The editors wish to thank everyone who responded to our first issue of the Grant Network Newsletter. Our group of Grant supporters continues to expand. We are pleased to report that the Ulysses S. Grant Network is now officially registered as a non-profit organization. This issue features information about membership, as well as articles and information about Grant sites, events and other current topics concerning the General. Upcoming issues will present articles concerning Grant related battles as well as discussions related to Grant’s military tactics and strategies. Please continue to send comments and suggestions regarding features and sections for future issues.
NETWORK PROFILE

LORETTA FURHMAN, POINT PLEASANT OHIO

For the past twenty eight years, Loretta Furhman has been the curator at Grant's birthplace located along the banks of the Ohio River in Point Pleasant, Ohio. Loretta enjoys her work there and finds it very rewarding. "Each day I learn a little more of history than I knew the day before". "I've met so many lovely people from all over the world and I still converse with some of them."

Upon entering the cottage, you will hear Loretta explain that "this little cottage was built in 1817. General Grant's parents married and moved into this building in 1821. They rented the home from Lee Thompson who lived next door and he owned this house. Grant's father, Jesse Root rented the property for $2.00 a month rent and he also had 1/2 acre of good rich bottom land for gardening. Jesse also worked in a tannery here, owned by Thomas Page. In 1822 on April 27th Ulysses Simpson Grant was born in this house at 5:30 in the morning."

Loretta goes on to describe the personal items in the house that belonged to the Grant's. Included is a large cherry corner cupboard, a partial pair of leather boots, a small leather covered chest, a night gown, dress and shawl, owned by Grant ladies, and a pillow case belonging to Hannah Grant, General Grant's mother.

In her spare time, Loretta likes reading any American History books, preferably biographies. She reports, "There are so many books about Ulysses. I liked Captain Sam Grant by Lloyd Lewis and A Personal

History of Ulysses S. Grant by Albert D. Richardson. She also uses these as sources of information.

Grant's birthplace is open Wednesday through Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 12:00 noon until 5:00 p.m. It is closed Monday and Tuesdays. The museum is open April 1st through October 31st of each year.

Address for Grant's birthplace is 1592 State Route 232, Point Pleasant, Ohio. Phone (513) 5534911.

*top: photo of cottage on 1905 postcard
*bottom: The cottage today
The U.S. Postal Service will be issuing a series of Civil War Stamps, possibly as early as July 1995, commemorating many important figures of the Civil War. The stamps will be available in sheets of twenty. Readers of this newsletter will be pleased to see that one of these stamps depicts a very familiar pose of General Grant. Notable figures such as Abraham Lincoln, William T. Sherman, Clara Barton, Harriet Tubman, Robert E. Lee and others, as well as several battles of the war are depicted on the stamps. Mark Hess, artist for the "Legends of the West" stamps, did the artwork for this new series. Further information regarding the date of issue should soon be available from local Post Offices.

Jim DiFeo, Retail Specialist for the Postal Service in West Orange, NJ, provided a copy of the pane of stamps for our readers. News about the stamps was first brought to the attention of some of our readers through the publication "Cump and Company," a newsletter for Sherman supporters. For more information about that group contact Kate Philbrick, 12 Hilliard Road, Old Bridge, NJ 08857.

"All of it. I should like to live all of my life over again. There isn't any part of it I should want to leave out." (Conversation with Grant before he met F. Ward.)

MORE POSTAL NEWS

This April the celebration of Grant's birthday at Point Pleasant, Ohio will be commemorated with a special cancellation by the Post Office. Requests should be made as soon as possible. The cancellation will be issued for 30 days only, beginning on April 22, the date of the birthday celebration. Those who would like to receive one should send a self-addressed stamped postcard or envelope to: Moscow Post Office, Grant's Birthplace Station, Moscow, Ohio 45153. For further information contact Lynn Miller at the Moscow P.O. at 513-553-3223.
The life of Jesse Grant is a study in contrasts. He was a self-made man who had his life planned by the time he was a teenager. He was also a hard working industrious man who expected as much from himself as he did from others, yet he was a loving, indulgent father who thought his young son nothing less than a genius. Jesse was an outspoken, argumentative and shrewd member of his community whose favorite pastime was a never ending boast about his first born son, Ulysses. Some historians contend that perhaps Jesse was justified in some of his boasting, however irritating it was to his neighbors. Ulysses, who seemed to inherit most of his characteristics from his reserved mother, watched with anxiety the unwanted attention his father was bringing him.

The feelings that Ulysses had for his father were ambivalent. Jesse had taught him to be self-reliant and a hard worker, but living up to the image that his father had set for him was hard work. After Ulysses' resignation from the army in 1854 a strain between father and son developed which never completely healed. Ulysses' marriage into a southern, slave holding family did not help matters. Jesse's views on slavery were well known. He was willing to help his son and his family, but often at a cost to Ulysses' pride.

To his credit, Jesse was a devoted family man and managed to raise an upright family in a rough Western community. His frugality was sometimes trying, but his family never suffered from want. Because Jesse had an inferior education himself, he wanted more for his children, and gave them the best the area had to offer. Ulysses appointment to West Point was a combination of Jesse's frugality and the best interest of his son. Young Ulysses would get a good education, and the tuition was free.

Jesse's devotion to his family and community certainly had a lasting impression on Ulysses, as did his fathers hard work and determination.

Jesse died in 1873, and the timetable that he had set for his life had been fulfilled with not a few surprises added. Little did the young man know what an important part he was to play in America's future.

Diane Meives

Sources:
The Ancestry of General Grant, and Their Contemporaries by Edward Chauncey Marshall, A.M. 1869
The Shoe and Leather Reporter, Sept. 17, 1868
Letters From Lloyd Lewis, by Lloyd Lewis, 1950
A CLOSER LOOK AT GRANT'S SUCCESS

"Ulysses S. Grant, a failure at everything but war," is a phrase frequently written and quoted. The inescapable word, "failure" has become linked with Grant's name in biographies, articles, and television programs. It has even appeared in a caption beneath a New York Times photo of the annual ceremony at Grant's tomb, and in an advertisement by a company selling Civil War stationery.

This myth of Grant as a failure in civilian life can be traced to his very first biographers who were extremely eager to relate his rise from "failure and poverty" to successful Civil War General. This image technique involving exaggeration, which is still used today, was employed in an attempt to create the kind of story that the American public has always loved. Authors dwelled on negative aspects and so-called failures to make his achievements seem all the more extraordinary. The myth grew and was perpetuated when the General ran for President in 1868. Ironically, his own reticence and innate modesty may have been factors that allowed the myth to continue.

After Grant's death many of the laudatory biographies contributed to this interpretation. Even the title of a typical biography from this time period, From Tannery to the White House, suggests the "rags to riches" type of rise that was especially popular in books written during the nineteenth century. Unfortunately traces of the myth remain in biographies written in this century; this continues to contribute to the misconception that Grant was only successful in times of war.

Careful examination of the facts proves otherwise. Grant led a very successful life before and after the Civil War. He did not rise to fame from failure and obscurity; many factors contributed to his success. He was born into a well-established middle class family at Point Pleasant, Ohio. His father's prosperous leather tanning business provided the means for the family to live very comfortably. While growing up in Georgetown, forty miles east of Cincinnati, Ulysses proved himself time and again to be an extremely self-sufficient, capable boy. His innate ability to understand and handle horses, combined with common sense and initiative, were factors which prompted his father to assign him many responsibilities. When he was eight years old his father entrusted him to drive a wagon to haul wood; also at an early age he took on most of the farming chores, especially those which involved the use of horses. By the age of ten he was driving for his father's livery business, taking passengers to places as far away as Cincinnati.

By the time he was seventeen Grant had passed the entrance examination to West Point where he was an able student excelling in mathematics and horsemanship. He may not have finished at the top of his class at West Point, but it was during those years that he was able to develop insights and perceptions about classmates, some of whom would later serve in his command or become his opponents in the Civil War. He distinguished himself and was cited for bravery in the Mexican War where he gained valuable experience as quartermaster while moving troops and supplies.

He was an extremely devoted husband and father to whom family life was a source of strength and inspiration. He endured an extremely difficult military assignment on the west coast for two years until he could no longer bear to be so far away from his wife and children.

continued...
Leaving the army and securing a financially sufficient civilian occupation is no easy task, to which any veteran will attest. With time and patience Grant was able to overcome an unfortunate situation in St. Louis in the 1850's when illness and bad weather contributed to the failure of his crops one year. This adversity and his west coast experiences were major factors in shaping his strong character; he emerged as a stronger person as a result of these circumstances.

Contrary to common belief, Grant never lived in poverty before the war. He was capable of building his own home in St. Louis and was always able to provide for his family. The homes in which he lived were all more than modest and always well furnished. In Galena, Illinois in 1860 he was not a mere clerk in his father's leather goods store, but a partner in the business. At this time he lived in a very substantial two story brick home where he employed servants and would be considered prosperous by most current standards. He likely would have remained a successful businessman in Galena had it not been for the outbreak of the war at that time.

After the war, in honor of his triumph, he and his family were given homes by the citizens of Philadelphia and Galena. Grant, however remained the General-in-Chief with headquarters in Washington, D.C. where he supported fair and considerate treatment of the South. His success and popularity led to his nomination and election as President in 1868.

Even the much maligned Grant Presidency deserves some re-examination. His administrations were not without accomplishments. He adopted and supported the 15th Amendment. He brought the nation back to a stable economy after the war, and insisted on humane treatment of the American Indian. He settled territorial disputes in the Northwest. He negotiated with Great Britain to pay for breaches of neutrality during the Civil War. His Civil Service Commission and Specie Resumption Act were credits to his administration. At the end of his second term he resolved a grave constitutional crisis by appointing an electoral commission to break an impasse in Congress over inconclusive election returns. Twentieth century historians agree that his accomplishments demand a second look from a present perspective.

In 1885, while dying of throat cancer, Grant struggled to complete his best-selling, highly acclaimed memoir in an effort to provide an income for his family. This certainly was one of his most notable achievements.

Grant did not fail, but biographers and historians failed; they failed to represent Grant fairly and accurately. Grant the General, Grant the man, and Grant the President cannot be considered a failure in any sense. Not only was he loved and respected by members of his family and members of the Union Army, but was also admired by members of the Confederacy. It is rare that a man is honored and respected by both those he loved and those who opposed him.

by Donna Neralich

Sources:
Carpenter, John A. Ulysses S, Grant. New York, 1970
Lewis, Lloyd. Captain Sam Grant. Boston 1950
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COMPOSITE PICTURE OF GRANT

A few years ago Galena historian, Steve Repp, was browsing through some books on the life of U.S. Grant. Steve reports, "As I turned the pages of Mr. Lincoln's General, U.S. Grant, by Roy Meredith, 1959, I noticed a photograph on page 220. The caption read, "General Grant and Cincinnati in camp in Virginia, the photograph is a composite, Grant on horseback, mounted over a background picture." Upon further research, I found that this page 220 photo is really made from several photographs.

"The head of USG is from the more common view of Grant standing by the tree, (see frontispiece of Grant Takes Command")

The body of the general on horseback is really that of General Alexander McCook, who fought in the Western Theater of the War. I found his picture, on horseback in the Image of War, volume 5, page 32. The background photo is also from the Image of War, volume 2, page 338. Both of these volumes are from a set published by the National Historical Society. During my research, a fellow Galena historian, H. Scott Wolfe, graciously allowed me access to his private library. My thanks to him for this kind gesture."

Steve attempted to contact the publishing firm of Mr. Meredith's book, but never received a reply. "I thought that if we could find out what kind of photograph the original was, we could determine the age, or when the "photograph" was put together. The next time you look at old photographs, take a really good look, you might be surprised at what you find."

Views of the composite picture on next page.

SUGGESTED READING

For those who wish to read more about Grant's early life, the following books are suggested:

Captain Sam Grant, Lloyd Lewis, 1950
Letters from Lloyd Lewis, 1950 (Letters written by Lloyd Lewis to his publishers describing the research for his biography on Grant.)
Ulysses S. Grant, His Life and Character, Hamlin Garland, 1898
A Personal History of Ulysses S. Grant, Albert D. Richardson, 1868 & 1883

"He is one of the most remarkable men I have ever met. He does not seem to be aware of his powers"

** Alexander Stevens,
Vice President of the Confederacy,
on meeting Grant near the end of the war.
above: composite picture

next three pictures made up the composite
GRANT'S TOMB UPDATE

At this writing, some of the interior work at Grant's tomb has been completed. The roof has been sealed and the top of the dome has been cleaned. Additional interior work will begin this spring, as well as the restoration of one of the murals. Exterior work has been suspended due to weather conditions, however it should be in full swing again by April.

The National Park Service will conduct a ceremony honoring U.S. Grant on April 27th at the Tomb. The ceremony, which starts at 11:00 a.m., will begin with the wreath laying of the Presidential Wreath by West Point, followed by a wreath laying by the National Park Service. Demonstrations by Civil War re-enactors will take place, to include a cannon fire salute. This year the ceremony has been extended to include a staged reading by professional actors of a new play called Cold Harbor, written by Daniel Wentworth.

On Sunday April 30th the Sons of Union Veterans will hold their annual ceremony honoring Grant. For further information about the events at the Tomb call 212-666-1640.

For more information about The Friends of Grant's Tomb, a group that supports the restoration, contact George Craig, 83-12 Saint James Street, Elmhurst, NY 11373