty one years and that your Complainant is a resident  
 of Robertsdale, Baldwin County, Alabama, and the Respondent is also a  
 resident of Robertsdale, Baldwin County, Alabama.

SECOND. That your Complainant and the Respondent were married  
 at Bay Minette, Alabama, on, to-wit: December 5th, 1932 and lived together  
 as husband and wife until September 1st, 1938.

THIRD: That the Respondent is a man of ungovernable temper;  
 and that on to-wit: September 1st, 1938 and at various times prior thereto,  
 the Respondent has cursed, abused and threatened the Complainant; that on,  
 to-wit: September 1st, 1938, he did actual violence to her person by strik-  
 ing her; that his conduct is such that Complainant has every reasonable  
 apprehension to believe, and does actually believe, that if she continues  
 to live with him, he will continue to carry out his threats to do further  
 violence to her person which will necessarily endanger her life and health.

FOURTH: Complainant shows further unto this Honorable Court  
 that the Respondent has not and does not contribute to her support, that he  
 is an able bodied man capable of working and supporting his wife, but that  
 he has and does fail to contribute to her support, and that the Respondent  
 has property and means whereby he could support your Complainant if he would  
 do so.

FIFTH: That there were no children born to your Complainant  
 and the Respondent of this marriage.

WHEREFORE, the premises considered, Complainant prays that  
 your Honor will, by proper process, make the said Robert Selma Hastings  
 party respondent to this Bill of Complaint, requiring him to plead, answer  
 or demur to the same within the time and under the penalties prescribed by

law and the practice of this Honorable Court.

The Complainant further prays that upon the final hearing of this cause, that this Honorable Court will give and grant unto her a decree of absolute divorce, forever barring the bonds of matrimony existing between her and the Respondent, Robert Selma Hastings, and that your Honor will grant unto your Complainant the further right of using her maiden name of Ella Ruth Wilson and that your Complainant further prays that she be given the right to marry again should she so desire and that the costs of Court be taxed on the Respondent, Robert Selma Hastings and further that this Honorable Court will assess your Complainant's Attorneys' fees against the Respondent and make the same a portion of the court costs; and that your Honor will give and grant unto her such, other, further, different and/or general relief as she may be in equity and good conscience entitled to receive and as in duty bound she will ever pray.

  
SOLICITOR FOR COMPLAINANT.

FOOT NOTE: The Respondent Robert Selma Hastings is required to answer each and every allegation contained in the foregoing complaint, paragraphs numbered 1 to 5 inclusive, but not under oath, oath being hereby expressly waived.

  
SOLICITOR FOR COMPLAINANT.

The State of Alabama,  
Baldwin County.

No. \_\_\_\_\_ CIRCUIT COURT IN EQUITY.

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS Complainant  
vs.

ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS Defendant

In this cause it appears to the Register in Chancery  
that a summons requiring the Defendant Robert Selma Hastings

to appear and demur, plead to or answer the Bill of Complaint in this cause within thirty days  
after the service of said Summons upon Robert Selma Hastings  
was served upon him by the Sheriff of Baldwin County, Alabama, on the  
23rd day of May 1939

And the said Defendant having failed to demur, plead to or answer the said Bill of Complaint  
to this date, it is now, therefore, on motion of Orvis M. Brown, Attorney for Complainant  
ordered and decreed that the said Bill of Complaint in this cause be and it hereby is in all things  
taken as confessed against the said Robert Selma Hastings

Defendant aforesaid.

This 1st day of July 19 39

R. S. Duck Register.  
By - Audelia Thompson, Deputy

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS,	)	
Complainant	)	IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BALDWIN COUNTY,
-vs-	)	ALABAMA.
ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS,	)	IN EQUITY.
Respondent	)	

TO THE HONORABLE T. W. HANE, JUDGE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF BALDWIN COUNTY, ALABAMA, IN EQUITY:

Come your Complainant, Ella Ruth Hastings, and humbly complaining against the Respondent Robert Selma Hastings, respectfully represents and shows unto your Honor and this Honorable Court as follows:

FIRST: That your Complainant and the Respondent are both over the age of twenty one years and that your Complainant is a resident of Robertsdale, Baldwin County, Alabama, and the Respondent is also a resident of Robertsdale, Baldwin County, Alabama.

SECOND. That your Complainant and the Respondent were married at Bay Minette, Alabama, on, to-wit: December 5th, 1932 and lived together as husband and wife until September 1st, 1935.

THIRD: That the Respondent is a man of un governable temper; and that on to-wit: September 1st, 1935 and at various times prior thereto, the Respondent has cursed, abused and threatened the Complainant; that on, to-wit: September 1st, 1935, he did actual violence to her person by striking her; that his conduct is such that Complainant has every reasonable apprehension to believe, and does actually believe, that if she continues to live with him, he will continue to carry out his threats to do further violence to her person which will necessarily endanger her life and health.

FOURTH: Complainant shows further unto this Honorable Court that the Respondent has not and does not contribute to her support, that he is an able bodied man capable of working and supporting his wife, but that he has and does fail to contribute to her support, and that the Respondent has property and means whereby he could support your Complainant if he would do so.

FIFTH: That there were no children born to your Complainant and the Respondent of this marriage.

WHEREFORE, the premises considered, Complainant prays that your Honor will, by proper process, make the said Robert Selma Hastings

rests her case in this Bill of Complaint, requiring him to plead, answer

law and the practice of this Honorable Court.

The Complainant further prays that upon the final hearing of this cause, that this Honorable Court will give and grant unto her a decree of absolute divorce, forever barring the bonds of matrimony existing between her and the Respondent, Robert Selma Hastings, and that your Honor will grant unto your Complainant the further right of using her maiden name of Ella Ruth Wilson and that your Complainant further prays that she be given the right to marry again should she so desire and that the costs of Court be taxes on the Respondent, Robert Selma Hastings and further that this Honorable Court will assess your Complainant's Attorneys' fees against the Respondent and make ~~the same~~ a portion of the court costs; and that your Honor will give and grant unto her such, other, further, different and/or general relief as she may be in equity and good conscience entitled to receive and as in duty bound she will ever pray.

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SOLICITOR FOR COMPLAINANT.

FOOT NOTE: The Respondent Robert Selma Hastings is required to answer each and every allegation contained in the foregoing complaint, paragraphs numbered 1 to 5 inclusive, but not under oath, oath being hereby expressly waived.

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SOLICITOR FOR COMPLAINANT.

The State of Alabama, }  
Baldwin County

CIRCUIT COURT

To VIRGINIA CRENSHAW:

KNOW YE: That we, having full faith in your prudence and competency, have appointed you Commissioner, and by these presents do authorize you, at such time and place as you may appoint, to call before you and examine Ella Ruth Hastings, Nell Forsyth, and Jennie Wilson

as witnesses in behalf of Complainant in a cause pending in our Circuit Court of Baldwin County, of said State, wherein ELLA RUTH HASTINGS

and ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS Complainant

Defendant,  
on oath to be by you administered, upon them  
to take and certify the deposition of the witness and return the same to our Court, with all convenient speed, under your hand.

Witness 23rd day of June 19 39

COMMISSIONER'S FEE, \$ paid.

WITNESS' FEES, \$

By: R. S. Dush REGISTER  
Deputy Register

The State Of Alabama, } Circuit Court of Baldwin County, In Equity.  
Baldwin County

To Any Sheriff of the State of Alabama—GREETING:

WE COMMAND YOU, That you summon ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS,

of Baldwin County, to be and appear before the Judge of the Circuit Court of Baldwin County, exercising Chancery jurisdiction, within thirty days after the service of Summons, and there to answer, plead or demur, without oath, to a Bill of Complaint lately exhibited by

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS,

against said ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS,

and further to do and perform what said Judge shall order and direct in that behalf. And this the said Defendant shall in no wise omit, under penalty, etc. And we further command that you return this writ with your endorsement thereon, to our said Court immediately upon the execution thereof.

WITNESS, R. S. Duck, Register of said Circuit Court, this 16th day of May, 1939.

R. S. DUCK  
clerk, - register

By *[Signature]* Register  
Deputy

N. B. — Any party defendant is entitled to a copy of the bill upon application to the Register.



The State of Alabama, Baldwin County

CIRCUIT COURT, IN EQUITY

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS Complainant

VS.

ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS Respondent

This cause coming on to be heard was submitted upon Bill of Complaint, Decress Pro Confesso on \_\_\_\_\_ and Testimony as noted by the Register, and upon consideration thereof, the Court is of the opinion that the Complainant is entitled to the relief prayed for in said bill.

It is therefore ordered, adjudged and decreed by the Court that the bonds of matrimony heretofore existing between the Complainant and Defendant be, and the same are hereby, dissolved, and that the said Ella Ruth Hastings is forever divorced from the said

Robert Selma Hastings

for and on account of cruelty and non-support

It is further ordered and decreed that the said Ella Ruth Hastings be given the right to use her maiden name of Ella Ruth Wilson.

It is further ordered, adjudged and decreed that neither party to this suit shall again marry except to each other until sixty days after the rendition of this decree, and that if appeal is taken within sixty days, neither party shall again marry except to each other during the pendency of said appeal.

It is further ordered that Ella Ruth Hastings be, and she is hereby permitted to again contract marraige upon the payment of the cost of this suit.

It is further ordered that Robert Selma Hastings the Respondent pay the cost herein to be taxed, for which execution may issue.

This 8th day of July, 19 39.

J. W. Hare Judge Circuit Court, in Equity.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Register of the Circuit Court for Baldwin County, Alabama, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct copy of the original decree rendered by the Judge of the Circuit Court in the above stated cause, which said decree is on file and enrolled in my office.

Witness my hand and seal this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19 \_\_\_\_\_

Register of Circuit Court, in Equity.



law and the practice of this Honorable Court.

The Complainant further prays that upon the final hearing of this cause, that this Honorable Court will give and grant unto her a decree of absolute divorce, forever terminating the bonds of matrimony existing between her and the Respondent, Robert Selma Hastings, and that your Honor will grant unto your Complainant the fatherly right of raising her children from and with their father and that your Complainant further prays that she be given the right to marry again should she so desire and that the costs of Court be taxed on the Respondent, Robert Selma Hastings and further that this Honorable Court will assess your Complainant's attorneys' fees against the Respondent and cause the same to be paid to her out of the Court and that your Honor will give and grant unto her such other relief, different and/or counsel relief as she may be in equity entitled to and as justice and equity shall require and as is fully found and will ever pray.

*Filed May 14, 1938  
 R. S. Birch, Applicant  
 R. S. Phillips, Respondent, Defendant*

~~DEFENDANT'S COMPLAINT~~

BILL OF COMPLAINT.

RECORDED

FOR FORM The Respondent Robert Selma Hastings is required to answer each and every allegation contained in the foregoing complaint, paragraphs numbered 1 to 8 inclusive, but not under oath, each being hereby expressly

~~DEFENDANT'S COMPLAINT~~

RECORDED

No. ....

Page .....

**The State of Alabama,**  
Baldwin County.

**CIRCUIT COURT, IN EQUITY**

EMMA RUTH HASTINGS

vs.

ROBERT SEIMA HASTINGS

**DECREE PRO CONFESSO ON  
PERSONAL SERVICE**

Issued *July 1* 19*39*

*R S Lynch*  
Register.

and the practice of this Honorable Court.

The Commission further prays that upon the final hearing of this cause, that this Honorable Court will give and award unto her a decree or absolute divorce, forever barring the power of matrimony existing between her and the Respondent, Robert John Hastings, and also her name will grant unto your Commission the further right of using her maiden name of Miss John Hastings and that your Commission further prays that she be given the right to marry again should she so desire and that the costs of Court be taxed on the Respondent, Robert John Hastings, and further that this Honorable Court will assess your Commission's attorney's fees against the Respondent and make a portion of the costs of this cause and that your name will give and grant unto her such other relief, either legal or general relief as she may be in equity and good conscience entitled to receive and as in duty bound she will ever pray.

*Filed May 14, 1937  
 R. S. Dyer, Reporter  
 By: Hubert Thompson, Deputy*

COLLECTED FOR COMMISSION

YOUR HONOR: The Respondent Robert John Hastings is notified to answer each and every allegation contained in the foregoing complaint, notwithstanding numbered 1 to 7 inclusive, but not under oath, each being hereby expressly waived.

COLLECTED FOR COMMISSION

NO.

DEPOSITION

**The State of Alabama**

**BALDWIN COUNTY**

**CIRCUIT COURT**

ELIA RUTH HASTINGS

Complainant

vs.

ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS

Defendant

**COMMISSION TO TAKE DEPOSITION**

**COMMISSIONER:**

**WITNESSES:**

(original)

RECORDED

*Robert Selma*

ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS,  
Served On Roberttsdale, Alabama

Circuit Court of Baldwin County  
IN EQUITY

No. 546

Summons

ELIA RUTH HASTINGS,  
Complainant,

VS.

ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS,  
Respondent.

ORVIS M. BROWN,  
Solicitor for Complainant

Recorded in Vol. \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

THE STATE OF ALABAMA,  
Baldwin County

Received in office this 17<sup>th</sup>

day of May, 1939

*W. L. Howard*  
Sheriff.

Executed this 5-23 day of

by leaving a copy of the Summons with

*Robert Selma*

*Robert Selma*  
Defendant

*W. R. Stewart*  
Sheriff

By *O. M. Brown*  
Deputy Sheriff

RECORDED

No. ... Page ...

The State Of Alabama  
Baldwin County

In Circuit Court, In Equity

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS  
vs. Complainant.

ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS  
Respondent.

DIVORCE DECREE

*Filed July 11, 1935*  
*R. S. Dick, Register*  
*By - W. A. Thompson, Deputy*

Faint, mostly illegible text of the divorce decree, including sections for "Whereas", "And it is the order of the Court", and "Witness my hand and seal this 11th day of July, 1935".



The State of Alabama, } Circuit Court of Baldwin County, Alabama  
 Baldwin County. } (In Equity.)

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS ..... Complainant.

VS.

ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS ..... Respondent.

I, Virginia Crenshaw

as Register and Commissioner

have called and caused to come before me Ella Ruth Hastings, Nell Forsyth, and

Jennie Wilson

witnesses named in the Requirement for Oral Examination, on the 1st day of July

192<sup>39</sup>, at the office of Orvis M. Brown

in Robertsdale, Alabama, and having first sworn said witnesses to speak the

truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, the said witnesses

doth depose and say as follows:

TESTIMONY OF ELLA RUTH HASTINGS

My name is Ella Ruth Hastings. I am the Complainant in the cause of action styled Ella Ruth Hastings vs Robert Selma Hastings. We are both over the age of twenty one years and both residents of Robertsdale, Baldwin County, Alabama and have lived here for the past thirteen years. We were married at Bay Minette, Alabama on December 5, 1932 and lived together as husband and wife since that time until September 1st, 1938 at which time we were separated and have lived separate and apart continuously since that time. There were no children born to us of this marriage. The Respondent, Robert Selma Hastings is a man of ungovernable temper and on several occasions and in particular on September 1st, 1938 the Respondent has mistreated me by cursing me and threatening me and on September 1st, 1938 did actual violence to my person by striking me and his conduct had been and was such at that time that I did believe and still believe that if I should have continued to live with him at that time that he would have continued to carry out his threats to do further violence to my person all to the danger of my life and/or health. The Respondent has not contributed to my support and did not contribute but very little to my support before we were separated. He is an able bodied man and could contribute to my support if he so desired.

My name previous to my marriage to Robert Selma Hastings was Ella Ruth Wilson and I hereby ask of this Honorable Court that they restore to me my right to use my maiden name of Ella Ruth Wilson.

*Ella Ruth Hastings*

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS.

**ORAL EXAMINATION.**

I, Virginia Crenshaw, as Register and Commissioner hereby certify that the foregoing depositions on Oral Examination was taken down in writing by me in the words of the witness<sup>es</sup> and read over to them and they signed the same in the presence of myself and Orvis M. Brown at the time and place herein mentioned; that I have personal knowledge of personal identity of said witness<sup>es</sup> or had proof made before me of the identity of said witness<sup>es</sup>; that I am not of counsel or of kin to any of the parties to said cause, or any manner interested in the result thereof I enclose the said Oral Examination in an envelope to the Register of said Court.

Given under my hand and seal, this 1st day of July 1929

Virginia Crenshaw (L. S.)

NO. \_\_\_\_\_ PAGE \_\_\_\_\_

THE STATE OF ALABAMA  
BALDWIN COUNTY

IN CIRCUIT COURT, IN EQUITY.

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS  
vs.  
Complainant

ROBERT SEMA HASTINGS  
Respondent.

**Oral Deposition**

Filed July 1 1929

P. S. Beckler, Register.

Recorded in \_\_\_\_\_ Record \_\_\_\_\_

Vol. \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_, Register \_\_\_\_\_

TESTIMONY OF NELL FORSYTH

My name is Nell Forsyth. I am a resident of Silverhill, Alabama and have lived in Silverhill for the past twenty years. I have known Ella Ruth Hastings and her husband Selma Hastings since they were married in 1932 and know that they lived together as husband and wife from that time until on Or About September 1, 1938. I know of my own personal knowledge that they are both over the age of twenty one years and are both residents of Baldwin County, Alabama and have been for the past five years and longer. I know of my own personal knowledge that Selma Hastings is a man of ungovernable temper and that he often mistreated Ella Ruth Hastings by cursing abusing and threatening her and that on September 1, 1938 did actual violence to her person by striking her and that she has all reason to believe and does actually believe that if she continued to live with him that he would continue to carry out his threats to do further violence to her person which would necessarily endanger her life and health and that she has not lived with him since about September 1, 1938 and that she has not had any contribution from him to her support from the time they separated and that he contributed but very little to her support before they separated. He is a man able bodied and capable of working and supporting his wife if he so desired. They do not have any children and no children were born to them of this marriage. I have known Ella Ruth Hastings ever since they were married and know that she made him a good wife and put forth ever effort possible to make their home as comfortable as possible for him and this fact was not appreciated by him.

*Nell Forsyth*  
Nell Forsyth

TESTIMONY OF JENNIE WILSON

My name is Jennie Wilson. I am a resident of Silverhill, Alabama and have been for the past seventeen years and I have been personally acquainted with Ella Ruth Hastings and Robert Selma Hastings since they were married in December 1932 and previous to that time also. I know of my own personal knowledge that they are both over the age of twenty one years and residents of Baldwin County, Alabama and have been for the past eight or ten years. I know that they were married in December 1932 at Bay Minette and lived together as husband and wife until on or about September 1st, 1938. They did not have any children. Selma Hastings has not contributed anything to the support of Ella Ruth Hastings since they were separated September 1, 1938 and contributed very little to her support previous to that time. He was very cruel to her and is a man of very high temper and often times he would curse, abuse and threaten her and on September 1, 1938 he did actual

violence to her by striking her and his conduct previous to that time had been such that she had every reason to believe and she does believe that if she continued to live with him that he would continue to carry out his threats and do actual violence to her person endangering her life and health and she has refused to return and live with him since that time and has not lived with him since that time. I know that she treated him good and tried very hard to make him a good wife and make everything as pleasant as possible around the home but he did not appreciate her efforts whatsoever and did every-thing possible to make and did make their married life unpleasant.

Jennie Wilson  
Jennie Wilson

**RECORDED**

No. \_\_\_\_\_

**The State of Alabama**  
BALDWIN COUNTY

**IN EQUITY**  
Circuit Court of Baldwin County

ELLA RUTH HASTINGS,

Complainant,

vs.

ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS,

Respondent.

**NOTE OF TESTIMONY**

Filed in Open Court this 1st

day of July 1939

*A. S. Duck*

REGISTER

\_\_\_\_\_  
 ELLA RUTH HASTINGS,  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Complainant,  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 vs.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 ROBERT SELMA HASTINGS,  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Respondents.

THE STATE OF ALABAMA  
 Baldwin County

IN EQUITY  
 Circuit Court of Baldwin County

This cause is submitted in behalf of Complainant upon the original Bill of Complaint, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Decree Pro Confesso on Personal Service; Testimony of Ella Ruth  
 Hastings, Nell Forsyth, and Jennie Wilson;

and in behalf of Defendant upon \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 R. S. Dush  
 Register.  
 By: Arthur Simpson Deputy