

**TRUE STORIES OF
GREAT AMERICANS.
U. S. GRANT**

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True Stories of Great Americans. U. S. Grant by Lovell Coombs

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LOVELL COOMBS

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PRESIDENT ULYSSES S. GRANT.

U. S. GRANT

BY

FRANCIS LOVELL COOMBS

When black the sky and dire with war,
When every heart was wrung with fear,
He rose serene, and took his place,
The great occasion's mighty peer.
He smote armed opposition down,
He bade the storm and darkness cease,
And o'er the long-distracted land
Shone out the smiling sun of peace.

In Memory of General Grant

— HENRY ARMY.

New York

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1916

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ULYSSES S. GRANT

CHAPTER I

A PROMISING BOYHOOD

IN the spring of 1839 an awkward, stocky, freckle-faced lad of seventeen, by some nicknamed "Useless," because of his "slowness," left his home in a small backwoods town in Ohio for the Military Academy at West Point. A few years passed, and the boy "Useless," after adventures as thrilling as those of any storybook, returned from the Mexican War a brevet captain of infantry, twice promoted for bravery in battle.

A few years more, and "Useless," now the general of an army of 70,000 men, saw the white flag go up over Vicksburg, the "Gibraltar of the South," after one of the greatest sieges of history, and received the surrender of more than 30,000 prisoners of war.

Two years later "Useless" stood in Washington, at the right hand of the President, while for two

whole days a great army marched by, and cheered and saluted him as their commander — the commander who had led them to victory and brought to an end the great Civil War.

What boy, and especially what American boy, would not love to dream of living such a life of adventure and renown? And then to be made President of the United States; and later to travel in foreign lands for two years, to be lionized everywhere as probably no other man has been lionized in the history of the world!

Such were the fortunes of General U. S. Grant.

Yet Ulysses Grant's early life was like that of thousands of other American boys. He was born in an unpretentious home, a small two-room cabin in the little village of Point Pleasant, Ohio, on the 27th of April, 1822. His father, Jesse R. Grant, was a tanner. His mother had been Hannah Simpson, of an old Pennsylvania family.

In the year following, the family moved to Georgetown, Ohio. And here it was that the future general and President grew up, — went to school, played, and worked between times, as he afterwards confessed, with no greater enthusiasm than other boys.

But boy life in the Middle West in those days was not what it is to-day. There was a great deal

more of work and a great deal less of play. Besides the tannery, Ulysses' father owned a farm and some woodland; and when Ulysses was seven years old he began hauling, with a team, all the firewood used in the house and tannery. At eleven he began doing all kinds of farm work.

"From that age until seventeen," he tells in his "Memoirs," "I did all the work done with horses, such as breaking up the land, furrowing, plowing corn and potatoes, bringing in the crops when harvested, hauling all the wood, besides tending two or three horses, a cow or two, and sawing wood for the stoves, etc."

What would you boys of to-day think of such a daily programme? And attending school as well?

Yet Ulysses found no fault, and had a good time with the other boys when he could. He went fishing, went swimming at a swimming-hole in a creek a mile from the village; hunted berries, May apples, pawpaws, and nuts in the woods; and in the winter went skating and coasting.

In appearance Ulysses Grant was a short, stocky boy, with brownish hair, a round, frank face, freckled, and with friendly gray-blue eyes. In disposition he was quiet and easy-going, had a dislike for coarse language which he never lost, and preferred the company of the quieter boys and girls