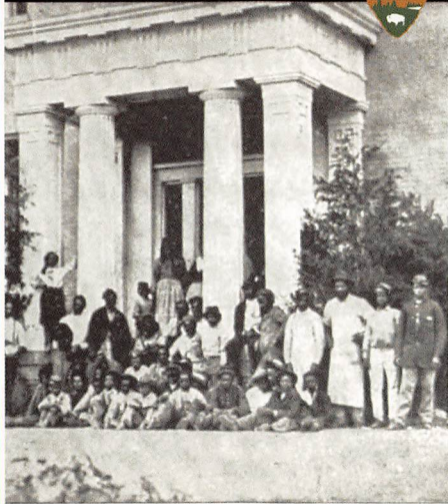


Harpers Ferry National Historical Park



Seeking Freedom



Seeking Freedom & Protection

Fact: As a border state, slavery was not abolished in West Virginia until February 3, 1865.

Thousands of enslaved people sought freedom and protection in Harpers Ferry. As a border town frequently occupied by Union soldiers, Harpers Ferry became a beacon to escape slavery. George Wingate, a soldier from New York recalled, “The rush...into the lines was very great, and Harper’s Ferry was soon crowded with nearly 5,000 runaway slaves.”