

Ulysses S. Grant



General Ulysses S. Grant. Library of Congress

Ulysses S. Grant was a great American. As a Civil War general he led the North to victory, keeping the nation united and **abolishing** slavery. As 18th President of the United States he worked to guarantee justice for all. Ulysses Grant also loved his wife Julia and their four children: Fred, Ulysses Jr., Ellen, and Jesse. When he died in 1885, he was one of the most famous Americans of his time.

Childhood

Hiram Ulysses Grant was born April 27, 1822, in Pt. Pleasant, Ohio. His family called him Ulysses, or Ulys for short. His father owned a **tannery**, where they made animal hides into leather. Ulysses did not like working there. He enjoyed farming and caring for animals, especially horses. He attended school and thought about becoming a math teacher. Instead, he went to the U. S. Military Academy in West Point, New York, to become an army officer. By mistake, his name was changed to Ulysses S. Grant. His classmates nicknamed him United States Grant.

Pre-Civil War

After graduation, the army sent Ulysses to Jefferson Barracks near St. Louis. He met and fell in love with Julia Dent at her father's home, White Haven. They were married on August 22, 1848. Julia traveled with her husband to his various military posts. When Ulysses was sent west in 1852, Julia and their two children had to return to her parents' home. Ulysses missed his family and resigned from the army in 1854.



White Haven, Ulysses and Julia Grant's St. Louis home.

He farmed the White Haven property, working with the slaves owned by Julia's father. In 1860, Ulysses, Julia, and their four children moved to Galena, Illinois. Ulysses worked with his brothers selling leather goods made in their father's tannery.



The Grant family in 1866. From left to right: Ellen, Ulysses, Jesse, Fred, Julia, and Ulysses, Jr.

Civil War

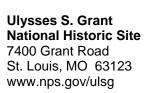
The Civil War began in April 1861.
Ulysses felt it was his duty to re-enter the military. He won many battles.
President Abraham Lincoln named him general of the Union army in 1864.
General Grant supported Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. He made sure that slaves who escaped were protected and cared for. Grant accepted Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender in April 1865, ending the war.



Citizens celebrated the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment. Library of Congress

Presidency

After the Civil War, Ulysses Grant continued to serve his country. He was elected President in 1868 and again in 1872. In 1870, the 15th **Amendment**, giving African American men the right to vote, became law. His Native American policy protected Indians from people who wanted their land. He sought free public education for all, regardless of race, gender, or religion.





Post-Presidency

Mr. and Mrs. Grant planned to retire to the White Haven farm they had purchased from her father. First they took a long vacation around the world. When they returned in 1879, they decided to live close to their children and grandchildren in New York, Ulvsses became ill with cancer in 1884. Before he died, he wrote a book about the Civil War. It became a best seller. He died on July 23, 1885. The people of the nation donated money to build a tomb in New York City where people could come to remember him. Mrs. Grant died in 1902 and is buried in Grant's Tomb alongside her husband.



Grant's Tomb, Riverside Park, New York City. Library of Congress

Post-Reading Activities

- 1. Using a dictionary, look up the definitions of the words in bold print.
- 2. Sequence: Draw a timeline of events in Ulysses S. Grant's life.
- 3. Summarize: Write a paragraph explaining why Ulysses Grant was a great American. Begin with a main idea sentence. Follow this with three detail sentences explaining the main idea.
- 4. Draw conclusions: How do you think Ulysses Grant felt about slavery? Give two reasons from what you read that support your answer.