Brig. Gen. Ulysses Simpson Grant, "the Hero of Fort Donelson," in full-dress uniform. Shortly after this photo was taken he trimmed his beard to its now more familiar appearance. (Library of Congress)
GRANT’S CONFEDERATE RELATIVES
(part one)

by Diane Meives
Research by V. Wayne Hackler, III

Roswell Miller Grant:

The Civil War was a war among brothers. No family was exempt from the possibility of having a loved one with opposing views and many families found themselves in the war fighting their own relatives. The family of General Grant was no exception.

Roswell Miller Grant was the younger brother of Ulysses Grant’s father Jesse. He was born in 1802 in Youngstown, Ohio. He lived for 86 years, outliving three wives. Roswell was attracted to the Kanawah Valley in West Virginia, by William Tomkins, who married Roswell’s sister Rachel. Prior to the war, Tompkins and Grant had purchased farms on the Valcoolin estate near St. Albans. The portion owned by Tompkins was made available to Confederate forces for use as a training camp, and was named Camp Tompkins. Roswell Grant was a tanner by trade, and used his portion of the land as a tanning yard. Although their nephew was a prominent Union general, both Grant and Tomkins favored the Confederate cause.

According to an early 1860's census Roswell Grant was in between wives and had in his household at this time his daughters Elizabeth and Susan and his youngest son Thomas, age 18 who was listed as a laborer. Roswell had with his various wives, 12 children, most of whom died young.

When the war started, Roswell’s son Thomas, was one of the first in town to enlist in the Confederate army. Thomas enlisted in Company H., 22nd Virginia Infantry Regiment. He was a private and a sergeant. He was captured and imprisoned at Pt. Lookout, and died after the war. This created an awkward situation for the Grant family that caused Roswell to move the family to Kentucky after the war. When the troops of the Confederacy were in control of the area, he was harassed because his nephew was U.S. Grant, and when the Union forces were in control of the area, he was harassed because his son was in the Confederate army.

During the war of 1812 Roswell was a drummer-boy in Col. Todd’s Regt. Throughout his adult years he was a tanner and farmer. He was also a vestryman at St. Mark’s church. He died in St. Alban’s, West Virginia.
A pictorial cancellation, created by Donna Neralich, commemorates the 177th anniversary of Grant’s birth at Point Pleasant, Ohio. The cancellation will be issued for 30 days beginning on April 24th, the date of the birthday celebration at Point Pleasant. To receive a copy of the cancellation send a self-addressed stamped postcard or envelope to: Moscow Post Office, Grant’s Birthplace Station, Moscow, Ohio 45153. For further information contact the Moscow Post Office at 513-553-3223.

GRANT ON C-SPAN

C-SPAN’s special television series, “Life Portraits of the American Presidents” will focus on Grant during the week of July 12th. The series began in March and will continue through December. Live programs, documentary-style vignettes, and conversations with historians and biographers will continue throughout each week. A live broadcast from General Grant National Memorial will take place in New York City on July 12th at 9:00 AM. Programming on Grant will air on July 16 at 8:00 PM. Check local listings for exact dates and times. C-SPAN has created a website to complement the programming at http://www.americanpresidents.org.
ULYSSES S. GRANT AND HIS HORSES BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR

by Marie Kelsey

Grant's skills in horsemanship made him a legend in his early years, long before he became a national hero. From his earliest days Grant had a special gift for relating to horses. As a toddler, he was permitted to play alone in his father's horse stalls under the bellies of the horses. Teams parked outside his father's tannery posed no threat to little Ulysses who was spotted by the neighbors blissfully swinging on the horses' tails and crawling among their feet. Hannah, his mother, who ignored the excited warnings by the neighbors, simply stated, "Horses seem to understand Ulysses." Indeed, horses fascinated Ulysses. He would stand in the dust of the Georgetown, Ohio streets and look up into the patient faces of the animals, establishing at an early age a special bond with them that would serve him well in the path his unusual life would follow.

As he grew older, he amused the townsfolk with his exploits when the circus came to Georgetown. He could outmaneuver any trick pony presented by the ringmaster. Ponies were trained to unseat a rider with sudden stops, starts, bucks, and wheelings. Ulysses could not be thrown from these wild animals, even when a frustrated ringmaster tossed a monkey upon Grant's neck where it pulled his hair and scratched him. Another time he won $5.00 when he could not be thrown from the back of a fat, round, "slick as an apple pony."

Farmers often brought him unruly horses to break, which he did with crowds looking on. "The quietest boy in town" could be seen riding a horse at a breakneck speed, through the village. Seeing that his son had a marketable talent, Jesse Root Grant allowed him to use the family teams to earn his own spending money. Ulysses was entrusted to transport passengers as far away as Cincinnati, about 40 miles from Georgetown. When passengers objected that this could be dangerous for such a young boy, Jesse's attitude was similar to Hannah's: "He'll take care of himself," he told the skeptical riders.

In May of 1839 Ulysses left Georgetown bound for West Point, or the United States Military Academy. Having little expectation of succeeding at this venture, he was quite surprised to finish his first year in 27th place among the 60 boys who survived the first year. Curriculum reform was underway and horsemanship became part of the program as Grant entered his second year.
Grant's future battlefield foe, Cadet James Longstreet, observed that Grant was "the most daring horseman at the Academy." Tiny, but resolute, dressed in old clothes for the dusty duty of ordinary riding exercises, Grant would stride to the stables to face what he excelled at. A fellow cadet said that it was as good as any circus to see Grant ride. Grant had taken a liking to a horse named York, a dark bay so fractious he was slated to be condemned. Grant commanded this horse with seeming effortlessness. The class would stand around admiring his control of the animal and the graceful evolutions he put it through.

At his graduation exercises in the riding hall, in front of hundreds of spectators, Grant was singled out to give a riding demonstration on York. Sergeant Herschberger lifted the jumping bar higher than his head, faced the class, all on horseback, and barked, "Cadet Grant!" The slender cadet dashed from the ranks on York and galloped to the end of the riding hall. He turned the horse toward the front and the two of them, seemingly welded together, thundered toward the bar, faster, faster, then up into the air and sailed over it to the breathless astonishment of the onlookers. The silence was broken by Herschberger who growled, "Very well done sir!" The record jump stood for 25 years.
BANKS HOUSE ADDED TO PAMPLIN PARK CIVIL WAR SITE

Pamplin Park Civil War Site, near Petersburg, Virginia, recently acquired the historic Banks House in Dinwiddie County, which served as the temporary headquarters of Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant on April 2, 1865. The Roslyn Farms Corporation donated the historic structure and about seven acres of land to Pamplin Park in conjunction with the purchase of some 150 additional acres along the park's northeastern boundary.

The Banks House is the second historic home acquired by Pamplin Park, joining Tudor Hall (c.1812), located in the heart of the park along Duncan Road.

The Banks House will remain closed to public access while research and restoration work are underway, a process that is expected to take about a year. As soon as restoration is complete, Pamplin Park will open a new road from the industrial access route to Chaparral Steel to allow visitors to view the Banks House from the exterior. The park will provide parking and exterior exhibits to interpret the structure's history and significance.

When the Confederate army began constructing earthworks southwestward from Battery No. 45 to protect the Boydton Plank Road, troops of Brig. General James H. Lane's North Carolina brigade erected their winter quarters near the Banks House. The fortifications stretched behind the structure. Unlike Brig. General Samuel McGowan at Pamplin Park's Tudor Hall, Lane did not make his headquarters in the Banks House. Mrs. Banks did allow women who were visiting relatives in the army stationed nearby to sleep in her home. Some fighting occurred near the house on the morning of April 2, 1865, after the Sixth Corps broke through the Confederate defenses on the Boisseau farm. That afternoon, Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant established his headquarters in the Banks House, spending the night in the structure.

For more information call Pamplin Park Civil War Site at 804-861-2820

photo courtesy of Pamplin Park Civil War Site
Several new books about Ulysses S. Grant have been published during the past year. All are available for purchase through Barnes and Noble and Amazon.

Maihafer explores the relationship of Ulysses S. Grant, Horace Greeley and Charles Dana, touching on the Civil War, Grant’s presidency and 19th century journalism. Maihafer describes and analyzes how the lives of these three men became interwoven and influenced each other and how the press played a major role in creating an overly simplistic representation of Grant.

Kaltman provides a practical and inspiring look at the legacy left by Grant. Drawing on Grant’s writing and life experiences Kaltman bases each lesson on a specific incident in Grant’s life.

Scaturro offers an in-depth look at Grant’s presidency, exploring some of the assumptions and oversights in the traditional assessment of the Grant administration. Scaturro focuses specifically on the issues of corruption and Reconstruction and the complexity of the relationship between these issues. A detailed overview of the book appeared in the Spring 1998 issue of the *Grant Network Newsletter*.

Cash presents and evaluates the lives and administrations of the U. S. Presidents from Ohio, explains how they have been unfairly maligned throughout our history and why they never have received the recognition they deserve.

Simpson examines the policies of Lincoln, Johnson, Grant and Hayes and provides an extensive evaluation of how they responded to the complex issues of Reconstruction in the context of their times.

**LITTLE KNOWN FACTS**

Grant was very thin during the war, weighing only one hundred and thirty-five pounds. He was a very sparse eater. He abhorred red meat of any kind, and the sight of blood made him ill. Consequently, he insisted on his meat being cooked on the verge of being charred. He would not eat any kind of fowl, but was fond of pork and beans, fruit, and buckwheat cakes.
A VERY DIFFERENT PRESIDENTIAL LOVE AFFAIR

by Al Kaltman

Even casual visitors to the White House quickly realized that the President was having a love affair, but it was never mentioned in the newspapers. It wasn't even a topic of conversation among Washington gossips. The President was openly, hopelessly, passionately in love with his wife.

Ulysses S. Grant's contribution to saving the Union was second only to Lincoln's. A grateful nation elected this quiet, modest, unassuming man its 18th president. On election night 1868, Grant had monitored the returns as they came in over the telegraph. In the morning, he went home and told his wife, "I am afraid I am elected."

Ulysses S. Grant was a recent West Point graduate, assigned to the Fourth Infantry Regiment at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, when he met Julia Dent, the daughter of a local plantation owner. He was 21 and handsome. She was only 18, and had a wandering right eye, but she was intelligent, sensible, witty, and loved the outdoors. Grant, who was famed for his legendary horsemanship, admired the way Julia handled a horse. They took long rides together, they flirted, and they fell in love. In April 1844, after a two month courtship, Grant's regiment was ordered to Louisiana. The United States was preparing to go to war with Mexico, and although neither Ulysses nor Julia realized it, they were going to be separated for the next four years.

When Grant learned that his regiment was moving out, he rode to the Dent's. Forcing his horse across a swollen stream in which he nearly drowned, he arrived soaking wet to ask Julia to be his wife. The entreaties of her waterlogged suitor were too much for her, and Julia, who had previously said no, this time agreed to become engaged. Twenty years later, Abraham Lincoln would say of the general who won the Civil War, "it is the dogged pertinacity of Grant that wins."

During the long separation that preceded their marriage, Grant served as his regiment's quartermaster, and was responsible for transporting supplies across the mountainous Mexican terrain by mule train. In his memoirs, Grant remembered it was anything but simple: "Sometimes one would start to run, bowing his back and kicking up until he scattered his load; others would lie down and try to disarrange their loads by attempting to get on top of them by rolling on them. I am not aware of ever having used a profane expletive in my life; but I would have the charity to excuse those who may have done so, if they were in charge of a train of Mexican pack mules at the time."

If Grant was tempted to swear, he was never tempted to stray. Unlike many young Americans in Mexico who had dalliances with the local girls, Grant did not. Julia was always on his mind. Before the outbreak of war, while his regiment was still in Louisiana, Grant had written to his fiancée: "You can have but little idea of the influence you have over me Julia, even while so far away. If I feel tempted to do anything that I think is not right I am sure to think, 'Well now if Julia saw me would I do so.'"
After they were married, they endured only one other long separation when Grant's regiment was ordered to California. Unwilling to subject his pregnant wife and two year old son to the dangers of crossing the malaria infested Isthmus of Panama, he went by himself. Desperately lonely and without a meaningful assignment, Ulysses S. Grant hit bottom and the bottle. In 1854, he resigned from the army. A letter written to Julia two months earlier showed his frame of mind: "You do not know how forsaken I feel here. I do nothing here but sit in my room and read and occasionally take a short ride."

After rejoining his family, Grant tried his hand at farming and real estate. He didn't like either very much and failed at both. He lacked adequate capital to make a go of it as a small farmer, and according to Julia, was too soft-hearted to succeed in the real estate business as a rent collector, "I cannot imagine how my dear husband ever thought of going into such a business, as he never could collect a penny that was owed to him." In 1861, Grant was working as a clerk in his father's store when the Civil War pulled him from oblivion. Four years after Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Ulysses, Julia and their four children began an eight year residence at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

The President and his wife were inseparable. They ate together, took walks holding hands, insisted on sitting next to each other when they went out, and they sent each other love notes such as this exchange recalling their engagement:

Dear Ulys, How many years ago today is [it] that we were engaged? Just such a day as this too, was it not? Julia

Thirty-one years ago. I was so frightened however that I do not remember whether it was warm or snowing. Ulys

It is not possible to describe the depth of their relationship. When Grant, as he invariably did, ended a letter to Julia with the words, "a thousand kisses for you," he meant them. His oldest granddaughter remembered that during Grant's final illness, "My grandfather always wore a slight frown in those days, which grandmama would smooth out in passing with her tiny, beautiful hand." Julia, in reflecting on their 37 year marriage, wrote how she "was warmed in the sunlight" of his "loyal love."

Americans today could learn from Grant's example. His values extended into political matters. When informed of wrongdoing in his administration, he emphatically insisted that no guilty party should go unpunished.

Mr. Kaltman has a Ph.D. in political science from George Washington University. He is the author of Cigars, Whiskey and Winning: Leadership Lessons from General Ulysses S. Grant (Prentice Hall, October 1998).
May 29 - Season Opening

Ulysses S. Grant Cottage State Historic Site will open for the season beginning May 29. Hours are 10-4 Wednesday through Sunday, plus Memorial Day and Labor Day. After Labor Day the Cottage will be open on Saturday and Sunday, 10-4. Travel back to 1885 and see the rooms as Grant left them; enjoy the spectacular view of the Hudson Valley that gave Grant solace during his final days.

July 25 - Grant Remembrance Day

A program of music and narration tells stories of Ulysses S. Grant and his weeks on Mt. McGregor. Local reenactors will portray the Grant family and scenes of family life.

August - Victorian Day for Kids

Children ages 6-12 will enjoy a special kids’ tour, Victorian games and crafts, and a Victorian Tea. Reservations requested.

August 22 - Victorian Picnic

The Victorian mood is created by a varied program of exhibits, demonstrations, games, and music scheduled throughout the day. There are also special games and toys for children. Victorian dress is encouraged but optional. Bring your own picnic and blankets or chairs for sitting on the lawn.

October 10 - Open House

The last day of the season is celebrated with an open house and refreshments. The Eastern Outlook provides a fine view of fall foliage.

Saturday on the Porch

Special presentations and activities are scheduled from noon until 3:00 on the second Saturday of each month. (June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, and October 9) Call the week before for program details.

For further information call 518-587-8277.
Ulysses S. Grant N H S (White Haven)

Saturday, May 1, 1999: Storytelling
Storytelling kicks off at White Haven on Saturday; St. Louis Storytelling Festival later in the week.

Saturday June 5, 1999: Images of Grant- A Slide Show
Steve Repp, a Grant scholar from Galena, Illinois, returns to the park to exhibit his extensive collection.

Saturday, July 3, 1999: Grant, An American Hero
Bring the family for this 2nd annual presentation of patriotic programs.

August 6-8, 1999: “Night Walk into the Past”
Make reservations early for this 5th annual living history presentation.

For reservations or for further information call the visitor center at (314) 842-3298

GRANT BIRTHPLACE OPEN FOR THE SEASON

The U.S. Grant birthplace, located in Point Pleasant, Ohio, which is owned by the Ohio Historical Society and operated by Historic New Richmond, is open Wednesday – Sunday, April through October. For details contact Loretta Fuhrman at 1-800-283-8932.