

SCENE 4: PEARSON v. CHARLESTON, S.C., 1948

Slide of Masthead, Charleston, S.C.

Characters: Harold R. Boulware, an African American attorney  
Levi Pearson, a farmer

Setting: Boulware's office in Columbia, S.C.

BOULWARE

Please come in, Mr. Pearson. Have a seat. (Levi Pearson does)  
Thank you for traveling all the way to Charleston. Now, these  
are your facts as I understand them. You have three children  
attending the Scott's Branch High School nine miles from your  
farm. Now, as I understand the case, you chipped in to pay for a  
bus to get those children to school, but the bus keeps breaking  
down.

PEARSON

That's right, Mr. Boulware. It's Reverend J.A. DeLaine who told  
me about your training as a lawyer. That you've worked on these  
kinds of cases before.

BOULWARE

Tell me about your children.

PEARSON

There's three of them. Daisy, age 18. James, he's 15; and I've  
got a younger daughter Eloise, who's 12. It's harder and harder  
to get my children to school, because it's nine miles away, and  
our bus just can't make it any longer. I'm in the fields all  
day, so can't take them myself.

BOULWARE

With your permission, I'd like to submit a petition to your  
school district...let's see, that's Number 26 of Clarendon  
County, is that right...(he's writing). The petition will pray  
the following: (reading) "that school bus transportation be  
furnished, maintained and operated out of the public funds in the  
district, for use of the said children of the Petitioner and  
other Negro school children similarly situated." I'll submit it  
to the County Superintendent there--that's Mr. McCord?--to the  
chairman of the school board, and to the State Board of Educa-  
tion.

(Lights dim as the two shake hands. MASTHEAD showing passage of  
three months time.)