GRANT FAMILY CREST
GEANEALOGY OF A GREAT FAMILY

Julia Dent Grant Can Trace Her Descent Back To The Year 600

[In the months preceding the wedding of the granddaughter of President Grant to a Russian Prince in 1899, the New York Tribune printed the following tribute to her distinguished American family with an impressive heritage of its own.]

We are apt to think, said Colonel Treeter, the genealogist, that when an American girl weds a titled man that she must necessarily be inferior in birth to her husband. If Miss Julia Dent Grant marries into one of the princely houses of Russia she can feel assured that in her own veins runs the blood of a noble and worthy ancestry, to trace which has proved a fascinating study.

The lineage of the Grant family, briefly told, is as follows: A celebrated manuscript in Scotland bears the title, An Account of the Rise and Offspring of Grant and the author shows a great deal of ancestral pride in his attempt to trace the origin of the Clan of Grant to a certain prince named Wodine. This prince came out of Asia about the year 600 and settled in Norway, where he built a great city and where prayer and sacrifices were made by the Norsemen.

Coming down to the ninth century, history records that name of Hacken, third of that name from Wodine and Earl of Trondelagen, one of the most renowned men for courage and strength in the Kingdom of Norway. Because of an unusual feat accomplished over his enemies he was called Hacken Grant, the latter word being used in the sense of great, and all descended from this Hacken were called Grants.

It is said that Heming, son of Hacken, having become converted to Christianity through the influence of his wife, a daughter of Adelstein, the first Christian king of Denmark, was banished from Norway.

Whether the Grants came from Norway to Scotland by the way of the Hebrides or as followers of Rolf the Ranger, ancestor of the Dukes of Normandy, they were undoubtedly Normans. They did not rise to the proportion of a clan until about the beginning of the fourteenth century. Richard LeGrant was Archbishop of Canterbury in 1228. About the same time William Le Grant married Albreda Byset, of the baronial family of that name, and he went as a crusader to the Holy Land in 1270.

Sir Lawrence Le Grant was High Sheriff of Invernesshire in 1258. Sir Duncan Grant was the first owner of what is now the castle and barony of Grant, chartered to him as heir of his mother Matilda of Glencairne. Sir Ludovic Grant is the fifteenth in descent from Sir Lawrence, and was the first to be called Grant of Grant. He was the son of James Grant of Grant, boronet member of Parliament for many years, who died in 1747.

Castle Grant, shown in the accompanying cut has been the home of the chiefs of the clan since the fourteenth century, and is cherished and venerated accordingly by all who bear the name of Grant. Among the features of the castle is the magnificent dining hall 47 feet in length and 27 feet in width and of proportionate height. The walls are adorned with numerous and rare works of art and ninety-nine ancestral portraits.
The possessions of the Grants, as the chief dwellers of Strathspey, were situated between the two Craig Elachie - two great rocks on the River Spey. *A mountain in flame* is the Grant crest taken from it. The name means *rock of alarm* and in the time of danger huge fires were kindled on the craig as a signal for the clan to assemble. ‘Stand Fast, Craig Elachie’ was the war cry, and is today the motto of the clan.

The oldest, stateliest and most formidable dwelling place of the clan chiefs is Castle Urquhart built upon a rocky promontory on the west side of Loch Ness. It was founded in the Norman period. It was besieged and taken by Edward I in 1303 and was chartered to Grant of Grant in 1509 by King James IV. It is the lordly seat of the Grants as Earls of Seafield, and is a mouldering ruin of eight centuries of Scottish history and four hundred years of the annals of the family of Grant.

Matthew Grant, forty years town clerk and surveyor of Windsor, Conn., was a lineal descendant of this old Norse race, called in Scotland a Highland clan. He came to this country from Plymouth, England landing at Nantasket, Mass. on May 30, 1630. General U. S. Grant was the seventh in the line of the descent from Matthew Grant.

Sir William Frazer, of Edinburgh, met General Grant upon the occasion of his being accorded the freedom of that city, while making the tour of the world, and he said the resemblance between the distinguished descendant of Matthew Grant and Sir James Grant, Earl of Seafield, was so striking as to be generally noticed and commented upon.

[While on his world tour the Grants visited Scotland and toured the country. Accompanying the Grants on their trip was John Russell Young who related in his book *Around the World With General Grant*, "At Granttown the General was welcomed to the home of the Grants. It was his intention to have paid a visit to Castle Grant, the home of the Earl of Seafield, the head of the Grant clan, but circumstances would not permit." ]

Castle Grant
A reference to General Grant’s “famous Des Moines letter,” in General Horace Porter’s oration at the dedication of the Grant monument, leads me to think that the public would willingly read of the circumstances of that remarkable utterance.

The declaration of General Grant’s political faith at Des Moines was not in a letter, but in a speech. In fact, it was in this speech, made on Iowa soil, that the great soldier began to find that he could talk on his feet. The occasion was on September 29, 1875, at the principal evening meeting of the reunion of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee. The place was Moore’s Opera-House. General Sherman presided, and Generals Sheridan, Logan, Dodge, Howard, Pope, and other distinguished Union generals, were present on the stage. This little speech, which, like Lincoln’s short speech at Gettysburg, contained so much living wisdom and enduring merit, has its own little history, part of it known probably only to me.

I was then editor of a newspaper and postmaster at Des Moines; and President Grant, in the three or four days he was in that city, used to come to the post-office to hide from the crowds of people that followed him everywhere, and to get a little rest, and to smoke. About five o’clock on the afternoon of the day this speech was delivered, he drove up suddenly to the post-office, and came direct to my room, in some way having escaped the attention of the crowds on the streets. He said: “Take me inside the post-office, where we can be out of sight, where I can get a chance to smoke, and where we can have a quiet talk”. We went inside the post-office, where there was an old-fashioned circular mailing-case, about ten feet high and thirty broad, shutting out the view from every one, and took seats on two stools; and I opened a box of cigars, and he began to smoke. He was in the chatty and reminiscent mood into which, when with one person, he so often fell. He began by talking of his boyhood, of his experiences and hardships in the army on the Pacific coast, of his life in Missouri and his attempts at farming, and of a project he had formed with some friends to try to secure some hard-wood forests in South America thinking it a good investment. Then he passed on to talk of education, schools, and oratory, and how unkind it seemed to be that one man had the natural gift to tell what he knew, and another could not. He said: “Now I have never had, at any time in my life, any difficulty in writing out my ideas or thoughts easily and quickly. But when I get up on my feet to speak, everything I know seems to go down into my boots”. Then a queer smile came over his face, and he began to reach down into the deep pockets of a large overcoat, or linen duster, that he had on, and to take out six or seven sheets of note-paper, on which I could see traces of writing. He held them toward me, and said: “I wish you would read these. Every time I attend these army reunions, the boys are always asking me to speak, and I never do it. This time I am going to fool them. I have had in my mind for two or three years some things I wanted to say to the American people on the public school question. It was my intention to put them in my last annual message to Congress, but I forgot or overlooked it in some way, and it occurred to me today, when the subject returned to my mind, called back by the public schools I saw while riding about Des Moines, that Iowa was a good and fitting place in which to give these utterances out to the public. So a while ago I hunted up some paper in my room at Judge Cole’s (where he and his family were guests) and jotted them down; and I wish you would look them over and criticize them, and make any suggestions freely”.

I accepted the opportunity to read, but not to ‘criticize’. For, as an editor, I had closely watched and carefully studied General Grant’s peculiarly lucid and sententious style of expression in all that he wrote, and therefore knew in advance that, in all probability, these few ideas jotted down hastily at Judge Cole’s were likely to be memorable. As I read them, the peculiar strength of analysis in estimation of the growing importance of the public school to the republic, and the wisdom of the prophecy in warning the American people as to the perils menacing the school, and the dominant note of freedom in all things good and
possible in American life sounding through it all, impressed me greatly, and I laid the straggling and crumpled little sheets together, folded them up, put them back in his hands, and said "I have not the ability to criticize a line, a word, or breath of that speech; and I do not believe the man lives who would have the impudence even to attempt to do it". I added: "In my opinion, Mr. President, this will prove to the people of the future republic the greatest and most useful of all your utterances. It is an actual gift, not alone to the American people, but to all the world; and as a citizen of Iowa, I am proud that the name of this State is to be associated with such a great message to all the people who love liberty". He replied, as simply and quietly as though the greatness of it had become common to his thoughts: "It is a subject on which I feel deeply, and it is time public thought and public conscience were both more thoroughly aroused regarding it". Then some little changes of his own occurred to his mind, and he unfolded the little package, hunted out the sheet on which he wished to make the changes, and started to do it. Evidently he found he did not have room, and, reaching down into his pockets again, fished out another sheet of paper, not written upon at all, turned to the mailing-desk, and rapidly rewrote the whole page. He read it to me, folded up the pages once more, put them in his pocket, and said, "Now that is ready for the boys tonight and the people tomorrow".

As he was in such a delightful mood, I ventured to ask him: "Why is it, General Grant, that editors, and especially literary critics and magazine people, and indeed that public generally, refuse to believe that you were the author of your own papers in the war, and in civil life since"?

He took the cigar from his lips, and, with more animation than he had shown before, said: "It is the irony of history that all men get credit for a great deal to which they are not entitled, and as invariably are refused credit, often by their own friends even, for many things perhaps the best of all in their achievements. Now, he went on, with increasing feeling, "there was a vast deal of credit given to me, and for many things that belonged to other men, or at least not to me. I have had papers, books, and histories written about me by the dozen, the most of them kind, much of the eulogy fulsome and over done in praise; but so far all writers have denied to me, or failed to give me, credit for two things that I do deserve: first, that the greatest credit I was entitled to receive fairly was for my work in organizing, first the Western, and next the entire Union army." He stopped awhile, then added: "After it was so organized, and made up of such material as it was, it was not in fate for it to be defeated or conquered. Then, as to the second thing," he went on to say, "you have touched upon that -- the unwillingness of the American people, and of my friends as well as the general public, to believe that I have always written my own papers. In the war, they said at first it was Rawlins who wrote them; then it was some one else -- Halleck, I think; then Stanton, then others -- and he went on to name two or three other people. "But," he said with much spirit, "if the people had only thought of it, or taken the trouble to take all my papers -- war dispatches, letters, messages, etc. -- and compare them as a whole with the writings of these other men, they would have seen at once that, while Rawlins had one style, Stanton another, and the other men still others, one style, good or bad, had run through my papers from first to last. "No," he added in a reflected manner, "I cannot speak on my feet" (that was before his trip around the world, when as in Glasgow or Edinburgh, he found his tongue, and ever after stood in the highest places with the ready grace of worthy speech) "but I have always been able to write down anything that came into my mind, and to express myself clearly."1 Happily, he lived to see the people of his own country, and of all countries, willing to admit that he was the author of his own papers. For before he died the whole world learned to know the style in which he always spoke or wrote -- a style that never had in it a false note or a clouded or double meaning, that took hold of every reader with its own masterful strength of wisdom and sincerity and kindly counsel, and that gave itself to the world in epigrams and proverbs to be treasured up for the good of men and the counsel of government for all time.

At the meeting that evening, General Grant went upon the stage arm in arm with General Sherman. As usual, Sherman, as the presiding officer, called upon Grant for a speech; and, to the surprise of Sherman and nearly everybody else, Grant at once arose and started to the front of the stage, beginning to hunt in his pockets for his speech. He was as shy and embarrassed as a school-boy; but as his comrades and the great audience cheered him tumultuously, he started to unfold the manuscript to read it. His hands trembled, and he dropped the scattered sheets on the stage. General Sherman and the secretaries helped to gather them up;

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1 The report of this conversation is from notes that I made of it, as I was then in the trained editorial habit, within an hour after it occurred.
COMRADES: It always affords me much gratification to meet my old comrades in arms of ten to fourteen years ago, and to live over again the trials and hardships of those days - hardships imposed for the preservation and perpetuation of our free institutions. We believed then, and believe now, that we had a government worth fighting for and, if need be, dying for. How many of our comrades of those days paid the latter price for our preserved Union! Let their heroism and sacrifice be ever green in our memory. Let not the results of their sacrifice be destroyed. The Union and free institutions for which they fell should be held more dear for these sacrifices. We will not deny to any of those who fought against us any privilege under the government which we claim for ourselves. On the contrary, we welcome all such who come forward in good faith to help build up the waste places and perpetuate our institutions against all enemies, as brothers in full interest with us in a common heritage. But we are not prepared to apologize for the part we took (in) the great struggle. It is to be hoped that like trials will never befall our country. In this sentiment no class of people can more heartily join than the soldier who submitted to the dangers, trials, and hardships of the camp and the battle-field, on whichever side he may have fought. No class of people are more interested in guarding against a recurrence of those days. Let us, then, begin by guarding against every enemy threatening the perpetuity of free republican institutions. I do not bring into this assemblage politics, certainly not partisan politics; but it is a fair subject for the deliberation of soldiers to consider what may be necessary to secure the prize for which they battled. In a republic like ours, where the citizen is the sovereign and the official the servant, where no power is exercised except by the will of the people, it is important that the sovereign - the people - should possess intelligence. The free school is the promoter of that intelligence which is to preserve us as by our nation. If we are to have another contest in the near future of our national existence, I predict that the dividing-line will not be Mason and Dixon's, but between patriotism and intelligence on the one side, and superstition, ambition, and ignorance on the other. Now, in this centennial year of our national existence, I believe it a good time to begin the work of strengthening the foundation of the house commenced by our patriotic forefathers, one hundred years ago, at Concord and Lexington. Let us all labor to add all needful guarantees for the more perfect security of free thought, free speech, a free press, pure morals, unfettered religious sentiment, and of equal rights and privileges to all men, irrespective of nationality, color, or religion. Encourage free schools, and resolve that not one dollar of money appropriated to their support, no matter how raised, shall be appropriated to the support of any sectarian school. Resolve that either the State or nation, or both combined, shall support institutions of learning sufficient to afford to every child growing up in the land the opportunity of a good common-school education, unmixed with sectarian, pagan, or atheistical tenets. Leave the matter of religion to the family circle, the church, and the private school supported entirely by private contribution. Keep the church and state forever separate. With these safeguards, I believe the battles which created us "the Army of the Tennessee" will not have been fought in vain.
When Ulysses S. Grant assumed the presidency in 1869 he surrendered his rank and pay as general. In the last years of Grant’s life several attempts were made to pass a bill restoring Grant’s rank by placing him on the army’s retired list as a full general. After some opposition the bill was finally passed on March 4, 1885.

George Childs, who was with Grant when he received the news that the bill had passed, remarked: “The passage of that bill gave great gratification to the General. I happened to be with him on the 4th of March... Mrs. Grant came in, and I said, ‘We have great news; the bill is passed.’ She cried out, ‘Hurrah! Our old Commander is back.’ In answer to a remark that it would be very good if it could be dated from the time of going out, he said, ‘Oh no: the law is to date from the time one accepts.’”

Mark Twain, who was also present, stated: “The news was dispatched to General Grant by telegram, and I was present, with several others, when it was put into his hands. Every face there betrayed strong excitement and emotion—except one, General Grant’s. He read the telegram, but not a shade or suggestion of a change exhibited itself in his iron countenance. The volume of his emotion was greater than all the other emotions there present combined, but he was able to suppress all expression of it and make no sign.”

On March 5, 1885 the Chicago Inter Ocean ran the following editorial, which demonstrates the popular feeling of the day regarding the passage of the bill:

The forty-eighth congress, that halted for a time in the path of the rising tide of popular feeling in favor of justice to General Grant, turned in its last hours and ran with the waves. With the world listening in indignation and pity, with the people all over the United States bending in sympathy toward the old commander and demanding as with one voice that justice be done him, congress put quick hand to the work, and it was done as it ought to have been done months ago, in a whirl of enthusiasm.

Practically the passage of the Edmunds bill may not be of much benefit to a man marked for the grave, but it will be like incense burned in his sick room to remember that the vote was as it was, and that the applause in the senate chamber over the announcement of the result was echoed round the world. It was most fitting that a democratic house should take action as it did yesterday, and give the last of the line of republican presidents the opportunity to approve a measure so near to the hearts of the people.

In this case there was no mistaking the trend of popular sentiments, and there are times when the most foolhardy of partisans realize that the people must rule. In the vote of March 4, on the Grant bill the people had their way, and the members of the house scampered into line to give expression to an emphasized popular demand. It was to the forty-eighth congress the last grand rally on the center—on the old flag and the old commander. And it will never be forgotten.
GRANT SPEAKS ABOUT LINCOLN

[The following account by Grant was originally presented in John Russell Young's book Around the World with General Grant.]

On Lincoln's Character

I never saw the President until after he gave me my commission as lieutenant-general. Afterwards I saw him often either in Washington or at head-quarters. Lincoln, I may almost say, spent the last days of his life with me. I often recall those days. He came down to City Point in the last month of the war, and was with me all the time. He lived on a dispatch-boat in the river, but was always around head-quarters. He was a fine horseman, and rode my horse Cincinnati. We visited the different camps, and I did all I could to interest him. He was very anxious about the war closing; was afraid we could not stand a new campaign, and wanted to be around when the crash came. I have no doubt that Lincoln will be the conspicuous figure of the war; one of the great figures of history. He was a great man, a very great man. The more I saw of him, the more this impressed me. He was incontestably the greatest man I ever knew. What marked him especially was his sincerity, his kindness, his clear insight into affairs. Under all this he had a firm will, and a clear policy. People used to say that Seward swayed him, or Chase, or Stanton. This was a mistake. He might appear to go Seward's way one day, and Stanton's another, but all the time he was going his own course, and they with him. It was that gentle firmness in carrying out his own will, without apparent force or friction, that formed the basis of his character. He was a wonderful talker and a teller of stories. It is said his stories were improper. I have heard of them, but I never heard Lincoln use an improper word or phrase. I have sometimes, when I hear his memory called in question, tried to recall such a thing, but cannot. I always found him pre-eminently a clean-minded man. I regard these stories as exaggerations. Lincoln's power of illustration, his humor, was inexhaustible. He had a story or an illustration for everything. I remember as an instance when Stephens of Georgia came on the Jeff. Davis Peace Commission to City Point. Stephens did not weigh more than eighty pounds, and he wore an overcoat that made him look like a man of two hundred pounds. As Lincoln and I came in, Stephens took off his coat. Lincoln said, after he had gone, "I say Grant, did you notice that coat Aleck Stephens wore?" I said yes. "Did you ever see," said Lincoln, "such small ear of corn in so big a shuck?" These illustrations were always occurring in his conversation.

On Lincoln's Presence at City Point

I merely told him what I had done, not what I meant to do. I was then making the movement by the left which ended in the surrender of Lee. When I returned to Washington, Lincoln said, "General, I half suspected that movement of yours would end the business, and wanted to ask you, but did not like to." Of course I could not have told him, if he had asked me, because the one thing a general in command of an army does not know, is what the result of a battle is until it is fought. I never would have risked my reputation with Mr. Lincoln by any such prophecies.
The darkest day of my life was the day I heard of Lincoln’s assassination. I did not know what it meant. Here was the rebellion put down in the field, and starting up in the gutters; we had fought it as war, now we had to fight it as assassination. Lincoln was killed on the evening of the 14th of April. Lee surrendered on the 9th of April. I arrived in Washington on the 13th. I was busy sending orders to stop recruiting, the purchase of supplies, and to muster out the army. Lincoln had promised to go to the theater, and wanted me to go with him. While I was with the President, a note came from Mrs. Grant saying she must leave Washington that night. She wanted to go to Burlington to see our children. Some incident of a trifling nature had made her resolve to leave that evening. I was glad to have the note, as I did not want to go to the theater. So I made my excuse to Lincoln, and at the proper hour we started for the train. As we were driving along Pennsylvania Avenue, a horseman drove past us on a gallop, and back again around our carriage, looking into it. Mrs. Grant said, “There is the man who sat near us at lunch to-day, with some other men, and tried to overhear our conversation. He was so rude that we left the dining-room. Here he is now riding after us.” I thought it was only curiosity, but I learned afterward that the horseman was Booth. It seems I was to have been attacked, and Mrs. Grant’s sudden resolve to leave deranged the plan. A few days later I received an anonymous letter from a man, saying he had been detailed to kill me, that he rode on my train as far as Havre de Grace, and as my car was locked he could not get in. He thanked God he had failed. I remember
THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT, the first documentary series ever to profile all forty-one of America’s chief executives, will premiere Sunday, April 9, 2000, 9-11 PM (ET) on PBS, with “A Matter of Destiny” featuring the programs entitled “Family Ties” and “Happenstance.” The epic series, ten hours in length, tells the story of the nation from the perspective of the highest office in the land and features exclusive interviews with President Clinton and all the living former presidents except Ronald Reagan. The programs will air in nightly two-hour blocks, concluding on Wednesday, April 13.

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT is a co-production of Kunhardt Productions, Inc. and Thirteen/WNET New York and is presented on PBS by Thirteen/WNET. The series was written, produced and directed by Philip B. Kunhardt, Jr., Philip B. Kunhardt III and Peter W. Kunhardt. The executive producers are Peter W. Kunhardt and William R. Grant. The series’ sole underwriter is New York Life Insurance Company.

“The story of the presidency is history on a scale that is both heroic and personal,” says producer Philip B. Kunhardt III. “These men achieved the highest office in the land — whether through personal ambition, the turn of events, or sheer happenstance — and imprinted their images on a chapter of the American story. Many of them were men of extraordinary character and many of them were flawed. One of the most interesting things that emerges when you look at them as individuals is that personal flaws are not necessarily a barrier to greatness, and rigorous personal virtue does not necessarily protect against failure.”

Each of the series’ one-hour programs presents the stories of several presidents, linked by a common theme. “An Office and Its Powers,” for example, looks at the presidencies of Andrew Jackson, Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, and Richard Nixon, each of whom expanded — or overstepped — the powers of the presidency. “An Independent Cast of Mind” focuses on America’s occasional proclivity to elect a president who claims to be independent of partisan politics; as the program suggests by recounting the stories of John Adams, Zachary Taylor, Rutherford B. Hayes, and Jimmy Carter, independence does not always lead to effectiveness. In “Compromise Choices” the viewer sees what happens when a president is chosen not so much for his positive qualities as for his relative lack of negative ones. As the presidential careers of Franklin Pierce, James Garfield, Warren G. Harding and Gerald Ford demonstrate, the results can be surprising.

Other program themes are “The Heroic Posture” (generals who became presidents), “The World Stage” (presidents who focused on America’s role in international affairs), “Family Ties” (American political dynasties), “The Professional Politician” (the relationship between the skills required for success in politics and the skills required by a successful president), “Happenstance” (vice presidents who assumed the office upon the death of a president), “The American Way” (presidents who advocated limiting the powers of the federal government), and “The Balance of Power,” which explores the rise and fall of the powers vested constitutionally in the three branches of the federal government.

The segment of the series, The Heroic Posture, which includes Ulysses S. Grant will be aired on Wednesday, April 12, and will feature the voice of Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf as Ulysses S. Grant.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Ulysses S. Grant NHS (White Haven)

Saturday, February 5, 2000

Grant’s Battlefield Sites – A Travelog

Volunteer Ed Moeller presents a look at Grant battlefield sites in the National Park Service, including brief overviews of the battles, what to look for today, and slides from his recent battlefield excursion.

Saturday, March 4, 2000

Touring Grant’s St. Louis

This reprise of the popular bus tour includes a ranger-guided exploration of the various city and area sites associated with Ulysses S. Grant. Reservations are required, and there is a $10.00 advanced fee.

Saturday, April 1, 2000

Author Brooks Simpson

The park will welcome Author/Professor Brooks D. Simpson for a book signing. He will also be discussing the first volume of his new biography on Grant entitled, Ulysses S. Grant: Triumph Over Adversity, 1822-1865. Simpson, a professor of history and humanities at Arizona State University, is currently at work on his second volume, Ulysses S. Grant: The Fruits of Victory, 1865-1885.

Call 314-842-3298 for reservations or for more information about these and other upcoming events.

COMMEMORATING GRANT'S BIRTHDAY

Grant's birthday, April 27, is observed annually at many Grant sites during the month of April. Contact the following sites for the exact dates and times of events scheduled for this year:

Grant's Birthplace, Point Pleasant, Ohio 800-283-8932
U.S. Grant Homestead/Boyhood Home, Georgetown, Ohio 513-378-4222
Grant's Tomb, New York City 212-666-1640
White Haven, Saint Louis, Missouri 314-842-3298
S. Grant Home, Galena, Illinois 815-777-3310