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## **HARPERS FERRY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

BOX 389, HARPERS FERRY, WV 25425

Vol. 26 April 2007 No. 8

- DATE:** Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007
- TIME:** 7:00 PM - CWRT Members Dinner  
(Dinner Reservations Required)
- 8:00 Speakers Presentation and Book Raffle  
(Open to the Public)
- PLACE:** Hilltop House Hotel,  
400 East Ridge St. Harpers Ferry, WV  
(Follow signs for Hilltop house from Washington St.)  
(Turn Right on Ridge St. and go to the end of the street.)
- SPEAKER:** Richard N. Griffin
- SUBJECT:** *Three Years a Soldier: A Massachusetts Soldier's  
Service in a New York Horse Artillery Battery*

### **The Subject:**

Private George Perkins, of Woburn, Massachusetts, served in the Sixth New York Independent Battery from December 1861 to December 1864. During that period, the battery served with the Army of the Potomac, beginning in an infantry support role, but functioning for the greater part of the war as horse artillery. Private Perkins, who was my great-grandfather, documented that period in a diary that he maintained and in his prolific correspondence with his hometown newspaper.

*Three Years a Soldier* was published by The University of Tennessee Press in April 2006 and was nominated for a Distinguished Book Award with the Society for Military

History. The book consists of the edited diary and correspondence of Private Perkins and also contains a lengthy introduction, chapter introductions, appendices and notes.

## The Speaker

Richard Griffin is a 1965 graduate of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio (or, as he claims, the *real* Miami) and was commissioned an Ensign from the NROTC program. He received his Masters degree in International Studies from Johns Hopkins University in 1977. One year of that program was in Bologna, Italy. He says this was a real grind. He received a non-resident diploma from the Naval War College in 1981

Mr. Griffin served on active duty for a total of 12 years as a surface warfare-qualified officer on ships in the Atlantic and Pacific fleets and on shore duty. He served in Vietnam as an advisor to the Vietnamese Navy in riverine and coastal operations. He also served as Assistant Director of the Navy's Communications School.

After leaving active duty, he continued in the Naval Reserve and served for 18 years in various positions in Washington DC, Norfolk Virginia, and Pearl Harbor. He commanded units supporting Naval Forces Central Command and Maritime Defense Zone Pacific and retired as a Captain. During his service, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal (with combat V), the Meritorious Service Medal (two awards), the Navy Commendation Medal, and the Staff Service Honor Medal First Class. The latter decoration was awarded by the government of the Republic of Vietnam.

As a civilian, he worked for various contracting firms, before moving to Hawaii in 1985 to work for the Navy as a civilian at the headquarters of the Pacific Command. In this position, he authored a series of tactical and doctrinal publications used in naval and joint operations and managed various command and control improvement projects.

In the summer of 2002, he moved to Washington DC and took a job with the Department of Defense. His major responsibilities included strategic planning, acquisition planning and management, and various project oversight and coordination functions. He retired from the federal civilian service in August 2005. Mr. Griffin works part-time now as a policy analyst with a consulting firm.

Richard Griffin has a long-time interest in the Civil War. The University of Tennessee Press published his first book, *Three Years a Soldier*, in April 2006. The book is based on his great-grandfather's Civil War diary and correspondence.

## The Meal

A family-style meal will be served at 7:00 PM prior to the program. The cost of the meal is **\$11.00** per person. Reservations for the meal **must be phoned in no later than Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>**, to Allison Alsdorf, at 304-535-2101 or you can e-mail her at [alsdorf@comcast.net](mailto:alsdorf@comcast.net)

## Sons of Confederate Veterans' Convention

The Battle of Sharpsburg Camp 1582 invites you to attend the annual Maryland Division state convention of the Sons of Confederate Veterans April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Boonsboro American Legion Post, 701 N. Main Street.

Boonsboro, MD. Special guest Albert Lee Comer of Cumberland, MD will be attending. There will be guided tours of the Antietam Battlefield. The first 50 to register will receive a complimentary copy of the popular CD *Maryland's Confederate Graves*. Individual registration is \$40.00 and couples \$65.00. Lunch is included. To register, send a personal check made out to SCV to PO Box 546, Sharpsburg, MD, 21782. Indicate on a separate sheet of paper the number of people attending. For any question please call 304-876-1825.

## Community Bulletin

### Upcoming Events

**Rally for Virginia April 21 – 22:** The Southern Grays, reactivated living history group will portray a camp of mustering Virginia state troops during the opening moments in the Civil War when citizens became soldiers and state militia became part of the Confederate Army. Although the federal armory at Harpers Ferry had been destroyed in April, the town remained a strategic military staging area for the nucleus of the growing Confederate forces. The Southern Grays will portray the Grayson “Daredevils,” an 1861 militia unit from the mountains of Southwestern Virginia which became part of the 4<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry of the Confederate Army. The Grayson Daredevils and other volunteers mustered in Confederate service in the spring of 1861 under Colonel Thomas Jackson, later know as General “Stonewall” Jackson. The Southern Grays will depict the raw recruits of the time with period correct uniforms, weapons and camp life.

**Stonewall Jackson’s Brilliant Victory May 5<sup>th</sup>:** Join living history staff on Bolivar Heights for a hike out to the School House Ridge Battlefield , the location of Confederate General Stonewall Jackson’s brilliant 1862 victory. Guided living history hike begins on Bolivar Heights and ends on School House Ridge.

**Defend and Protect: Arming America’s Soldiers May 26 – 27:** Special exhibits, historic weapons firing demonstrations, and programs highlight the Harpers Ferry Armory, technology, invention and how soldiers used these weapons for national defense and exploration. This program investigates how a young republic grew with industrialization, technology, innovation, national expansion, while wrestling with the challenges of mass immigration, free labor versus slavery, and religious prejudice. Visitors are invited to experience the skills necessary to be a musket lock plate armory and munitions worker.

For further information concerning the Community Bulletin, call Susan Haberkorn at 304-535-6224 or receive the electronic version of the bulletin by sending your email address to [susan\\_haberkorn@nps.gov](mailto:susan_haberkorn@nps.gov) . Please write “Electronic Community Bulletin” in the subject line. You can log on to <http://www.nps.gov/hafe/parknews/newspaper.htm> to see the latest Community Bulletin.