

My cousin, Donya Williams, along with another friend on Facebook, alerted me to some little-known facts about the history of the end of enslavement in the United States. I'd like to share them.

Yesterday was Juneteenth, the day black America increasingly uses to mark the end of enslavement in the US. Back in 2018 I recorded Episode 19 about Juneteenth. [You can listen and read the full transcript here to learn more.](#)

Here's the truth about the end of slavery in the United States. It didn't end with the [Emancipation Proclamation](#) on January 1, 1863, nor on June 19, 1865.

In what was then called "Indian Territory," enslavement continued for another year after June 19, 1865. Here are the dates of emancipation for enslaved people of African descent in Indian Territory:

March 21, 1866 - the Seminole Nation.

April 28, 1866 - the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations.

June 14, 1866 - the Muscogee Creek Nation.

July 19, 1867 - the Cherokee Nation, as they were the last to sign a treaty with the US emancipating their enslaved.

In terms of US states, slavery didn't end until the dates associated with them:

December 8, 1865 - Oregon.

December 19, 1865 - California.

December 28, 1865 (reaffirmed – June 9, 1868) – Florida.

January 15, 1866 – Iowa.

January 23, 1866 (after rejection – March 16, 1865) – New Jersey.

February 18, 1870 – Texas.

February 12, 1901 (after rejection – February 8, 1865) – Delaware.

March 18, 1976 (after rejection – February 24, 1865) – Kentucky.

March 16, 1995; Certified February 7, 2013 (after rejection – December 5, 1865) – Mississippi.

There were 36 states in 1865, 3/4 of which were required in order to make the abolition of slavery a part of the US Constitution. This did not happen until December 6, 1865.

When President Lincoln signed the executive order to free enslaved people in September 1862 it 1) only provided for abolition in the Confederate states and 2) didn't go into effect until January 1, 1863. People forget that Northern states allowed slavery, too, and that the Proclamation did not apply to them. So, truth be told, no one was freed on June 19th – they were just told about it in Texas.

And, in all honesty, just as December 25th is called Christmas and is a day given to celebrate the birth of Christ, Juneteenth is a day chosen to celebrate the end of American enslavement of other human beings.

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