

presidents of the *United States of America*

"I helped win the Civil War and served as the 18th President of the United States."



Ulysses S. Grant



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Published by PragerU

15021 Ventura Boulevard #552

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403



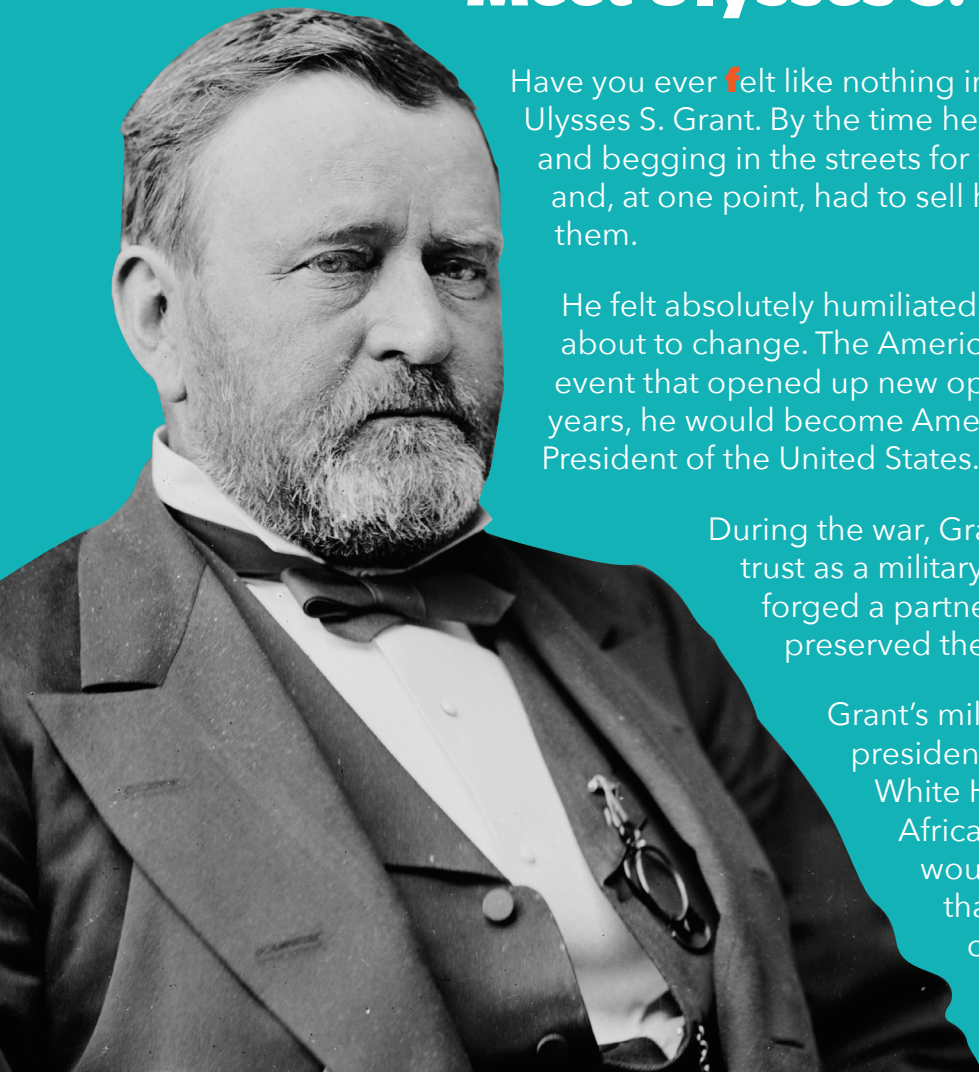
Become a Presidential Historian By Solving This Puzzle

In this book, you'll learn all sorts of facts about Ulysses S. Grant's amazing life and accomplishments. But there's still one last thing we need to know about him.

He and his family owned a Newfoundland dog while they lived in the White House, and we need your help to find out what its name was. Your task is to help us uncover the answer! Hidden in the text are bolded letters. Read this book carefully to find them and fill the letters into the blanks below in the order they appear.

— — — — —
Once you've solved this puzzle, you'll be a true PragerU Kids presidential historian!

Meet Ulysses S. Grant



Have you ever **f**elt like nothing in your life was going right? So did Ulysses S. Grant. By the time he was 37, he was dirt poor, unemployed, and begging in the streets for work. He could barely feed his family and, at one point, had to sell his watch to buy Christmas presents for them.

He felt absolutely humiliated, but unbeknownst to him, his life was about to change. The American Civil War would soon begin—**a**n event that opened up new opportunities for him. In a few short years, he would become America's top general and, ultimately, President of the United States.

During the war, Grant earned President Abraham Lincoln's trust as a military leader. Together, Lincoln and Grant forged a partnership that defeated the Confederacy, preserved the **U**nion, and ended slavery.

Grant's military heroics led to his election as president **i**n 1868. During his two terms in the White House, he fought for the rights of African-Americans and sought to heal the wounds of the war. Grant's story proves that, no matter how bad things seem, you can still succeed and have a major impact on the world.

Interesting Facts

- He was the first president born in Ohio.
- He was a member of the Republican Party.
- He was born with the name Hiram Ulysses Grant but later went by Ulysses Simpson Grant.
- He was the first president to graduate from the United States Military Academy at West Point.
- He was the first president whose parents were alive during his presidency.
- He created the Department of Justice.
- He was the first president to establish a National Park and set aside federal land for wildlife protection.
- He was the first president to visit Ireland, Egypt, China, and Japan.

Young Hiram

Hiram Ulysses Grant was born on April 27, 1822 in Point Pleasant, Ohio. He was the oldest of Jesse and Hannah Grant's six children. His father was a **tanner** who made leather products.

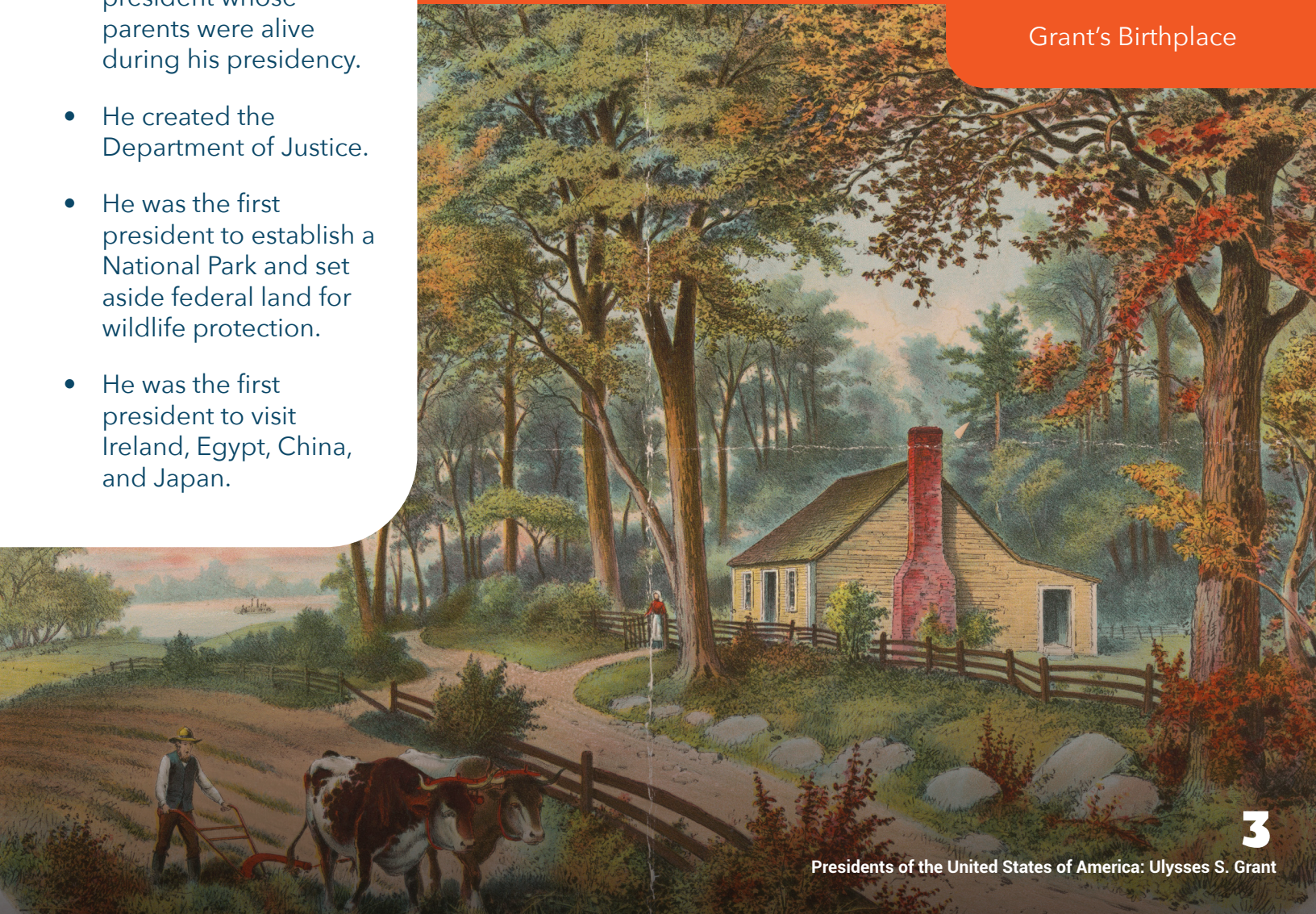
Hiram was a shy, quiet boy. He studied in local schools and worked on the family farm. He did, however, have a talent for riding and taking care of horses.

The Grant family couldn't afford to send Hiram to college. The **United States Military Academy** at West Point, New York, however, offered free tuition. The Grants took advantage of that opportunity and sent Hiram there for a military education.

When Hiram was nominated to attend West Point, he was incorrectly listed as "Ulysses Simpson Grant." Hiram decided he liked that name better and made it his full name.

Although he was an average student at West Point, he impressed his fellow classmates with his horse riding skills.

Grant's Birthplace



Early Career

Grant's first assignment was in the infantry near St. Louis, Missouri. There, he met one of his friend's sisters—a young woman named Julia Dent. They fell in love. Although Grant wanted to marry her, his plans were delayed when the Mexican-American War broke out in 1846.

Grant served as a **lieutenant** in that war under General Zachary Taylor. He had great respect for Taylor and learned many leadership lessons from the general. Grant, however, did not think the war was just. He believed that American president James K. Polk had unnecessarily provoked the war with Mexico. Still, Grant fought bravely, seeing combat at the battles

of Palo Alto and Monterrey and at the siege of Veracruz. Many of his fellow soldiers during the war, such as George McClellan, Robert E. Lee, and James Longstreet, would (like Grant) become major figures in the Civil War.

After the Mexican-American War ended in 1848, Grant married Julia. They would eventually have four children. The Army stationed Grant in various locations, such as Michigan, New York, and California. It was a difficult time for Grant, since he was often away from his family for long periods of time. In 1854, he resigned from the military.



RIGHT 1902
HANDY

4

Presidents of the United States of America: Ulysses S. Grant

Rock Bottom

Grant tried to start a new life and support his family. Unfortunately, no matter what he did, whether it was **f**arming or real estate, he only experienced failure. Everything he touched seemed to fail. By 1858, he was walking the streets of St. Louis, begging for work.

Things got so bad that, by 1860, he had crawled back to his parents and siblings in Ohio. He got a job working at his dad's tanning shop again under his younger brothers - which he felt very embarrassed about. He had no idea that, in a few short years, his life would be transformed, and he would reach the heights of political power.



Top Right: First known portrait of Grant

Bottom Left: The Grant Family

Freedom

Ulysses S. Grant hated slavery. His wife Julia, however, came from a slave-owning family which gave Grant one of their enslaved servants—a man named William Jones. At the time, Grant was very poor and could have either kept Jones or sold him for a lot of money. Grant, however, was so opposed to slavery that, on March 29, 1859, he freed Jones out of principle.

Quote

"The prejudice to color... is a senseless one..."
- ca. 1869-70

Civil War

In the years leading up to the Civil War, the nation became increasingly divided over slavery. America had acquired new territories, and many Southerners wanted slavery to be allowed there. Many Northerners disagreed and wanted slavery to be either destroyed or not allowed to spread into the new territories.

In 1860, the Republican candidate Abraham Lincoln won the presidency. Southerners were angry that he didn't want to allow slavery to spread, so they decided to break away from the Union. Eleven Southern states declared themselves independent and formed the **Confederate States of America**. Grant believed, like Lincoln, that the South had no right to **secede**. When the South fired on a federal fort, Fort Sumter, the Civil War began.

At the beginning of the war, few people knew who Grant was, but he began winning impressive victories in Tennessee (at Fort Henry, Fort Donelson, Shiloh, and Chattanooga). His capture of the Southern fortress of Vicksburg in Mississippi was a major breakthrough for the Union—one that is still considered a military masterpiece.

Some Americans criticized Grant because his battles featured many **casualties**, but President Lincoln promoted him to general and commander of all Union forces in 1864 because he was aggressive and willing to do anything it took to win.

Grant worked closely with his friend, General William T. Sherman, to destroy the Confederacy's will to fight. Grant chased Confederate General Robert E. Lee and trapped him in Virginia. On April 9, 1865, Lee surrendered to Grant at **Appomattox Court House**. The war was over. 620,000 Americans had died, but the Union was preserved and slavery had ended forever.

Quote

*"The art of war is simple enough. Find out where your enemy is. Get at him as soon as you can. Strike him as hard as you can, and keep moving on."
- early 1862*



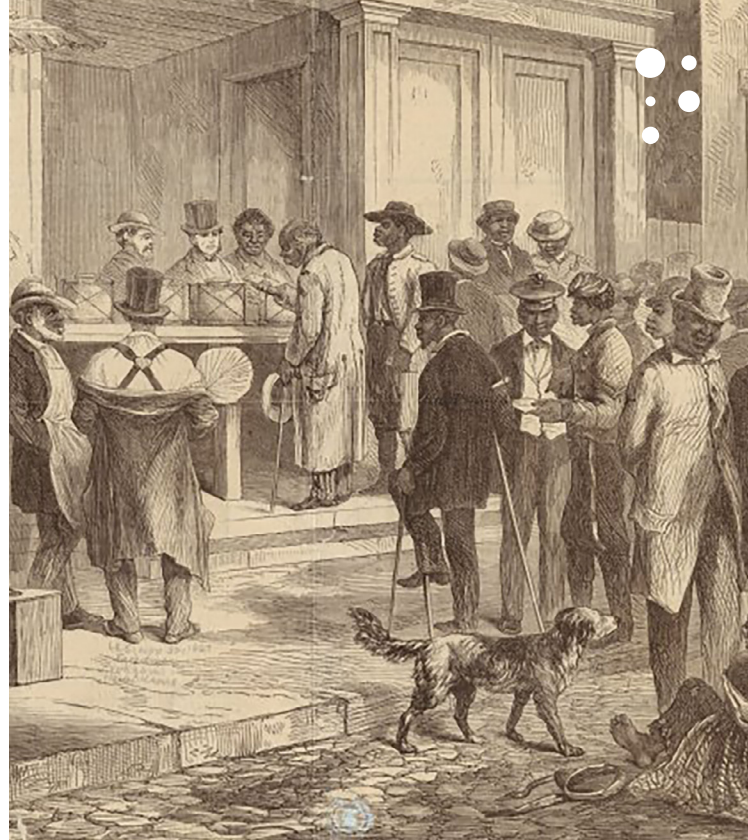
Lee surrenders to Grant, 1865

1868 Presidential Election

A few days after Lee's surrender, President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. His vice president, Andrew Johnson, became the 17th President of the United States. Although the Civil War was over, there were still hard feelings between the North and the South. This era was known as **Reconstruction**—when America was figuring out how to reconstruct itself after the war.

When Lincoln's party, the Republican Party, looked for a candidate in the 1868 presidential election, Grant was their top choice.

After the Republicans nominated him, Grant wrote back, "Let us have peace." It was the exact message the American people wanted to hear. In November of 1868, he defeated Democratic candidate Horatio Seymour. At the age of 46, he was the youngest president elected up to that point.



Quote

*"Let us have peace."
- May 1868*

President

As president, Grant faced a very difficult situation. He wanted to reunite the country, but many white Southerners, who were mostly Democrats, were angry that they had lost the war and that their former enslaved servants had been freed. They began to enact **Jim Crow** laws which prevented African-Americans from enjoying the rights of free men and women. They also began inflicting violence on black people, beating them up and hanging them from trees in a practice called lynching. One of the most violent groups was the **Ku Klux Klan**, or KKK.

Grant fought hard to stop the violence against

African-Americans. He sent the military in to destroy the KKK and signed the **Enforcement Acts** to protect black Americans' rights.

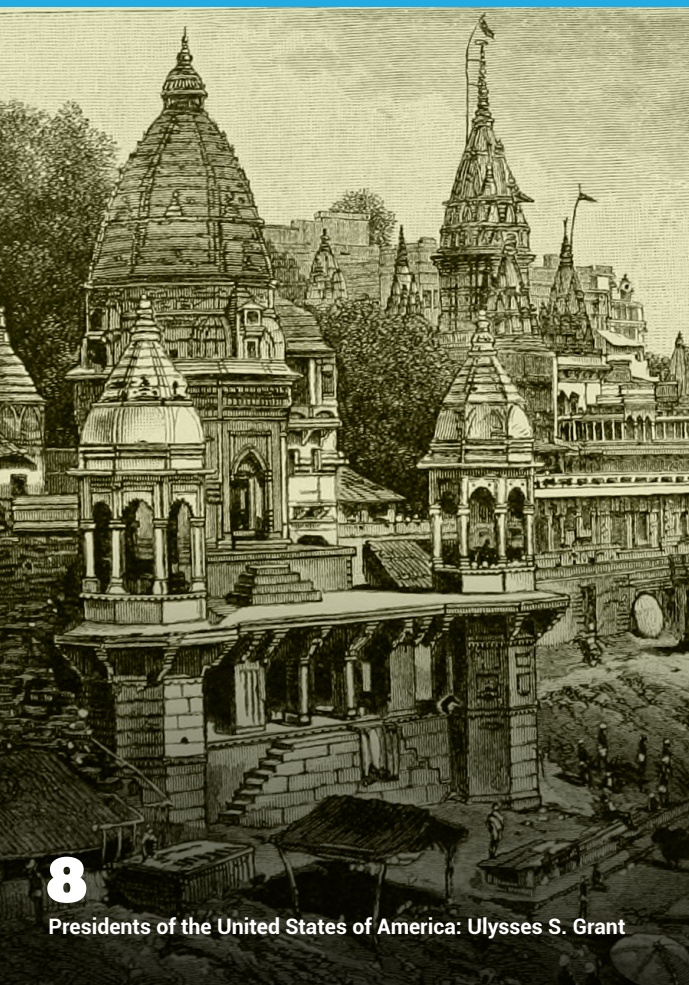
Although many Southerners were upset about these decisions, Grant was still popular across the country and easily won re-election in 1872.

Unfortunately, several **scandals** broke out during his administration that damaged his reputation. Grant didn't personally do anything dishonest, but many people believed that he was too trusting of his friends. These corrupt friends took advantage of Grant and stole government money.



Quote

*"The United States is the freest of all nations."
- December 1869*



Retirement

Grant left the White House in 1877. He and Julia then took an epic two-year tour around the world, where they traveled through Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. He met the United Kingdom's Queen Victoria, Pope Leo XIII, and the Japanese Emperor Meiji. Most Americans had only dreamed or read about the places he visited, but he got to see them firsthand.

Grant tried running for an **unprecedented** third term as president in 1880, but failed to get the Republican Party nomination. He suffered a major setback when, in 1884, he and his family lost all of their money. They had invested their money with a man named Ferdinand Ward, a man who ended up being a crook. Grant was devastated. Things got even worse when Grant developed throat cancer. The former president realized that he was dying.

Grant's Final Battle



Things seemed hopeless. Grant was dying and his family was bankrupt, but the general had one final battle to fight. He wanted to provide for his bankrupt family, especially Julia, so he decided to write his memoirs. When the famous writer Mark Twain promised to publish them, Grant began writing tirelessly for several hours a day. The cancer got worse and Grant was in intense pain. He could barely eat or drink water and he lost the ability to speak, but he kept on writing. He finished on July 20, 1885 and was utterly exhausted.

Grant died three days later, on July 23, 1885. Twain published *The Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, and they became a massive success. Hundreds of thousands of copies were sold and Julia and her family had more than enough money to survive. *The Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* are considered one of the greatest American literary masterpieces of all time. Ulysses S. Grant had won his final battle.

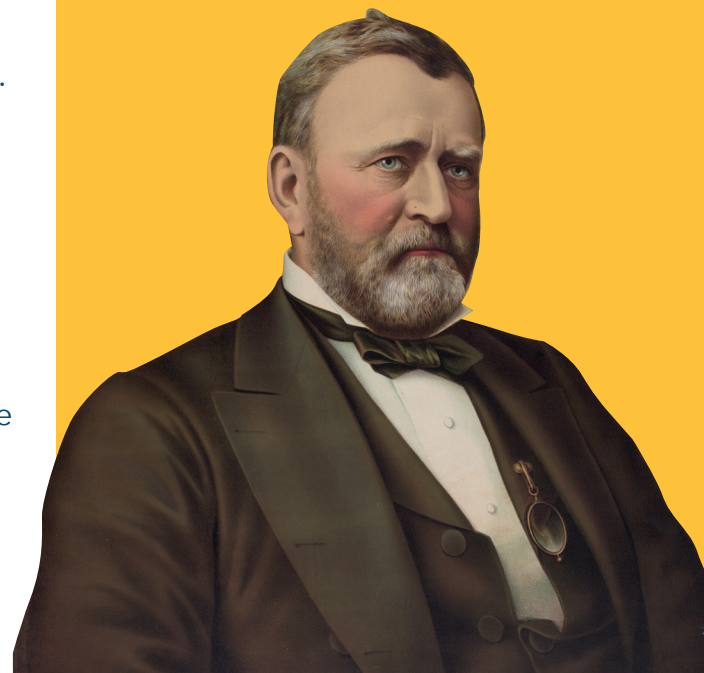
Legacy

Ulysses S. Grant's reputation has changed more dramatically than perhaps any other president. During his lifetime, he was considered one of the greatest Americans of all time - at the level of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Southerners, however, who were angry with Grant's policies began to attack him and focus solely on his flaws. His reputation as a military leader and president fell apart. In more recent years, historians have re-examined Grant and have recognized his achievements.

Now, we can judge Grant more fairly. Yes, he experienced many failures, and the scandals tainted his presidency. He was, however, a man of principle - he hated slavery, even freeing an enslaved servant when he was in a tough financial situation. Despite his setbacks, he always found ways to bounce back and rise higher than anyone could have imagined. He went from being virtually homeless to becoming president in less than a decade. As president, he worked hard to protect the most vulnerable in the country - the newly freed black Americans. Perhaps civil rights leader Frederick Douglass said it best when he said, "In him, the Negro found a protector... a vanquished foe a brother, and imperiled nation a Savior."

Quote

"Slavery must be destroyed. We felt that it was a stain to the Union that men should be bought and sold."
- June 1878



Glossary

Union: The United States government during the Civil War that fought to prevent the Confederate states from seceding.

Tanner: A person who makes leather from animal skins.

United States Military Academy: The U.S. Army's top military academy, which provides undergraduate education and training to commissioned Army officers. It is known as West Point, and is located in New York State. Ulysses Grant graduated from West Point in 1843.

Lieutenant: An officer of junior or middle rank in a country's military force.

Confederate States of America: The country created by the 11 Southern states when they seceded from the United States from 1860 to 1861.

Secede: To leave an organization or government.

Casualty: A person killed or injured in a war or accident.

Appomattox Court House: A house located in Virginia owned by grocer Wilmer McLean and his wife. It was the site of General Robert E. Lee's surrender to General Ulysses S. Grant, which effectively ended the Civil War.

Reconstruction: The period in American history after the American Civil War ended in 1865 until the late 1870s. The goal of Reconstruction was to rebuild the country, bring the former Confederate states back into the United States, and to assist the newly freed African-Americans in becoming U.S. citizens. Many historians believe that this period failed in its goals, since African-Americans continued to suffer under unjust laws.

Jim Crow: State and local laws in the South, in effect from the 1870s until the 1960s, that discriminated against African-Americans.

Ku Klux Klan: A group that began organizing soon after the American Civil War in the 1860s that believed in white supremacy and attacked and killed African-Americans.

Enforcement Acts: Laws passed in the 1870s and signed by President Ulysses Grant that sought to protect the rights of African-Americans and suppress the Ku Klux Klan.

Scandal: An event involving dishonest and/or illegal activity that provokes outrage.

Unprecedented: Never having happened or existed in the past.

Sources

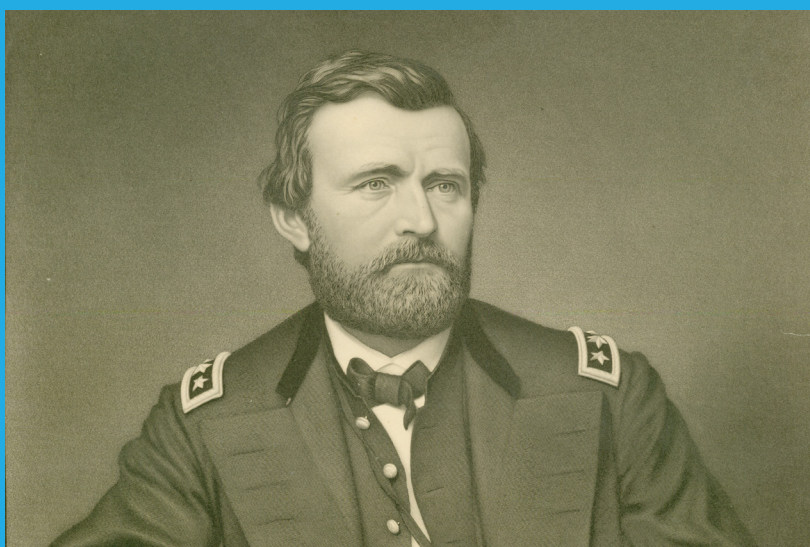
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Answers:

GRANT'S DOG'S NAME: FAITHFUL



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