



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of Interior

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal  
National Historical Park

1850 Dual Highway  
Suite 100  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
301.739.4200 phone  
301.739.5275 fax

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## C&O Canal National Historical Park News Release

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For Immediate Release

**Contact:** Kelly Fox, (301) 767-3714

### 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry Visit Great Falls Tavern

Potomac, Md –On May 7th and 8th 2016, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park will host a Civil War living history weekend with the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine Volunteer Infantry at Great Falls Tavern in Potomac, Md.

In 1862, and the worst fear of many has come to pass: the country has split, civil war is in its second year, and the country is divided right along the Potomac River and the C&O Canal. The Potomac River has become a hostile frontier. The original 20<sup>th</sup> Maine saw action along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal at the Battle of Shepherdstown, shortly after the battle of Antietam. The 20<sup>th</sup> found that the canal offered an excellent defensive position by using the dry bed of the canal prism as a trench. From there they were able to fire across the Potomac at confederate forces along the Virginia (now West Virginia) shore.

In 1862, many local residents could not look at the troops along the canal without concern. Were they liberators, foretelling the end of bondage? Were they a safeguard of lives and property? An occupying force of interlopers? Or were they just a nuisance, burning fences and stealing chickens? How long would they stay? What would next year bring? During this event, the park invites today's visitors to reflect on what the Civil War would ultimately determine: the Union of the States, and eventual freedom of 4 million enslaved people.

This Civil War Living History encampment will offer both informal and formal programs. Visitors are invited the walk through the camp and talk to the re-enactors throughout the weekend. Formal programs will be offered at 12:00, 2:30, and 4:00 both Saturday and Sunday. Civil War infantry tactics and wartime activity along the C&O Canal will be discussed. The event will be free of charge, although there are fees to enter the park (currently \$10 per vehicle for a single visit, unless a passenger has an applicable park pass).

Call ahead for details at (301) 767-3714 (press "0" to reach a live person, Wed.-Sun., 9:00-4:30) For more information on the C&O Canal's programs, please visit [www.nps.gov/choh](http://www.nps.gov/choh).

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**ABOUT THE C&O Canal:** The Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park preserves and interprets the historical, natural and recreational resources of the C&O Canal. Over 5,000,000 visitors a year enjoy the opportunities for recreation and understanding that the Park has to offer. For more information, visit the Park's website at [www.nps.gov/choh](http://www.nps.gov/choh).

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