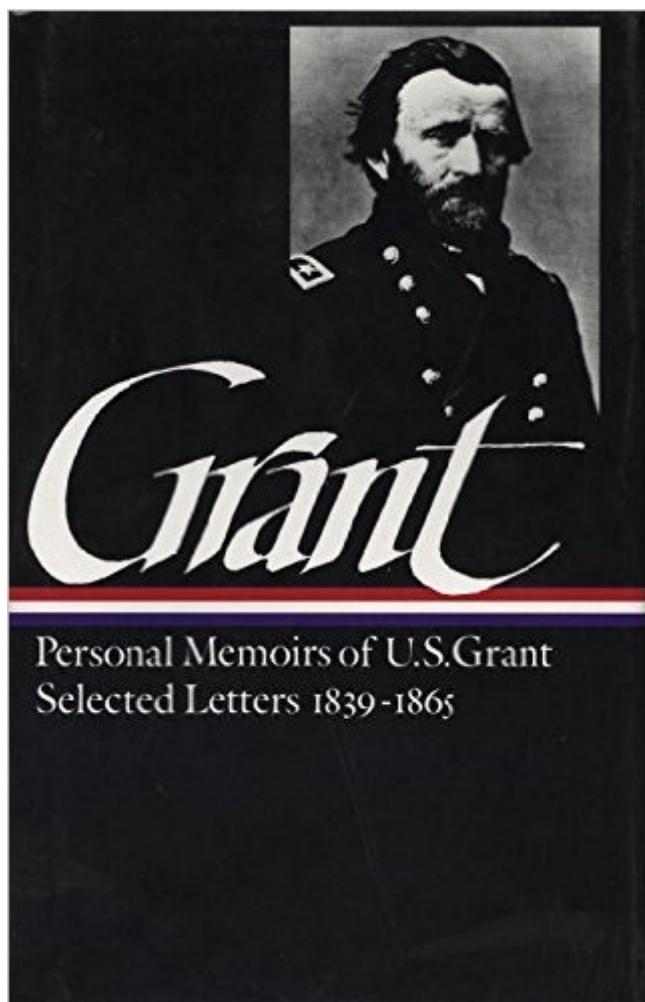


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Ulysses S. Grant : Memoirs And Selected Letters : Personal Memoirs Of U.S. Grant / Selected Letters, 1839-1865 (Library Of America)



Synopsis

Twenty years after Appomattox, stricken by cancer and facing financial ruin, Ulysses S. Grant wrote his Personal Memoirs to secure his family's future. In doing so, the Civil War's greatest general won himself a unique place in American letters. His character, intelligence, sense of purpose, and simple compassion are evident throughout this vivid and deeply moving account, which has been acclaimed by readers as diverse as Mark Twain, Matthew Arnold, Gertrude Stein, and Edmund Wilson. Annotated and complete with detailed maps, battle plans, and facsimiles reproduced from the original edition, this volume offers an unparalleled vantage on the most terrible, moving, and inexhaustibly fascinating event in American history. Included are 174 letters, many of them to his wife, Julia, which offer an intimate view of their affectionate and enduring marriage.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I originally read this book as part of a Masters Level History course at the University Of New Orleans (I wasn't in the program, I just took the class for fun). 2 months, and hours and hours of research later, I turned in a 22 page book report. This is one of the best 'autobiographies' that you will ever read, as well as one of the finest books on the Civil War. Grant was poor, having lost most of his money on poor financial decisions, when he set out to write this. He undertook the project as a way to provide for his wife, however after beginning the writing process, he grew to like it, and his 'memoirs' evolved into a classic. One should note, that this book is really his memoirs about the Civil War. There are only a couple dozen pages dedicated to his childhood and West Point

years. Through his memoirs, one gets a better glimpse into the decision making of the general that they called a butcher. On his decision to assault Vicksburg in 1863, Grant wrote "There was no telling how long a siege might last. ...it was the beginning of the hot season.... There was no telling what the casualties might be among Northern troops working and living in trenches". Grant understood war. He understood that most deaths weren't caused by bullets, but by disease. He also understood that in a battle of attrition, the North would prevail. This is not to say that there aren't any flaws in this book. As with all memoirs, certain accounts can be a little self-serving. Grant's accounts of Cold Harbor and Shiloh are somewhat different than James McPherson and Shelby Foote would have you believe, and in fact in describing his actions at Shiloh he almost contradicts himself. Over all though Grant's writing reveals a very humble person.

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