

A Brief Story of JuneTeenth

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“Juneteenth” is the oldest known celebration of the end of slavery in US history. It dates back to June 19th, 1865 when slaves in Texas received news of the Emancipation Proclamation, which President Abraham Lincoln signed by executive order that freed the southern slaves.



This was the news that the slaves had been waiting for, but sadly, they received it two and a half years after it was passed. President Lincoln’s signing of the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863, but word never reached Texas due to an insufficient number of Union troops able to overcome the resistance to such a message. But with the help of General Granger’s regiment, they

finally had enough troops to influence and enforce the over 2 year-old law.



Today, we celebrate the receiving of this news, and remember that freedom itself was slow to pass and be accepted by the rest of the nation during those times. The 1857 Dred Scott Decision stated that slaves were property and had no rights under the United States Constitution. This increased the already national attention to the slavery issue, helped propel the nation into a civil war, directly influenced the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation and ultimately led to the 13th Amendment which legally abolished slavery in the United States.

The board and volunteers of the Dred Scott Heritage Foundation have worked hard over the past six years to preserve and commemorate the legacy of Dred Scott through reconciliation, education and remembrance of historic moments such as this.