



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Harpers Ferry National
Historical Park

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Harpers Ferry NHP News Release

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Eyes of the Army: The Cavalry Factor

On Saturday and Sunday, September 20-21, 2008, visitors are invited to join the park's living history staff and volunteers of the 2nd U.S. Cavalry for special programs at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. A living history display of horses and riders will be presented on the Park Green and Arsenal Square from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and historic weapons and cavalry demonstrations will be held at 12 noon and 3 p.m. each day.

In September 1862, Harpers Ferry's 14,000-man Union garrison found itself surrounded; surrender was imminent. Cavalry commander Colonel Benjamin F. "Grimes" Davis deemed an escape from the Confederate trap worth a try. On the evening of September 14, Davis led 1,500 men across the Potomac River pontoon bridge and then toward Sharpsburg, Maryland. They escaped Stonewall Jackson's siege and capture of the hapless union garrison. The cavalry column pressed on undetected toward Sharpsburg and captured a 91-wagon Confederate ammunition train near Williamsport. They eventually reached safety in Greencastle, Pennsylvania, on the morning of September 15. The column rode 50 miles in 12 hours.