Clara Rachel Grant

The oldest of Ulysses Grant's sisters, Clara Grant was born at Georgetown, Ohio, on Dec. 11, 1828. Clara never married. She developed consumption and died at Covington Kentucky at the home of her parents on March 6, 1865. She is buried in Spring Grove Cemetery next to her parents in Cincinnati, Ohio. She is the only one of the Grant children buried next to her parents. Ulysses Grant was unable to attend his sister's funeral; he was tending to war duties at City Point, Virginia.

Photo courtesy of Mary Chandler
To the Editor of The Shoe and Leather Reporter:

Dear Sir,—At the close of my last letter your readers left me eating mush and milk with Mrs. Judge Tod’s children, in their little log kitchen. The mush and milk were not new to me; but the spoons and bowls used were entirely new to me. The spoons were the finest and nicest I had ever seen, and the bowls were fine, pure and transparent. I thought I had never tasted anything so excellent. When I became a little better acquainted, I ventured to ask Ingersol, the oldest boy, who was about six years of age, what those spoons were made of; “of silver,” he replied. That astonished me still more, for I had never heard that silver was used for any other purpose than to make money, and I had never seen but little of it in that form. The bowls, he said, were china. I told him when I had children to feed, and I did not doubt I would have, I would have such bowls and spoons for them to eat their mush and milk with. I then asked him what those spoons cost, and he went into the house to ask his mother; after drawing a full explanation from him, she told him to tell “Jess,” a person must be very rich to get silver spoons—they cost eighteen dollars! That was a larger sum of money than I had ever seen, but I thought I could and would obtain it.

After I had lived with Mrs. Tod in Youngstown O., about two years, I felt that it was time for me to decide as to what was to be my pursuit in life. I knew but little of what was meant by education, and if I had known more I had no advantage for advancement in this respect, or of supporting myself while engaged in study. I could see no means of support even, but by the sweat of the brow. Mrs. Tod seemed to take almost as much interest in my welfare as in that of her own children, so I consulted with her about what trade I had better learn. She said, “if you want to get rich you had better learn the tanning business, for tanners all get rich.” That was enough. I had the silver spoons in view, and determined to reach them, and the example I set of industry and perseverance I have no doubt had something to do with the taking of Vicksburg.

My program was now arranged for life, and I was soon off for and at work in a little tannery in Deerfiled, Portage Co. O.; the same little tannery is still in operation, now fifty-nine years old. After working there two years, I found I would have a poor chance to get the trade well, so in 1812 I went to Maysville, where my older half-brother, Peter Grant, had a tannery, carried on upon a more extensive scale, and here I worked until I was out of my apprenticeship.

I was now twenty-one years of age, large and strong, had a good trade, and was supposed to be a fair workman. I had saved up about $50 during my apprenticeship, so that after working five or six years, and then, if there was any profit on labor, I would have it myself. Now, as I did not intend to make the journey of life alone, nor to take a help-mate until I had some visible means of support for her, I thought that by the course I had marked out for myself, I could accomplish this object by the time I was twenty-five. My next plan was to retire from labor and all the cares of life at sixty, if my circumstances would justify it.

Now with these four objects in view—to wit, the silver spoons, the wife at 25, the entire profits of my own labor, and the privilege to retire at sixty, I started out on the great journey of life. Well, I succeeded in three of them, and should have succeeded in the other but for the intervening hand of Providence. That was delayed two years—and that no doubt had something to do with the taking of Vicksburg, and opening the navigation of the “Father of Waters.” But in my next letter I will fully explain this matter.

Yours, etc. J. R. Grant
Covington, Ky. 1868
GRANT ARTIFACTS

Ulysses S. Grant’s boyhood in Georgetown Ohio houses the rocking chair owned and used by Grant’s father Jesse Root Grant. The couch is reported to have been owned by the Grant family. The Grant home is owned by John and Judy Ruthven. The house is located at 219 E. Grant Ave. in Georgetown. Admission is free.

TOWN NAMED FOR GRANT

Grant’s Pass Oregon was named as a result of the capture of Vicksburg by General U.S. Grant. About the time the news arrived in Southern Oregon, men engaged in improving the road over the low hills north celebrated the victory by naming the summit Grant’s Pass.

The discovery of rich placers at Sailor Diggins (later Waldo) in 1852 and the resulting gold rush brought the first settlers to this region. Several U.S. Army forts were maintained in the county, and many engagements during the Rogue River Indian War (1855-1858) took place within its boundaries. In 1886, the county seat was finally located in Grant’s Pass, a new town built on the railroad that was completed through the state in 1886.

Grant’s Pass is now the departure point for most Rogue River guided fishing and boating trips. The Rogue River and one of its tributaries, the Illinois River, have been designated a scenic waterway.

History of Oregon names
submitted by William and Pat Grant
GRANT'S BOYHOOD SCHOOL IN KENTUCKY DEMOLISHED

The Maysville Academy, a Kentucky school attended by Ulysses S. Grant when he was 14 years old, was recently demolished due to structural defects. Attempts to renovate and save the school failed due to damage from many years of neglect.

Young Grant entered the school, run by teachers Jacob W. Rand and W. W. Richeson, in the autumn of 1836 and boarded with an uncle who lived nearby. In his memoirs Grant wrote that he probably did not make enough progress at the school to compensate for the cost of the tuition. He commented that he was still going over the same old textbooks and familiar facts that he had learned in the schools in his hometown of Georgetown, Ohio.

The Maysville Academy did offer Grant one new opportunity however; here he joined the Philomathean Debating Society. According to Lloyd Lewis's book, Captain Sam Grant, the boys in the society debated topics such as the abolition of slavery, war, intemperance, the superiority of writers over orators, and the wisdom of the Texans in freeing Mexican General Santa Anna. One fellow member of the society commented that Ulysses was "a good debater for one of his years" and that as an executive officer of that society "he was firm and steady."

After Grant was elected president, Mr. Richeson wrote a letter to a Louisville newspaper stating, "Young Ulysses during his school days at Maysville seminary, ranked high in all his classes, and his deportment was exceptionally good."

The Ulysses S. Grant Network will be contacting Maysville officials to determine if a commemorative plaque will be maintained at the site.
It was a day that National Park Service (NPS) researchers at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site hoped would come. After three full years of main house restoration, it was evident that there were very few portions of the structure that had not been modified by 20th century owners. However, on January 28, 1998, Chief of Maintenance Mike Ward knew by looking at the paint lines and nails, that a second floor window casing had not been touched. As the main house exterior restoration is near completion, Ward and his crew needed to adjust the historic window back to its original level due to declination over time. As Ward began correcting the casing, a piece of paper fell to the floor. He picked it up and the first words he read were, "Dearest Julia".

It is a tattered letter that researchers believe was written from Ulysses to Julia while she was visiting her family at White Haven. Although the letter is partial, details of Ulysses' correspondence gives us a good idea of the meaning, location and date. Based on his words that still remain, it is believed that the letter was penned in 1850 or 1851. He was responding to a letter he had received from Julia.

At that time, Ulysses S. Grant was a first lieutenant stationed with the 4th Infantry in Detroit. She had given birth to their first child, Frederick Dent Grant, at White Haven on May 30, 1850. After rejoining with Ulysses, she made another lengthy visit to the farm in 1851, before the unit was reassigned to Sackets Harbor, New York. Grant mentioned Detroit and the names Mrs. Gore and Mrs. Bruester, whose husbands served with Grant there. Major John Gore later died while crossing the Isthmus of Panama with Grant and the 4th Regiment on their way to the Pacific Northwest. Grant also mentioned the name Nelly. NPS researchers are not certain to whom or what Grant was referring. Grant had a sister-in-law, Nelly Dent, but also had a horse called Nelly. There are not enough words to clarify this issue, however.

How the letter got there is also a mystery. Upon removing the window casing, a large rat's nest was found, packed with corn cobs and nails. The letter was possibly placed there by pack rats or it could have fallen through a crack from the attic which is just above the window. However it happened, it was preserved in the window for over 140 years. It had been missed despite the years of modernization and restoration. This is an appropriate time for such an ultimate find for the site that has been preserved to interpret the history of Ulysses and Julia and their life together.

The letter has been placed in the park's collection for preservation. For more information on the letter or the park itself, please call the visitor center at (314) 842-3298, or write to Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, 7400 Grant Road, St. Louis, MO 63123.
Pictures of the letter found at White Haven
Photos courtesy of Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site

Transcription of letter continued on next page.
The following is a transcript from a fragmented letter believed to be from Ulysses S. Grant to his wife Julia. The letter was found by Mike Ward (Chief of Maintenance, ULSG) inside the head casing above window 202W1 on the back side of the White Haven main house, January 28, 1998

FRONT:
Dearest Julia

I have just your letter of the 28th ultimo has been eleven days on its had hoped, by this time, to further particulars about[?] but your letter[?]

INSIDE (left):
I am satisfied that in[?] oppose[?] it so long as we are at Detroit. __ In a former letter of the possibility of our ordered[?] on the Indian frontier so did not increase the rank the Army. Congress have there is

INSIDE (right):
very much[?] warm. You want to know time[?] Well I'll tell you[?] usually of from 8 to 10[written over] miles evry[sic] day taking some lady[?] with [illegible beginning of word] Mrs. Gore[?], then one or the other Miss[?] Brusterr and other ladies[?] way the Miss Brusterr[torn] [torn]particularly[?] after[?] torn

BACK:
get[?] to St.[?] as fine as she assured that Nelly will carry than she anticipates. here spending some time with her is as gay as ever but looks broken. be leaving in a few days for parts The[?] Maj. has not received his orders.

BACK (written sideways):
Capt. be back month me to leave[?]

BACK (written sideways the other way, and is the address)
Grant[torn]ent[perhaps Dent?] [illegible, but perhaps Gravois?] Mo.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site (White Haven)

Special Saturday.
The first Saturday of every month is special at Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. Each Saturday a variety of distinctive interpretive themes make a special day for visitors. These Special Saturday programs often require reservations, so call the park Visitor Center at (314) 842-3298 to reserve your place. The staff is happy to answer any questions. Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site is open from 9:00 to 5:00 daily.

May 2: St. Louis Storytelling Festival.

June 6: From White Haven to the White House
Lecturer: Grant descendant Ulysses S. Grant Dietz.

July 4: Grant, An American Hero
A variety of interpretive programs with patriotic themes.

Grant’s Cottage

Grant Cottage at Mt. McGregor, N. Y. will open for the season on Memorial Day weekend. For information about special programs and schedules call 518-587-8277.

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS

While serving in the Mexican War, under Generals Taylor and Scott, Grant was in every battle except Buena Vista. Grant was twice breveted for bravery and gallantry for services at Molino del Rey and Chapultepec.
Grant Network member, Frank Scaturro, presents the following overview of his forthcoming book which re-evaluates the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant.

**President Grant Reconsidered**

**Overview**

Frank Scaturro

Grant a great president? For anyone acquainted with President Ulysses S. Grant's standing in history books, the idea seems absurd; but *President Grant Reconsidered* argues that history should judge our 18th president's administrations in a radically different light. As opposed to a more traditionally structured chronological narrative, this study is highly analytical, and it approaches the subject from a thematic standpoint that is both historical and historiographical. As a rule, I tend to prefer chronological to thematic studies, but given the ambitiousness of the goal of revising a chapter of history and the preexisting body or work concerning Grant's presidency, the format of this manuscript seems most appropriate to its remedial task. The work is designed for those with at least an elementary understanding of American history, but it also appreciates the fact that even the most avid reader of preexisting work on Grant's presidency tends to be denied a basic understanding of the issues involved. Those who are unaware of President Grant's place in history are also given a healthy sampling of what historians have thought of him in both general and particular aspects. The chapter on Grant's character immediately follows the introduction in part because I find it most effective to precede discussion of substantive policy issues with an introduction to the widely misunderstood person whose actions awaited description. Those policy issues are then discussed with the corruption issue coming first and Reconstruction last. As I mention in the preface, those two issues receive more emphasis than the issues discussed in the fourth chapter because I believe they hold the key to remedying past distortions. Since corruption is the preeminent feature of the Grant presidency under the traditional consensus, it is the first issue of Grant's substantive record to be explored; by explicitly stating my standards of assessment, I have tried to bring an element of logic, coherence, and consistency that I am chagrined to find lacking in every presidential history I have encountered. (Readers deserve to be shown the starting and end points of such analysis and should not be expected to adhere to the ex cathedra judgements of a twentieth-century author on nineteenth-century issues.) The corruption chapter intentionally leaves open a few questions but attempts to settle enough issues to turn to the neglected list of Grant's rich policy achievements-minus Reconstruction. That issue is given its own special, more detailed chapter because it is necessary to place everything preceding it into perspective.
It is that issue which brings to full light the unanswered questions of the corruption chapter and, in turn, an understanding of why the achievements of the immediately preceding chapter have been subordinated to the corruption issue. This thesis essentially repudiates the myth that Grant’s presidency deserved the stigma of corruption and proceeds to argue that in the realms of both domestic and foreign policy, Grant’s presidency gave rise to a wide array of achievements that tower above those of both his predecessors and successors. Far from being a bewildered, ignorant, and weak president, Grant was a singularly perceptive, enlightened, and strong president who understood politics better than his chief critics. Where his powerful sense of the practicalities of politics appeared to escape him, it actually gave way to his even stronger sense of principle; his record of achievement and courage should become a permanent fixture in studies of U.S. history.

To put it in terms of preexisting schools of thought which a publisher might employ as a point of reference, this work can be considered a sort of hybrid of Reconstruction revisionism and Gilded Age revisionism. For some reason—perhaps because historians in the two categories tend to be mutually exclusive—there is virtually no work in print that combines the two. Yet a fundamental requirement for this study is the realization that, at least between 1869 and 1877, the Gilded Age and Reconstruction are too intertwined to be treated as separate subjects. Reconstruction revisionism, incidentally, has sometimes been distinguished from what Eric Foner calls postrevisionism, a school of thought with which I do not identify (though William McFeeley and William Gillette, the two most influential scholars on Grant and Reconstruction in recent times, probably do). Postrevisionist tendencies to impose twentieth-century attitudes on Reconstruction have simply added to the confusion. Without being too polemical, this study also contains a disturbing case study of the shortcomings of American historical profession. I hope those who are working tirelessly to improve the art of writing history can draw lessons from the secondary, historiographical account to diminish distortions in other areas of history.

As the general subject of Grant and American History is concerned, I am probably most widely identified with the effort to restore Grant’s Tomb over the last four years, but my scholarly interest in Grant’s presidency long predates—and still surpasses—my involvement with historic preservation. If there is further information you would like for appraisal or promotion of this study, I would be happy to provide it.

*Readers who would like more information should contact Frank Scaturro at 36 Carole Avenue New Hyde Park, NY 11040-1964.*