At Mount MacGregor, by Oliver Clarke

It was an eager, expectant throng that gathered about the Mount MacGregor depot at Saratoga Springs on the afternoon of June 16th, 1885. Two days previously it had been announced through the New York press dispatches that General Grant would probably be removed to Mount MacGregor on the Tuesday following, a week earlier than was at first intended. "The swelling on the side of the General's throat," so this dispatch read, "has increased so as to affect his voice. He passed an unquiet night on Saturday and his condition is one of increasing debility without pain."

On the morning of the 16th, among other notices that appeared in the village papers the following possesses peculiar interest:

Headquarters Luther M. Wheeler Post 92, Department of New York, G. A. R.

Comrades: It is expected that General Grant will arrive here on his way to Mount MacGregor early this afternoon. You are hereby ordered to assemble at the post room at one o'clock in full uniform. Bear in mind, Comrades, that this may be our last opportunity of seeing our old Commander.

By command of R. F. Knapp, Post Commander.

Attest: George T. Downing, Post Adjutant.

Early in the afternoon the people began to assemble; by the time the Delaware & Hudson train arrived and slowly drew up beside the car that was to bear the General to the mountain, a crowd numbering several thousands had gathered. There were no loud buzzes or noisy demonstrations, only the silent waving of farewells as the Mount MacGregor train pulled slowly out. It seemed as though, as another had expressed it, 'the people realized that this was a last good-bye.'

The fact that General Grant was soon to visit Mount MacGregor was early known to the denizens of that quiet retreat. When the day of his expected arrival came one could note an air of eager, suppressed excitement among the people whose homes, for business or pleasure, were there. 'Will he come?' 'At what time?' These questions were on the lips of all.

About the Drexel cottage all was hurry and confusion. Packing boxes, bundles and packages that had arrived at a late hour the day before were being hastily unpacked and their contents properly arranged. Men and women were hurrying to and fro. Up stairs and down stairs was heard the coming and going of hurrying feet. But everything was at last arranged; then the noise of preparation ceased; quiet settled down over all; the Drexel cottage was ready for its expected guest.'

And none too soon. For even in the midst of the hurry and confusion the telegraph had announced: 'General Grant has just left Saratoga on his way up the mountain.' Then, after a time, the engine was heard puffing up the steep incline. At 2:39 the train arrived.

Preparations had been made to carry General Grant from the train to the cottage; but they turned out to be unnecessary. As though to assert his mastery, even over disease itself, the
At Mount MacGregor, by Oliver Clarke, Part 2

General stepped from his car with something of his old-time firmness of tread, and began to walk toward the cottage; but his weakened frame responded but temporarily to the strong will within. At the foot of the board walk leading from the hotel to the depot, some one hundred and fifty feet from the home awaiting his coming, he was glad to avail himself of the loving aid of those about him. Seating himself in a chair, and after a brief rest, he was carried by James Minick, a veteran of Wheeler Post, and John M. Fryer, then police justice of Saratoga Springs to the foot of the broad steps leading up to the cottage. Here the chair was lowered and the General walked, with the aid of a cane only, up the steps and into the cottage.

Accompanying General Grant were the following members of his family: Mrs. U. S. Grant, Colonel F. D. Grant and wife and their children, Julia and U. S. Grant, Jr., [i.e., the III], Mrs. Nellie Sartoris, Jessie [i.e., Jesse] Grant and wife; there were also Dr. Douglas and Mr Dawson, General Grant’s stenographer. Besides these there were Harrison, his servant, and Henry McQueeney, the nurse.

Most of the time during the remainder of the afternoon of the 16th was passed by General Grant on the veranda; again in the evening he was there, resting quietly in a reclining chair. At 7:30 he retired for the night. Dr. Douglas reported later that his patient ‘was doing as well as could be expected and that he seemed to have gained some strength.’

Wednesday, June 17th. General Grant’s first night on the mountain was passed comfortably and in the morning he was feeling somewhat refreshed. During the previous afternoon and evening his throat had been dressed three times. This operation was painful, but it was necessary. During the day the General spent most of his time on the cottage veranda. Late in the afternoon a special train arrived, bringing the Justices of the Court of Appeals and their families, who had come to pay their respects to the suffering General. U. S. Grant, Jr., General Grant’s youngest son, arrived in the evening. At twelve-thirty everything was quiet about the cottage.

Thursday, June 18th. It was near twelve o’clock today when General Grant first came from the cottage. The night had been one of a good deal of discomfort. At one-thirty it had been found necessary to treat his throat with cocaine, and again at four. The stimulating excitement of his trip from New York was beginning to wear off; a slight reaction apparently was setting in.

On the previous day Dr. Douglas had telegraphed Dr. Sands of New York to come to the mountain. He arrived at three-thirty, and very soon after the two physicians made an examination of General Grant’s throat. Dr. Sands’ report was reassuring; the General’s condition was better than when he had last examined his throat in New York. The two physicians concurred in the opinion, however, that their patient had taken too much exercise.

During the day Dr. Newman, General Grant’s pastor, arrived; he had come up for a few hours’ visit with his old parishioner and friend. Among the other pleasing incidents of the day was the receipt by General Grant of a message of sympathy from the New York Press Association, then in session in Niagara Falls. It ran as follows:

The New York Press Association, now in session at Niagara Falls, extend to General Grant their heartfelt appreciation of his great services to the nation. In this, his hour of
great suffering, our hearts go out in sympathy to him and his family. May the God of all
grace vouchsafe strength to endure, and a happy deliverance from all his afflictions."

In the afternoon the New York State Pharmaceutical Association visited the mountain. As they
filed past the cottage every head was uncovered. This silent, respectful salute was appreciated
by the one for whom it was offered, and as silently acknowledged. As these people were passing,
two young girls went up the teps of the cottage to where the General was seated and presented
him with two beautiful bouquets of flowers.

I might say just here, and so economize the reader’s time, that incidents like those just
mentioned, the receipt of sympathetic telegrams, the visits of silently respectful delegations, the
presentation of flowers, were almost of daily occurrence during the days of General Grant’s
sojourn on the mountain. I shall refrain from mentioning them in future unless something of
unusual interest attend them.

During the evening of this day General Grant wrote this on the pad he constantly used, the
trouble in his throat making oral conversation both difficult and painful: ‘I am exceedingly
pleased with this delightful mountain air. The doctors tell me I am better, but I do not think so.’

Friday, June 19. A typical June day. ‘General Grant has passed a very comfortable night,’ so the
report came to those anxiously aiting for the first news from the sick room. And this was
indicated still more fully by the General’s appearance when he first came out upon the veranda;
his step was firmer and his face had a more healthful appearance than on the previous day. Dr.
Douglas expressed the opinion that there was a decided change for the better. The swelling on
his throat had considerably subsided.

Not far from eleven o’clock General Grant retired to his room for a little sleep. Not long after
midday he reappeared and remained during the greater part of the afternoon in the open air.
Many people, old and intimate friends, called to see him. To one he said, or rather wrote, after
motioning him to a chair: ‘Come and sit down and let us have a good old-fashioned talk; but you
must do all the talking.’

To Judge Hilton he wrote: ‘I find the air very fine here. This must become a great sanitarium
before many years.’ And then again after he had shewn the Judge through the cottage: ‘I have
not been able to sleep in a bed for several months. The chairs you saw in the back room have
served me instead. I have found nothing better.’

To Doctor Gray, the somewhat portly superintendent of the Utica Insane Asylum, he wrote: ‘Dr.
Gray, your shadow has grown no less since I saw you in Utica, mine has reduced materially.’
Shortly after nine o’clock General Grant retired for the night, Dr. Douglas remaining at the
cottage to be near at hand in case his services were required.

Saturday, June 20th. It must have been with pleasure that General Grant noticed the first soft
light of the coming day, for the night had been one of discomfort. The strain of long continued
suffering and anxiety had told upon the iron nerves of the strong man, diminishing that power of
calm endurance so admirably displayed in the earlier stages of his illness. 'A restless night.' Few there are who do not know something of the meaning of the doctor's words.

It was past noon when General Grant left his own room and went out upon the veranda. I have a picture that, though taken later, represents him as the newspapers describe him at this time. He is seated in his favorite chair, a pillow comfortably tucked in at his back, his cane lying handily by, members of his family sitting near, and the faithful Harrison close at hand, ready at a look or a sign to give the aid required. If one could eliminate from this picture the thought of illness and of death near at hand, there would be only the feeling of gladness; of gladness because it would represent one in the quiet of the afternoon, the work of the day all done and well done, waiting the oncoming hush of evening. But alas!

**Sunday, June 21.** 'General Grant has had nine hours sleep and feels better than he has for a number of days;' this is the morning bulletin. It had indeed been the best night's rest the suffering General had enjoyed since coming to the mountain. His sleep had not been uninterrupted, however, for there had been several spells of coughing; caused, no doubt, by the annoying secretions that Dr. Douglas discovered and removed when he examined his patient's throat at seven o'clock. The signs were all encouraging; and the General's refreshed appearance imparted a tone of cheerfulness to all about him.

A heavy wind prevailed during the day and there was some rain; but notwithstanding these General Grant remained nearly the entire afternoon in the open air. Seated in a sheltered corner he wrote several sheets of manuscript; which, it was understood, he desired inserted in the proofs of his forthcoming book. Toward sunset the wind died away and the evening was delightful.

**Monday, June 22.** Owing to the storm of yesterday the weather of the mountain today was so cold as to keep the General most of the time within doors. At midday the thermometer registered 62 degrees; in the evening the mercury had dropped to 60 degrees. But a blazing fire in the great open fire-place made all within the cottage comfortable and warm. During the day General Grant spent his time quite largely in going over the revision of his Memoirs and in writing. This fact is pleasing, as it indicates returning strength, both intellectual and bodily. One thing excites not a little surprise; the General suffers more during the earlier portion of the day than during the afternoon and evening. Not far from nine o'clock, after submitting to the usual treatment of his throat, General Grant retired to his great easy chairs and everything indicates a restful night.

During the day Mr. W. J. Arkell and wife called at the cottage; they wer cordially received and enjoyed a long, friendly chat with the General and his family. Mr. Arkell was then the Vice-President of the Mount MacGregor Railroad Company and was practically in control of everything here.

**Tuesday, June 22.** Notwithstanding the thermometer indicated so low a temperature as 40 degrees, the General's condition today indicated continued improvement. The night had been one of comparative ease and quiet; and when he came from the chairs that formed his only couch the invalid seemed refreshed. During the day he remained within doors, passing his time in
writing and dictating, in a weak, husy voice, to his stenographer. Although he used his voice but little at this time, the fact that he could use it at all gave pleasure, as it indicated returning strength. As the evening drew on the family gathered about the fire-place in the large reception room, General Grant, in his easy chair, being the center of the group. At nine o’clock the General retired, expressing the opinion that he was to have another comfortable night.

During the day a box arrived and with it the following letter of instruction, written by Mr. F. L. Whitney, Ass’t Gen’l. Agent of the Michigan Central Railroad:

“To all Trainmen and Conductors on the Michigan Central and New York Central Roads: This box is for General Grant, and contains food for his use. It is extremely important that the box should arrive in good shape at once. Please see that it is forwarded immediately and that it is kept cool.”

The box contained bovinine, a present from a Chicago firm. The kind thought prompting this act was fully appreciated by the recipient. This incident was trivial in itself, perhaps, but it goes to show (and I only give it place here because of that) the loving, helpful thoughts that were in the hearts of the people. I might mention a hundred incidents of similar character.

The reader has perhaps noticed that no mention has been made thus far of the General’s daily habits in the matter of eating. Poor man! The pleasures of the table were denied him. He dined alone; not with a tempting array of savory dishes before him, but upon the simplest fare. His food was all in liquid form, and was prepared by his nurse, and frequently administered. A little stove, scarcely large enough to bear the name, stood in the room opening from the General’s sick room, and then used for storage purposes; upon this the simple fare of the invalid was prepared.

**Wednesday, June 24.** Another beautiful June day; thermometer at 70; the air soft and mild. General Grant suffered but little during the night; his rest was broken, however, by several attacks of coughing. Shortly after dawn his throat was treated by Dr. Douglas. The forenoon was well spent were he made his appearance; he then seemed in good spirits. Though his steps were far from being so elastic as in the days before his illness, still they indicated returning strength. What remained of the forenoon was spent in work upon his Memoirs; the proof of which were undergoing revision. Not far from twelve o’clock an easy chair was placed for him on the veranda, where he spent some time perusing the morning papers.

During the day a dispatch was received from the National Encampment of the Grand Army in session in Portland, Me; ‘sympathy and a soldier’s greeting’ were the words it brought. It was early evening when General Grant retired to the seclusion of the cottage for the night.

Dr. Shrady of New York, in response to a telegram from Dr. Douglas, arrived during the day and the two physicians made a careful examination of the General’s throat. Speaking of it afterwards, Dr. Shrady expressed the opinion that the patient’s condition showed improvement, his system indicating more tone. The cavity at the root of the tongue, he said, had deepened somewhat since his last record, and the neck swelling had become broader. During the evening he and the General had a long, quiet conversation, the latter, fearing to tax his voice, using his pencil and pad. In the matter of his voice General Grant showed not a little solicitude. In reply
to an inquiry as to whether he would ever regain its use. Dr. Shrady replied that he could not then decide. At nine o'clock the General was prepared for the night, and at ten he was sleeping.

**Thursday, June 25.** The balmy June weather still continues; thermometer at 75 and a gentle breeze stirring the foliage of the trees. When General Grant came from his room, which he did, not far from twelve o'clock, his appearance indicated a comparatively comfortable night and forenoon. Comparatively? Why always use that adverb? Alas! the story of those days and nights could not otherwise truthfully be told. Comfortable days and comfortable nights were no longer for him. Comparatively - the word expresses the thought but imperfectly. Pain, restlessness, that terrible disease, eating the delicate, tender tissues with appetite near appeased, - how weak the word seems when written over against all this!

Most of the afternoon of this warm June day was spent by the General in his favorite corner on the veranda. Nothing occurred as the soft hours passed to disturb the restful quiet of the day. As evening came on, one by one the family retired to the cottage. Not far from nine the General sought his own room where he received the usual ministrations of his physicians.

Dr. Shrady today prepared and telegraphed a report to the Medical Record. A few extracts from this may not be uninteresting.

> “The progress of the disease from which General Grant is suffering, is, barring accidental complications, necessarily slow. Comparing the condition of the patient with what it was a month ago the changes which have taken place can be readily appreciated. Taking this period of the time into consideration it can be said that the swelling under the angle of the lower jaw on the right side had increased and became harder and more deeply fixed. .... The ulceration on the right side of the base of the tongue has become deeper and more irregular, although its superficial area has not perceptibly increased. .... The voice has been reduced to a whisper, due partially to the inflammatory involvement of the vocal cords and partially to nervous atony of the latter. There is some impairment of the general strength and some loss of weight although the appetite is unchanged and the usual amount of nourishment taken. The remove to Mount MacGregor has so far proved beneficial. ...”

**Friday, June 26.** The weather still continues delightful. A cooling breeze sweeps softly through the woods that crown the mountain top. Thermometer 78 degrees. Another comparatively comfortable night was the welcome report that came early this morning from the sick room.

General Grant left the cottage today for the first time since his arrival. A bath, or invalid’s chair, arrived yesterday and in this he was wheeled by the faithful Harrison to the brow of the hill overlooking the valley. It was the General’s first view of the magnificent scene here presented and he seemed to enjoy it keenly. After remaining for some time in his chair on the lawn in front of the hotel, enjoying the view, he sat for a few moments on the hotel veranda where he was the center of a group of personal friends and admirers. But fearing to overtax his strength he remained but a short time. Later in the afternoon, in reply to a question of Dr. Douglas while treating his throat, the General said it had been decidedly his best day since coming to the mountain. Not far from nine o’clock the patient retired for the night. But sleep did not come.
One notices as he follows the daily course of General Grant's life during the day is followed by wakefulness at night; sure indication of declining strength.

I have but a glimpse of those wakeful night hours. Henry McQueeney, the nurse, related to me, during a visit he made here in 1893, the manner of their going. 'The General had a board,' he said, 'fitted to rest on the arms of the chair, and when he was wakeful he passed the time in writing; using this board as a desk or table. In the morning his notes were given to Mr. Dawson, the stenographer, and by him transcribed. Many and many an hour I have held this lamp so - taking the lamp that still stands on the stand beside the General's chair - 'for him to write by.'

Saturday, June 27. A restless night, followed by a morning from whose hours the refreshment that should follow sleep and rest seems to have departed. Not until the noon hour had passed did General Grant go to his favorite corner on the veranda. But his stay there was of short duration. Most of the day was spent within doors. Towards evening, having again expressed a desire for the open air, his chair was comfortably prepared and he remained on the veranda with his family until the evening was well spent. At nine o'clock - it seems monotonous to say it over and over again, the same thing of the closing and of the opening hours of the coming and going days. But monotony had come to be the rule of the General's daily life. Today it would be this, and tomorrow the same, and when the morrow came again; each day like its predecessor until, alas, the ending of it!

At nine o'clock, I say, General Grant received the usual attention at the hands of Dr. Douglas and soon after retired. Retired! The word has in it something of restfulness. It presents to the mind the thought of one comfortably resting after the weariness of the day. How little any of us know what it is to be deprived of all this! To sit during the day, and when night comes still to sit, and then again on the morrow; there is suffering in this, though no pain to rack the frame.

During the day Mr. J. W. Arkell and family arrived on the mountain for the summer. In the evening they sent a handsome bouquet of flowers to General Grant. Miss Kate Drexel also sent flowers.

Sunday, June 28. A rainy Sunday. Early in the forenoon a heavy thunder shower came up and was followed by a dense fog. Later in the day a steady rain set in.

From eleven p.m. of yesterday until five a.m. today, General Grant slept quietly. At the latter hour Dr. Douglas, who was sleeping near by, was aroused by the sound of voices in the General's room. The strength and tone of these voices surprised him, believing it must be his patient and McQueeney, the nurse. On hastening to the General's room he found his surmise was correct. He was surprised and pleased. The General's voice had not been so strong and clear for a long time. An examination showed that his throat was in a comparatively good condition. General Grant expressing himself as inclined to sleep again quiet was restored and he soon fell into a sleep that lasted until nearly nine in the morning. Not wishing to be disturbed, he remained quietly in his room until after twelve. It was past the middle of the afternoon before he ventured out of doors. He remained, however, but a short time. During the evening a bright fire blazed in the fireplace and about this the family gathered. The rain continued and it was damp outside. At nine o'clock the General retired.
Monday, June 29. General Grant remained nearly the entire day in his own room. Although Dr. Douglas had been compelled to attend him at midnight, and again at five in the morning, he rested comparatively well. He was not dressed until the middle of the afternoon, and only then to quiet the apprehensions of his family, to whom he wrote on his pad: 'Do as I do. Take things quietly. Give yourselves not the least concern. As long as there is no progress there is hope.'

The cold wave that followed in the wake of yesterday's storm made a fire in the reception room a necessity during the evening. It was fully appreciated and enjoyed by the family. At 8:30 the General retired and at 9:30 he was sleeping.

Tuesday, June 30. The cold wave still continues to influence the temperature on the mountain. Early in the afternoon the thermometer stood at 56 degrees; at 6:30 it had fallen to 52 degrees.

The general tone of apprehension, one could not but note on the faces of all about the General, was not dispelled during the day. And it communicated itself to all on the mountain. People had seemed for the moment, in the flush of hope inspired by what the change of climate had wrought, to forget that the disease, eating away there night and day, day and night, could have but one ending; but the disinclination of the suffering patient to make any exertion, slowly but surely, as the days passed, growing more marked, was bringing home the fact that the dread malady was making progress. He was growing weaker. His favorite nook at the northeast corner of the cottage for two days now has been vacant.

Speaking of the General's growing weakness Dr. Douglas today said: 'His life has been prolonged by the invigorating air here. ... The disease has progressed in its natural way, but the General's condition is one of increased debility. ... His present weakness is the natural result of the disease. ... He grows weaker and weaker and at last the point of exhaustion will be reached. ... This weakness of the patient is now evidenced by lack of ability and desire to walk on the piazza.'

General Grant could not but have noticed the tone of inquietude and depression so manifest on the faces and in the manner of all about him, and one may believe that the following note, written late in the afternoon, was intended to bring a return of assurance and hope. 'I feel better than I did a week ago.'

Then he wrote the following: 'The atmosphere here enables me to live in comparative comfort while I am being treated or while nature is taking its course with my disease. I have no idea that I should have been able to come here now if I had remained in the city. It is doubtful, indeed whether I would have been alive. Now, I would be much better able to move than I was to come at the time I did.'

But there could be no doubt of the General's slowly declining strength notwithstanding his cheering words. Slowly but surely the end was drawing nigh.

Today the use of anasthetics was discontinued for a time to enable the physician to experiment on the General's voice. This seemed to cause no special pain. Not far from nine General Grant retired for the night.
Wednesday, July 1. Still cold. Thermometer at 5:30 a.m., 49 degrees; at noon it had risen to 60 degrees. General Grant felt this morning considerably refreshed; he had had nine hours of rest and sleep, broken only by the necessary ministration of his physician. But owing to the chilly air outside he remained within doors; passing his time in reading and writing. It was noted with a good deal of pleasure that, although he wrote several pages of manuscript, he did not appear to be over-taxing himself. In this employment he seemed to take much pleasure. Between eight and nine he retired.

Thursday, July 2. The cold wave has passed. The air is soft and mild. Thermometer at 67 degrees. Although General Grant was disturbed at midnight by accumulations in his throat, and again at four, the night, on the whole, was one of comparative comfort. At nine o'clock he was still sleeping. It was late in the forenoon when he came from his room and resumed the literary labors of the previous day. Not far from two in the afternoon denizens of the mountain were pleased to see the General's favorite chair placed in his quiet corner, all pillowed and bolstered, and soon thereafter the General himself. His presence in his accustomed place was reassuring. But he seemed to prefer the quiet of his own room and soon returned to it. In the evening he fell asleep before Dr. Douglas was ready to give him his usual bed-time treatment. He awoke, however, about ten and was then made ready for the night.

Space will not allow me to quote in this little volume the almost numberless messages of sympathy that came to General Grant during these last days. I can only state here that they did come, increasing in number as the days passed. And they were not circumscribed in the source of them by any geographical lines whatever. Many, I may note here, were from the South.

During the day General Grant wrote the pathetic letter to Dr. Douglas that has been so often quoted. I give here but a few words. The letter is printed entire, a portion of it in the General's own hand in the Century Magazine for November, 1885:

"I think the chances are very decidedly in favor of your being able to keep me alive until the change of weather, towards the winter. Of course there are contingencies that might arise at any time that would carry me off suddenly. The most probable of these is choking. Under the circumstances, life is not worth living. I am very thankful to have been spared this long, because it has enabled me to practically complete the work in which I take so much interest. Cannot stir up strength enough to review it and make additions and subtractions that would suggest themselves to me, and are not likely to any one else.

"Under the above circumstances, I will be the happiest the most pain I can avoid. If there is to be any extraordinary cure, such as some believe there is to be, it will develop itself. I would say, therefore, to you and your colleagues to make me as comfortable as you can. If it is within God's providence that I should go now, I am ready to obey His call without a murmur. I should prefer going now to enduring my present suffering for a single day without hope of recovery."

It was about this time, perhaps a few days later, that the pathetic message one now sees in General Grant’s room, in his own hand, was written:
"Say to Mr. Drexel that I will always be pleased to see him. But it is not worth while for
him to give himself any trouble to come up here expressly for that. I have such difficulty
in speaking that I am no company."

Friday, July 3. At six o'clock this morning General Grant was writing. He had slept only from
twelve to four and was nervous and restless. During the day he took a brief airing in his bath
chair, but most of the time was spent in the cottage on the veranda. The restlessness of the night,
attributed by Dr. Douglas to the over-exertion of the previous day, seemed to increase rather
than diminish as the day wore on. He moved about a great deal, now in his own room, then in
the reception room and still again on the cottage veranda. His steps were slow and feeble. It was
a great relief to those who watched and waited to learn that at nine o'clock he was sleeping.

During the day Dr. Douglas telegraphed for Dr. Sands of New York.

Saturday, July 4. It was feared that the inquietude that characterized General Grant's
movements of yesterday would continue during the night; but these fears were not realized. The
sleep that came early in the evening was only a precursor of what was to follow. With only now
and then a brief interval of wakefulness, his sleep was continuous and refreshing through the
night. It was during that delicious period, between the heat of the day and the cool, dewy air of
the morning, that General Grant came from his room in the cottage veranda, where he spent
most of the forenoon. Quite likely most of the afternoon would have been passed there, for the
day was delightful; but a heavy storm came up not far from twelve, and this forced the General
inside. After spending some time in the reception room he retired to his own room, where he lay
for a time on his side in bed.

I mention this little detail here because it had been so long since he had been able to rest in that
manner. After so many months in those tiresome chairs the relief must have been great. But the
change was to be only temporary. Soon the old manner of resting and sleeping was resumed. In
the evening General Grant wrote: 'I have been getting along very well today.'

Dr. Sands arrived today, and with Dr. Douglas made an examination of the General's throat. The
former said he noted no material change, except increased weakness.

Sunday, July 5. Although the weather today was delightful it was not until afternoon that the
well-known figure of the sick General was seen in its accustomed place on the veranda. The
night had been one of comparative rest and refreshment, but it had not brought what it brings
when health and sleep go hand in hand. During the hour and a half that General Grant remained
in the open air he spent his time in reading the papers and in a ‘pencil talk’ with Senator
Chaffee. At three o'clock after receiving the attentions of his physician, he retired for a few hours
rest. At half past six he again went out and walked for a few minutes on the eastern veranda. At
eleven o'clock after receiving the attentions of his physician, he retired for a few hours rest. At
half past six he again went out and walked for a few minutes on the eastern veranda. At eleven
o'clock he was sleeping and everything indicated a comfortable night.

As showing how the thoughts of the people not only here, but abroad, wee with our sick and
suffering General, I take the liberty to insert here the following telegram:
At Mount MacGregor, by Oliver Clarke, Part 2


Please tell General Grant that Mr. Phelps, the American Minister, Senator Edmonds and the Duke of Argyle, Mr. John Bright and other mutual friends, are to dine with me this evening, and that we shall drink his health; and that I do most earnestly pray that his health may improve and that he may live for years a blessing to his family, his country, and the world. Give my kindest regards to Mrs. Grant and all her children, and telegraph me exactly how General Grant is.

Cyrus W. Field

Mr. Waterbury’s reply was read at Mr. Field’s dinner.

Monday, July 6. General Grant slept from eleven p.m. of yesterday until two this morning; he was then weak and restless. After partaking of some nourishment, in reply to a question from Dr. Douglas as to how he felt, he wrote on his pad: ‘I think quite well, Doctor. When I got awake a half hour ago I did not feel in the slightest degree sleepy, and I feared my night’s rest was over; but I was asleep in a minute or two and have felt now as if I could hardly keep awake long enough to take food.’ After this he again fell asleep and did not awaken again until nearly seven, at which time he again asked for food. This was given him by his faithful nurse, and soon thereafter he was again asleep. During most of the forenoon he remained within his own room. Only a small portion of the day was passed in the open air, although the day was fine. In the afternoon he wrote a little for his book, but most of the time was given to rest and sleep. To Dr. Douglas he wrote: ‘The pain left me entirely so that it was enjoyment to lie awake; but I got the enjoyment from the mere absence of pain.’ But soon after this note was written the pain returned and was constant; in consequence of which General Grant became nervous and restless. Between six and seven he went out upon the veranda, where he sat for a few moments bolstered up in an easy chair. At eight he was still restless and walking about. Half an hour later he retired to his own room, it was supposed for the night; but he rejoined his family in the reception room a few minutes later. At nine o’clock he finally retired.

Up to within a short time, it seems from what he wrote to Senator Chaffee, General Grant had ‘clung tenaciously to the bright ray of hope that possibly a cure might be affected, but as time progressed the depressing feeling, superinduced by increasing exhaustion, led him to abandon all such thoughts. He now waited the end calmly. Considering his present feeble and debilitated condition, he would almost hail with pleasure the closing of life’s chapter.’

During the evening of this day a telegram of sympathy was received from the Emperor of Japan.

Tuesday, July 7. Owing to the rain and consequent dampness, General Grant remained within doors during the day. Early in the morning he handed Dr. Douglas this note: ‘I can feel my strength increasing, and the drain upon me is diminishing.’

During the night he had asked for and partaken of nourishment three times. The effect of this led him to express the fact to Dr. Douglas that he was now taking more than his system could
assimilate. The Doctor acted promptly on this information and ordered that food be given him in reduced quantity.

The day passed as so many others had, without any special incident to mark its coming or going.

**Wednesday, July 8.** General Grant passed a restful night and awoke at about eight in a cheerful frame of mind. At three he had been awake for a short time, and after receiving the usual medical treatment from Dr. Douglas, had engaged for a time in a "pencil talk" with him. But aside from this brief interval of wakefulness his rest had been comparatively unbroken. Not far from nine he was dressed, and soon thereafter came from his room. The weather was delightful. Tempted by the balmy air the General soon sought his accustomed seat on the cottage veranda. Many now living remember the stooping figure as it moved slowly, not only on this day, but on many other days, from the reception room to the pillowed and bolstered chair at the northeast corner of the cottage. But his stay here was of short duration; he soon returned to the quiet of his own room.

The time spent in the open air this afternoon was mostly given to writing. A lap-board lay across the arms of his chair and on this the General wrote; occasionally bestowing a nod of recognition of the respectful salutes of those who were constantly passing and repassing.

Among the more noteworthy events of the day was the visit of a party of Mexican journalists, numbering twenty-six, who had come to the mountain to pay their respects to General Grant. They were presented to the General by his son, Colonel F. D. Grant, and through one of their number made a brief and feeling address. To this General Grant wrote a cordial reply.

It would give me pleasure could I insert in this little volume, verbatim, all the addresses and messages to which General Grant listened, or of which he was the recipient during these last days of his life; and it would give me equal pleasure to write beside them all he said in reply. But visits of delegations to the mountain were almost daily occurrences, and messages came, floods of them, by post and by wire. I can only mention these facts, leaving the reader to other sources of information for details. One could not fitly portray General Grant’s life here and do less.

During the evening of this day General Grant suffered a good deal of pain, brought on quite largely, it was thought, by the excitement incident to the visit of this large delegation. At ten o’clock he retired.

**Thursday, July 9.** General Grant did not sleep until eleven o’clock and was awake again at three this morning, at which time, after having his throat cleared by the Doctor, he partook of some nourishment. At six he was again awake and again received the attention of his physician. The day passed in the usual manner. Owing to a recurrence of the pain in his throat he retired early. He had slept but little during the day.

An incident occurred during the day that vividly recalls to my mind, as I write, those early days of the war. It will be remembered that when the general in command at Fort Donelson sent from behind his intrenchments to know what terms General Grant would allow him in case of his giving up the fort, he received back the not very comforting words, ‘Unconditional and immediate surrender. .... I propose to move immediately upon your works.’ It was General S. B.
Buckner to whom this message was sent, and it was the same General Buckner who today telegraphed from Saratoga to know if he could see General Grant. It was found necessary to send a negative reply. His father would be pleased to see him, so Colonel F. D. Grant telegraphed, but he was too weak today to see anyone.

It will be recalled that soon after the disastrous bank failure that stripped General Grant of every dollar of his earthly possessions, Mr. Charles Wood, of Lansingburgh, wrote him offering a loan of $1000 on the General's note for a year, without interest. In this same letter he enclosed a check for $500, 'on account,' so Mr. Wood wrote, 'of my share for services ending April, 1865.'

Among the callers on General Grant during the earlier portion of the day was this kind-hearted, big-hearted Mr. Wood. To him General Grant wrote on his pad: 'I am glad to say that while there is much unblushing wickedness in the world, yet there is a compensating goodness of soul.' Fitting words to one whose practical generosity had demonstrated their truth! It should be noted here that this note of $1000 was paid from the first proceeds of General Grant's literary labors.

**Friday, July 10.** Although General Grant slept fairly well during the night he remained in his own room till nearly noon, not being dressed for the day until that hour. During the afternoon General Buckner called. He and General Grant had been classmates at West Point; but being on opposite sides during the war, had not met since the surrender of Fort Donelson. This meeting seemed to be a pleasant one for both, as they conversed together for a long time; General Grant, of course, using his pad.

**Saturday, July 11.** It was one o'clock this morning before General Grant fell asleep and he was awake again at eight. Notwithstanding the rather poor night he had had he wrote on his pad: 'I woke up feeling perfectly fresh and as if I had had a good night's natural sleep.' But it was nearly noon before he was dressed; and he remained within doors during the afternoon, passing his time in comparative ease and quiet until toward evening, when his rest was broken by unusual pain in his throat and by coughing. He was prepared for rest early in the evening and at eleven was sleeping.

During the day Dr. Douglas telegraphed Dr. Shrady to come to the mountain and relieve him, as he was worn out by constant attendance upon the General.

**Sunday, July 12.** It has been a superb day and the mountain has been thronged with visitors. Silenty, with uncovered heads, they have almost continuously filed past the cottage where the nation's hero is quietly and calmly waiting the end that seems now but a few days off. It was a matter of congratulation with these visitors, nearly all of whom had come to the mountain with the thought only of seeing the General, that he was able to remain for a considerable portion of the day in his favorite corner on the veranda. A slight wave of the hand or a nod of recognition was all the return his condition would allow him to make to the respectful salutations of the passing throng.

During the day General Grant was called upon by Governor Hill, Hon. J. W. Drexel and Senator Arkell. He received them in his own room. Speaking (writing) of his sitting as he did, in an easy
chair, his feet in another, he told Governor Hill that he was quite feeble and had not yet recovered from the fatigue of Wednesday (the visit of the delegation of Mexican journalists) but that he was not so weak as he looked to be.

At eight o’clock he retired.

Monday, July 13. General Grant was able again this morning to use his voice, but feebly. The night had been restful, and all things considered there had been so apparent change for the worse; alas! one must add, nor for the better. This was evidenced by the fact that, although the day was fine, and many hundred people were on the grounds, each anxious for as much as even a moment’s glimpse of the General, he remained during the entire day within doors, spending the time in reading and writing. At 4:25 Dr. Shrady arrived. He will relieve Dr. Douglas for a few days.

Tuesday, July 14. Nothing of any interest occurred during the day. Barring the increased feebleness, that each day now seems more and more apparent, General Grant’s condition remains the same as on the past few days. It was afternoon before he was dressed, and most of the time until he was prepared again for the night was spent in sleep. He retired not far from nine o’clock.

Wednesday, July 15. Although Dr. Shrady was called three times during the night to treat the General’s throat, the rest of the latter was comparatively good. During the forenoon he remained within his own room, sleeping a good portion of the time. In the afternoon he spent a few moments on the cottage veranda.

Today the two physicians made a careful examination of the General’s throat: ’which, on the whole,’ so the report came, ’might be said to show favorable conditions.’

I must mention here, for the fact is worthy of notice, the receipt by General of a telegram from the Dean County (Mississippi) Democratic Convention, transmitting a resolution passed by that body. This resolution was as follows: ‘Resolved, That we join in the Nation’s grief for the sad affliction which has befallen General U. S. Grant, America’s most illustrious citizen, who was as magnanimous in peace as he was great in war.’

Thursday, July 16. General Grant’s condition remains substantially the same today as yesterday. And this statement will do as well for the following day, Friday, the 17th. Nothing of special moment occurred on either. The mountain was thronged with visitors, as usual, and there were letters and messages fro societies and individuals expressing sympathy and hope for the General’s recovery, in the usual abundance; but aside from all this these two days were uneventful.

Saturday, July 18. It was but little past six o’clock when General Grant came from his room this morning dressed for the day. He immediately sought the veranda. He had passed a restless night, having slept but little after eleven p.m. Dr. Shrady had been frequently called. When the General came from the cottage his face showed too plainly what the night had been; the expression of it was as of one worn by care and fatigue.
Most of the day the General remained in his own room. He seemed unusually weak and spiritless. The desire for occupation which had characterized the previous days of his illness seemed to have gone. There were anxious hearts at the cottage and at the hotel as evening drew on. Was the coming night to be as the last? Then surely the end was near!

**Sunday, July 19.** Happily the fears of last evening were not realized. General Grant passed a comfortable night and seemed more cheerful this morning. The day passed quietly. There was the usual throng of visitors to the mountain, the usual daily routine at the cottage, for it had come to that, the same tiresome round, but nothing of special interest. Toward evening General Grant complained of unusual fatigue; it was not yet dark when he retired.

**Monday, July 20.** It was after eleven o'clock this forenoon when General Grant came from his room. He had passed a comparatively comfortable night, having had in all about seven hours sleep. While he showed no inclination to attempt work of any kind, he seemed cheerful. During the afternoon upon an intimation from him that he was tired of the monotony of life in the cottage, he was taken out in his bath chair. The place selected for this day's visit was the Eastern Outlook; a point a few rods south of the Railroad depot, where the side of the mountain is more precipitous, and where one sees the valley more in detail than from its summit. The General and the party accompanying him remained here twenty minutes or more and then set out on their return. On the way back, some obstruction being in the path, General Grant got out of his chair and walked, slowly and feebly, but unaided around it. But this exertion, added to the fatigue necessarily incident to the trip, proved too much for the General's declining strength.

Looking back on this little incident now, and on the events that rapidly followed, one sees here the beginning of the end. General Grant never rallied from the fatigue of this, his last outing. When he passed up the steps of the cottage veranda, leaning heavily on the arm of his attendant, and entered the door, with the exception of a few brief moments during the evening that followed, he had looked for the last time upon scenes his five weeks sojourn here had made familiar. From this time on events moved in rapid procession to the end.

**Tuesday, July 21.** Independently of details that from time to time came to the ears of those outside the family and were eagerly discussed, the disturbed and anxious look on the faces of all about the cottage told plainly enough that it was not well with the suffering General. Evidently the end was approaching and that rapidly. General Grant did not leave his room at all during the day. At one time in the forenoon the pain in his throat was so severe that he begged of Dr. Douglas something to allay it. Morphine was administered and after that the General slept for an hour. When he awoke food was offered him, but he partook of a small portion only. During the afternoon he reclined wearily in his chair, seeming to take but little interest in what was passing. Toward evening food was again offered him, but owing to the failure of the muscles of his throat to act he could take but little. As evening drew on he became restless and moved about in his room from place to place and finally to the reception room. At eight-thirty he was reported as unconscious and sinking rapidly. Dr. Douglas gave out the opinion this evening that General Grant could not live more than twenty-four hours longer.

**Wednesday, July 22.** At one o'clock this morning Dr. Douglas telegraphed for all the absent members of General Grant's family and also summoned the other physicians to the mountain. At
two o'clock all the family had retired except Dr. Douglas and Colonel Grant. These two watched as the remaining hours of the night slowly passed. What of the morning? In distant cities and hamlets, in the homes of the lowly and of the great, this question was on the lips or in the hearts of all. What would the morning bring?

The soft warm rays of the summer sun, as they stole into the room where the suffering chieftan sat, brought neither hopes nor encouragement. He was slowly but surely growing weaker; only by the use of stimulants was the fatal end postponed. As the day wore on he sat, with his eyes closed and his head bowed wearily forward apparently taking little or no notice of what was passing. He spoke occasionally, but in a feeble voice. Once in the earlier portion of the day he attempted to write on his pad, but only got down the date. Subsequently he did write a few words as I shall presently relate.

Drs. Shady and Sands reached the mountain at three-forty and immediately thereafter held a consultation with Dr. Douglas. At six o'clock another consultation was held. But nothing favorable resulted. At this time hypodermic injections of brandy were given every thirty minutes. Not far from seven the General appeared to be growing rapidly worse and it was feared that the end was at hand. But he rallied slightly thereafter; at seven-thirty the report was somewhat reassuring for it was only that he was ’very weak." At eight o'clock the cottage was closed for the night.

From Mr. McQueeny I have an account of some of the incidents of that last day. "He was so weak," the faithful nurse said to me, 'that he could not sit without support, and so I held him up in his chair. It was warm and the air was sultry; that is the reason why he was moved from his own room in here (the reception room). Some one fanned him constantly. When the clock struck twelve he noticed that it was wrong- it was only eleven- and he wrote on his pad: 'Fred, hadn't you better take that clock down and wind it up and start it as it should go?'

That General Grant was conscious during this last day, or a portion of it, although taking but little notice of what was going on about him, is evident from another little incident that occurred not long after the one just recited. The family were all about him at the time and one would think from his appearance that he had little or no knowledge of their presence, but suddenly he opened his eyes and then came the words, so feebly spoken as scarcely to be understood: 'I hope no one will be distressed at my condition.'

It is related by Mr. McQueeny that later in the evening some one asked General Grant if he did not wish to lie down, and that, through inability to speak, or from weakness, he gave an affirmative sign by an inclination of his body forward. The bed was then prepared and the dying Commander of mighty armies was tenderly lifted from the chairs in which so many wearisome hours had been spent, and placed upon it. The bed stands now as it stood then, and it requires no very great effort of the imagination to picture that evening scene- the dying man, the anxious, sorrowful group about the bed.

Thursday, July 23. But little remains to be told. A few words more and my sad and painful story is done. Let me say them and so lay down my pen.
General Grant died at eight minutes past eight this morning.

And so the reaper had come at last. One may be pardoned for thinking, perhaps in view of all the past, and of the possibilities of the future, that the sheaf be gathered was not yet fully ripened; but God knew best.

After his death, General Grant's remains lay in state at the cottage until August 4th; then, amid funeral pomp seldom witnesseed, they were conveyed to their resting place.

The final burial services were held at Riverside Park on the 8th day of August.

From Obscurity to Renown

General Grant was born at Point Pleasant, Clermont County, Ohio, April 27, 1822. He entered West Point July 1, 1839, and graduated in 1843. On leaving West Point he was commissioned Brevet-Second Lieutenant in the 4th Infantry. In September, 1845, he was made a full Second Lieutenant. Owing to casualties in his command at the capture of the City of Mexico in September, 1847, he was promoted to the grade of First Lieutenant immediately following that event. In 1849 he was breveted Captain for 'gallant and meritorious conduct' during the Mexican War; and on August 5th, 1853, was promoted to a full Captainty. He resigned his commission July 31, 1854, and retired to private life.

On the breaking out of the War of the Rebellion the subject of this sketch was among the first to offer his services to the government. After serving for a short time as mustering officer of the Illinois troops he was commissioned Colonel of the 21st regiment, Illinois Volunteers. This was in May, 1861. In August of the same year he was advanced to the rank of Brigadier-General and was made a Major-General the following year; his commission bearing date February 16th, 1862, the date of the surrender of Fort Donelson. Congress having revived the grade of Lieutenant-General, President Lincoln nominated General Grant for that position on the 26th of February, 1864; this nomination was confirmed on the 2d of March following. In July, 1866, the grade of General was created in the army; on July 25th General Grant was nominated and confirmed for that position. After the war he served for a short time as Secretary of War. In 1868 he was elected to the Presidency and again in 1872. On the 4th of March, 1885, a bill was passed by Congress restoring him to the army with the rank of General.

It is a fact worthy of note that no army commanded by General Grant ever took a step in retreat.