



The Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant

Ulysses S. Grant (1822 - 1885)

Read by:	Jim Clevenger	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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After leaving the presidency in 1877, Ulysses S. Grant and his wife Julia embarked on a world tour that was to last two years, capturing the public imagination but depleting their savings in the process. Returning home, Grant invested in a Wall Street brokerage run by his son and a partner that went bust, leaving Grant essentially broke. His several articles on his Civil war campaigns for *Century Magazine* were popular and he was urged to write his memoirs. *The Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant* was the result – an autobiographical account focused on his military career during the Mexican-American and Civil Wars written in the course of a year during which he learned he was dying of throat cancer. The two-volume set was published by Mark Twain shortly after Grant’s death, and was no-

table for the unique marketing campaign created by Twain, which enlisted ten thousand veterans to canvass the North using a script written by Twain to sell the sets in versions ranging in price from \$3.50 to \$12.00, based on the binding. The effort generated sales of 350,000 sets and provided Grant’s family with a 75% net share of the royalties, an amount of \$450,00 worth over \$10 million today. The book was a critical success as well. Mark Twain compared it favorably with Caesar’s Commentaries ... “the same high merits distinguished both books—clarity of statement, directness, simplicity, unpretentiousness, manifest truthfulness, fairness and justice toward friend and foe alike, soldierly candor and frankness, and soldierly avoidance of flowery speech. I placed the two books side by side upon the same high level.”

Ulysses S. Grant (April 27, 1822 – July 23, 1885) is best remembered as the 18th President of the United States, serving from 1869–77. Born Hiram Ulysses Grant in Point Pleasant, Ohio, he adopted the name “Ulysses S.” when he was nominated by that name to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He graduated in 1843 and served in the Mexican-American War, after which he retired to private life. He rejoined the Army at the outset of the Civil War and proceeded to control Kentucky and Tennessee, win the Battle of Shiloh and then take Vicksburg, controlling the Mississippi River and dividing the Confederacy. Lincoln appointed him Commanding General of the United States and he battled with Robert E. Lee, culminating in Lee’s surrender at Appomattox. After the war he supervised Reconstruction before election to the presidency in 1868. During his term he stabilized the nation, enforced civil and voting rights, prosecuted the Ku Klux Klan, and built a coalition to strengthen the Republican Party in the South. His administration was plagued by corruption, struggled with native American uprisings, and was unable to prevent conservative whites from regaining power in the South. The author H.B. Brands summarizes his legacy well:

“As commanding general in the Civil War, he had defeated secession and destroyed slavery, secession’s cause. As President during Reconstruction he had guided the South back into the Union. By the end of his public life the Union was more secure than at any previous time in the history of the nation. And no one had done more to produce the result than he.”